

St. Mary's Catholic School September 2023 Newsletter

stmary@shaw.ca / www.stmarysschool.ca

From the principal's desk,

Welcome back to school! I am humbled and honored to join the St Mary's Catholic School family. I look forward to continuing the work that has been done to foster a calm yet vibrant school community. As a new person attending your June band concert, I could feel the love for learning and a shared excitement for celebrating each other's achievements.

I grew up playing in the forests and fields just outside of Winnipeg, Manitoba. After graduating with my B ED and BA degrees, I taught in Thailand for a little while and then made my way back to Canada. While living in Vancouver, I worked in a variety of schools across the lower mainland and completed my Master of Art Education degree at Simon Fraser University. I eventually moved to a little city called Williams Lake (in central BC) where I recently held the principal position at Sacred Heart Catholic School. I am married and have three children. As a family we spend a lot of time playing outside - no matter what season it is!

Please drop by the office to chat if you have any questions or concerns. I am eager to meet all of you and begin the journey of teaching, learning, and exploring.

Blessings to you all!

Vanessa Fer, Principal



Welcome to all our new staff!

We have 2 new classroom teachers, 2 new Educational Assistants, and 2 new After School Program staff.

We are so happy to have you! Please feel free to introduce yourself to our new colleagues! Do not waste your time worrying:

"...ye have not, because ye ask not." – James 4:2 Remember to pray. Jesus encourages us to 'ask' in many places in Ccripture, so it makes sense that if you don't have something, it could be because you didn't ask for it.

St. Mary's School Staff 2023-2024

Principal: Vanessa Fer (stmprincipal@shaw.ca)

Secretary: Norine Green (stmary@shaw.ca)

Bookkeeper: Donna Hogg

Maintenance: Joshua Fennema

Custodian: Alain Cole

Kindergarten: Sheryl Smith

Grade 1: Cara Carmelo

Grade 2/3: Susan Merz

Grade 3/4: Claire Shaw

Grade 4/5: Jerrod Bondy

Grade 6: Carmen Gallina

Primary/Library: Michelle Quinn

Intermediate Band/Music: Vanessa Fer

Intermediate Computers/Tech Support/

Student Services Coordinator: Paula Veldman

Outdoor Ed: Patty Kolesnichenko

Student Services Assistants: Amanda Avison, Makayla Gallina, Rachel Green, Doreen Lethbridge, and Meaghan

Merz

Daycare & After School Program Manager: Wanda Dunn

ECE Staff: Amanda Avison, Makayla Gallina, Rachel Green,

Marlene Howard, and MacKenzie Henry

Church Pastor: Father Rex Velmonte

School Council Chair: TBA

Parent Support Group Chair: Courtney Magro



New Families to St. Mary's School

Armstrong/Brookes

Avison

Bell/Hamilton

Cumming

D'Ambrosie

Dunn

Evans

Fer

Galanov

Grant-Orser/Jaworsky

Hes

Hick

Jonat/Olver

LaPointe

Lorraine

Martyr

Vriend/Cochet

Zemek

Reporting Student Absence:

Please call the school directlynot the teacher -and leave a message on the machine.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday

8:30 A.M. -

3:30 P.M.

Dutdoor Ed









Welcome new staff to St. Mary's School

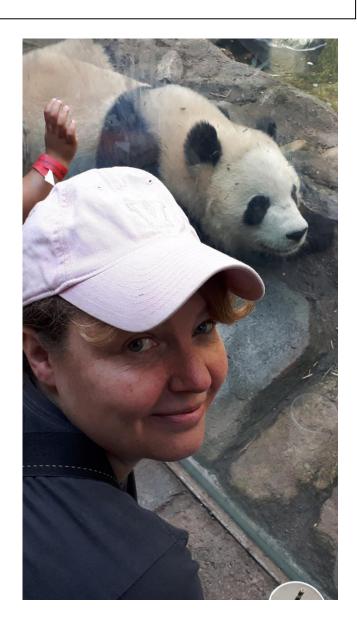


Hello! I am Mrs. Fer and this is my 3 year old Aurora. We are excited to have our family join the St Mary's School community. My other 2 children will be in the K-6 part of the school. I will be the principal and the band/music teacher. I love being a principal, but I can't seem to let go of making music! I have been performing as well as teaching music for many years. I am excited to meet you all and start the new school year.

~ May God bless you today and always

Hello St. Marys, I am Ms. Sheryl and I am very excited to be your new kindergarten teacher! Kindergarten is my favourite grade to teach because we learn so much and have so much fun:) I keep busy outside of school walking my dogs in the forest, hiking, paddleboarding and traveling. Mostly, I love spending time with my family and friends who mean the world to me.

I look forward to meeting all the students and families of St. Marys!





Hello everyone,

I am very excited to be teaching the Grade 4/5 class at St. Mary's Catholic Independent School! I have been living in the East Kootenays since 2006 and, after all these years, I continue to find new and exciting things to do and see in our community. Some of my favourite things to do include mountain biking, camping, and going for walks around the neighborhood with my dog, Cherie. But wait, there's more! I am very passionate about the performing arts, including drama and *drum roll please* the Circus Arts! Yes, in addition to being a classroom teacher, I am also a certified Circus Arts Educator, which is a fancy term for being a part-time clown. Being new to the school community, I am eager to meet everyone and share in all of the discoveries our class will be making this year! Cheers!

Hello Everyone!

My name is Wanda Dunn and I have been an Early Childhood Educator for the last 21 years and I'm excited about being the new Daycare & ASP Manager. I have spent most of my career working here in Cranbrook where I raised my 2 children. I have worked in various programs including curriculum based, emergent based, play based, and believe that we can take something from all program styles to offer a great program to fit all children's needs.

My personal time is usually spent with my family, and I enjoy camping, going for walks in the winter (yes, I am one of "those" people who love the snow), and I love doing photography as a hobby.

I'm looking forward to working at St. Mary's and I'm excited to start building relationships with the children and their families!





Hi my name is Amanda Avison. We just relocated here 2 years ago and we are absolutely loving it! I love the outdoors, running and being by the water as much as possible. This summer I was able to meet a small group of children within the ASP and I am so excited to be working within the school and meeting many more of you . I love working with children,

I'm very excited to be working as an EA and working with the kindergarten ASP!

Hi! I am Rachel Green. I was born and raised in Cranbrook and went to St. Mary's as a kid. I am excited to join the team as I have a lot of good memories at this school and can't wait to make new ones!

In my free time I enjoy spending time with my friends and family, baking, running, going to the gym, and especially travelling.







Please keep Boston, our Grade 6 student in your prayers! He is fighting leukemia and receiving excellent care at the Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary!

A GoFundMe campaign has been organized to support the Rousselle family with additional costs for Boston's care and treatment.



St. Mary's PSG Update - September 2023



Welcome new and existing St. Mary's families to what I'm sure will be an exciting and fun school year! For those who don't know me, my name is Courtney Magro. I'm the proud mom of three kids, two of whom attend St. Mary's in Grades 6 and 3. This will also be my fourth year as chair of the St. Mary's Parent Support Group (PSG) and I am also continuing in my position as Hot Lunch Coordinator, along with **Chelsey Hodges**.

For those families that are new to our school, the PSG is separate from the School Council. We fundraise by hosting various events throughout the school year, as well as administering the hot lunch program. We also organize fun activities such as the Christmas Pancake Breakfast, Walkathon and annual school bake sale. We provide funding for such things as playground equipment, field trips, the computer lab, school t-shirts and special school presentations, among many other initiatives.

The **PSG Executive** is made up of:

Courtney Magro – Chair / Hot Lunch Coordinator Ashley Roberts – Vice Chair Stephanie Fiorentino – Treasurer Tobi Cumming – Secretary Kerry Stanley – Special Events & Promotions Jenna Simoes – Fundraising Coordinator

We are ALWAYS thrilled to see new (and familiar!) faces at our monthly PSG meetings. We usually meet once a month at the school and meeting times are posted beforehand on the PSG Facebook page. If you are not a member of the St. Mary's PSG Facebook group, we encourage you to join as that's where you can always find the most up to date information. Our first PSG meeting of the school year will be at **6:30pm on Tuesday, September 12th at St. Mary's School.**

We also love having new volunteers to help with our monthly hot lunch sessions. We meet in the school kitchen at 12:00pm on each month's hot lunch day. Gloves and masks will be provided. Each month, we assign one grade to oversee hot lunch and ask parents with kids in that classroom to sign-up to volunteer (also on the PSG Facebook page). September's hot lunch will be on Friday, September 22nd featuring Domino's Pizza and Taco Time and we are asking Grade 6 parents to come help serve.

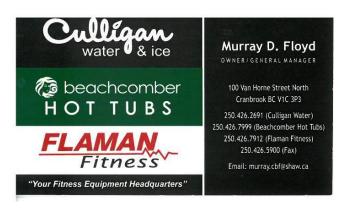
To start this year off right, we thought it would be fun to do a **school potluck** featuring an opportunity to meet all the teachers (we have several new staff members!) followed by a rousing game of Bingo! St. Mary's routinely hosts Bingo nights throughout the school year and this will be a fun way to kick off 2023/24. **We will be hosting this event in the school gym on Thursday, September 21st at 6:00pm.** Signup for your potluck item will also be on the PSG Facebook page. More details to come soon!

We are so excited to start a new school year at St. Mary's. We are fortunate to have the amazing school community that we do!

Happy fall, ya'll!

Courtney Magro







MARY KAY®

DONNA HOGG

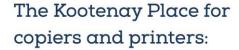
Independent Beauty

Consultant

250-426-5944

dmghogg@gmail.com

www.marykay.ca/dhogg





250-426-2241 • rmoffice.ca

Servicing Cranbrook, Nelson, Trail, Castlegar, Creston, Elkford, Sparwood, Invermere, Golden, Radium, Fernie...

Smile @ Photo Day

Thursday, September 28th at 9:15 A.M.

(Retakes November 9th)

Wear brightly coloured clothing and bring your best smile!





to Beachcomber Hot Tubs and Culligan of Cranbrook for their support to St. Mary's School!!

Save-On Foods

If you buy your groceries at Save-On Foods, please tell the cashier that you are from St. Mary's School, and they will record your total sales in a binder. The school receives a percentage of all sales quarterly!

Thanks for supporting our school!



St. Mary's School Emergency Management Plan

If we have to evacuate the school, our meeting spot on the property is in the soccer field in back of the school. The best way to access this is through 6th Street South (in back of the school); park your car and walk over the bridge. This will leave our school lot uncongested for emergency vehicles.

If we must evacuate to an alternate location, our evacuation site is Christ the Servant Church at 1100-14

Avenue South if we must go inside or the Baptist church at 328 14 Avenue South if we require only an outside off-site gathering location.

Emergency Response Co-ordinator: Vanessa Fer

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

PREPARE YOUR CHILD. Children who are prepared experience less fear and hysteria. Let your child know who can make the pickup at school if you are unable to do so. Reassure your child that he/she will be cared for until you arrive.

KEEP YOUR CHILD'S EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION UP-TO-DATE. The only people other than yourself who will be allowed to pick up your child are those whom you authorize on the Student Emergency Identification & Release Authorization form. No student will be allowed to leave with another person, even a relative, unless the school has prior written permission from the parent/guardian.

REMAIN CALM. Your child is probably safer at school in the event of a disaster. School personnel are certified in CPR, First Aid and Emergency Preparedness.

DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL AND TIE UP THE SCHOOL PHONE. Phone lines will be needed for emergency communications. Check email, school website and Facebook page for updates.

WALK FROM YOUR HOME, IF POSSIBLE. Leave the streets free for emergency vehicles. You may get to school faster by foot or bicycle.

PARK ONLY IN AREAS DESIGNATED FOR PARENTS. Leave adequate room for emergency vehicles to park and turn around.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD DIRECTLY FROM THE STUDENT ASSEMBLY AREA. Parents and authorized adults must first report to the Principal/ Designated Lead. Students will only be released to their parents or to an adult designated on the Student's Emergency Identification & Release Authorization form.

PICK UP ALL STUDENTS FOR WHOM YOU ARE AUTHORIZED.

SIGN OUT AT THE RELEASE SPACE. The staff will locate and bring your child to you. No student will be released without a parent signature, noting time of release, destination and phone number.

LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY AFTER BEING REUINITED WITH THE STUDENT.



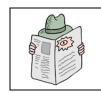
"Meet-the-Teacher Night"

Monday, September 11th 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Families are encouraged to attend Meet-the-Teacher night. We will meet briefly at 6:00 PM in the gym for introductions. Families can then walk around the school, connecting with staff. Teachers will speak about their classroom, routines, expectations, communications, and be available to answer your questions. This is also a time to walk around the school and become familiar with student rooms, lockers, etc.

2023-2024 MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES



We are offering advertising space in our monthly newsletters for businesses to advertise! Please call the school if you are interested.

Rates: \$200 / year (10 months) (\$20/month) \$300 / year front page (\$30/month)

Mass Times: Everyone is Welcome!

<u>Christ the Servant Parish</u> Sat. 5:00 P.M.

Sun. 9:30 A.M.



St. Mary's Parish
Sun. 8:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.

Are you struggling with something?

God can help

Terry Fox Fun Run

Friday, September 8th

WEAR RED!

1 P.M.

Our school will participate in a FUN ullet

RUN as a buddy activity on Rotary

Trail as a school. Students are asked ullet

to **bring a toonie** on this day for **o** donation to the Terry Fox Foundation. **o**





to Joshua Fennema & Alain Cole for cleaning the building over the summer and for all the maintenance work!

Allergy Alert!

If your child has any medical condition that the school should be aware of please notify us immediately so we may keep your child's file up-to-date. For students with severe allergies, this is also a reminder to bring their <u>Epi-pen</u> to the office for placement in the first aid room as required.

We will let families know if there are any restrictions on student lunches due to allergies once all verifications sheets are returned in two weeks.

Please do not send ANY NUT products to school.

<u>Student Sign-Out /</u> <u>Sign-In Procedure</u>

Please remember the person who is taking the student from the school during school hours, <u>must</u> sign the student out at the office.

If the student will be returning to the school before the end of the school day, they must check in at the office and wait until a staff member directs them to class.

This procedure will allow us to ensure that all students are safe and accounted for.

Daily Physical Activity (DPA):

Exercising the body makes it easier for the mind to learn!
Our classes all do DPA in many cool ways. Ask your child what his/her class does each day. This is a mandatory Ministry of Education requirement for all students.

Indoor/Outdoor Footwear

All students are required to have indoor and outdoor shoes. School and fire regulations require that student's wear shoes at all times. If your child has not brought indoor shoes please send them to school as soon as possible.

Changing our footwear helps keep our floors clean and in good condition.

What is 'Walking Recess'

We started 'Walking Recess" last year and we all like it so we will continue with this. Each afternoon the whole school stops and goes walking for 10 minutes: 2:00- 2:10 PM We either walk around the outside of the building or in bad weather we walk in the school. It is a brain break. It is not for competition or instruction. Students can walk together or alone. It is simply a walk, water, and wonder time; it is a great time to clear the cobwebs.

We all find ourselves frustrated at one time or another. I share the following with you as it places a unique perspective on how we can handle the daily challenges of life. Enjoy.

Do it Anyway — Mother Teresa

This is a wise ''final analysis'' perspective on life, relayed from Kent Keith to us with some revision by the late

Mother Teresa,- because ''it was never just between you and them.''



People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered. **Forgive them anyway.**

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. **Be kind anyway.**

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you. **Be honest and frank anyway.**

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight. **Build anyway.**

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous. **Be happy anyway.**

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow. **Do good anyway.**

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.

Give the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis it is between you and God; it was never between you and them anyway.

<u>House teams</u>: 2023 Every student and staff member will be placed on a House Team by mid-September. Every time we hold a 'theme' day teams collect points for their team in a race to win! The team names and colours are as follows:

EAGLES - BROWN; CROWS - BLACK; FOX - GREY; FROGS - GREEN (These choices reflect Ktunaxa culture.)

Our Report Cards

Our school uses a report card format we are really pleased with. Our reporting components follow Ministry standards. Primary reports differ from Intermediate. If you have questions interpreting anything please ask! As a staff, we feel it gives parents better insight into how their child is achieving, not just what material they have covered. Two aspects of note include:

- Using 'Levels of Support' in grades 1 6 subject areas to show how much teacher support a student requires to achieve a grade.
- Language Arts and Social Studies are reported out as 'Humanities.'
- More detailed information on reporting can be found in the front portion of student agenda books.

Scottish Blessing:

May there always be work for your hands to do.

May your purse always hold a coin or two.

May the sun always shine upon your window pane.

May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain.

May the hand of a friend always be near to you and

May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.





"Nothing is as strong as gentleness, Nothing so gentle as real strength."

Saint Francis de Sales

Calling "All Volunteers"

❖ Although volunteers must be limited right now, please be aware of this requirement to volunteers.

Safe Environment Training

For all new parents to our school, please be aware that in order to be present in classrooms (including all field trips and activities) and volunteer situations you MUST take a Safe Environment workshop that is offered at the school and you must have a Criminal Record Check on file. Please do not wait to do this! We really dislike having to tell people that they cannot attend their child's field trips due to paperwork! Ah! This paperwork is good for 5 years so do not delay! Even if you think you do not want to volunteer or attend your child's field trips, things change and having the paperwork done now gives you total flexibility at a later date. **Sign up at the office.**

Email communication

St. Mary's tries to be paperless. Classroom teachers will be requesting an email address from each family. This will be used for the purpose of:

- Sending home classroom newsletters and the <u>school newsletter (monthly)</u>.
 Communicating with parents for educational updates and field trip notifications.
 Parent permission for field trips: you may email or text phone message your permission for field trips instead of sending paperwork back.
- Scheduling parent-teacher interviews and arranging meetings.
- Communicating changes to school calendar, dismissal times and emergencies as needed.

Parent permission for field trips: you may email or text phone message your permission for field trips instead of sending paperwork back.

However, if you send notification of a student absence to the classroom teacher by email/text, always send this to the office as well! (stmary@shaw.ca) or leave a message on the school phone at 250-426-5017. Why? Because, if a teacher is away for the day, we will not know of your communication. In order to avoid us causing you unintended frustration, we thank you for reporting all absences as we have requested.



Field trip Requirements for Driver's of St. Mary's Catholic School

Reference CISND POLICY#5200

When volunteer drivers are driving for school field trips, the following documentation must be on file in the school office 2 days before the trip. Kindly scan and send proof of the following to stmary@shaw.ca or the secretary will copy it at the school office for you. Your information will be confidentially retained until the end of the school year when it will then be shredded. **Required proof of the following include:**

- 1. <u>Drivers \$3,000,000 Insurance Liability</u>:
- 2. Valid Driver's License Driver Abstract: See below
- 3. Valid Drivers's License: Copy on file at the school
- 4. <u>Valid Criminal Record Check</u> CRC's are processed free of charge when completed online. To complete this process, insert the following link in your browser and follow the directions. https://justice.gov.bc.ca/eCRC/ ACCESS CODE: 8RJ8BJCMYC (Only CRC's processed directly through our school are valid for school purposes).
- 5. <u>Safe Environment Training</u> Sign up at the office if you have not completed this training. (If you have completed #4 and #5 the school has it on file).

*Request a Driver's License abstract as follows:

<u>https://onlinebusiness.icbc.com/clio/</u> Copy and paste this into your web browser

- -→Enter your information
- -→Click "Personal Driving Record" on the options page
- -→Enter your personal email
- -→Submit

You must forward a copy to the school office or bring it in and we will copy it and retain it on file.

Final Steps:

- Forward email results to stmary@shaw.ca, OR
- Print and provide a copy to the school office, OR
- Screen Shot and email to stmary@shaw.ca

*Driver's Abstract's are usually returned to your email within a few hours and are very fast to complete online

Thank you for your due diligence. It is appreciated.

ST. MARY'S T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

FAMILY NAME:	

SIZE	YOUTH	YOUTH	YOUTH	YOUTH
	SMALL	MED	LARGE	X-LARGE
AMOUNT				

All St. Mary's students have received one complimentary t-shirt from the Parent Support Group.

If you would like to order an additional t-shirt, please fill out this form and return to the school with payment (cash or cheques payable to St. Mary's School).

The	cost	is	\$17	.00	each.
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Total	number	of t-shirts	

Total	payment:	\$
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We have toques, and youth hoodies from our special order. If you are interested in any of these items, please call the school office as there are limited numbers in stock.

Youth hoodies – blue/orange/purple/sangria - 2 medium left - \$34.00 each (Sizes: Small / Medium / Large / X-Large)

Retro hoodie (extreme): Medium size only - \$39.00 each

Beanie toque / Pom Toque \$22.00 each





Morning Routines:

A reminder to parents that there is <u>no supervision</u> at the school until 8:30 A.M. (school doors are locked until 8:30 A.M.) as staff is NOT present. Students arriving at school are to remain <u>outside</u> until the bell rings at 8:45 A.M. They are then to line up at their respective door and wait for the duty teacher to call them in the school. **Students are usually not to come in the school before the bell except in an emergency situation**. Students are to keep their backpacks with them on the playground. This practice will help teachers be available to parents during non-instructional times. I

- Primary students are NOT to be on the (back) primary playground before school. Children should be on the playground in front of the school.
- <u>Intermediate students with band instruments</u> are to bring them in their <u>classroom this</u> <u>year</u> and intermediate teachers will inform students where to keep their instruments.
- Parents meeting with teachers before school are asked to let your children remain on the playground while you enter the building.
- We do <u>staff prayer</u> Tuesday's at 8:15 A.M. Thank you for respecting the need for staff to be together at this time.

Your cooperation with this is truly appreciated.

Dressing Appropriately for School

Nice clothes are great but please be practical St. Mary's has a dress code for students. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- No high heel shoes: comfortable footwear is needed to maximize participation and help with safety.
- No spaghetti straps: straps should be at least 3 fingers wide.
- No inappropriate words or slogans on shirts: clothing should be reflective of a respectful learning environment in a Catholic context.
- Dress appropriately for the weather daily!

Students wearing inappropriate attire will be asked to change. Parents will be called if necessary.



St. Mary's Catholic Independent School

2023-2024 Annual School Calendar

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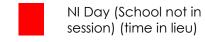
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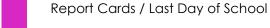


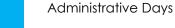
Noon Dismissal – Staff Meetings (School closed at 12 noon)



PRO-D Days (School closed all day)

Stat Holidays





St. Mary's Catholic Independent School 2023 – 2024 Annual School Calendar

Start 8:40 AM

Recess 10:30 – 10:45 AM Lunch 11:50 AM – 12:40 PM

DPA Walking Recess 2:00 – 2:10 PM

School Ends 3:00 PM

Days in Session 171.6
Hours of Instruction per Year 901
Minutes of Instruction per Day 315
Professional Development Days 6
Spiritual Staff Development Day 2
Non-Instructional Day 2



School Open

Truth & Reconciliation Day (school closed)

Thanksgiving Day (school closed)
Remembrance Day (school closed)

Advent begins

Christmas Vacation Period (school closed) School re-opens after Christmas vacation

Family Day (school closed)

Ash Wednesday (school in session)
Spring Vacation Period (school closed)

Good Friday (school closed)
Easter Monday (school closed)
Victoria Day (school closed)
Last day of school for students
Administrative Day for Staff only
Parent, Teacher, Student Interviews

Early Dismissal Days at 11:50 AM

Tuesday, September 5, 2023 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Friday, September 29, 2023 Monday, October 9, 2023 Friday, November 10, 2023 Sunday, December 3, 2023

Monday, December 25, 2023 - Friday, January 5, 2024

Monday, January 8, 2024 Monday, February 19, 2024 Wednesday, February 14, 2024 Monday, March 18 – 28, 2024

Friday, March 29, 2024 Monday, April 1, 2024 Monday, May 20, 2024 Wednesday, June 19, 2024 Thursday, June 20, 2024

Monday, October 16 – 26, 2023 Monday, March 11 – 14, 2024 Friday, December 8, 2023 Friday, January 26, 2024 Friday, May 10, 2024 Friday, June 14, 2024

School Not in Session Days (NI) OR (time in lieu)	Administration Days (Staff Only)	Staff Meetings / (Early Dismissal)	PRO-D Days	Report Cards
	August 30 & 31			
October 27 (in lieu)			October 20	
			November 24	
		December 8		December 1
		January 26		
			February 2	
March 17 (in lieu)			March 1	March 8
			April 19	
May 17		May 10		
	June 20	June 14	June 7	June 19

Children go where there is excitement and stay where there is love!