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YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD








LESTER B. PEARSON P.S.  
www.lesterbpearson.com



**Character trait for the Month of October is RESPONSIBILITY**

**Responsibility is the act of being morally accountable for one's actions, capable of rational conduct, of good repute, being respectable, trustworthy.**

**Responsible students:**

-  understand and accept consequences for their actions and try to correct their mistakes.
-  complete assignments and tasks.
-  clean up after themselves.
-  do the "right thing" and apologize if wrong.
-  help others in need.
-  follow through without giving up.
-  understand the effect they have on others.

"The willingness to accept responsibility for one's own life is the source from which self respect springs." Joan Didion.

**REMINDER – CURRICULUM NIGHT IS TONIGHT!**

Our teachers are looking forward to meeting you this evening to present an overview of the goals and programs for the year ahead. Please understand that this evening is for parents, not students, and that there will be ample time for one-on-one interviews at a later date in the year. The teachers will not be able to spend a lot of time with each family on in-depth questions, so if you would like to schedule an interview for another time, they will be happy to do so. Thanks for your understanding!

**DON'T MISS THE PRESENTATION BY YORK REGIONAL POLICE OFFICER HAZLETT ON CYBER-BULLYING!**



You will want to come early tonight to catch this informative and timely presentation by our community officer. Our school council had an opportunity to attend this session last year and found it most informative. Not to be missed for parents of students who use the internet, or even cell-phones! We will meet in the gym at 6:15 p.m.

**"LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE"**

The York Region District School Board has designated the week of **September 21- 25, 2009,**

as Safety Week for all schools. This week provides schools with an opportunity to highlight programs such as anti-bullying, bus safety, Values, Influences and Peers (VIP), and internet safety. The Board has also introduced a Crisis Management Resource Guide which contains a specific protocol to be followed in the case of an imminent direct threat on the safety of a school population. The "Lockdown Procedure" was developed to deal with situations such as a fatality, a violent storm, or an armed intruder. As part of Safety Week activities, we conducted a practice drill of our Lockdown Procedure at Lester B. Pearson P.S. The procedure calls for all students and staff to be secured in a locked classroom, gym or other secure area, and to situate themselves on the floor, away from doors and windows. This drill is a necessary part of preparedness to minimize risk to students and staff in the case of a catastrophic event for which school evacuation is not a reasonable or practical solution. Please refer to the calendar for Bus Safety dates in October.

**ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

As shared with School Council on September 22, we have some concerns regarding the increase in Lates and Absences in our student population from 2 years ago to last year. In fact 42% of our students were absent 10 days or more last year. Also, DOUBLE the number of children who were late more than 10 days (from 26% in 08 to 53% in 09). We urgently request your cooperation in helping your children get to school on time (the most efficient way is still the bus!) and to attend class regularly to maximize their potential for learning. Days missed (other than due to illness, of course) are disruptive to the child's progress. They miss important instruction and opportunities for learning and practice. Frequent absence also affects the class routines as a whole and puts an extra responsibility on the teacher to make sure children who miss school catch up with the rest. Please be aware that the York Region Board has attendance counselors who will be called upon to assist the school and families in the case of a high frequency of absences. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this important matter!



2008 - 2009	ABSENCES # of children	ABSENCES % of school population	LATES # of Children	LATES % of school population
O days	35	5	177	24
0.5 – 5 days	153	25	380	51
5.5 – 10 days	230	35	88	12
10.5 – 15 days	171	23	53	7
15.5 – 20 days	92	5	21	3
20.5 + days	62	8	24	3
total	743	100	743	100

Questions for reflection:

1. When students are absent for reasons other than illness, what impact does it have on their achievement? On their classmates?
2. What can be done about the number of unnecessary lates? ("late start")

### HOMEWORK TIME

The beginning of a new school year is the perfect time to create positive homework habits. Families are encouraged to try the following ideas:

- ✓ Set homework goals. At the beginning of each homework session, ask your child simple questions to get focused on the task at hand. "What do you need to do today?", "How long do you think each assignment will take to complete?"
- ✓ Set a schedule. Block out homework time every day.
- ✓ Identify learning styles. Children learn in different ways. Some are primarily visual learners when others are auditory learners. Some children need to involve their entire body and are known as kinesthetic learners. Experiment; see what type of learning is best for your child. Then plan homework activities that support your child's learning style.
- ✓ Get comfortable. Some children need absolute quiet to study while others can tolerate some noise. There is no right or wrong way of doing homework. See what works best!

Do a 5 minute check. Have your child in the habit of checking homework. Is the name on the paper? Has the work been proofread?

If you encounter persistent issues with homework, please contact your child's teacher via a note in the agenda or by calling the school.

### PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF

Please remember that only busses are allowed in both bus loops between 8:40 a.m. and 9:05 a.m. and between 3:25 p.m. and 3:50 p.m. Also, between 3:25 p.m. and 3:50 p.m. cars may not enter the north parking lot. During these times, the busses are either arriving or departing from our school. Busses have priority at all times and this means that cars may be turned away or asked to leave the parking lot. Parking is available on the adjacent streets to the school and parking is prohibited by the town of Aurora immediately in front of the school



building. **The by-law officer will be watching for offenders and cars WILL be ticketed if they are illegally parked.**

If you choose to drop off your child in the morning, **PLEASE SLOW DOWN!** Children are not always vigilant and may run unexpectedly in front of your car. The teacher on duty is there for the children's safety as well as to guide the busses out of the loop and direct the students when to cross. Thank you for following her direction. We strongly urge our students to take the bus daily - even on rainy days! We need your assistance to make arrival and departure time a SAFE TIME for all our students. Thank you.

### AFTER SCHOOL ROUTINES

Thank you to all of our students for their cooperation and patience during our first week of after school bus procedures. All students, teachers and bus helpers were quick, efficient and diligent and departure went very smoothly the first few days. The first month of school has gone well and we continue to strive to improve our daily routines to make every day a smooth experience for everyone attending Lester B. Pearson P.S. Kindly comply with the following requests to improve our daily practices:

- 👏 Please inform both the office and the after-school provider when you decide to pick your child up at the end of the school day as they wait for their bus. This routine should avoid unnecessary emergency procedures and a lot of worrying by both the office staff and the after-school provider.
- 👏 When picking up your child at the end of the day, please wait in the main lobby of the school not the classroom hallway to avoid traffic congestion. It would also be helpful to classes and students receiving end of day instructions and homework tips not to be disturbed by unnecessary office calls requesting a specific student to leave the class a few minutes early. If your child knows she is being picked up, she will meet you in the lobby after dismissal time.
- 👏 The last 15 or 20 minutes of the school day are important in the class. Collecting work, writing in agendas and reflecting on tasks completed during the day are but a few of the activities that occur during this time frame. It is disruptive to the students in the class to have one of their classmates frequently called out of class at this time. For this reason and as a general rule, we will not be calling students from class after 3:15 p.m. Please ensure that you have written a note in your child's agenda in the morning. The teacher will ensure that your child comes to the office at the appropriate time. Thank you for your cooperation.

### PHYSICAL CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

In order to prevent physical injury and because of our concern for student safety, students at Lester B. Pearson P.S. are expected to avoid activities that involve aggressive play and touching. Activities that are not acceptable include wrestling, piggy-backing, tripping, pushing, shoving, body-checking, poking, punching, and other forms of play in stairwells, hallways and playgrounds. During recess breaks, students are able to play organized games such as basketball, soccer and foot hockey as well as activities such as skipping and tag. On the playground, students will be expected to play safely without the use of rough play or violence. The bus is considered an extension of the school and these guidelines apply to conduct on the bus as well. Thank you for re-enforcing these expectations at home in the interest of the safety of all our students.

## CELL PHONE USE

In these times of modern technology, we are aware that many students and parents feel the need to carry cell phones at all times. We strongly discourage bringing cell phones to school as the children always have access to a phone in case of an emergency.



As a general rule, we ask that students not bring valuable items with them to school. The school cannot take responsibility for lost or stolen belongings. Integrated digital imaging devices (such as camera capability on phones) can be used in a manner that violates the privacy, dignity and safety of students and staff. To protect all concerned, please adhere to the following guidelines.

### Guidelines for Electronic Devices

During the school day, the use of cell phones and electronic devices is not allowed.

- ♦ During classroom instruction, all cell phones and electronic devices should ideally be stored elsewhere (in a locker). They should not be used to make or receive phone calls, send or receive text messages, send or receive e-mails, access the Internet, watch TV, listen to or download music or download files.
- ♦ The privacy, dignity and safety of others must be maintained through the appropriate use of cell phones and electronic devices. Students are prohibited from taking or posting photos of other students or staff without their consent.
- ♦ Parents are to leave messages for their children at the office for non-emergencies.
- ♦ These devices are often the targets of theft. They should be left at home or secured in their lockers for safety. The school is not responsible for the replacement of such items that may be stolen or lost.
- ♦ Popular websites such as Facebook, MySpace and YouTube are growing at an enormous rate everyday. Students need to understand that what they post to these sites – including personal information and pictures – can be accessed by millions of people world wide. It is NOT the same as sending a note to their friend in class and any such communication is neither private nor protected under privacy law.
- ♦ Cyber bullying through electronic devices, even if it occurs away from the school, can now be subject to in-school discipline under Bill 212, which became law in February, 2008.

**Our school is committed to ensuring an environment conducive to learning and to the protection of privacy, dignity and safety.**

## HALLOWEEN

This is a reminder to parents that students celebrating this occasion must exclude weapon accessories from their costume during their classroom celebrations; such items may be toy guns, knives, axes, swords, etc. Students are welcome to wear their costume in class.



## LOST AND FOUND



Our supply of lost and found items of various genres is growing already. We are collecting items such as pants, jackets, shoes and baskets full of hats and lunch bags. Please remind your child to check the hall outside of the gym on a regular basis. At the end of every month, items are put on display for a few days and then they are collected and sent to a local charity. Thank you for your cooperation.

## DOGS AT SCHOOL

If you visit the school during recess or lunch times when the students are at play, please refrain from bringing along your dog. While your child will recognize and feel comfortable with your dog, we do have children who may be afraid or allergic to your pet. Thank you for your understanding.



## HIP HOP

Once again this year we welcome back Micaila to challenge our students in a fun, active program of Hip Hop dance. Classes have sessions with this dynamic and talented dancer and teacher in order to learn a performance routine suited to their age and abilities. Students love this opportunity to participate fully and they enjoy the chance to share their learning with each other at the end of the series of sessions. This year we have divided up the classes and Micaila will be teaching in two separate blocks – one from September 30 to October 2, and the next from October 13 to 15. We look forward to seeing what our students (and teachers!) are capable of learning in a short time and to celebrating their successes with them! We are very grateful to the SSA for making this exciting program available to all our budding “Hip Hoppers” here at LBP!

## PICTURE DAY

Please take note of the date in the calendar that has been scheduled for our annual Picture Day. On **October 7**, Z2 Photography will be in the school taking pictures of each class as well as individual photos of students which will be available for purchase if you wish to do so. Watch for the order forms and please send them in by the deadline as it makes it so much easier to accommodate all requests in a timely manner. Many thanks for your cooperation! We know these photos are often important keepsakes for families.



## HIGH HOLY DAY

**October 17 - Diwali** (Deepavali) both names mean a row or garland of lights. Also known as the Festival of Lights, Diwali is probably the most widely celebrated Hindu festival. This festival may be celebrated over a five-day period. The diwas (clay pots filled with oil and a wick) herald the start of the new year and symbolize the triumph of good over evil, of light over darkness. For many Hindus, October 18, New Year's Day, is also very important. Tamil Hindus may celebrate this day on October 16.



# Correct Handwashing Procedures

**1** Wet hands



**2** Soap



**3** Lather  
(minimum 15 sec.)



**4** Rinse



**5** Towel dry



**6** Turn taps off  
with towel



For more information, call York Region  
Health Connection 1-800-361-5653



Health Protection 2008

