



September 2022

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Fri Sep 2 - early dismissal
- Thu Sep 15 - welcome back BBQ / meet the staff from 5-6:30pm
- Fri Sep 16 - early dismissal
- Wed Sep 21 - Public board meeting at 7pm at CBO
- Fri Sep 30 - **NO SCHOOL** (National Day for Truth & Reconciliation)

Happy September! We are so happy to welcome back our returning students and excited to welcome our new students to our Exshaw family! We hope that the summer break provided all a wonderful time to relax, enjoy time with family and friends and adventure. Can you believe that we are already entering the 2022 - 23 school year?!

Attendance

Who is going to make it into the 90 and above attendance club? At Exshaw School, an expectation for all students is that each student attend at least 90%. This means that if there is 20 school days in a month, they must attend at least 18 days in a month. We want to set each student up for success and to do that, they must be at school on time each day. We miss them when they are not here! With a strong connection between home and school, we can do the very best for our students. Attendance is very important to support growth.

Welcome Back BBQ

Please join us for our Welcome Back BBQ. This is a chance to meet the staff and enjoy dinner with us! Please save the date and time for us. It is on **September 15th, 2022**, from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

Parent / Family Council

It would be wonderful to have a parent/family council for Exshaw School. If you would like to learn more about this, please join me at 3:15 p.m. on September 21st.

Contact Information

Please if your contact information changes, please contact the office immediately so that we can update our records. We want to make sure that we can keep in contact with you to celebrate successes and let you know about very important events!

Elders & Knowledge Keepers

We are excited to continue working with our wonderful Elders and knowledge keepers to build our understanding of culture and language. We are looking forward to embarking on this continued journey! The staff wanted to develop a space where we could have a special place for cultural and language learning. Over the summer, room 108 has been painted and we have been decorating with pictures and language items. We are excited to see this space grow and be used consistently!

Thank You

Thanks for creating a strong community between home and school where each child can reach their full potential. We are excited to another year to learn about your child(ren) and have them reach their highest potential.

Technology-free Recesses

Did you know that our recesses are technology free? We have had great feedback from students, families and staff about how happy they are to be playing outside with friends and family members. Thanks for your support!

Truth & Reconciliation

Throughout the month of September and throughout the year, we will be highlighting our continual learning and educating of Truth and Reconciliation. Please stay tune to learn about the events and activities to acknowledge what Exshaw School is doing to learn and move forward.

Read All About It!

At Exshaw School, we want to get all students off to a great start! Helping all students develop strong reading skills helps them to truly thrive. Here are some tips to help our students become the best they can be!

For Kindergarten to Grade 3:

In the early years, students continue to learn how to read. Students develop the ability to identify letters, decode letter sounds, blend sounds in a word, build a growing and then proficient memory of spelling and establish a large bank of sight words.

Try the following with your child to improve their reading skills:

1. **Decode mystery words:** Read part of a book out loud to your child, leaving out one “mystery word” that is frequently used {like “because” or “always”} Introduce clues about that mystery word in the text, including the number of letters it has, a letter the mystery word contains, or even a specific sound in the word. Ask your child to guess what the word is! Celebrate solving the mystery with final reading, asking your child to clap every time the word is read. This is a fun way to introduce high frequency words to your child.
2. **Personalize story time:** Have your child tell a brief personal story to you while you write it down. Then, work together to read it out. This is called “Write a Story to Read a Story” in the education world.
3. **Write silly sentences:** Encourage your child to use their imagination to come up with the silliest sentences they can, using words that include a certain spelling pattern. For example, ask your child to use words that have the /əl/ sound spelled with ‘-le’, plus consonants ‘z,’ ‘g,’ and ‘k.’ By looking at an example text or poem (choose one from **No Fair! No Fair! And Other Jolly Poems of Childhood**), your child can identify words that fit the patterns of poetry.

Grades 3 and Above

Reading comprehension skills are key at this time! That’s because at this point, kids are moving on from learning to read, to reading to learn. Children will be asked to collect information from a variety of sources and summarize it in school. They are increasingly focused on both reading and writing skills and the ability to edit and revise their work. These strategies will help increase students’ skills:

1. **Give context:** If your child is reading a new topic, provide a bit of background knowledge and context about the book’s topic if you can. For instance, if you are reading about a book about traditional medicine in war times, talk to them about what Canada was like during that period and what medicine would have been used. This will help ground child in the reading ahead.
2. **Discuss essential words:** If you’re providing background knowledge for a book, talk about an essential word they’ll encounter in the text, and further use an example and a picture that gives understanding to the word. For instance, if you’re reading a book about the beach, you might talk about “riptides”.
3. **Ask questions:** Ask your child questions at the end of a story or book they read based on the conversations you’ve had about the text. Your child has hopefully been building up ideas about the topic while reading!
4. **Maximize reading time:** Encourage your child to take a book with them into bed, on a car ride, or anywhere else that they can carve out a little extra time to read. Even if they read just 20 minutes daily, that’s 3, 600 minutes per school year - exposing them to nearly 2 million words annually!
5. **Let your kids choose:** Give your children (and especially adolescents) the chance to choose the books they read. If they aren’t engaged, reading will become a chore rather than a cherished practice.
6. **Partner up:** You and your kids can partner up to read in a very similar way to how students might normally read in the classroom. Ask a question at the end of each page and have a conversation with your child - this “extra-textual” discussion time is important for building vocabulary and reading comprehension. Read one page and then invite your child to read the next, progressing in small chunks together.

Put on a reading theater: A beloved classroom practice, this approach also works well at home. Assign roles to get the entire family involved in a book. Someone can play stage director, while others take the role of a specific character or characters. As everyone reads, it’s important to have them really get into the roles and act them out.

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Yours in education,
Nadine Dack-Doi (principal)

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