October 1, 2020

Dear McGowan families,

September has been a busy month. I have so enjoyed getting to know our children a little better. Parent’s please remember to send a reusable water bottle to school. The school is not in a position to provide water bottles to students who forget. Water is vital to the growing brain so it would help us out greatly if you ensured your child(ren) arrived daily with their own bottle that can be filled at our water filling station. Our lost and found is filling up. Please consider labeling your child’s items.

Parent Teacher Conferences: Next Thursday, October 8th, we will be having our Parent Teacher Conferences. As with many things during COVID, these will not look like they have in the past. Your teacher(s) will be contacting you soon and setting up a time for a conversation about your child’s learning. As we are early in the school year, please understand that the focus of these calls will be to let you know how your child has been adjusting back to school and to discuss possible goal areas for the remainder of the term.

PAC Meeting - mark you calendars! The first PAC meeting for the year will take place via Zoom on Monday, October 5th starting at 7 pm (Meeting ID: 653 2456 1313 Passcode: He7ZUd@r). We look forward to seeing you then! If you are a new parent to the school or just starting with your first child in Kindergarten, we highly recommend you become actively engaged with PAC as this provides you an opportunity to guide future directions of the school from a parent perspective.

Emergency Drill Practices - So far this year, we have had one Fire Drill with our Firemen attending. A Lockdown Drill will be held tomorrow and we will have our Earthquake drill in October too. We need to have 6 fire drills, 2 lockdown drills and 1 earthquake drill each year.

Thank you so much to those students and families who participated in this year’s Raise a Reader Fundraiser. Covid 19 prevented us from doing our normal fundraising campaign on Raise a Reader Day and forced us to come up with another idea: “A Loonie for Literacy” campaign. It proved very successful! Through the efforts of various schools around the district, Raise a Reader was able to raise an impressive $1511.10. Thank you for McGowan Elementary’s role in achieving this! We contributed $171.00 which was the highest of all Kamloops’ schools.

Provincial Pro-D Day - Friday, October 23rd - no school for students. We had an informative Professional Development Day this month. We welcomed April Wessel, who is our school and family consultant, to lead us in exploring trauma-informed teaching and sharing simple strategies to support each other and students who may be feeling anxious. Our staff also discussed creating a compassionate community at McGowan Park.
There are now three categories in the Safe Arrivals app to choose from when notifying the school of your child’s absence due to illness. You will be asked to whether the absence is due to a respiratory illness, gastrointestinal illness or the broad category of general illness. Distinguishing between respiratory, gastrointestinal, or general category of illness will provide more accurate data to Interior Health regarding seasonal flus and colds affecting the community.

From the staff of McGowan to all of our families and students, we would like to wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving Day on Monday, October 12th. May the day be full of family, friends, turkey and pumpkin pie (or whatever your favourite holiday food might be).

Yours truly,

Sally Zryd  Jo McKenna
Principal    Vice-Principal