



Halifax West High School

September 2016

Tim Simony,
Principal
tsimony@hrsb.ca



Phone: (902) 457-8900
Fax: (902) 457-8980
Website: hwh.hrsb.ca
E-mail: hwhs@hrsb.ca
Twitter: @HalifaxWestHS

Dates for your calendar:

September 6 and 7: Orientation Day and Professional Development for staff

September 8: First day of classes for students

September 9: Student Photo Day

September 14: Ice Cream Social

September 21: Curriculum Night & Grade 12 Parents Meeting

September 30: Professional Development Day—no school for students

October 10: Thanksgiving Day—No School

October 26: AARAO post-secondary afternoon session

Halifax West Websites

Halifax West homepage:
hwh.hrsb.ca

Athletics :
hwhssports.ednet.ns.ca

Guidance:
hwhsguidance.ednet.ns.ca

Inside this issue:

Student Fees	2
Photos	2
Cell Phones	3
Scent-Free Policy	3
Attendance Policy	3
PowerSchool	4
Guidance ,Athletics	4

WELCOME!

Welcome to the start of the 2016-2017 school year. We are looking forward to another very successful year for our school of over 1500 students and our extended community of parents, guardians, staff, volunteers, community members and visitors.

Halifax West has undertaken the next steps for creating its Students Success Plan and will be focusing on two goals.

Goal 1: To improve student achievement through the use of instructional practices that are informed by knowledge of their students' diverse backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and learning styles.

Goal 2: To improve student achievement through planning and using formative and summative assessment strategies.

These two goals will be central to the work that we do as a school community, and will be our focus for the year. Throughout the year you can expect to hear more about our approaches to meet the needs of our African Canadian, Aboriginal and New Canadian students. In a school that has a population representing over 55 different countries of origin, the work to ensure that every student feels they are represented and respected is critical. Our second goal focuses on the relationship between the work that students do for practice and learning (formative assessment) and the work that is done to measure their knowledge and understanding of the course outcomes (summative assessment) and evaluated to form grades.

As we progress through the year communication is key. Halifax West uses Twitter and the school website extensively for communication with our community. If you are looking for an answer there is a lot of information on our website and through links to the Guidance Department, Department websites, teacher websites, and Athletics. PowerSchool gives you access to student attendance and grades, and allows us to communicate via automatic phone calls (student attendance and messages). Please know that your child's teachers, guidance counsellor and Vice-Principal are all great contact points for your questions or concerns.

Welcome to the new year and all the best,
Mr. Simony

SCHOOL OPENING INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

The first day of classes is Thursday September 8th, with a 9:10 start. Students are asked to check the alphabetical lists on our cafeteria windows that morning before entering the school building. Your homerooms are listed there, in the building you will be greeted by members of our Student Government who can help you find your homeroom.

The first day will start with a homeroom block, where you will receive your schedule for first semester, along with a *tentative* second semester schedule. You can pay student fees, pre-pay for a yearbook and you may rent a locker if you wish, provided your student fee has been paid. See page 2 for more details.

STUDENT FEES

Student Fees are paid by all students. These fees contribute to the cost of activities, events and programs that are sponsored by Student Government. They provide a student ID card, noon-hour and evening activities sponsored by Student Government, library enhancements, subsidized field trips, extra-curricular transportation, a subsidy for athletic and other special events, and more. These are all non-curriculum and non-program based items.

The Student Fee of \$50.00 - payable by cash, money order or cheque - is collected the first day of classes. After the Student Fee is paid, you may choose to rent a locker for an extra \$5.00.

Yearbooks can be ordered as part of the registration process this year for \$50.00. Ordering early will ensure availability when they arrive in June. Facebook may not be forever, a yearbook is! These books have become increasingly popular and we have sold out the last two years. Order now to ensure there is one available for you.



The West is *your* school: make it yours by becoming involved in Student Government, athletics, clubs & activities!

PHOTOS

Photos:

All students must have their photo taken for identification purposes. This is **not optional**. You may choose to order and purchase a picture package if you like. The first Picture Day will take place Friday, September 9th, with proofs being delivered shortly afterward. Picture re-take day will be scheduled later on in the month: announcements will be made and the date will be posted on our website. Picture ID's will follow as soon as possible afterward.

Grad photos for the Class of 2017:

In addition to school photos, you may take advantage of the opportunity to have your grad photo taken by our official Grad Photographer. This photographer will be here for three days in the fall: October 3-5. These photos are published in our yearbook. If you wish to go elsewhere for your grad photos, please make sure that you bring us a photo to include in the yearbook. Appointment times with the official grad photographer can be reserved through the main office. A sitting fee is due at the time of your appointment. Please note, that if you have a picture taken elsewhere it must be submitted in time for inclusion in the yearbook. Pay attention for that date being announced.

PARKING

Our parking lot is reserved for staff.
Authorized visitors may be issued with temporary parking passes.

There are some additional spaces that may be made available to students by a lottery system. Students who choose to park in spaces designated for staff and/or visitors will be ticketed. Repeat offenders may be towed. Designated handicap spaces are strictly enforced and you must have the appropriate permit displayed.

CELL PHONE POLICY

One of our goals at Halifax West is to teach responsible “digital citizenship” and the appropriate use of technology. We recognize cell phones and other digital technologies as powerful tools; however, their misuse in a school setting can seriously distract and interfere with learning.

Students are not permitted to use cell phones during class time unless instructed by their teachers.

Classroom teachers will deal with students who violate this policy. This may include the instruction to hand over a device until a later time. If the problem persists, the teacher will communicate with a student’s parent or guardian. Serious or persistent misuse will result in a request for support from school administration.

Confiscated devices may be held until the end of the day. Second/subsequent offenses will result in the device being confiscated and being held for parent/guardian pick-up. Chronic disregard for this policy will be dealt with as defiance.

ALLERGIES & SENSITIVITIES

HALIFAX WEST IS A SCENT-AWARE SCHOOL!

A number of students and staff at Halifax West have serious allergies. This necessitates specific rules regarding products or foods in some classrooms.

Please be aware that the use of scented products can result in severe and possibly life-threatening reactions.

We require all students, staff and visitors to respect our scent-free policy.

**Research shows
that consistent
student
attendance
correlates to
achievement!**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Halifax Regional School Board, Halifax West High School and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development recognizes that regular student attendance and punctuality are essential components of student achievement. Student attendance is a responsibility that is shared among parents, students, teachers, principals and the school board. **Research shows that consistent student attendance correlates to achievement.** We are expecting that there will be new guidelines in place for the 2016-2017 school year, and these will be published as soon as they are available. Many processes will likely remain the same, since the goal is ensuring good attendance and record keeping.

An excuse from a parent or guardian is required within 3 days of a student’s absence. This may be in the form of a phone call to the attendance line at 457-8900 ext. 1 or by a letter that can be shown to individual teachers and then submitted to the main office for our records.

Despite the reason for an absence, **students are responsible to complete the work that is covered during that absence.** This should be discussed prior to the absence when possible, and promptly after the absence when necessary.

All students must complete a **“Student Extended Absence”** form **at least one week prior to departure** for planned absences that are anticipated to be 5 school days or longer. Medical absences should be communicated to teachers and the student’s Vice-Principal if they are expected to have a significant impact on school attendance, or the ability to complete school work. Please consult directly with the student’s teachers for expectations regarding missed tests, quizzes and exams.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is a web-based student information system that allows students and parents to log on anywhere there is internet access to your own private online account and see grades, track attendance, learn about upcoming assignments, and catch up on school events and announcements.

STUDENT SERVICES

Important notices from your Guidance Counsellors

Website : <http://hwhsguidance.ednet.ns.ca/>

Guidance Counsellors : Ms. L. Cameron (Students with surnames beginning with A—F)
 Ms. T. Ellsworth (Students with surnames beginning with G—M)
 Ms. L. Welsh (Students with surnames beginning with N—Z)

Grade 12 Student & Parent Meeting: There will be an information evening for Grade 12 students—our potential grads of 2017—and their parents in the Bella Rose theatre immediately following our Curriculum Night on Wednesday, September 21st. This session will cover post-secondary options, scholarships and bursaries. This session will be supplemented with daytime sessions for students with specific questions regarding topics like finance, budgeting, etc.

NSCC: If you are in grade 11 or 12 and are planning to attend NSCC after graduation, you should apply as soon as possible for your desired program, as some spots are filled on a “first qualified, first accepted” basis. Go to NSCC.ca for more information and on-line applications. If a spot is being held for you, be sure to submit a current transcript prior to September 30th.

Post-Secondary Expo (AARAO): This event will be held on October 26th for students. There will be many post-secondary institutions from Atlantic Canada available to answer questions about college and university life, tuition, residence and many other topics. This is a great opportunity for students to get face-to-face with the representatives to get the information they need. Parents can attend a central AARAO night at Citadel High School on Tuesday October 25th from 6-7pm.

Post-Secondary Visitation Days: Most post-secondary institutions hold open house days for prospective students. Listen to our announcements or check out the websites to find out when and how to register. This is a valuable service that helps students decide on the “right” choice for their future education.

Course Changes: Please note: The school has been scheduled based on student course requests from the spring, with most students receiving exactly what was requested, unless a conflict made it impossible. There are **no** course/class changes permitted for grade 10 and 11 students. There will be no elective changes made. ONLY changes that affect graduation or post-secondary paths will be considered. Grade 10 students must have 8 courses. Grade 11 students must have 7 courses. Grade 12 students must have 6 courses. You can drop a course by September 16th but this does not guarantee a replacement courses. Course additions must be requested prior to September 19th and will only be considered based on the conditions mentioned previously. Listen to announcements for more information.

ATHLETICS

<http://hwhssports.ednet.ns.ca/>

Schedules and practice times for all teams can be found on our school website. If you have a question or concern regarding athletics at Halifax West please contact Mr. Smeltzer, our Athletic Director.

The Halifax West athletic season begins in mid-August with football and soccer tryouts. Watch our website for further information about dates, times and locations of tryouts and practices. Hockey and volleyball meetings will be held early in September, so listen for announcements. We look forward to another great year at The West with much success for our teams and individual athletes.