

Nelson Whynder Elementary School 2024-2025



Family Handbook

**In Service of Students, Families, and
Community**

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2024/2025 school year at Nelson Whynder Elementary! We are thrilled to have you as part of our school community and are eager to begin another year filled with growth, learning, and new opportunities.

Our dedicated staff is excited to partner with you in ensuring a year full of academic success and personal development. We are committed to nurturing our students as they continue to grow into thoughtful scholars and responsible citizens of Nelson Whynder, North Preston, and beyond.

As part of our learning community, students will be encouraged to:

- Engage actively in their studies, always striving for excellence.
- Honor their own history and culture while embracing the diverse histories and cultures of others.
- Carry themselves with dignity, showing respect for themselves, others, and the environment.

This year, we are excited to welcome back the majority of our teaching and support staff and introduce new members to our Grade 4/6, Grade 5/6, Core French, Music, Band, Resource, Learning Centre, and Prep Relief/Floating teacher. Together, we look forward to creating an environment that promotes academic growth and supports overall well-being.

Be sure to stay connected through our monthly newsletter for information on upcoming parent engagement events and important school updates.

We are excited to collaborate with you throughout this new school year and look forward to supporting your child's academic and personal success.

Sincerely,

Ms. April Desmond, Principal

Mr. Chris Head, Vice-Principal

NWES/HRSB School Calendar 2024-2025

SEPTEMBER

2: Labour Day - no classes

3: Organization day (PP-12) - no classes all schools

4: Professional development day (PP-12) - no classes all schools

5: First day of school for students

12 Stand Up Against Bullying Day

12: Curriculum Night

TBA Terry Fox walk/run

30: National Day for Truth & Reconciliation - no classes all schools

OCTOBER

1: Treaty Day - Culturally significant day - schools open

11: Professional development day - no classes all schools

14: Thanksgiving Day - no classes all schools

23: Picture Day

25: NSTU Provincial conference day - no classes all schools

30: Orange Shirt Day

NOVEMBER

11: Remembrance Day - no classes all schools

22: Elem/Middle/Jr Assessment & evaluation day - no classes elem/jr high only

18-Dec 5: Report cards sent home (elem/jr high only)

AM PD Day / PM Parent teacher - (no classes)

DECEMBER

5: Progress Conferences & Teacher Professional Practice Day - no classes all schools

11: Christmas Concert

16-19- School Spirit Week

19: Christmas Concert (snow date)

TBA- Turkey Dinner

20: Last day of school before holiday break

JANUARY

2: Teacher Professional Practice Day - no classes all schools

3: Classes resume

FEBRUARY

February is Registration Month!

26: Pink Shirt Day

17: Heritage Day - no classes all schools

MARCH

3-7 School Spirit Week

4: Pancake Day

7: Elem/Middle/Jr Assessment & evaluation day - no classes elem/middle/jr only

10-14: Spring Break

25-April 3: Report cards sent home (elem/middle/jr high)

APRIL

3: Elem/Middle/Jr progress conferences & Teacher Professional Practice + High School professional development day - no classes all schools

18: Good Friday - no classes all schools

21: Easter Monday - no classes all schools

30: Elem/Middle/Jr professional development day + High School progress conferences & Teacher Professional Practice - no classes all schools

MAY

15: Black Excellence Day - Culturally Significant Day - schools open

19: Victoria Day - no classes

29: Evening of Arts

TBA: Well Being Day

JUNE

21: National Indigenous Peoples Day - Culturally Significant Day

23-26 School Spirit Week

TBA-Grade 6 Closing Event

TBA- Field Day

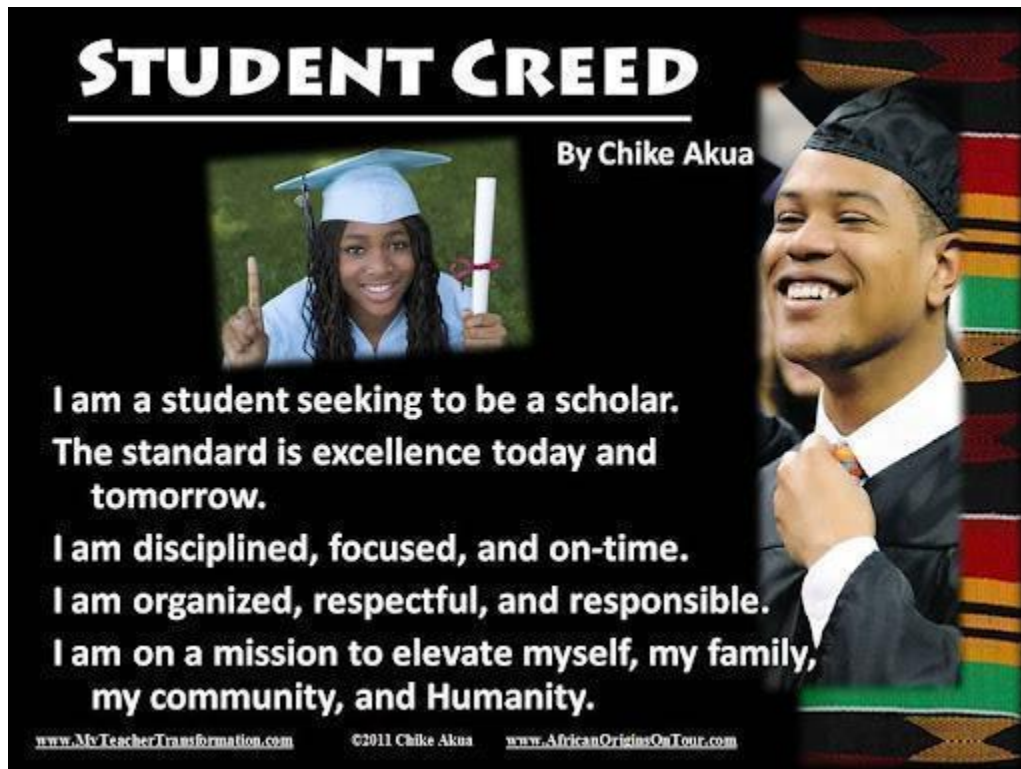
26: High School Assessment & evaluation day - no classes high school ONLY

27: Assessment & evaluation day - no classes all schools

30: Last day of school

Student Creed

At Nelson Whynder Elementary, students recite the Student Creed each morning during announcements. This practice reflects the commitment to deconstructing negative values and rebuilding positive, life-affirming principles, as inspired by Chike Akua.



STUDENT CREED

By Chike Akua

I am a student seeking to be a scholar.
The standard is excellence today and tomorrow.

I am disciplined, focused, and on-time.
I am organized, respectful, and responsible.
I am on a mission to elevate myself, my family,
my community, and Humanity.

www.MvTeacherTransformation.com ©2011 Chike Akua www.AfricanOriginsOnTour.com

(Chike Akua)

Entrance and Dismissal Procedures

Students will enter and exit through designated doors (see below). We kindly ask that parents drop off their children at the designated doors between 8:10 AM and 8:20 AM. For dismissal at 2:30 PM, parents will meet their children at the crosswalk. Pre-primary parents may come to the front steps to collect their children, but please avoid gathering there to reduce congestion. Older siblings (Grades 1-6) should wait on the sidewalk when picking up younger students.

Students enrolled in the Community Centre Afterschool program will be met by staff near the Fire Hall. Parents and guardians are requested to call ahead if picking up a child early for an appointment. Early dismissals will occur at the front door.

To ensure student safety, the entrance to the parking lot will be closed from 8:05 AM to 8:30 AM and again from 2:20 PM to 2:30 PM. Only staff will be permitted to enter during these times. The daycare van and Special Needs Bus will drop off and pick up students at the front door.

Designated Entrances

Pre-Primary	Main Door (by Office) *ramp
Primary/One	Side Doors by Gym/Small Playground
Grade 1/2	Side Doors by Gym/Small Playground
Grade 3/4	Side Doors by Gym/Small Playground
Grade 4/5	Back Doors by Big Playground
Grade 5/6	Back Doors by Big Playground

Visitors

We warmly welcome you to our school and appreciate your involvement in our school community. For the safety and well-being of all students, we kindly request that families and visitors sign in at the office upon arrival. To ensure health and safety measures are upheld and to minimize classroom disruptions, we ask that you please wait at the office while our administrative assistant or a member of the administration assists you.

Student Transportation/Bussing

Bus transportation is available for students from Pre-Primary to Grade 6 who live more than 1.6 km from the school. If your child is eligible for the bus, you should have received an email during the first week of September.

For students living within 1.6 km, courtesy bussing may be requested by completing an online application [here] or by contacting Connect@HRCE at 902-431-4723 or emailing transportation@hrce.ca to request courtesy bussing for Nelson Whynder.

Please note that all students riding the bus must be registered for safety and contact tracing purposes.

ATTENDANCE

Research has proven that students who attend school on a daily basis, arrive prepared, and on time for classes, are much more successful in school. The staff of Nelson Whynder Elementary School monitors daily attendance very closely and look forward to communicating with parents in order to help students maintain a positive focus on their academics. The following guidelines have been established to make sure that attendance does not become an issue:

- Students arriving late for school will be greeted by someone from the office.
- Please phone the administrative assistant at 462-6030 or use the Safe Arrival School Messenger (see below) before classes begin if your son or daughter is ill or has another legitimate reason for being absent, otherwise you may receive an automated call from the system.
- Please ensure the school has up to date contact information.
- Parents are asked to contact the Office if they need to pick up students during the day for an appointment. Students will meet parents/guardians at the front door.

SAFE ARRIVAL BY SCHOOLMESSENGER

A New Way for Families to Report Student Absences

One of our greatest priorities is ensuring all students arrive at school safely each day. Parents/guardians of students who attend our school now have the option to report their child's absence in advance using a toll-free number, the PowerSchool Parent Portal or an app!

SchoolMessenger SafeArrival – an absence management system that improves student safety and makes it easy for families to inform their child’s school if they will be away – powers all three of these options.

If your child will be absent, please let us know by using one of the following methods:

- **Toll-Free Number** - Call 1-833-582-6940 to report an absence using an automated system.
- **PowerSchool Parent Portal** - Log into <https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/> and access the SchoolMessenger website to report an absence.
- **SchoolMessenger App** - Download the SchoolMessenger app for Android and iOS devices and sign up using your PowerSchool username (full email address).

For more information about reporting your child’s absence and a list of frequently asked questions, visit: <https://www.hrce.ca/safearrival>

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The teachers at Nelson Whynder Elementary School focus on supporting student achievement. Therefore, teaching and learning opportunities are varied so that students can demonstrate their learning using their various talents, strengths, and gifts. We expect to set our students up for excellence. Staff are committed to increase student learning and support well-being in keeping with Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy, Teaching standards and student success planning, with a culturally responsive, Africentric, Anti-racist approach to education. Through a team approach including parents/guardians, we will guide our students to success.

HOMEWORK

Homework is important to students’ success in our school. It helps students review and practice what they have learned and helps to develop independent learning. Homework for example can look like reading a just right book, journaling and writing about their experiences, and practicing math facts through games. The provincial homework policy can be found at the following link: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/homeworkpolicy.pdf>.

HOME SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Home School Communication is very important. Teachers will communicate in a variety of ways including classroom newsletters, phone calls and emails. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact teachers to discuss their child’s progress and school experiences. Parents should feel free to contact their student’s

teacher via e-mail or through the school phone. Please note teachers have up to two teaching days to return or respond to parent phone calls and/or emails.

Curriculum Night, Parent/Teacher interviews and Parent engagement events are a good way for home and school to connect and leap up to date with curriculum and student progress. We are excited that we can again meet with our parents in person. Please see the calendar.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Healthy foods are important during school age years for growth and learning. For this reason, Nelson Whynder Elementary has a **Breakfast Program** which will provide a variety of individually packed healthy foods. Breakfast is delivered to the classrooms and is available to students from 8:20 -8:30 am. Breakfast program will begin Sept 16th.

LUNCH

Lunchtimes run from 11:30 – 12:20 for all classes. We are happy to announce our universal lunch program which will begin Monday, October 28. The ordering window for menu selection will be October 18-23 online. More information will be provided.

WATER FOUNTAINS

The use of the fountains are for bottle filling only. For health reasons the option to drink directly from the mouth has been removed. Please ensure your child comes to school with a water bottle.

SCHOOL LIBRARY

Our school library has a great collection of books from a variety of categories. We are constantly updating our selection. We also make it a priority to purchase high interest and fun Africentric books. Students are expected to return the borrowed books by the due date so other children can enjoy the books as well.

MEDICATIONS

Students who require taking medication at school must provide the necessary documentation required by the HRCE administration of medication policy from their parent or guardian, authorizing the use of the substance. **All medications (both prescribed and over the counter) are to be distributed by authorized school personnel after completion of appropriate forms.**

ALLERGIES/HEALTH CARE PLANS

Parents/Guardians of students with severe allergies or other health related difficulties are required to familiarize school staff at the beginning of each school year in order to ensure that the proper treatment may be administered in an emergency situation. **Please ensure the medical section is updated on the Registration form sent home in September.**

Life-Threatening Allergies

Nelson Whynder Elementary School kindly asks that all families continue to respect our Life-Threatening Allergy Policy. Please note that students and staff have life-threatening allergies, including those to **nuts, eggs, poultry, fish, shellfish, and various scent sensitivities**. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated, as it helps us maintain a safer environment for everyone.

FIELD TRIPS/SPORTS EVENT/COMMUNITY OUTINGS

A permission form to allow students to access the Arnold D. Johnson Sports field and other areas of the community off school property during school hours with staff supervision will be coming home in September. Students must have permission forms signed before they can attend a field trip, sports event or community outing.

REGISTRATION AND SELF IDENTIFICATION

Each year it is necessary to update our student information files. Our students will be bringing a registration form home in September which is to be updated and returned to the school. In addition to the basic information the form also contains a section for emergency contact, emergency dismissal instructions, medical information, media release consent, and request for French Language schooling and. Also, there is a section entitled Student Self Identification; Parents/Guardians and/or students are encouraged to self-identify. By doing so, this enables the Department of Education and HRCE to have a greater awareness of the diversity of the student population and the communities served and to better access resources to meet the needs of students.

CELEBRATING STUDENT SUCCESS

At Nelson Whynder Elementary, we are very proud of the success of our students within classrooms and beyond. We celebrate the success of our students in a variety of ways such as monthly positive participation awards, Nelson Whynder Boss Awards, Positive Office Referrals, shout-outs during announcements and in school newsletters, positive phone calls to parents, as well as individual and class rewards.

PROVINCIAL SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

Everyone has the right to a quality education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes respect, self-esteem and school spirit and is free from any form of violence, intimidation, threat, abuse or mistreatment. Students, parents, teachers, support staff, principals, and the Halifax Regional Centre for Education share responsibility for creating a school-wide approach to maintaining a positive and inclusive school climate where all students are supported and develop healthy relationships, make good choices and achieve success in their learning. The Provincial Code of Conduct can be found at:

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/provincialschoolcodeofconduct.pdf>.

Inclusion Policy

Inclusive education is a commitment to ensuring a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education to support the well-being and achievement of every student. All students should feel that they belong in an inclusive school—accepted, safe, and valued—so they can best learn and succeed. Successful inclusive education requires

- safe, caring schools that welcome parents/guardians, families, and include the broader community as key partners in education. Parents/guardians are particularly important in identifying the strengths, interests, and challenges of their children and in working with teachers and others in the school to determine the best way to support all students.
- teaching and support, based on evidence, that promote students' physical, social-emotional, and behavioral well-being and achievement.
 - promoting the independence of every student and developing their resilience as they progress through school.
 - a focus on equity by supporting success for students who are historically marginalized and racialized (African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaw students) or who come from other groups that have been traditionally under-represented and under-served, including, but not limited to, students with special needs and those struggling with poverty
- stimulating and accessible learning opportunities to keep every student engaged, challenged, and inspired.
- ensuring that every student sees themselves reflected throughout their schools, learning resources, and within their learning experiences.

- everyone, including partners in the departments of Health and Wellness, Community Services, and Justice, working together to support students' strengths and help address their challenges in a culturally and linguistically responsive, accepting, respectful, and supportive manner that honours all students' cultural identities and values their experiences and world views.

The Inclusive Policy can be found

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OSw47efPQE7xWoUyxtsy4eZ8ZBNbKOfZ/view?usp=sharing>

POLICY FOR SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Nelson Whynder Elementary welcomes volunteers! The Halifax Regional Centre for Education has a **policy** regarding volunteers in our schools. The Board recognizes its responsibility for ensuring that all students attending our schools are protected by taking reasonable precautions to screen volunteers who may be working with students. The link can be found at: <https://www.hrce.ca/volunteer> .

BAND, VIOLIN and CHOIR

We are excited to have a band program for our grade 6 students. Students will have 60 minutes of band per week. During the first week of school the Band teacher will survey students' interest to see which instrument they would like to play. We try as much as possible to borrow instruments from HRA or other sources. Parents can also rent instruments from Long & McQuade if they choose.

Nelson Whynder Grade 4, 5 and 6 students will have the opportunity again this year to engage in the free Strings program (violin). To register go to <http://dacm.hrsb.ns.ca>. For more information contact Mr. Wilhelm RWilhelm@hrce.ca. The school choir program is also returning for another for grades 3 to 6. Check your child's bag for permission forms within the upcoming weeks.

TECHNOLOGY-PERSONAL DEVICES BROUGHT FROM HOME

- There is no need for students to bring devices from home as we have an adequate supply of Chromebooks and iPads at school.
- Students are responsible for the safety and care of their devices brought from home, although bringing devices from home should be discouraged.
- Student cell phones are not to be used in school or on the playground. They must remain mute in their school bag.
- Students are responsible for the safety and care of their devices brought from home; this is not the responsibility of the teacher or Administration.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Realizing the challenges the pandemic may have placed upon families financially; we have streamlined the school supply list (please see attached below). Any additional items will be purchased by the school with money raised through fundraising activities last year.

Grades Primary - 3 Supply List

- 1 school sized backpack (please label)
 - Lunch bag (please label)
 - 1 package of crayons
 - 1 package of markers
 - 1 package of colour pencils
 - 2 packages of pencils
 - 1 pair scissors
-
- 2 glue sticks
 - 2 white erasers
 - 1 pencil case
 - 1 pair of headphones

Note: indoor sneakers are expected to be worn in gym class. Grade primary students should also keep a change of clothing at school.

*****Please bring all supplies with your child's name on it on the first day of school*****



Grade Four/Five/Six Supply List

- 1 school sized backpack (please label)
- Lunch bag (please label)
- 1 Binder
- 1 Package Page Dividers

- 1 package of crayons
- 1 package of markers
- 1 package of colour pencils
- 4 packages of pencils
- 1 pair scissors
- 4 white erasers
- 1 pencil case
- 1 pair of headphones
- 2 Glue Sticks

