

Volume 1 |
Issue 1
September 1,
2017

Charles Dickens Elementary Newsletter

*Coming
together is a
beginning,
staying
together is
progress,
and working
together is
success.*

-Henry Ford

Welcome to the start of the 2017-2018 school year. The Dickens staff is excited to see the students.

Welcome Letter from the Office of Dickens!

Dear Families of the Charles Dickens Community,

On behalf of the staff at Dickens Elementary School, I am happy to welcome you to the 2017-18 school year! We are looking forward to a positive relationship with you which will ensure students' can achieve a year of learning and positive connections. We recognize that to be successful in school, our children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong relationship with you will make a great difference in your child's education. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities. We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring that he/she:

1. Attends school daily and arrives on time (school STARTS at 9:00), ready for the day's learning experience
2. Completes all homework assignments given by teachers
3. Reads and/or is read to daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills
4. Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life
5. Informs you if he/she needs additional support in any area or subject
6. Knows that you want him/her to succeed in school by working with the staff and Dickens peers

Please find the Dickens Code of Conduct attached and review it together with your child. If you have any questions about the rules and expectations, please feel free to contact your child's teacher. It is very important that you and your child are fully informed regarding the Code of Conduct how it is related to appropriate behavior for a safe and productive school year.

As we settle into routines, thank you to our staff and parents for your leadership and support which has allowed a smooth transition into a new school year. The wonderful Dickens' staff and I feel privileged to be a part of this school family. We thank you for your support and look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,
Jann Schmidt, Principal Dickens Elementary

We would like to welcome the staff that will be supporting the learning of students' at Dickens.

Be Nut Aware!



Did you know?
Tree nuts are considered a priority allergen by Health Canada.

People with an allergy to one type of nut have a greater chance of being allergic to others.

People who are allergic to some tree nuts generally avoid all tree nuts and peanuts because of the risk of cross-contamination.
Potential Non Food Sources of Tree Nuts:

- Beanbags, kick sacks/hacky sacks
- Bird seed
- Cosmetics, skin and hair care products, lotions, soap, body scrubs, sun screens
- Massage oils
- Pet food
- Sandblasting material

For more information:

<http://foodallergycanada.ca>

Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.

-Malcolm X

Introducing Dickens Staff

We are working really hard to fill the outstanding positions at Dickens, thank you for patience.

Teaching Staff

Wendy Saunders/Jeanne Sayn-Wittgenstein (Div 1) - K	Jenny Freeman/Karen Lam (Div. 2) Gr. 1/2
Cathy Sutton/ Jeanne Sayn-Wittgenstein (Div. 3) Gr. 1/2	Sheila Stouten (Div. 4) Gr. 1/2
Maria Morais/Kimberley Doherty (Div. 5) Gr. 1/2	Kim Frehlick (Div. 6) Gr. 1/2
Blake Moore (Div. 7) Gr. 2/3/4	David Murphy (Div. 8) Gr. 3/4
Paula Naylor (Div. 9) Gr. 3/4/5	Katie Tittler (Div. 10) Gr. 3/4/5
Peggy Mackinnon (Div. 11) Gr. 3/4/5	Maternity Leave TBA (Div. 12) Gr. 4/5
Tammy Wreggit (Div. 13) Gr. 4/5	Kelly Kent (Div. 14) Gr. 4/5
Jeanette Inglis (Div. 15) Gr. 5/6/7	Kenny Lam (Div. 16) Gr. 5/6/7
Karim Bhimani/Jody Polukoshko (Div. 17) Gr. 5/6/7	Tami McDiarmid/Jody Polukoshko (Div. 18) Gr. 5/6/7
Valdine Ciwko (Div. 19) Gr. 5/6/7	Laura Sengara (Div. 20) Gr. 4/5/6/7
TBA (Div. 21) Gr. 5/6/7	Jeanne Sayn-Wittgenstein/Jenny Freeman Resource Teachers
Maranda Hounsell Librarian	Jennifer Chobotiuk Resource Teacher
Kimberly Doherty Resource Teacher	Laurie Lee Resource Teacher
Glen Manery Counselor	Paul Nicholls Prep Teacher
Jean Fowler Speech and Language	

Support Staff

Anne Rodriquez SSW	Cindy Diett Nurse VCH
Colleen Stoyand SSW	Debbie Mohabir SSW
TBA SSW	TBA – PM Engineer
Jack Pereira Supervision Aide	Jesse Cullen SSW
TBA Engineer	Kim Kondra Aboriginal Enhancement Worker
Linda Greadner Supervision Aide	Loraie Nichols SSW
Lucy Otoya SSW	Teuta Haxhiavdija SSW
Naomi Kidd SSW	Lisa Green
Sandhya Hegoda Gamage SSW	Tarow Sekhon Supervision Aide

How Parents Can Solve a Concern at School

Please remember that your child's teacher is your first point of contact. If parents have any concerns or questions regarding practices or activities occurring in their child's classroom, please discuss these concerns directly with the classroom teacher by phoning the school to book an appointment in order to speak privately. Most concerns are solved at this point.

After having spoken to the classroom teacher, an appointment with the administrator is the second step.

Beyond that, the VSB Conflict Resolution Process for School-Based Concerns

<https://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/conflict-resolution.pdf> provides more detail as to how parents can solve a concern at school. Pamphlets are available at the school and can be found online at the link above.

***A successful
school Year:***

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/back-to-school/10-teachers-tips-kick-starting-new-school-year>



Dates to Remember:

Date	Event
Thursday, Sep. 21	Pro D Day – no school for students
Thursday, Sep. 28	Desert Night with the Teachers
Friday, Sep. 29	Terry Fox Run – 1:30 – 2:30 – parents welcome
Monday, Oct. 9	Thanksgiving – No school
Friday, Oct. 20	Pro D Day – no school for students

Students' New Divisions

The move to students' new division is an exciting time. Parents can help make this part of their child's "Back to School" experience a positive one!

- When children move to their new division, some students may react emotionally (in-keeping with a child's maturity level).
- Children often look to their parents for their reaction as well, learning from them. Parents can help by encouraging their child to be open and accepting and by highlighting the positive aspects of the new class, like new friends, new teacher, etc. Your child will be looking for *your* reaction; be positive and optimistic. S/he may not have all the same friends as last year, so talk about the opportunities to make new friends or be re-connected with old ones. Later moves among divisions often create a "domino-effect" of new issues and requests to change divisions are not possible.
- Your child may be in a combined class (often referred to as "split"). There are often misunderstandings and misconceptions about multi-grade classes, and parents may not be aware of the many advantages to multi-grade classes. You are encouraged to read the VSB document entitled - <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/combined-split-classes>.

School Hours

Our Daily Schedule:
 8:55 AM – Warning Bell
 9:00 AM – **Instruction Begins**
 10:35 – 10:55 – Recess
 12:10 – 12:57 – Lunch
 12:57 – Classes begin
 3:00 – Dismissal

Office Hours

8:00 – 3:30

Outside Supervision – Monday to Friday (excluding holidays)

Please do not leave students unsupervised in the playground.

8:40 – 9:00 and 3:00 – 3:20

Safe Arrival Announcement

Reporting Student Absences:

Student safety is of paramount importance at the Vancouver School District. Ensuring student safety is a shared responsibility. In order to assist schools, we ask parents to notify schools of student absences. If your child will be absent from school, please phone the school to report this absence as early as possible. Parents should leave a message on a dedicated answering service by calling 604-713-5159 (ext. 27). Messages will be received before the office is open. School offices are busy places: consistently notifying the school in advance of your child's absence will significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Safe Arrival Morning Routine.

To Report Your Child's Absence – Please Call 604-713-5159 (ext. 27) prior to 9 am on the first day of the absence.

Student Sign Out Procedure

When you pick up your child during the school day, please ensure that you sign them out at the school office. If you do not sign out your child, they will be unaccounted for, and the school will identify your child as a 'missing' student and will commence a search of school grounds. If the school staff do not locate the child, and are unable to reach a parent promptly, the school will call the Vancouver Police Department. Therefore, clear communication is essential for ensuring the safety of your child and to prevent unnecessary searches.

Thank you for helping us keep your children safe!

Code of Conduct

Students will be bringing home our Dickens School Code of Conduct. Thank you in advance for taking the time to review and to go over, with your child, our school's core beliefs and guidelines for being a respectful, safe and contributing member of our school community.

Clubs and Sports

Cross-country Running will begin! Thank you Paula and Sandhya for offering to coach. More information will be coming soon.

School Fees

A reminder that school supplies (\$25) and agenda (\$7) fees are now due. The Vancouver School Board will not deny a child access to the school supplies required for his or her educational program because of financial hardship. Nor will any child be excluded from activities where a fee is charged. ***If at any time there is a financial challenge, please contact one of the school Administrators; Jann Schmidt, Principal or Elyssa Derban, Vice Principal.*** All requests will be treated confidentially.

ASSEMBLIES

As part of our wonderful Dickens tradition, student-led assemblies take place each week. Our assemblies this year will continue again on Monday mornings at 9:00 am in our Gymnasium. Everyone is welcome and we look forward to seeing you there! Please join us.

SAFETY

To start off our school year, we would like to review a number of safety items:

- Over the next coming weeks, there will be a **series of forms that require completion** – asking families to **provide up-to-date contact information** (phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc.). Providing this information is extremely important in the event that a student gets hurt or feels ill during the school day and parents/guardians need to be contacted. Please keep our Main Office staff informed of any contact information changes that may occur throughout the year.
- If you are a returning family to Dickens and there has been **changes to your child’s medical profile**, please ensure that the Main Office is informed. If you are a new family to Dickens, please provide medical information on the forms that will be sent home in the coming days.
- We encourage families to ensure that **all student belongings and personal items be labelled with the child’s name** (clothing, indoor shoes, lunch containers, water bottles, etc.). Each term, the school accumulates many lost and found items. Having items labelled will assist both the families and the school. Thank you!
- If families have made arrangements to have their child leave school grounds during lunchtime, please have the child bring a note to school for the Main Office. Please ensure that the note is signed, dated and clearly states whether your child is allowed to leave school grounds on a specific day or for a specific duration of the school year. We also want to thank all the students for signing in and out.

GETTING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

- **Drop-off and Pick-up**: As we settle into our school routines for the year, we want to encourage families to communicate with their child about ‘after school’ practices. Typically, primary students are escorted to and from school by a parent, family member or caregiver. Please keep your child’s teacher informed of these arrangements and of any changes. Please note, the school has the expectation that all students not escorted home by an adult are to report home immediately afterschool. At times, students have made their own after-school arrangements, such as meeting up with a friend, without parent awareness. Therefore, to avoid any misunderstanding, it is important that all students report home immediately after school.
- **Parking**: Please be mindful of the City of Vancouver (COV) parking signage around our school. The COV will be continuing its practice of monitoring and issuing tickets to drivers who are illegally parked or idled. We encourage you to pay careful attention to this.

TERRY FOX RUN

This year, our Terry Fox Run will be held on Friday, September 29th from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm. Please come out and join us for this inspiring and meaningful event! This year, organizers of the Terry Fox School Run will be accepting online donations. Please visit <http://www.terryfox.ca/CharlesDickensElementary> for more information.

PAC News

Dickens Annex & Main are well supported by our Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). PAC provides wonderful support in many areas of the schools: planning and organizing special events, fundraising for field trips and school needs, and communicating with parents at both schools. Our chair this year is Amy Stanley, with Andrea Mitchell and Jacqui Thomas as co-chairs. PAC is always open to new members and welcome both new and returning families to become involved. At Dickens Annex & Main, students, staff, & parents work together to create this atmosphere of one community.

Reminders

Reminders from the Dickens Staff to help make this a successful year. We are looking forward to working with you and your children. It is important for students to start off the school year by being punctual and ready to learn. We are also working on making sure that our school is a safe and healthy environment.

- To parents, a reminder to please read, sign, and return a series of coloured forms distributed at the beginning of the school year. These forms contain important information that allows us to update contact information for your child and supports us to update our safety protocols.
- Parents are asked to call the school if students are going to be away. Please see the Safe Arrival Announcement below.
- All students arriving after the bell or leaving with parents/guardians early **MUST** be signed into and out of the office.
- Students who will be going home for lunch regularly need a written note that specify the days of the week that this will occur. Students must sign out and in each day. Please be aware school staff cannot be responsible for students once they sign out of the school. The permission note will be kept on file at the office.
- Outside supervision by staff begins at 8:45 in the morning and ends fifteen minutes after the 3:00 p.m. bell. Please do not leave your children in the playground unsupervised before 8:45 a.m. and after 3:15 p.m. School staff cannot be responsible for unattended students after 3:15.
- We promote good nutrition in the school and encourage students to bring good nutritious snacks and lunches. **As we have a number of students with serious food allergies, we ask parents to avoid preparing lunches and snacks that contain nut and seed products.**



Student Accident Ins. Plan available at kidsplus.ca/apply or by calling 1-800-556-7411

Contact Information

Charles Dickens Elementary Contact information:
1010 East 17th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5V 0A6

Telephone: 604-713-4978
 Fax: 604-713-4980
 Safe Arrival: 604-713-4978
 Website: <http://dickens.vsb.bc.ca>

Principal: Jann Schmidt
 Vice Principal: Elyssa Derban
 Annex Vice Principal: Erin Gibbs
 Appointed Trustee: Diane Turner