

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Welcome to Room 108 at HPAS. We are a close knit, accountable school community that has a commitment to academic exploration, active citizenship and a sense of adventure. For more information see our school website: [www.highparkalternativeschool.com](http://www.highparkalternativeschool.com) our class website: [www.kellysedu.weebly.com](http://www.kellysedu.weebly.com), and our Twitter Account [@KellysEdu](https://twitter.com/KellysEdu)

We are off to a great start as we are establishing a sense of cooperation and responsibility in our classroom community. Our focus is to foster an engaging, respectful and caring classroom environment. I aim to balance a consistent program with flexible responsiveness to students' individual needs.

Here you will find information about various parts of our day that I hope you will find useful. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to send me a note in your child's Home Notes Folder, call me at the school at 393-9050 or send me an e-mail at [kelly.fricker@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:kelly.fricker@tdsb.on.ca).

We post **Monthly Google Calendars** to keep you informed of daily activities on our class website! Information about curriculum content, themes and other special activities will also be posted. Soon, I will start to touch on some of our monthly highlights through the Blog. If you don't Tweet, don't worry! All Tweets are on the website.

You will be receiving a **Home Notes Folder** most Fridays. We include any office letters and classroom news, including some student work. Occasionally students will receive notes on other days if information cannot wait. Please empty the contents of the Home Notes Folder and send it back to be kept at school.

**Lunch & Snacks** Please send nutritious, easy to open foods. Products containing any traces of nuts or sesame are *prohibited*. Milk can be bought in the lunchroom for 75¢.

**Clothing and Backpacks** Please label all personal belongings. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their things. The school lost and found is located at the base of the tower stairs.

## **Class Schedule**

Day 1: Gym with Helena, every other week Library with Krissy

Day 2: Health with Helena, every other week Swim with Coach A and coach R

Day 3: Music with Violet, every other week Media/IT with Lillian

Day 4: Book Buddies with Anastasia's 7/8, Gym with Helena

Day 5: Drama with Helena

\*I teach Language, Math, Social Studies, Science, Dance, and Visual Arts

## **Curriculum**

**Food For Thought:** something that warrants serious consideration  
poverty, inequality, discrimination - many current injustices that may spark the activist voice of our students

## **Themes and Foci:**

Throughout the year we will focus on central themes. While both grades will learn about the same general theme, each will have a specific focus based on that grade's curriculum requirements. The themes are taken from the social studies or science strands of the curriculum. Wherever possible, math strands will link to the central focus (e.g. geometry will link with the building of structures).

Assessment will be ongoing, both informal (observation, checklists) and formal (quizzes, presentations). There is a strong emphasis on the use and understanding of learning goals and success criteria for both self-assessment and teacher-assessment purposes, thus providing the children with a concrete tool to use in all areas of the curriculum.

### **Language Arts:**

*A large block of time each morning is dedicated specifically to literacy skills development.* The curriculum focuses on students' ability to: communicate ideas and information for specific purposes and to specific audiences; write materials that show a growing ability to express their points of view and to reflect on their own experiences; produce pieces of writing using a variety of forms; understanding form and style, language structures (grammar), vocabulary and conventions (capitalization, punctuation, spelling). Students participate in shared writing activities daily and independent journals.

*\*Media Literacy taught by Lillian*

### **Mathematics**

The areas of number sense and numeration, measurement, geometry and spatial sense, patterning and algebra and data management and probability are covered with large and small group lessons and activities, individual written practice and occasional homework. There are five strands of math; remember that a thorough knowledge of all strands, not just number sense and numeration, is key to a full understanding of the program. A strong focus is problem solving, with students thinking through answers and explaining understanding using Words, Images and Numbers (it's a "WINing" strategy!).

### **Science and Technology:**

We cover the topics of "Needs and Characteristics of Living Things", "Growth and Changes in Animals", "Daily and Seasonal Changes" and "Air and Water in the Environment". While both grades work together on a common theme and learn about both the grade 1 and the grade 2 strands, the focus for each grade is determined by specific curriculum expectations. Within these topics students work on understanding basic concepts, developing skills of inquiry, and relating learning to real life experiences.

### **Social Studies:**

We cover the strand of Heritage and Identity, "The Local Community" and "Global Communities". While both grades work together on a common theme and learn about both the grade 1 and the grade 2 strands, the focus for each grade is determined by specific curriculum expectations. Students work on understanding the concepts, developing inquiry, research and communication skills, and applying concepts and skills in various contexts.

### **Physical Education:**

The curriculum covers Healthy Living, Fundamental Movement Skills and Active Participation. There is swim once every 10 school days. Dates will be posted on our monthly calendar, online. Please send a note to excuse a student from swim; all students are expected to participate. A swimsuit and towel are needed in a labeled bag.

### **The Arts:**

The curriculum covers knowledge of the elements, creative work and critical thinking. The students are learning to express their ideas effectively, to understand form and explore meaning through dance (taught by myself), music (taught by Violet), visual arts (taught by myself) and drama (taught by Helena).

### **Homework:**

Please visit the website and scroll to the links on the bottom of the Home Page for more, detailed info. Homework should take no more than 10 to 20 minutes. I suggest that a regular daily homework time be set up with your child and I encourage students to read for 15 minutes each evening (shared or independently). More information about the Language and Math homework programs will follow, as they are introduced to our schedule.

Ontario Curriculum Documents and Exemplars can be accessed online at:  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/>