

Friday, Sept. 17, 2021

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

This weekly Letter to Families is intended to help you learn how [Near North District School Board](#) (NND SB) will support you in the return to school.

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The first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation takes place on Sept. 30. Orange Shirt Day has become more than a one-day event and many teachers have already started gathering resources to start the important work of truth and reconciliation that will continue throughout the school year.

In following through on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, students will be learning about Indigenous perspectives and stewardship of land, treaties, the Indian Act, residential schools and Canada's current relationship with Indigenous Peoples. Teachers and students are supported in this work by the board's Indigenous education lead, and many local Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers.

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The mental health team has been busy connecting with students we served last year and over the summer to help students transition back to school and hopefully have a great start to the new year.

If you have any concerns about your child, please reach out to our social work team who will connect the student to supports and services. It is as simple as emailing socialwork@nearnorthschools.ca and we will contact you to set up services for your child, whose well-being is our number one concern. We are here to help.

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Secondary Tutoring Services are available for all students Grades 9-12 across the Near North System. The tutoring is offered virtually Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday with four half-hour sessions each day. This is a one-to-one service that provides support in all program areas to support student achievement.

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Parents and guardians are advised that those who have submitted new or updated transportation forms to Nipissing Parry Sound Student Transportation Services (NPSSTS) will experience a two-day delay from the time that the change is confirmed on the NPSSTS website to when

the operator can accommodate the change.

This means that parents will see the change has been processed, but that the change won't take effect for another two days. This delay is due to the time required to provide the change information to the bus operator and for the driver to make changes to the required seating plan. NPSSTS thanks all our families in advance for their patience and understanding.

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Near North District School Board is pleased to share that all students in Grades 1-3 classrooms now have access to [DreamBox Learning](#).

DreamBox is a digital math program that combines a fun and engaging math learning environment with curriculum focused outcomes. DreamBox lessons are interactive experiences that promote active learning and independent critical thinking and respond to each student's strategies and decisions in the moment. Because DreamBox dynamically adapts lessons and learning paths based on the needs of each learner, students always have just the right level of support when and where they need it. Students are encouraged to continue their learning with this resource at home. To access DBL at home, students simply need to [login to Clever](#) (using their NNDSB username and password).

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Students in classrooms across the NNDSB are learning about developing positive mindsets and social emotional learning (SEL) skills related to mathematics.

Collaborative problem-solving tasks using tangible math tools and discussions about the "Power of Yet" are being explored to support students in developing the skill of perseverance to solve challenging math questions. Additionally, students are building math process skills such as problem-solving, communication, reflecting and reasoning through open and differentiated relevant and engaging math tasks.

Creating positive mathematics learning environments and mindsets are critical foundations to successful experiences throughout the school year.

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At Near North District School Board, we value and embrace students and employees with diverse backgrounds, identities, and personal experiences.

"Our schools should be places where students not only learn about diversity but also experience it. Students should see themselves and their classmates reflected in their studies. Students and families should expect their interactions with their school community to leave them feeling

accepted for who they are. All students should believe in their potential and know that they will be supported along the way from Kindergarten to Grade 12 and beyond, no matter what pathway they choose.” (Equity Action Plan 2017).

Culturally responsive teaching recognizes that all students learn differently and that these differences may be connected to background, language, family structure and social or cultural identity. The board has produced a yearly equity calendar for staff that highlights special awareness days for each month of the year. New books are added to NNDSB libraries that support diversity and inclusion so students will see themselves, their culture and identity reflected in their library books, to enhance learning about cultural heritage, gender identity, anti-racism, differing abilities and human rights.

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A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions.

Both NNDSB’s Code of Conduct and individual schools’ Codes of Conduct reflect standards of behavior that promote a safe, inclusive environment and are applicable to all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and community groups. Each stakeholder has a specific role to play in creating welcoming, respectful environments.

Please take the time to read your school’s Code of Conduct and discuss it with your child. Ask them to consider how they might model responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence within their school community.

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NNDSB follows the direction of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the public health unit when devising COVID-19 plans.

Thank you,
Near North District School Board