



# Joseph Giles Elementary School Newsletter



*Where everyone lends a helping hand!*

September 2019  
Volume 1, Issue 1

## Joseph Giles Elementary School

54 Gregory Drive  
Dartmouth, NS  
B2W 3M6

Phone: (902) 464-5192

Safe Arrival: (902) 464-5196

Fax: (902) 464-5197

E-mail: [iges@hrce.ca](mailto:iges@hrce.ca)

Website: <https://ige.hrce.ca/>

Twitter: @giles\_school



## Important Dates to Note

### September

- 9 - First fire drill
- 12 - *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* - wear pink
- 16 - Lockdown drill takes place this week
- 16 - SAC Meeting 6:00
- 16 - PTO Meeting 7:00
- 19 - Breakfast Club Begins
- 19 - Curriculum Night and PTO Ice Cream Social 6:00-8:00
- 25 - Terry Fox Day
- 27 - PD Day – No classes for students
- 30 - School Photos
- 20 - Milk order due (1/2 year) \$32.00

### October

- 1- Hold & Secure takes place this week
- 2 - Bus Evacuation drills
- 9 - Terry Fox Day (rain date)
- 7 - Relocation Drill takes place this week
- 14 - Thanksgiving - No Classes
- 10 - Second fire drill takes place this week
- 18 - Bus Evacuation drill (rain date)
- 24 - Home and School Halloween Dance (6-8)
- 25 - NSTU Conference Day – No Classes

## Message from Principal

It is with great eagerness that I arrive at Joseph Giles Elementary School to begin my role as principal. For the past two years, I was vice-principal at Tallahassee Community School. Previous to that, I spent four years at Hawthorn Elementary School in the same role. Coming to Joseph Giles is very exciting for me. For the past 16 years, the majority of my teaching career has been spent in Eastern Passage and Dartmouth Schools.

I can't express how pleased I am to be the principal of Joseph Giles. This is a wonderful school environment where teachers work together to plan lots of engaging activities for students each day. I look forward to working with staff, students and the greater community this year as we strive to positively impact student learning.

Jimmy Hurley



## New Staff Members

We would like to welcome several new staff members to JGES.

- Mr. Hurley – Principal
- Ms. Horne (long term sub grade 2)
- Mrs. MacDonald – Guidance (40%)
- Mr. Leblanc – Band
- Ms. Thompson – Art Specialist
- Ms. Rodgerson - Music

Please join us in welcoming these staff members to our school.

## Class Configurations 2019-2020

Class configurations this year include 10 classrooms. Our classes consist of some combined grades (a class made up of students from 2 grades). With provincial recommended caps (P-2 is 22, 3-6 cap is 27). The reality is your child will quite likely be in a combined classroom at sometime during their elementary years. It is therefore important that parent/ guardians understand how these classes work.

In every grade there are children working at different levels within the program expectations, whether that be a combined grade or a straight (single) grade. Outcomes that are part of that grade level are the same whether being taught in a combined or straight grade. The manner in which they are taught may differ from class to class.

Students are not placed in a combined grade because they are behind, (upper grade of combined) nor are they placed in a combined grade because they are superior (lower grade of combined). Criteria used to place all children in classes include age, gender, learning styles, range of ability, special learning needs, and social groupings.

Teachers at similar grade levels work together to plan activities and design assessments. Combined grades provide opportunities for children to develop greater independence, problem solving and collaboration skills. You can support your child if placed in a combined class in the same ways you would if they were in a single grade class; staying interested and concerned about school work and activities, monitoring a child's homework and keeping in touch with the teacher and attending the school whenever possible, are ways parents can support your child's learning.

## Allergy Alerts / Medication

---

Please keep in mind we have numerous students and staff with severe allergies to food and scents. Please refrain from wearing scents when in our school and be diligent about the food items your child brings to school. **Nut products cannot be sent to school.**

If your child requires medication to be given during school time, an "Administration of Medicine" form must be filled out. All medicine is kept secured and distributed from the main office or learning centre. Medications are required to be in the original container and clearly labelled for your child. **Please note that over the counter medication cannot be administered to students.**

If your child has a **severe or life-threatening allergy or medical condition**, a photograph of your child and an alert will be kept in the office, staff room, and classroom to ensure all staff members have access to this information. It is also important that you call the school to obtain the appropriate medical forms. This is important to ensure all staff is aware of any conditions or allergies so they can respond appropriately in the case of an emergency. You must complete a form indicating appropriate medical care for your child.

If your child requires an Epi Pen, they **must** wear their Epi Pen on their person. If you decide that you do not want your child to wear the Epi Pen, it can be left in the office but you must sign a waiver as well. If you want to send in a second Epi Pen, it can be left in the main school office.

If you require a Medic Alert bracelet, Medic Alert will provide children between the ages of 4 and 14 with a free medic alert bracelet. Please call the school and ask for a pamphlet.

## Primary School Supplies for 2019-2020

---

This year we have purchased school supplies for grade primary students. If you have not already had a chance to send in your \$35 for primary supplies, please do so as soon as you can.

## Safe Arrival

---

On days when your child will be late or absent, please contact our safe arrival line at (902) 464-5196. Alternately, you may send an email to [jges@hrce.ca](mailto:jges@hrce.ca). Please clearly indicate your child's name, class, the date and reason for the absence.

## Arrival and School Bell Times

---

Please note: outside supervision begins at 8:10; students enter the building at 8:20; lunch is from 11:30-12:25; ALL grades dismiss for the day at 2:30pm. **Students may not be on school grounds before 8:10am.**



## Registration Forms & Parent Contact Information

---

If you have had changes to your contact information, please inform your child's teacher or contact Ms. McKearney in the office as soon as you can. It is essential that we have the most up to date information in the event of an emergency or school cancellation.

It is extremely important that you update the registrations forms being sent home next week. Please return the updated forms to your child's teacher ASAP. We will be using the email addresses on those forms to email newsletters and send school messages. Please check all details on the form carefully and sign/initial the bottom of the form indicating that you have updated it.

## Terry Fox Day

---

**WHEN:** This year Mr. Hill will be planning activities for Terry Fox Day. These activities will help students learn more about who Terry Fox was and why it is important to recognize his contributions to cancer research. Terry Fox Day will take place on **Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>**.

**WHERE:** School gym for assembly then back of the school grounds.

**DONATIONS:** We ask students to bring a donation (not mandatory) for this worthwhile cause. We would like to collect "Toonies for Terry," but any donation would be gladly accepted. Remember that \$0.85 of every dollar goes directly to cancer research of all types. If you wish to donate online, Income Tax Receipts will be issued by the Terry Fox Donation directly to you by e-mail. Go to [www.terryfox.org](http://www.terryfox.org), click on Terry Fox School Run (along the top of the page), then click on Parents and "DONATE TO STUDENT/SCHOOL". There will be a red button on that page that says "Donate to a student, click that and then search "Joseph Giles Elementary School" with the location "Nova Scotia."

## Cell Phone Policy

---

Students are not permitted to use cell phones during the day. They must be turned off and stored in their backpack at all times.

## Parent/Guardian Volunteers: Are You Ready for School Trips?

---

Throughout the year, teachers will be planning special events to host at school or school trips. Volunteers play an invaluable role with various school activities as well as chaperones on school trips. The HRSB Student Protection Policy requires that all volunteers must have completed a police Criminal Record Check and a Child Abuse Registry Check before being able to volunteer with children, including accompanying students on class trips. We do require a Vulnerable Sector Check to volunteer.

**Information about the Child Abuse Register** can be found at:

<http://novascotia.ca/coms/families/abuse/ChildAbuseRegister.html> Once you complete the Child Abuse Register Request for Search (Form A) and receive a copy of the search in the mail, provide a copy to the office for our files.

**Information on obtaining a Criminal Record Check** through the Halifax Regional Police can found at <http://www.halifax.ca/police/CriminalRecordCheck.html> There will be a \$30.00 processing charge for volunteers. We greatly value your support; however, the school does not have the funds to assist volunteers in completing this check.

It is highly recommended you submit the forms to the local police and NS Department of Community Services well in advance of the date of your volunteer work at school, as it can take a minimum of several weeks to have both checks completed, or longer at busy times of the year. We cannot emphasize the importance of having the checks completed in advance of class trips. It is quite possible that students will not be able to benefit from such valuable learning experiences if adequate parent support is not available.

Once the checks are complete and on file at school, they are good for three years.

You can pick up volunteer forms in the office.

### **Curriculum Night / Ice Cream Social**

Our curriculum night will be held on the evening of Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup>. You are asked to go to the gym at 6:00. There will be two sessions in the classroom; 6:15 - 6:35pm, 6:40 - 7:00. The intent of this evening is to share curriculum information with parents and guardians. Children are welcome! A Home and School sponsored ice cream social will take place in the gym from approximately 7:00 to 8:00. Please bring a bowl and a spoon if you plan on enjoying a frozen treat.



### **Head Lice Reminders**



We encourage parents to make checking their child's head for the presence of nits and/or lice a regular part of their routine. Please notify the school if your child has head lice and provide the recommended treatment before returning to school. Call 8-1-1 at any time to speak with a Registered Nurse for more information and guidance if head lice are still present after the second treatment. For information on the prevention and treatment of head lice, refer to the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness pamphlet, *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice* on our website: <https://jge.hrsb.ca/our-school>.

### **Communication**

Communication is extremely important for our home-school relationship and for the positive development of your child. We strive to work in partnership with families. Sharing what you know of your child helps us provide the most supportive learning environment for him/her. We are happy to answer questions, clarify information and listen to what you have to share.

**Please note that calls and emails sent to staff members will be returned within two business days.**

### **Breakfast Basket**

We are fortunate and happy to offer breakfast foods from a basket at our school. Please note that we will continue to offer grab-and-go style breakfast items. Students participating in the club may request breakfast items (granola bars, yogurt drinks, fresh fruit...) from the multipurpose room prior to the start of the school day or from the office after announcements. The breakfast basket will be available beginning on September 19<sup>th</sup>.



### **School Advisory Council**

A school advisory council is a legally recognized body composed of the school principal and representatives of teachers and support staff, parents, and community members who work together in an advisory capacity to increase the quality of education being provided by the school. The purpose of the school advisory council is to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning opportunities by engaging all partners in an ongoing process of problem solving and shared decision making.

**Structure of the Council** - The membership of the advisory council will include: the school principal; 3 parents, including at least one visible minority, if possible; 3 staff members; and 3 community members

Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of the community and represent communities served by the school. This includes but is not limited to, African Nova Scotian's, First Nations, and other racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities.

With the exception of the Principal, each component of the school advisory council (parents, staff, and community members) will serve for a two-year term for a maximum of two elections.

### **Lunch**

Students are responsible for their own lunches each day. You have the option to purchase milk for your child at a subsidized rate by ordering from the

order form sent home. We know that children who eat healthy foods learn better, so consider healthy food choices whenever possible.

We offer pre-ordered lunches through Healthy Hunger, an online program where parents can order and pay for lunches for their children. This year, we will be offering pizza from Little Caesar's, pitas from Pita Pit and other possible providers. An email message will be sent out with instructions on how to use Healthy Hunger.

As a final note, we ask that you send in spoons and forks with your children if they will need these utensils to eat their lunches. We do have some available at the office, but we would rather spend our money on learning resources for the students. Thank you. We appreciate it.

### Lockdown Drill

---

The safety and security of our students and staff is a top priority for **Joseph Giles Elementary** and the Halifax Regional Centre for Education. We implement a number of measures as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at ensuring our school remains a safe place for our students to learn.

One of the procedures our school will be practicing is a lockdown drill. During a lockdown drill, classroom doors are secured and the students remain inside the room until instructed by the teacher to resume their activities. All exterior doors are locked and no one is permitted to enter or leave the building.

Students are kept inside the school and classrooms when circumstances make it safer to stay in the classroom rather than evacuate. Just as we prepare our students to properly respond to a fire drill, they also need to be aware of the proper response during a lockdown drill. These drills should be treated with the same level of importance as fire drills.

Please be assured that staff at our school will spend time discussing the importance of this procedure with students prior to running a drill. We will also take time after the drill to remind them that it was only a practice and there was no danger. When possible, our School Liaison Officer may assist us in conducting the lockdown drills just as the Fire Department assists with evacuation drills from time to time.

Please take the time to speak with your son/daughter about this procedure and reinforce its importance. We practice these drills to ensure our school remains a safe place for teaching and learning.

Our first lockdown drill will take place the week of September 16-20. Please contact principal, Jimmy Hurley if you have any questions about lockdown drills.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

### Other School Safety Items

---

Please help to keep our students safe when dropping off and picking up your children. Here are a few friendly reminders:

- During the instructional day, entry is via the main front doors. Please ring the bell and someone will buzz you inside. Check in at the office rather than proceeding directly to classrooms please.
- When parking, be certain not to stop in areas that block the crosswalk in front of the school.
- There is no parking for visitors available on the school grounds. There are spaces for visitors who have mobility concerns.
- The area in front of the school should be considered a "No Idle" zone - please turn off your vehicle while waiting for your children.
- Dogs are not permitted on school yard or playgrounds unless on a leash and in control of the owner. We appreciate your cooperation with this!



### Emailed Newsletters

---

Again, this year we are asking you to help us be more environmentally friendly. We would like to email newsletters to you, if possible, to allow us to save paper. Your child's teacher will be requesting an up to date email address on your child's registration form in the near future. We thank you for your support. If you do require a paper copy of the newsletter, please contact Ms. McKearney at the office and we will provide one.

### Lunch Monitors

---

If you are interested in serving as a lunch monitor on a paid or volunteer basis please call the main school line and leave a message for Ms. McLeod (Vice Principal) or email her directly [kmcleod@hrce.ca](mailto:kmcleod@hrce.ca)



### PowerSchool Parent Portal

---

Parents have real-time access to their children's grades, attendance and more through the Power School parent portal. Parents of primary students will receive their access information. Please contact Ms. McKearney if you require access information for your child.

