



## **MCGOWAN PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

2080 Tremerton Drive Kamloops, BC V2E 2S2

Phone: (250) 374-4545 Office Hours: 8:00-3:30

Website: <http://mcgowan.sd73.bc.ca>

Principal: Sally Zryd Vice-Principal: Jeanine Wourms Secretary: Stephanie Conroy

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### **Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!**

The McGowan staff welcomes back to school all the students and parents in our community as well as those families who have recently joined us. We hope everyone had a great summer holiday and is now ready to get back into the routines for the fall.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, Sally Zryd, as your principal. As such, I would like to extend my sincere thanks in advance to the McGowan community for welcoming our new and returning staff and students. Last year I realized that this is a very special place for learning and playing. I am excited to be a member of the Magic team and I look forward to the prospects of a very productive and rewarding year as we reach for the stars!

I would also like to introduce our new Vice-Principal, Jeanine Wourms. She joins us this year from A.E. Perry. She looks forward to this school year and getting to know you and your children. She is excited to be part of the McGowan Magic team and watching our students' learning journey. We are reaching for the stars and this is our McGowan.

I recognize the challenges faced with the global pandemic; I empathize with the diverse feelings we collectively confront. For some fear, anxiety, and/or frustration are central. At the same time, there is reason for optimism, hope and excitement as humanity grapples with uncertainty and demonstrates unity to overcome **COVID-19**. I know we will overcome the obstacles faced and emerge stronger as a result. We will do this together.

**Welcome to New Staff!** I would like to welcome our new staff. Stephanie Conroy is joining us as school secretary. Please have patience with her as she embraces this

new-to-her position. We also welcome our new CEAs: Ms. Wilkie, Ms. Snider and Ms. Kotani as well as new teachers Ms. Bone, and Ms. Ferguson.



### **COVID Health and Safety Procedures**

For the majority, the health and safety procedures used to keep us safe from COVID are the same this year as last year. As the Province makes changes to the rules based on the current infection rates, the school will align, so we will let you know when those occur. As of the writing of this letter, here are some important key parts:

1. There are no more learning cohorts in BC. This means we will go back to one bell schedule.
2. Masks are now required for students and adults inside the school from grades 4 to 7.
3. Masks are strongly recommended for students in grades K to 3.
4. Extra curricular activities will be restarting. As the building is still closed to parents and volunteers, the details of this will come out as needed.
5. Handwashing, health screening, exterior entrances and cleaning protocols will continue the same as before.

Here is a link to the. [McGowan Park Communicable Disease Prevention Plan](#)

A very important part of our plan is ensuring that those who are sick stay away from the rest of our community. Parents and caregivers are [responsible for assessing](#) their children daily before sending them to school.

We are expecting approximately 430 students and 45 staff members at the school this year and we hope to have all students placed in their classrooms as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience and understanding with this process.

We want you to know we appreciate your concerns and requests regarding your child's classroom placement and have listened. Unfortunately, it is impossible to accommodate all requests. The staff at McGowan have met and reviewed all requests. We have weighed the academic and social needs of individual students, as well as class composition carefully before assigning children to their classes. Please contact your

child's teacher if you wish to discuss specific concerns you have regarding your child's learning.

**Noon Hour Supervisors:** Please consider volunteering as a noon hour supervisor. We need a few helpers. If you have any questions or would like an application, please stop by or call our office.

**Oh, that paperwork!!!** During the month of September, you will receive several important documents. Please sign and return to your child's teacher. Next week we will send home school supply notices and verification forms. Please return ASAP, we appreciate your prompt response! Please call the office if you have any questions or concerns.

**Parent Email addresses** If you have either a **Hotmail or Yahoo** email account, you may find you are not receiving emails from the school. Please check your junk and spam folders. If you have an alternate email address to offer, we would appreciate that. Gmail accounts seem to be working fine. Call the office or email Mrs. Conroy at [sconroy@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:sconroy@sd73.bc.ca) with any updates.

**Safe Arrival Program** Parents no longer leave a message on our school answering machine/Safe Arrival line. Our new system handles the majority of parent contact (including phone calls) when a student absence is unexpected. This also allows parents to interact directly with the system in the following ways:

- by phone when the system calls you, or when you want to initiate a call to notify that your child will be absent
- by internet through a login controlled web page interface
- by a Smart phone app (iOS and Android version; both available for free).

All parents are asked to please report student absences before 8:30 am on the day of the absence (you can also report absences in advance, if they are known).

To report an absence you may choose to:

- call the toll free # 1-844-350-2647 or
- access the following website: <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca> or
- download App from Itunes or Google Play

Please choose the reason for your child's absence from school: sick, appointment, family vacation, etc.

Do not forget to wait for confirmation # to ensure your child's absence has been recorded. A registration

email will be sent to parents in advance. These emails are not spam and will contain specific parent login information for the system, as well as, instructions on how to log in

as a parent to report your child's absences. If you do not connect with the system by 8:30 am on the day of your child's absence from school, and when the teacher has completed attendance for his/her class, then a report will be dispatched for all.

### **Bell Schedule**

Morning Warning Bell	8:25
Start of classes	8:30
Recess 1	10:26-10:41
Lunch starts	12:01
Afternoon warning bell	12:56
Afternoon classes start	1:01
School Ends	2:41

**Driving/Parking/Drop Off Safely** Our excited students will be scrambling to make their way in and out of our school during pick up/drop off times. Please decide, if possible, to walk to school! Or, if your child is older, arrange to meet in the church parking lot on the corner of Summit and Tremerton.

Please **do not** use our two staff parking lots to pick up and drop off children. Those are for school and District staff only. The **bus turnaround** is designated for bus pick up and drop off **only**. We know that this poses an inconvenience for parents, but in the interests of child safety, please obey the signs and make suitable and safe arrangements for your children. We strongly recommend that you use the parking lot at the church on the corner and walk your child along the sidewalk to school. If your child is confident enough, say goodbye there. Children can take the sidewalk all the way to the school. When children walk to school they are often more ready to learn. This also eases the congestion around the school and provides a safer environment for buses and students. Many thanks!

### **Upcoming Dates:**

School District 73 calendar:

<https://www.sd73.bc.ca/en/whats-happening-news/resources/Yearly-Calendar/School-Calendar-Summary-2021-24.pdf>

September 17th Terry Fox Run

September 22nd Raise a Reader Day - collecting Loonies for Literacy

September 27th Non-Instructional Day - no school for students

September 29th Orange Shirt Day

September 30th Statutory Holiday

**Kids Plus™ Accident Insurance school** Beginning this September, we will no longer be sending home an information package on student insurance. Instead you can go to [kidsplus.ca](http://kidsplus.ca) for more information on this service.

**School News** Please check out our website: <http://mcgowan.sd73.bc.ca/> We also have a school Facebook page [McGowan Park Elementary - Home](#) you are welcome to follow.

**Message from PAC** Welcome back! I am your PAC Chair Jessica Sutherland. McGowan PAC is excited to welcome back all our students and welcome our new kids this year. The PAC helps to support our teachers and students at McGowan Elementary with events and resources. We do this with your support through our Direct Drive annual program where we ask for your support. PAC is a great way to get involved in what is happening at your children's school. Please inquire about joining our PAC reach out directly to me at [mcgowanparkpac@gmail.com](mailto:mcgowanparkpac@gmail.com). Join us at our monthly PAC meetings 7pm 1st Monday of every month.

Thank you for being a member of our school family. We value your support and participation in our school. I hope you have a wonderful long weekend. There is a lot of information in this, I hope I haven't overwhelmed any of you reading this. I'm looking forward to seeing the children on Tuesday.

All the best,

Mrs. S. Zryd  
(Principal)

