



**Muir Lake School**  
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To: Muir Lake Parents/Guardians  
Fr: Murray Marran and Heather Brownlee  
Re: Friday Memo for March 12, 2021

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Good Afternoon, Muir Lake Families:

Spring is around the corner and with spring, there is a renewed hope and optimism in the air. First, vaccine rollout continues to progress along and we are starting to see some staff members be able to book their vaccine administration online. I am one of those lucky people (only due to age - being an old principal must have some perks!). I look forward to the ubiquitous application of vaccines so that schools can return to our so-called "normal".

As we start planning for next year, Mrs. Brownlee and I are optimistic that we will be able to increase programming offerings and experiences for students at Muir Lake School. Considering this, we have learned some "pandemic lessons" from this experience and will be taking that learning forward in our planning for the upcoming school year. Here are some of things that will be continuing into our next year (provided that we no longer have to remain in cohorts):

1. Students will be allowed into school at 7:45 a.m. Prior to the pandemic, students (with the exception of grade 6 to 9) were not allowed into the building until 8 a.m. In the interest of creating and maintaining a safe, caring and welcoming learning environment, I firmly believe that children should be allowed to enter the building before class. This gives them time to settle, put their belongings away, touch base with the teacher, if they choose. Naturally, if students wish to go back outside and play until the bell rings, there will be supervision on the playground to accommodate those that want to be outside. This also gives the opportunity to start learning right away when the bell rings with little or no wasted time settling students once the bell rings.
2. Friday memos will continue next year. The feedback that we have received indicates that parents find these weekly memos an invaluable tool for keeping current of the happenings of Muir Lake School.
3. We will continue to keep doors locked during the day. This is primarily for the safety of students, but also it helps determine the whereabouts of students. Often, in pre-pandemic times, students would leave the building (not using the front door) and not check out in the office. Now, while these students were leaving for legitimate reasons, often our front office staff would not know that they left. By having ONE secured door that is controlled by office personnel, we will be better equipped to monitor where students are at all times and limit the possibility of unneeded class interruptions.
4. Each grade will continue to have assigned doors and we will clearly mark them and announce them to parents at the beginning of next year.
5. Next year, we are going to ask parents not to walk their children to their classrooms. Let me explain: this year with no visitors allowed in the school, teachers have noticed that there is less anxiety and a marked *INCREASE* in student independence! Students are getting to and from class (from outside) in a timely manner, and they are more comfortable with their surroundings. For example, our kindergarten students know to follow the special signs to get to their

classroom, and they know they are responsible for carrying their own items to and from the classroom. They safely navigate their school world. This independence is vital to their development and we, as a staff, want to continue to foster this as we currently see almost no anxiety, tears, trepidation or severe school refusal. Let me assure you that we have more than sufficient staff in and out of the school building that NO child will be lost and left to navigate on their own. Teachers and Support Staff keep vigilant watch on students both inside and outside of the building.

6. When coming to pick up children, we will kindly ask that parents continue to phone the school office when they reach the parking lot and we will send your student(s) out to you. The parent muster point will remain the same.
7. Morning drop offs and afternoon pick up at the end of the day will remain the same.

These procedures/changes in practice have made a **POSITIVE** impact on your children. By continuing the above, we are building essential skills in our children. Naturally, Muir Lake will continue to welcome families to our school, we are just helping our students along the way and ensuring building safety. On that note, we look forward to a return to parent volunteers, and community members bringing vibrancy and breadth to our school programs. Let's hope this happens sooner than later.

On a different note, please note that this is the second last memo for the month of March. Next week will be the last week for our Friday Memo before Spring Break. Friday Memos will resume on Friday, April 9th, 2021. Mrs. Brownlee and I would like to take this opportunity to wish a very happy Easter and hopefully our weather will remain as it is today.

## **1. Bringing Pets to the School/Community Playground: \*\*\*New Information\*\*\***

This one is difficult for me to write: I am an owner of 2 dogs who are part of the family and I am devoted to their care, so I understand the desire to bring dogs on outings. These outings add fun and excitement to our fur babies' day, and it is something that I immensely enjoy doing.

Recently, I see more people are bringing their dogs to Muir Lake School when they are picking up their children. Please note that there is signage that clearly states that dogs are prohibited from coming on school grounds, even if they are leashed.

I remind you of this because I want to protect you from ANY possibility of liability by bringing dogs onto school grounds. I have seen dogs that are normally calm and well behaved get frightened or spooked by children and not always react in a predictable manner. So, in the interest of protecting yourself from any situation that puts you in a libelous predicament, I ask that you not bring your dogs to the school grounds when picking up your children.

## **2. Spring Photos and Kindergarten Farewell Photos: \*\*\*Corrected Dates\*\*\***

Our annual spring photos and Kindergarten Farewell photos will be held on **March 23rd and 24th**, 2021. Please mark this day on your calendar. As per usual, Lifetouch will be handling all the arrangements for the photos.



### **3. Registration for the 2021/2022 School Year: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

School registration for the next academic school year opened **February 8th, 2021**. It is imperative that parents register their children in order to guarantee that a dedicated spot on the bus is reserved for September 2021. Late registration does not guarantee a spot on the bus and may take up to 3 weeks to process.

Also, even if your children do not take the bus, it is important to register as these registrations determine budgets and staffing for the upcoming year. The more accurate picture we have, the easier it is for us to allocate resources to staffing, etc. Your timeliness on completing this process is both critical and appreciated. Please avoid any uncertainty and frustration by registering your child(ren) on time. **Registration closes March 25th, 2021**. An email containing a direct link to your child's registration was sent out by our Division Office, please check for it; if it is not in your inbox then please check your Spam. You can also log into your [PowerSchool Parent Portal account](#) and click the 2021 2022 Registration link on the left hand side of your screen. If you have any difficulty registering or need assistance with your [Parent Portal account](#), please contact the front office and we will happily assist you with the registration process.

### **2. PD Day - April 6th, 2021: \*\*\*New Information\*\*\***

Please note that Tuesday, April 6th, 2021 is a Professional Development Day for Teachers. This is the day following Easter Monday. *There is NO school that day.* Classes resume on Wednesday, April 7th, 2021.

### **3. Parent Teacher Interviews: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

[VIRTUAL Parent Teacher interviews](#) are scheduled for Tuesday, March 23rd and Wednesday, March 24th, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. each evening. These interviews will be virtual again and parents need to sign up in order to ensure that they have a dedicated interview time.

Please click on the link [HERE](#) in order to sign up for interviews.

### **4. Spring Break: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

Please note: the **LAST** day of classes before Spring Break is **THURSDAY, MARCH 25th, 2021**. Students return to classes on Wednesday, April 7th, 2021

### **5. School Council: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

Our next School Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 16th, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. If you plan on attending the meeting please [RSVP](#) your attendance by filling out [THIS form](#).

Our next meeting will be a virtual meeting and links to the meeting will be emailed to you the day of the meeting.



## **6. School Foundation: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

Everyone is invited to attend Foundation meetings, the fundraising society that works to support many worthwhile causes at Muir Lake. We strongly encourage parents to be part of Foundation as one can make meaningful and long lasting contributions to the school. If you plan on attending the next meeting please [RSVP](#) your attendance by filling out [THIS form](#).

Our next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 16th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Please join us for this virtual meeting.

## **7. Nature Kindergarten Update: \*\*\*New Information\*\*\***

As you may or may not be aware, the Nature Kindergarten program became the exclusive purvey of Muir Lake School. We were excited when we took this program over from the Division and there have been many changes and improvements to the program overall. Also, it should be noted that Nature Kindergarten is an optional, fee for service program that is offered in addition to a regular Kindergarten program. Nature Kindergarten students attend regular Kindergarten either at Muir Lake or any other school in the area.

I am happy to report that our program is fully subscribed for next next and that there is a waiting list for admission.

## **8. Muir Lake Community Hall Parking: \*\*\*New Information\*\*\***

We have been kindly asked by the Muir Lake Community Association to please respect their designated parking spots during the day that are marked specifically for their use. These parking spots are clearly marked at the front of the Hall.

## **9. Wellness: \*\*\*New Information\*\*\***

Alberta Parenting for the Future Association (APFA) is hosting a presentation by Little Oaks Psychology if anyone is interested. This no-cost presentation is on Supporting Emotional Regulation with children on the autism spectrum. Larissa Predy of Little Oaks Psychology is presenting this session on Wednesday, April 7 from 6-8 pm. If there are any questions about the presentation, you can contact Heidi Johnson-Hemeyer at APFA ph. 780-963-0549 [Heidi@apfa.ca](mailto:Heidi@apfa.ca)

Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/supporting-emotional-regulation-with-children-on-the-autism-spectrum-registration-131635817273?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

## **10. MCHS Gr 9 Virtual Open House & Registration: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

Grade 9 students will be selecting their grade 10 courses online next week in class. Parents must have their **Parkland School Division 2021-2022 Online Registration** completed **before** their son/daughter can make their course selections. Registration opened on February 8, 2021, and all parents are required to complete the registration process by **March 25, 2021**.



## **11. Report Cards: \*\*\*Repeated Information\*\*\***

Report cards will be available to parents and students online on March 19th, 2021. Please sign into the Parent Portal to view your child's report card.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Friday memo! We hope this weekly communication keeps you informed of necessary informational items at Muir Lake School. Mrs. Brownlee and I would like to take this time to wish you a great weekend and a restful and relaxing Spring Break. We also like to thank all of you for bringing extra care and attention to keeping our children safe both at school and at home.

HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND AND A GREAT SPRING BREAK!

