



IRWIN PARK ELEMENTARY  E-BULLETIN

First Week Update of School Information For Parents and Guardians

Friday, September 6th, 2024

2024-2025 Bell and Recess Schedule @ Irwin Park Elementary

Arrival	8:50 AM
Morning Recess K-7	10:50 AM-11:10 AM
Lunch Eating Time	12:30 PM-12:50 PM
Lunch Recess K-7	12:50 PM-1:10 PM
Dismissal	2:50 PM

Important Dates:

Sept 9-12th	Half Day for KG & KG Intake Interviews in the Afternoon
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Sept 16 th	Full Day KG begins!
Sept 17 th	1 st District XC Running Meet @ Ambleside Gr 3-7
Sept 18 th	Terry Fox Run for the Cure School Wide Run
Sept 20 th	Professional Development Day : School Not in Session
Sept 26 th	Inside Irwin Park – Orientation Evening and Fall Carnival (TBC)
Sept 27 th	Orange Shirt Day
Sept 30 th	National Truth and Reconciliation Day (Stat Holiday)

Important Information & Class Placement Timeline :

[A Message from the Principal...](#)

It has been a true pleasure to welcome back our Irwin Park students and families as we open our 24/25 school year. Over 40 new students have joined our student community not including over 40 more entering Kindergarten this September. Teachers have spent the early part of this week engaged with students in mixed grade group cohorts to observe student dynamics and ease the transition into school routines. Thank you again to our entire Irwin Park Parent/Guardian community for your flexibility and patience as our staff has taken the necessary time this week to observe, consider, and reflect upon classroom placement decisions. Regardless of your child’s final placement, our teachers appreciate your patience and support during these next several weeks while your child becomes accustomed to their new learning environment.

Like last year at Irwin Park, and at every other comprehensive elementary school site in West Vancouver Schools, we will have several multi-age grade configurations or combined grade arrangements. We are confident that all our students will receive the first-rate education they deserve, and our teaching teams are very excited and confident about the year ahead. Once again, as I explained in successive Irwin Park E bulletins this past spring, this is very much a normal practice and widely accepted across the district,

province, and nation. I have provided a link to our District Webpage that helps provide context and research to relieve any potential parent anxiety or questions about the efficacy and value of combined classroom arrangements.

Thank you again for your patience and trust in our excellent teaching staff as we strive to meet the needs of all children, both academically and social emotionally; regardless of their grade level.

A Note to Parents on Classroom Placements at Irwin Park Elementary

Irwin Park final classroom placements have been completed and decisions are final. Please note that Kindergarten placements will take place at the end of Week 2. Today, students in Grade 1-7 had the first opportunity to meet their homeroom teacher and familiarize themselves with their new and former classmates. Over the next month, our teaching team will be heavily focused **on building a strong, safe, and respectful classroom culture and sense of community**, something we here at Irwin Park value so highly.

This time will also allow teachers to begin those important formative assessments to help guide our instruction. In the coming weeks, you can anticipate receiving a message or letter home from your child's teacher introducing themselves and their hopes for the coming school year. Regardless of your child's final placement, our teachers appreciate your patience during these next several weeks as your child becomes accustomed to his/her new learning environment.

Please keep in mind, that the classroom placement process considers a wide variety of factors including *overall enrollment numbers at each grade, gender balance, diversity of learning needs, student resiliency and adaptability, current and past relationship dynamics, parent input provided in the spring, and of course Ministry of Education class size and composition requirements*. The Irwin Park team invests an enormous amount of thought, consideration, and reflection in this process. There are always benefits and challenges when placing so many individuals into groups, regardless of the grade, and we appreciate families helping their children focus on the benefits of their new placement.

If your child feels disappointed by being separated from friends, an unexpected class arrangement, or an unfamiliar teacher, encourage them to work through it. Like every school year, this one will have its highs and lows. As parents, our role is not to shield them from disappointment, but to support them so they don't face it alone.

We depend on parents to model resiliency and perspective should their children require support and reassurance. These life experiences are vital teaching opportunities and can be translated into many other challenges that will undoubtedly arise, thus furthering your child's **resilience, self-confidence, and character**.

[School Sports are On! Cross Country Team Starting Soon \(Grade 3 to 7\)](#)

School sports are ON this year and the first sports season, Cross Country Running, will be starting soon for all interested Grade 3 to 7 students. Races occur at Ambleside Park each Tuesday for 3 weeks consecutively, starting Sept 17th; with practices during the school week.

All Grade 3 to 7 students are welcome to join in. Parents and students can anticipate permission forms with more information coming home shortly. We encourage all abilities as the aim of the game is participation and healthy bodies and minds! And while you're at it you will meet new friends and teammates! Our first XC Team practice will occur next Thursday Sept 12th at 8:15 am. Cross Country Team permission forms with information regarding the season will be available starting early next week. Stay tuned!

***NEW* WVECA Athletic Fees** - Due to the increasing cost of fees associated with running our Elementary Athletics programs in all West Vancouver schools, the West Vancouver Elementary Coaches' Association (WVECA) will be charging \$10 per student per sport for the 2023-2024 school year. These fees are School Board approved and cover the costs of marshalling, referees, teacher release for tournaments and meets.

Parents can make payments through School Cash Online which has been set up for each school through the District. **All families of students in Grades 3-7 will receive a School Cash Online message saying the payment link for Cross Country fees will be live as of September 7th. Please note that we ask you to wait until your child has come home on Friday this week to discuss and confirm their participation.**

HOT LUNCH – Stay tuned for more information.

The IPPG is pleased to announce that once again the MunchALunch website will be opening in the coming weeks. Pls stay tuned to the weekly E Bulletin for more information on this fabulous fundraising opportunity for our school but also the provision of delicious and nutritious lunch menu items for students.

Similar to last year, lunch orders will be expected to be delivered to students at the school on **Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday**. More details will be forthcoming next week and all orders are made directly through the MunchALunch website.

Kindergarten Social Mixer – WED Sept 11th @ 12:30 PM

Kindergarten families and students are invited to join us on the KG playground for activities, fun and friendship as we gather to celebrate the beginning of this new school year. Bubbles, Face Painting and Light Refreshments will be available. Stay for awhile, stay for a little. Kindergarten Families are also reminded to sign up soon for their KG INTAKE INTERVIEWS next week running on Mon-Thurs. Information went home to all KG families in a separate message.

After-School Activities – Online Sign Ups Coming Soon

Starting next week we will be releasing the various registration options for our Fall Term of After School Extra Curriculars.

With activities like Private Coaching Clinic Athletics, Animation and Cartooning Club, Lights Up Theatre and After School Yoga and Zen Maker Lab ...there is sure to be something to interest all. Activities are offered after school to students usually between 3pm and 4:30. Again more info coming next week.

Grade 6 & 7 Irwin Park Band Program 2024-25: Starting Next Week!

Grade 6 & 7 Band at IRWIN PARK starts in the coming week. Band members who have registered are asked to stay tuned to their inbox as Ms King will be sharing a WEEK 1 schedule to allow students a more focused and intensive orientation with their instruments. Please reach out to her at <mailto:Janine.King@wvschools.ca>

Registration is still open for returning band students and other interested students to join the Irwin Park Band Program at <https://westvancouver.schools.ca/programs/elementary-band> - no previous music experience is necessary!

This is a user-pay program and there is a fee paid to the District. Irwin Park has a proud tradition of Band at the Grade 6 & 7 Levels where students learn a symphonic instrument. **Students currently in Grade 7 who were not in Band last year can also join the Grade 7 Band if they are interested** – special arrangements are made at the beginning of the year to incorporate Grade 7s starting as beginners in band.

Optional Accident Insurance for Families-

Each year the school district reminds families that they have the option to purchase insurance coverage against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses, and critical illness. There are many different voluntary plans that provide coverage for students and their families against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses and critical illness. Families are encouraged to do their due diligence when choosing a provider.

Policies and Procedures form for 2024-2025 – REMINDER TO ALL PARENTS

The mandatory **Policies and Procedures form for 2024-2025** is now live and the link is accessible through your school websites under Parents -> Forms or on the district website under Resources -> Parents. Please make sure you complete one for each child registered at Irwin Park as soon as possible. The direct link is unchanged from last year - <https://eforms.sd45.bc.ca/Form/PandP> and, like last year, requires a parent login. This completion will allow your child to take part in many activities.

If a parent previously created an account to complete the 2023/2024 form or to register for elementary band, the account is the same. If they have forgotten their password, they can reset it by following the instructions on screen. If a parent does not have an account, they can create one by following the link provided.

NOTE: ***International fee-paying students are not required to complete the P+P form, as the items included are covered by the legal agreement signed when they are accepted by the International Programs Office.

Personal Digital Device Expectations – NEW!

At West Vancouver Schools, we understand that personal digital devices offer students valuable opportunities to collaborate, create, and communicate, enhancing their learning experiences. We also recognize the importance of maintaining focused and safe learning environments for all students. Recently, provincial guidelines and legislation have further highlighted the need to minimize distractions, as digital devices can interrupt class time, interfere with student concentration, and disrupt the educational setting.

To support focused and safe learning environments, West Vancouver Schools is refining our approach to digital device use and will be uniformly applying personal digital device expectations across all schools. Starting this school year, personal digital devices will only be allowed with the explicit permission of a teacher or administrator, who will provide clear guidelines to ensure their use is intentional and directly supports student learning. Additionally, considerations will be made to accommodate students' medical and health needs, accessibility, and accommodation requirements.

Here's what this means for different school levels:

- **Secondary Schools:** Personal digital device expectations will be in place during instructional time. Instructional time is during classes, assemblies and all school related learning activities.

- **Elementary Schools:** Personal digital device expectations will apply throughout the entire school day, including before school, after school, and during break times. Cell phones will not be used at all during school hours.

How PARENTS Can Help:

To support these updated expectations, we ask parents and guardians to:

1. **Familiarize Yourself:** Please take the time to read through the Parent PDD Infographic (US Letter).pdf to fully understand the new district-wide expectations. Additionally, review any specific guidelines or expectations provided by your child's teacher(s). Understanding both the general and specific expectations will help you support your child in following the new expectations effectively.
2. **Model Appropriate Use:** Demonstrate and discuss the importance of limiting device use at home, especially during family time or other important activities. Your behavior sets a powerful example for your child.
3. **Encourage Balance:** Help your child find a healthy balance between screen time and other activities, such as reading, outdoor play, or family interactions. This will reinforce the focus on learning during school hours.
4. **Mindful Communication:** Please avoid calling or texting your child during school time unless it's an emergency. Remind your child that school time is for learning, and that messages can wait until after school. If urgent communication is needed, please contact the school office.

By working together, we can create a safer, more focused learning environment for all students. These small steps at home can make a big difference in reinforcing the positive changes we're implementing at school. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Aron Campbell

Principal Irwin Park Elementary