

December 9, 2020

Dear Parents,

It has been our pleasure to work with and see the progress of your children throughout these last few months. We are thankful that despite all the difficulties that we are all facing during this unprecedented time, that we had the opportunity to share special moments, teaching and learning with your children.

The staff and students are working together on a little pre-holiday activity video-taping our students outside singing winter songs, with the plan to blend the voices together to share with family and friends. Keep an eye out for an email with instructions on where to watch this little video around December 16.

The **St. Francis Christmas Dinner**, which has been a long standing tradition, will be postponed this year as this event gathers the whole school and we are unable to provide a meal to all 260 while maintaining COVID-19 restrictions. The PPO has ordered special cookies with winter designs for all of our students and staff, as well as our bus drivers. I am confident that the COVID-19 virus will be under control by next year, so that we can offer this wonderful meal once again.

St. Francis teachers are organizing Zoom lessons & phone calls to stay in touch with their students December 17, 18, 21 and 22, 2020:

As arranged by Premier Legault and the Minister of Education, M. Roberge, all students are to remain at home the four days before the holidays. The teachers are to reach out to their students for a set amount of time each day. If a child is not available via Zoom (Wi-Fi not available), one of their classroom teachers will reach out by phone daily to see if your child has any questions or needs help with the school package that is being sent home.

This is not viewed as a full shut down, therefore, families who have indicated a need for routers or a Chromebook will not be receiving these at this time. We will be ready to deploy these in the event of a full shut down at a later date. That being said, students in grade 5 & 6 will be bringing home their Chromebooks.

On December 16, students will be bringing home their school materials, and anything they will need over the holiday. Teachers will provide them with an academic package of school lessons to work on independently each day. These packages will be referred to or worked on independently or through Zoom meetings held at a specific time each day. All children who do not have access to a technological device will receive a phone call at some time during the academic day. On Monday, December 14, your child's teacher will be sending home the schedule of times when your child has a daily Zoom meeting. We have tried to ensure that each cycle meets at a different time to ensure that all students can share a device at home, making it more accessible for all students to attend their Zoom class session each day. This will be a good practice session in the event that we do have to shut down for a period of time later in the school year.

Our Office Secretary will be working via Tele-work December 17, 18, 21 and 22, 2020:

Please note that our School Secretary, Tammy Porter, will be working from home on these four days, replying to phone calls and responding to emails. Please prioritize emails where possible.

Centralized Registration for Emergency Daycares will be open on Thursday, December 10, 2020

1. Thank you to the families who completed the ETSB interest survey to state if you were an essential service provider who wished to enrol your child in an Emergency Daycare Service December 17, 18, 21, 22. St. Francis has been selected to provide Emergency Daycare Services. St. Francis will provide employees for this service but the registration is managed by the Government.
2. On Thursday, December 10 essential service workers will be able to access a Centralized registration site & officially register for an Emergency Daycare in their area. Please note that the St. Francis Emergency Daycare may be attended by not only our school students, but by children from our area whose family member is an essential service provider.
3. The ETSB School Board will be sending parents a letter with a link to register for this Emergency Daycare on Thursday.
4. As stated by the Ministry, all students who are attending the Emergency Daycare will not be available to follow any scheduled Zoom meetings organized by their classroom teachers. As well, they will need to work on the take home academic package after hours and on weekends, as Daycare Educators are not in a position to provide academic support during the Daycare service hours.
5. Please note that eligibility for a space at an Emergency Daycare (including the one that will be open at St. Francis on December 17, 18, 21 and 22) is dependent on a list of approved occupations. Students who have had access to our regular Daycare throughout the school year will not have access to the Emergency Daycare over these four days unless a parent works in one of the essential services listed on the Quebec.ca website.

School Arrival Time: We are noticing a small group of children being dropped off on the school property at least 10 minutes before supervision begins. School supervision officially begins **at 8:35 am** and children should not be left alone on the school property prior to this time. Thank you to those parents who wait until supervision is in place before dropping off their children. Please note that we have Daycare service available. For more information regarding Daycare, email: stfdaycare@etsb.qc.ca. Your support in this matter is very much appreciated!

Check for Head Lice: This is a reminder to check weekly for Head Lice. It tends to be more prominent at this time of year.

School Fees Past Due: School fees were due by Friday, November 27th. Please contact the school to organize a payment plan that can be divided over the remaining months. Please note that the online payment option is available. If you need help to set up your parent portal or to know how to complete this online payment, please call the school office at (819) 826-3737, extension 11801.

Christmas Basket Campaign: St Francis Elementary School has organized a campaign to raise funds to donate to the Town of Richmond Christmas Basket Program. This year, rather than collecting non-perishable food items, the town is collecting funds to put towards MAXI gift cards. The school is collecting until December 11. Thank you to all our families for their contributions!

Have you read with/to your child today?...

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St. Francis Library Ongoing Fundraiser:

Hey friends, we're using Indigo to raise money for the St. Francis Elementary School Library. Please show your support by making a donation or shopping online which will earn cash towards our fundraiser. indigo.flipgive.com
[Click here to support St. Francis Elementary School Library](#)

CLC News

Workshop for Adults: Taking Care of Your Mental Health during the Pandemic and Beyond

December 10, 7pm: online over Zoom.

Feeling frustrated? Isolated? Anxious? Overwhelmed? You're not alone! The pandemic has disrupted our lives and has us feeling a wide range of emotions. Join us for a FREE one-hour workshop to learn practical tools to help you cope and take care of your mental health. This workshop for adults is offered to our 9 ETSB CLC school communities in partnership with Mental Health Estrie. To receive the link to the workshop, please click

[here: https://forms.gle/E4DXZcNyjVNur3cP7](https://forms.gle/E4DXZcNyjVNur3cP7)

LEARN Parenting Workshop Series

LEARN is offering some very interesting virtual workshops for parents via the Zoom platform. Here are some of the upcoming topics.

Helping our teens stand tall during the pandemic

December 9th at 7pm

More info here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/465735731071188>

Register here: <https://learnquebec.ca/pandemicteens>

My child is worried; How can I help?

January 12th at 7pm

More info here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/439222117068580>

Register here: <https://learnquebec.ca/childsupport>

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



On behalf of the St. Francis Elementary School staff, I wish you and your family a safe, happy, and healthy Christmas holiday. May we fill our hearts with Christmas cheer and remember to stay positive during this beautiful time of the year.

Sincerely,

Louise Retchless, Principal

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Summary of Important Dates

December 9: The December Newsletter; T-shirt & hoodie orders coming home soon with your child

December 10: Governing Board meeting via Zoom 6:00 pm

December 11: Last Day to contribute to the St. Francis Christmas Basket Campaign

December 14: Zoom Class Schedule will be sent home today

December 16: Last day in class before the holidays

December 17, 18, 21, 22: Students complete independent work at home; Zoom meetings daily; an Emergency Daycare will be open (The Ministry is accepting Emergency Daycare registration online for essential workers only).

December 22: Last day of online classes before the Holiday Break

January 6: Planning Day; Daycare will be open

January 7: First Day back to school after the holidays

January 22: First Term Report card is posted on the parent portal

January 25: Planning Day

In February: Details will be provided for a Parent-Teacher Interview format

February 1-5: Teacher Appreciation Week

February 12: Planning Day

February 15: Planning Day

February 15-19: Hooked on Schools Week

February 24: Geordie Production's virtual presentation of "The Little Mighty Superhero"