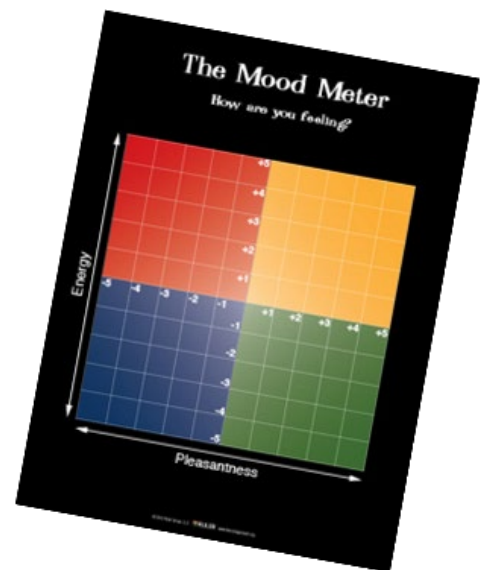


September 1, 2023

Dear Skwo:wech Families,

Warm greetings to you and your family on behalf of Mr. Elves, myself and our entire staff! We welcome back all returning families and send a special welcome greeting to our new families, particularly our new kindergarten families. We hope you are still enjoying the summer weather and finding time to relax or adventure with family and friends. We are filled with excitement and anticipation for the school year journey ahead. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to collaborate and partner with each of you this year and to support your children in their learning journey. We look forward to working with you in partnership to nurture an enriching environment where every Skwo:wech student will thrive.

Getting ready for back to school has always been one of my favorite seasons. I loved having sharp new pencils, the smell of a fresh box of crayons and carefully selecting my first day outfit. As a teacher and an administrator, the delight and joy of the season always fills me with feelings of hope and anticipation. We know, however, that for some students this time is worrisome, which is very natural as our children navigate their new classrooms and new friends. Your support at home through this transition is invaluable. It is important to acknowledge and support our students and encourage them to use their strategies to help manage their feelings and have the best start possible. Using the mood meter is a great way to open that conversation with your child.



**Please find below details of our first week of school to ensure a smooth transition for your family.**

**First day of school, Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> 8:50-9:50**

**Returning students:**

Our first day back at school for children in grades 1-5 begins on Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:50 and pick up is at 9:50. We ask that children line up in the same location as their class lined up at the end of last year on Tuesday and Wednesday morning. We are very hopeful that we will be able to transition to our new classes on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. Please do not bring school supplies on the first day, these will not be needed until the following day. Dismissal time is at 9:50 from the same doors.

**New families to Skwo:wech:**

Families that are new to Skwo:wech will be meeting in our music room, please look for the signs that will guide you to the music room. (The entry doors are in our courtyard, beside the piano!) Please do not bring school supplies on the first day, these will not be needed until the following day. Dismissal time is at 9:50 from the same doors.

**Incoming kindergarten families:**

Our kindergarten families will follow the gradual entry schedule that you received at the end of June. If you do not have your gradual entry schedule or if you have questions, please email us as soon as possible. We can't wait to have our kindergarteners begin their school journey with us!

While we have only a few sleeps to go until our first day, it's not too late to begin resetting your child's sleep routines which may have shifted over the summer months! Please see below for a few tips which will hopefully ease your child back into their school sleep schedule:

1. Adjust your child's sleep schedule gradually (it's not too late if you haven't started this yet!)

2. Wake your child around the same time every day, within half an hour of their regular school day wake time; begin making this shift incrementally as your child needs.
3. Shift bedtime incrementally earlier, by approximately 15 minutes each night.
4. Restart your school-night bedtime routines that may have become relaxed over the break. This might include bath time, story time and other relaxing routines for your family.
5. Continue to encourage physical activity during the day, but focus on more relaxing, quiet activities in the evening as part of the sleep routine adjustments.
6. Turn off electronics two hours before bedtime.

The guidelines for school age children recommend that they receive 9:00-12:00 hours of sleep per night; having enough sleep each night will help to set up your child for success!

We are starting the year with approximately 458 students at our school. We have added a new division for a total of 21 divisions. Teachers have worked very carefully to create balance in our classrooms both academically and socially. Moving students at this point is very difficult without causing imbalances and inequities. We all understand that it can take a few weeks for a child to acclimatize to a new school, new grade level, peer group and teacher. Thank you for helping your child through this transition. Thank you to our custodians, teachers and secretaries who have worked together to help prepare for the new school year. Your commitment to ensuring that Skwo:wech remains a safe and amazing school is heartwarming.

It remains an honor and privilege to serve as your principal. We wish a very enjoyable long weekend ahead and look forward to seeing everyone back at school next week.

With gratitude,

Mrs. Chad