DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

December 1, 2026

Phone (250) 870-5138
Email dwe@sd23.bc.ca

Darker Mornings

As BC has not fallen back an hour and our community observing Pacific Time, we have more daylight in the afternoon but it is darker in the mornings. The BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit published this article with safe travel recommendations for famlies to consider: www.injuryresearch.bc.ca/news/pacific-time

"*The new Pacific Time shifts darkness from the evening commute to the morning commute*," ... "*Safety reminders that previously applied to the afternoon rush hour traffic, now apply to the morning commute: choose well-lit routes with marked crosswalks and sidewalks when walking, and when driving, use your headlights and drive with caution and slow down during rainy weather.*"

DWE provided students with a reflective arm band for famlies to consider having students wear or attach to backpacks.

Some children may be travelling to school before sunrise, making visibility an important consideration during the morning commute. Changes in daylight patterns may also affect sleep, mood, and overall well-being. Parents and caregivers can help children adapt by encouraging safe travel practices, maintaining consistent sleep routines, and supporting healthy daily habits.

Upcoming Events

Nov. 27 - First Written Learning Update
Dec. 4 - Grade 4 Sexual Health Lessons
Dec. 7 - Mar-Cat Entrepreneur Fair in Gym
Dec. 8 - Grade 4 Sexual Health Lessons
Dec. 9/10 - Winter Music Rehearsal
Dec. 11 - Jensen - Salvation Army Santa Bus
Dec. 15 - Winter Music Performance 9:15-10:15
Dec. 16 - Winter Music Performance 1:15-2:15
Dec. 17 - Johnson, Jensen, Peters, King to H2O

Dec. 21-Jan. 2 - WINTER VACATION

Jan 24-31 - Family Literacy Week
Feb. 12 - Pro.D. Day / School Closed
Feb. 15 - Family Day
Feb. 24 - Pink Shirt Day
Feb. 25/26 - Early Dismissal for P.T. Conferences
March 11 - Second Written Learning Update
March 15-25 - Spring Break
March 26 - Good Friday / School Closed
March 29 - Easter / School Closed

December brings cooler temperatues!

Please be sure to send your child with warm jackets, boots, mitts and toques

A note from the Principal

Celebrating Remembrance, Harmony, and Community

Our **Remembrance Day Peace Assembly** was a meaningful opportunity for students to demonstrate respect and self-discipline during a more formal assembly than they are typically accustomed to.

Mme Light created a beautiful tribute slideshow featuring family members from our school community who served in peace efforts. Her students thoughtfully shared each story and displayed their artwork. OKM student Jagger Lissa played The Last Post and Reveille on the trumpet, helping to create a respectful and reflective atmosphere for our moment of silence.

Sea Cadets, also from OKM, accompanied our Colour Guard of student service club members as they marched into and out of the gym. I was incredibly proud of our students' respectful demeanour and of the way we came together as a school community to honour Remembrance Day.

On November 18, Ms. Kirsten Mulleny and her OKM Leadership students led our **Harmony Day** assembly. They brought joy and excitement to the gym while also helping students deepen their understanding of our R.O.A.R. principles. Thank you to everyone who helped make this gathering such a positive and engaging experience.

As we look ahead, December promises many opportunities for connection and celebration. On December 7, our senior students in the Grade 5 English Program and Grade 6 French Immersion will participate in the **Mar-Cat Entrepreneur Fair**. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to develop their creativity, collaboration, and entrepreneurial skills. Please contact your classroom teacher with any questions you may have.

On **December 15 and 16**, we look forward to welcoming parents and guardians to our **Winter Music Performances** in the gym. Many thanks to Mrs. Ball for coordinating this special opportunity for us to come together and celebrate the students' musical talents.

Our students also have numerous opportunities to give back to the community through initiatives organized by Mrs. Jensen's class and the **R.O.A.R. Council**, coordinated by Mme Johnson. I am so proud of the many ways our staff and students continue to let our DWE Wildcat R.O.A.R. shine by supporting others and strengthening our collaborative school community.

Have a wonderful month of December!

Warmly,

Christey Hughes

Principal, DWE





COUNSELLOR CONNECTION

December Theme: **Sleep and Screens**

Many families notice that when kids are tired, everything feels a little harder; emotions can be bigger, mornings can be tougher, and everyday challenges can feel more overwhelming. One idea explored in The Anxious Generation is how screens and devices, especially before bed, can influence children's sleep and overall well-being.
As we head into winter break, routines naturally tend to shift. Seasonal activities, family gatherings, travel, later nights, and a little extra screen time can all be part of this time of year. With these changes, it's worth keeping sleep in mind, as getting enough rest can make a difference in how children feel and manage their day.

A few gentle ideas to consider:

- Finding a bedtime rhythm that works for your family, even if it's a little different from the school-year routine.
- Being mindful of screen time before bed, as screens can make it harder for some children to settle.
- Finding little pockets of screen-free time, such as reading, drawing, or quiet play before bed.
- Balancing busy days and seasonal activities with opportunities for rest and downtime.
- Keeping a few familiar parts of the daily routine in place to help children feel a sense of predictability.

And, of course, routines don't need to be perfect! Winter break is a time for flexibility, fun, and a change of pace. Even small moments of predictability and rest can help support children's well-being as we head into the new year.
Ms. Knox: School Counsellor
Book Study: The Anxious Generation by Jonathan Haidt

Ms. Knox: School Counsellor
Book Study: **The Anxious Generation** by Jonathan Haidt

Bikes and Scooters

- *All student bikes MUST be parked at our designated bike racks and not along our fences, please!*
- *Non-motorized scooters may be parked at the "scooter cage" nearest our front entrance.*
- *Motorized scooters are not permitted.*
- *Helmets must be worn.*
- ***"Wheels" must be walked at our crosswalk and on our school property***



Optional Student Accident Insurance

Central Okanagan Public Schools does not insure expenses for student injuries that occur on school grounds or during school activities. Parents and guardians can voluntarily purchase private accident insurance. Student Accident Insurance by StudyInsured is a voluntary plan that provides coverage for students and their families against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses, and critical illness. To apply for the Plan or to find out more, visit this website:

www.studyinsuredstudentaccident.com/

ARRIVING TO SCHOOL ON TIME

Our school places an emphasis on being ontime. It is very helpful and adds success to each child's day when all students are seated by the second bell and classroom instruction can begin without interruption. Arriving on time sets up all our students for success. Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation with this goal. If your child arrives late, please ensure that they report in at the school office before going to their classroom. **Our welcome bell is at 8:20** and school starts promptly at 8:25.

Please also remember school ends at 2:25pm and there is no supervision outdoors after 2:40pm.



Safety Reminder

*Please **DO NOT** enter our staff parking lot **between 8am-3pm**. Students are often crossing the parking lot before / after school. We need to avoid near misses!*

Personal Devices at School

We want to remind parents and guardians that **students are not permitted to use their personal devices at school (this INCLUDES texting with smart watches)**.

During school time, including lunch and recesses, personal devices should be in backpacks and smart watches should not be used for any other purpose than to tell time. If a student needs to contact their family, or receive an important message, this should be done via the office.

WINTER SHOW

We are excited to announce our **School Winter Performance**! Please see the performance and rehearsal schedule below to help you plan ahead. We hope you can join us for one of our two performances, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Concert Performances *(parents / guardians invited)

Tuesday, December 15: 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.
Wednesday, December 16: 1:15 to 2:15 p.m.

Rehearsals (for students only)

Wednesday, December 9: 12:10 to 2:25 p.m.
Thursday, December 10: 12:10 to 2:25 p.m. This session is for classes that did not rehearse on Wednesday.

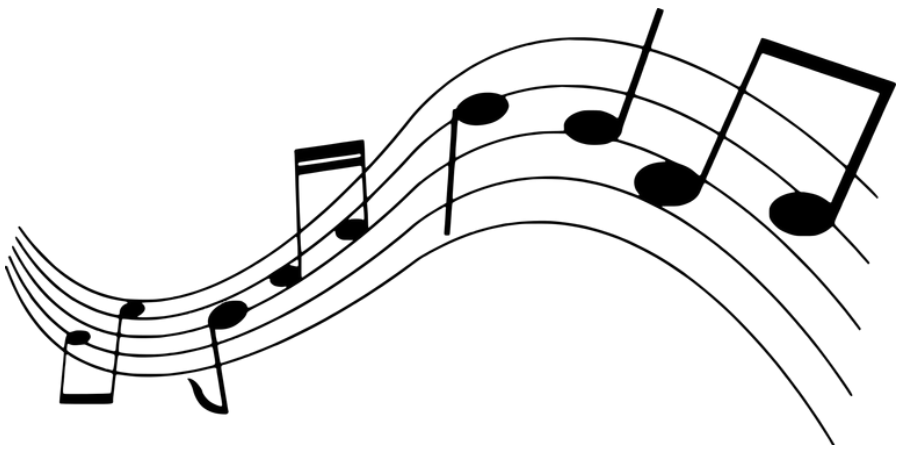
Dress rehearsals – Monday, December 14 (for students only)

9:30 to 10:50 a.m.: A full run-through of the show.
12:10 to 1:10 p.m.: A rehearsal for students selected as narrators, usually from Grades 5 and 6.

Winter Performance Concert Attire

Students should wear dark pants or a dark skirt with a shirt in their class color below. Any shirt style is welcome, including collared shirts and T-shirts. Shirts may have prints or designs on them.

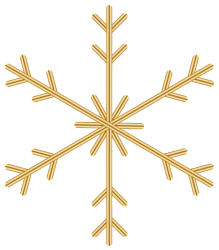
- **Red**: Mrs. Lebbon/Settingiano, Mme King, Mme Macdonelle, Mr. Brown
- **Green**: Mr. Nicholls, Mme Rode, Ms. Peters, Mme Johnson
- **White**: Mme Morden, Mrs. Murch, Mrs. Jensen, Mme Light



Salvation Army Toy/Gift Drive

Dear DWE Families,

At this time of year, we are reminded to be thankful for all that we have and to look for ways to support others in our community. Participation in this donation drive is entirely optional, but any contributions are greatly appreciated. If you would like to participate, we invite you to talk with your child about what type of gift another child or teenager might enjoy receiving for the holidays. You can purchase a gift together and send it to school with your child to donate to a family in need. A list of recommended gift ideas can be found on the back of this sheet.



Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Gifts must be new and unwrapped.
- Please do not donate stuffed animals or candy.
- Each afternoon, students from Mrs. Jensen's Grade 5 classes will visit classrooms to collect donated gifts.
- Gift cards for families, such as those for grocery stores or Walmart, are also gratefully accepted.

Donations will be collected at school from November 30 to December 11.
Thank you for your kindness and generosity in helping make the holiday season a little brighter for families in need. Your support is appreciated!



If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Jensen at jessica.jensen@sd23.bc.ca.
With gratitude,
Mrs. Jensen
DWE Grade 5 Teacher

Salvation Army Gift Suggestions

Teen
Toiletries, nail polish, facial care, lip balm, hair products, socks, candles, card games, Escape Room in a Box, headphones, journal, toque, mitts, gift cards (Orchard Park Mall, Cineplex, Landmark Cinemas, Walmart, Best Buy, Chapters, iTunes etc.)

10-12 year old
Tech Deck, Beyblades, headphones, slime, advanced Lego, Meccanno, Nerf toys, remote control vehicle, Minecraft, watch, books, sports balls, fidget toys, K-nex, Snap Circuits, board game, bath set, advanced art set, crafting kit, sketch set, make-up, hair care, facial kit, science kit, LED lights, bluetooth speakers, anime, nail art, skateboard

7-9 year old
Lego, Pokémon, Beyblades, Hot Wheels, coding toys, remote control vehicle, Star Wars, science kit, fidget toys, K-nex, marble set, minecraft, Monster Jam, Kinetic Sand, superheroes, Bionicles, Tech deck, Polly Pocket, Nerf, Pop It, Hatchimals, LOL Doll, art kit, craft Kit, Barbie, slime kit, dollhouse, Rainbow Loom, Pixies, DIY Kit, Rainbowcorn/Fairycorn Surprise, books, board games, card games, puzzles

4-6 year old
Lego, Pop It, superheroes, Paw Patrol, Dino Smashers, monster trucks, Crayola, remote control vehicles, Kinetic Sand, Hot Wheels, Bionicles, Beyblades, action figures, coding toys, building set, dinosaurs, Transformers, Playmobil, Rainbowcorn, Mini Brands, Lol Doll, Polly Pocket, Pixies, Hatchimals, tea set, dollhouse, Barbie, Cry Babies, Magformers, Disney, Crayola, My Little Pony, Baby Alive, doll accessories, Fur Real, books, puzzles, games

1-3 year old
Paw Patrol, Leap Frog, Little People, Crayola, tool set, building blocks, walking toys, trucks, cars, trains, Play Doh, ride-ons, Peppa Pig, Fisher Price, PJ Masks, Elmo, V-Tech learning toys, dinosaurs, Lego Duplo, Water Babies, baby dolls, doll stroller, tea set, building blocks, play kitchen items, dollhouse, dress up, Calico Critters, Woodland Treehouse Playset, books, wooden puzzles

Infant (0-12 months)
Rattles, learning toys, teething toys, infant essentials (excluding diapers/wipes),
developmental toys, learn to walk, shape sorter, stackable toys, board books, Sophie the Giraffe, Go Go Smart Friends, Lamaze Mix and Match Caterpillar

DWE STUDENT COUNCIL

ROAR COUNCIL

SERVE • LEAD • CREATE

ROAR Council News

SPREADING KINDNESS & MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Our ROAR Council is off to a fantastic start! Our student leaders have been sharing great ideas and looking for meaningful ways to make DWE an even more welcoming, inclusive, and positive place for everyone. With a focus on spreading kindness, giving back, and taking pride in our school, students are excited to turn their ideas into action!

ROAR Council Projects in Action!

- Restore our DWE Friendship Bench
- Create a more welcoming school entrance
- Start lunchtime clubs
- Donate our time to pick up garbage and collect lost and found items

SUPPORT OUR ROAR COUNCIL INITIATIVES!

BOTTLE DRIVE

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

Support our ROAR Council by donating refundable cans and bottles throughout November and December.

Drop off your donations at the bottle depot using our school phone number:

250-870-5138

CANDY CANE TELEGRAMS

ON SALE DECEMBER 1 – 4

Spread a little kindness and holiday cheer!

Students will have the opportunity to purchase a candy cane telegram for a friend or another student at our school. These sweet surprises will be delivered on **Monday, December 14,** helping spread joy while also raising funds for our ROAR Council projects.

4 DAYS OF GIVING

Food Drive for the Central Okanagan Food Bank

DECEMBER 14 – 17

MON Dec. 14	**Cans & Quarters**	Bring quarters + canned goods (e.g., soup, vegetables, beans, canned fruit)
TUES Dec. 15	**Loonies & Lunches**	Bring loonies + school lunch items (e.g., granola bars, fruit snacks, macaroni)
WED Dec. 16	**Breakfast Boost**	Bring toonies + breakfast foods (e.g., cereal, oatmeal, pancake mix)
THURS Dec. 17	**Fill the Shelves**	Bring any amount + family favourites (e.g., peanut butter, crackers, canned meals)

Thank you for supporting our ROAR Council and helping us put kindness, leadership, and service into action at DWE!

If you have any questions, please contact Mme Johnson at cherise.johnson@sd23.bc.ca.

ÉCOLE DOROTHEA WALKER ELEMENTARY · TOGETHER WE ROAR

DWE WILDCATS

MarCat

Grade 5 & 6 ENTREPRENEUR FAIR

Monday, December 7 | 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Student-crafted creations!

All classes will sign up for a shopping slot, giving students a chance to browse and shop the MarCat during class time.

DWE school community family members are encouraged to come shop and support our students!

10% of all student profits will be donated to charity.

Community


CARE CLIMATE ACTION RIPPLE EFFECT
MENTORS NEEDED!
Mentorship changes lives for youth and mentors. Join our program!
AS A MENTOR YOU WILL...
• Share your passion for climate action while supporting student learning and innovation
• Create a local solution with a team of students grades 6-12
• Meet with your CARE team in person or via Zoom
• Commit 10-15 hours from March to mid-May, 2027
FOR MORE INFO
Kasey@freshoutlookfoundation.org
WWW.CLIMATEACTIONRIPPLEEFFECT.ORG


SCHOOL'S OUT
2026 ENROLMENT OPEN NOW!
FREE for newcomers, immigrant families, and low income families
Fun & Engaging Activities - A variety of activities throughout the program, including arts & crafts, sports, games, educational activities, and more!
: K - GR 6 (YRS 5-12)
: OCT 07, 2026 - DEC 18, 2027
: TUESDAY & FRIDAY
: 2:45 PM - 5:00 PM
: OCCA, 1460 INKAR RD, KELOWNA
Registration Email:
schoolsout@occabc.ca
OCCA
United Way
British Columbia


MISSION DANCE CENTRE & COMPANY
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TANYA VADUROVA
THE NUTCRACKER
SCHOOL & SENIOR SHOWS
THURS DEC 17 & FRI DEC 18
11:45am to 1:45pm
Rotary Centre for the Arts
$10 per student/senior
(free admission for staff & volunteers)
EMAIL US TO RESERVE YOUR SEATS:
admin@missiondancecentre.com
Reservation Deadline: November 13 | Payment Deadline: November 27


FREE
Youth Nights
City of Kelowna
OUR NEXT YOUTH NIGHTS
Nov 7th & Dec 5th
6 - 9 PM | GR 6 - 9
Come to Parkinson Rec Center for a free, fun-filled night.
Pizza and snacks included!
More info at
kelowna.calendar
FREE

2027 VANCOUVER KIWANIS MUSIC FESTIVALS

LARGE ENSEMBLES FESTIVAL

SCHEDULING REQUESTS

PROCESS CHANGE! SCHEDULING REQUESTS WILL BE TAKEN **DURING THE REGISTRATION PROCESS.** THEY WILL **OPEN OCT 5** AND **CLOSE NOV 6.** NO REQUESTS WILL BE TAKEN DURING LATE REGISTRATION PERIOD.

OCTOBER 5, 2026
REGISTRATION OPENS

THE ENTIRE **REGISTRATION PERIOD HAS MOVED SIGNIFICANTLY EARLIER FOR 2026-27** IN ORDER TO GET SCHEDULES OUT **BEFORE** WINTER BREAK.

NOVEMBER 6, 2026
REGISTRATION CLOSES

NO FURTHER SCHEDULING REQUESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE.

NOVEMBER 30, 2026
LATE REGISTRATION CLOSES

6 NOV - 30 NOV LATE REGISTRATION WILL INCUR A **$50 LATE FEE PER REGISTRATION**, SPACE PERMITTING. NO SCHEDULING REQUESTS ARE AVAILABLE DURING THIS TIME PERIOD.

VKMF JAZZ FESTIVAL
FEBRUARY 23-26, 2027*

VKMF CONCERT BAND & ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL
FEBRUARY 26-MARCH 8, 2027*

VKMF CHORAL FESTIVAL
MARCH 8-12, 2027*

VKMF PRESENTS: FINAL CONCERT & AWARDS
MAY 15, 2027*

BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH
22680 WESTMINSTER HWY., RICHMOND

MUSICFEST (NATIONALS)
CALGARY, AB | **MAY 10-14, 2027**

PABC (PROVINCIALS)
CRANBROOK, BC | **JUNE 5-9, 2027**

CANADA WEST FESTIVAL
VICTORIA, BC | **JULY 22-24, 2027**

LARGE ENSEMBLE SCHEDULE RELEASE

BY POPULAR REQUEST, WE MOVED THE REGISTRATION PERIOD EARLIER IN ORDER TO FACILITATE GETTING YOUR SCHEDULES OUT TO YOU BEFORE THE WINTER BREAK. WE ANTICIPATE A SCHEDULE RELEASE IN MID-DECEMBER.

*Festival dates will not actually overlap. Precise dates within published ranges will be determined based on exact registration numbers.

2027 VANCOUVER KIWANIS MUSIC FESTIVALS

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

MULTIPLE VENUES | **FEBRUARY - MAY**

LARGE ENSEMBLE FESTIVALS

OUR LARGE ENSEMBLE (LE) FESTIVALS SERVICE OVER 100 HIGH SCHOOL, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY ENSEMBLES FROM ACROSS BC AND NEIGHBOURING REGIONS EACH YEAR. AS A VOLUNTEER, YOU WILL HELP ENSURE THAT OUR OVER 4,500 PARTICIPANTS HAVE A SMOOTH EXPERIENCE BY PROVIDING ASSISTANCE IN OUR CONCESSION, AT OUR REGISTRATION DESK, AS AN AMBASSADOR, AS A STAGE HAND, AND AS AN ADJUDICATOR SECRETARY. **THESE SHIFTS ARE TYPICALLY DURING BUSINESS HOURS, BETWEEN MONDAY AND FRIDAY FROM 9 AM TO 5 PM.**

SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE FESTIVALS

OUR SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE (SSE) FESTIVAL SEES OVER 3500 ANNUAL REGISTRATIONS IN THE MONTH OF APRIL WITH OVER 500 VOLUNTEER SHIFTS HELPING ADJUDICATIONS LOCATED ACROSS 5 DIFFERENT VENUES. OUR TWO VOLUNTEER ROLES ARE ADJUDICATOR SECRETARY (WHO MAKES ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE CLASS AND DOES PAPERWORK FOR THE ADJUDICATOR), AND AMBASSADOR (WHO GREETS PARTICIPANTS AND ORGANIZES SHEET MUSIC). **THIS FESTIVAL RUNS 7 DAYS A WEEK FROM 9 AM TO 9 PM, ALLOWING US TO OFFER A NUMBER OF EVENING AND WEEKEND SHIFTS IN ADDITION TO DAYTIME SHIFTS.**

VOLUNTEER INCENTIVES

WE RELY ON OUR VOLUNTEERS TO FILL OVER 500 VOLUNTEER SHIFTS EACH YEAR - MOST OF WHICH ARE IN APRIL ALONE! IN THANKS, WE OFFER:

- VOLUNTEER FIVE TIMES TO RECEIVE A $50 HONORARIUM, WITH EACH ADDITIONAL SHIFT AWARDING AN ADDITIONAL $10 UP TO 10 SHIFTS ($100).
- VOLUNTEERS WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO RECEIVE GIFTS FROM OUR SPONSORS, (EX: FREE TICKETS TO THE VSO, GIFT CARDS, ETC.) AT OUR ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT IN JUNE.

SOLO & SMALL ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL
MULTIPLE VENUES | MARCH 30 - APRIL 30, 2027

www.vkmfestivals.org

ÉCOLE DOROTHEA WALKER ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2026-2027

School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan Public Schools)

4346 Gordon Dr, Kelowna, B.C. V1W 1S5
Phone: (250) 870-5138 www.dwe.sd23.bc.ca

Days in session	189
Number of days of instruction	182
Number of non-instructional days	7
Schools open – Tuesday only, 8:25-10:55	Tuesday, September 8, 2026
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Wednesday, September 30, 2026
Administrative Implementation Day (no regular classes)	Friday, October 9, 2026
Thanksgiving Day (schools closed)	Monday, October 12, 2026
Early Dismissal at 12:25 for Parent-Teacher Conferences	Thursday, October 15, 2026
Early Dismissal at 12:25 for Parent-Teacher Conferences	Friday, October 16, 2026
Teacher Professional Day	Friday, October 23, 2026
Remembrance Day (schools closed)	Wednesday, November 11, 2026
First Written Learning Update	Friday, November 27, 2026
School closes for Winter vacation at 2:30	Friday, December 18, 2026 at 2:30pm
Winter vacation period (schools closed)	Monday, December 21, 2026 – Friday, January 2, 2027
Statutory holiday (schools closed)	Friday, January 1, 2027
School reopens after Winter vacation	Monday, January 4, 2027
Teacher Professional Day (Support Staff In-Service Day)	Friday, February 12, 2027
Family Day (schools closed)	Monday, February 15, 2027
Early Dismissal at 12:25 for Parent-Teacher Conferences	Thursday, February 25, 2027
Early Dismissal at 12:25 for Parent-Teacher Conferences	Friday, February 26, 2027
Second Written Learning Update	Thursday, March 11, 2027
School closes for Spring vacation at 2:30	Friday, March 12, 2027 at 2:30pm
Spring vacation period (schools closed)	Monday, March 15 – Friday, March 25, 2027
School reopens after Spring vacation	Tuesday, March 30, 2027
Good Friday (schools closed)	Friday, March 26, 2027
Easter Monday (schools closed)	Monday, March 29, 2027
Victoria Day (schools closed)	Monday, May 24, 2027
Last Day of School and Third Written Learning Update	Thursday, June 29, 2027
Administrative Day (students do not attend)	Friday, June 30, 2026
School closes for summer	Friday June 30, 2026

Bell Schedule for 2026-27

8:20 Welcome Bell
8:25 Morning Classes Begins
11:10 Outdoor Play
11:35 Lunch
12:00 Lunch Completes
12:05 Afternoon Classes Begin
1:10 Little Recess
1:25 Final Period
2:25 Dismissal

Early Dismissal Days for 2026-27

Dismissal will happen at 12:25 on the following days:
October 15 and 16, 2026
February 25 and 26, 2027

Staff In-Service Days for 2026-27

Friday, October 9, 2026
Friday, October 23, 2026
Friday, February 12, 2027

Statutory Holidays are highlighted in the above calendar.