

CURRICULUM NIGHT 2011

TDSB Mission: to enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and to acquire the knowledge, skills and values they need to become responsible members of a democratic society

We begin the process of preparing students to be responsible members of a democratic society in the 21st century, by thinking on an ongoing basis about how our practices make connections at all levels from the individual to classroom to the whole school, starting with logistics and routines.

Logistics/Safety

Calendar

Again, this year, our year-long calendar will be included with the Parent Handbook.

This will indicate the 5-day cycle, some key dates for your information as well as the character education focus, sports focus and charitable outreach focus if there is one, for each month.

Routines

We will start with some logistical issues that bear highlighting every year.

Inclement Weather Routines

Entry: Grade 1 – 6 students go to designated areas depending on the classroom. Your child has been trained in this procedure. Kindergarten students go to the kindergarten hallway.

Lunch: Students are either in the gym or the Library during the recreational portion of the lunch hour. Those who go home and come back before the bell should check in with Jamie upon arrival.

Dismissal: Just a reminder to please wait for your child at the bottom of the steps. We need to avoid crowding on the landing, especially around the flagpole. If you need to come from Castlefield with a stroller, please stay well away from the flagpole area.

Student Safety

This is our first priority. The above routines, if followed, go far to ensure student safety for entry and dismissal.

Within the school, we reinforce the following on a daily basis:

- Code of Conduct (in your child's agenda)
- Common understandings and school-wide routines have been developed to be enforced by all staff. They include:
 - reminding students to hold the railing when going up and down stairs
 - walking quietly in the halls – being asked to “Go back and try again” when they don't.
 - no going back to class during recess or lunch for any reason
 - for inappropriate or hurtful language “We don't speak like that at Allenby.”
 - use of phone in the office only for emergencies or a forgotten lunch, **not** for gym or swimming clothes or social arrangements
- Bathroom protocol: students sign out of the classroom and go with a partner, and sign back in

We ask you not to send your children to school with **Pokemon cards**, or other collections for trading, as this has been causing quite a lot of conflict. We want the students to be physically active at recess and the lunch hour recreational break.

We remind you that students are not to use **cell phones** during school hours. Students with cell phones are to have them turned off and out of sight.

Space

With nearly 800 students in the school, these logistical routines are important for safety. As always, space is at a premium and we have 3 rotary subjects “a la carte,” French, Drama Dance and Math. This has necessitated creative planning, good will and mutual respect among staff and students and we have worked out a plan that seems to be working very well.

Traffic Safety

We have an ongoing concern about traffic safety around the school. There are many steps we can take as a community to address this.

If you need to drive your child to school, the **Kiss 'N' Ride** program is a safe, efficient way to reduce traffic and allow students to get to school safely.

We need to respect the Kiss 'N' Ride, Kindergarten and School bus zones.

There should be

- **NO STOPPING** in the Bus loading zone on St. Clements. Bussed children need to step safely to the curb.
- **NO STOPPING** in front of the Kindergarten Playground on Castlefield.
- **NO PARKING** in the Kiss 'N' Ride Zone until after 9:00 a.m.
- Please do not do **U TURNS** on the streets near the school, especially during entry and dismissal times.

You may have noticed the updated signing on the streets. We should all expect more consistent parking enforcement by police.

To sign up to be a volunteer for the Kiss 'N' Ride Program, or for more information about Traffic and Safety, please contact Heather Stark, or visit the APA website.

We have many things to celebrate at Allenby.

We have a strong commitment to academic excellence and character development.

Allenby's Mission and Vision, included in your child's agenda, has helped us, as a school with a growing population and increasing numbers of staff, to develop common goals and a team planning framework.

We have continued to work with a Character Education planning framework that starts the year with an explicit focus on **Community Building and Respect**, setting the stage for a year of great learning. **Respect** and **Responsibility** are the character education values we emphasize in September and October. We build on this as we move to our focus on Global Awareness and

Outreach, with an emphasis on **Empathy, Kindness and Caring, Teamwork** and **Fairness** in the months of November, December, January, and February. We continue into the Global and Environmental focus for the rest of the school year with character values of **Honesty, Cooperation, Integrity** and **Perseverance** being the emphasis for March, April, May and June. Obviously we link all the character values where we can throughout the year.

This planning framework is reflected both in classroom curriculum planning and outside the classroom where students have a variety of opportunities to participate in activities that increase awareness and make a difference in the school, community and beyond.

We are an EcoSchool!

And we have achieved a gold standard 2 years in a row now.

We remind ourselves and students on an ongoing basis about the “3Rs” and that the most important one is the “Reduce.”

We need every year to reemphasize the **Boomerang Lunch Program** and we really appreciate your support in this. We will shortly have Grade 5 volunteers on duty to help remind students to:

- Use reusable containers
- Recycle milk cartons and juice boxes
- Take unfinished lunch and garbage home.

Each class has an EcoRep to help remind teachers and classmates of our goals. Many other EcoSchool initiatives will be reported on in future newsletters.

We have a strong **Sports program** that emphasizes maximum participation in our House Leagues as well as opportunities for team competitions beyond the school supported by our very committed staff.

We have a very active **Student Leadership** program that supports our whole school mission and plan, also supported by committed staff.

Grade 6:

- **Peer Helpers**
- **Food Drive**
- **Kiss 'N' Ride**
- **Spirit Day Team**
- **Grade 6 EcoLeaders**
- **Free the Children Project Team** that supports a local and a global initiative each year.

Grade 5

- **Grade 5 EcoLeaders**

Students are actively practising all the character values in these teams in ways that are meaningful for them and that make a real contribution to the school as a whole often to the community at large.

Team Curriculum Planning

Grade teams of teachers have worked on long-range planning in Literacy and Numeracy together and develop common assessment tasks and activities with an increased focus on critical thinking skills.

Professional Learning

Teachers work in small groups on Professional Learning goals that at Allenby are a reflection of a high level of commitment to ongoing learning.

The Family of Schools and the TDSB offer out of school sessions to which we send staff representatives.

We currently have several teachers participating in innovative initiatives this year: the **M.I. Lead** project involving the use of multiple intelligences in planning classroom activities.

The **NYC Global Partnership**, a project involving schools from around the world in a common project using technology to connect.

A **Hand Tools Training** project supporting a network of teachers across our Family of Schools. An increasing number of staff are participating in learning to use **new technologies** in their teaching practice.

Technology: With the support of and partnership with the APA, we have continued to work on enhancing technology in the school, expanding interactive whiteboard technology to a total of 10 classrooms, with 2 portable units ordered for use in Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2. Teacher capacity is building with our technology mentorship program.

Two of our Grade 6 classrooms are participating in a **TDSB mobile computing strategy** in which there are Macbooks available for use by students in the classrooms.

A pilot initiative this year will be a cart of a class set of **Netbooks** that can be in a class for about a month at a time.

Literacy

- **Reading** is still the most important skill for your child to learn, even in this technological world. We ask that you ensure that your child reads at home on a regular basis. Ask him/her questions about the book or other reading material.
- **Parent Reading Program:** We are asking for volunteers for this important program. The form is available on the APA website and in the school office. It is to be handed in to the office. We will have an information, planning and training session later in this month for all volunteers.

Parent-School Communication

- The **Allenbeat** comes out at the beginning of each month. The APA also sends out weekly emails and there are occasional school updates included. We encourage you to

read the school news in the electronic newsletter. We are an EcoSchool and try to minimize paper communication as much as possible, a constant challenge. We also encourage you to visit the APA website, which has a wealth of information about the school and community.

- **Access to school**

We are happy that Allenby has created such a sense of community over the years, but we need to balance this with safety and security and appropriate supervision for our students. In your child's agenda there is a section on page 5 that clearly outlines the process for visitors to the school. At all schools there are signs saying "**Visitors please report to the office.**" We need to enforce this policy, which is across the TDSB, more diligently. Even if you are a very familiar face, we ask you to comply and wear a green visitors tag when you are in the school.

- For example, if you have a message for your child's teacher in the morning, for things such as appointments, or lunch arrangements, it can be sent in a note in the agenda or separately or else you can come into the office and Jamie or Renee can pass the message along. If you wish to speak to the teacher, at that time, the office staff will call the teacher. The teacher may not be available and an appointment can be made by leaving a message.
- If you have a concern, address it first, using this protocol, with your child's teacher, and if need be after that, you may wish to contact myself or the Vice Principal.
- Classroom teachers no doubt spoke on Thursday about how to contact them if you want to discuss anything.
- **Volunteer protocol:** We welcome volunteers. If you volunteer in the school on a regular basis, please come to the office for a Police Reference Check.