



Stephen Leacock Public School
25 Leacock Drive Kanata, Ontario K2K 1S2
(613) 592-2261 (attendance line press 1 or email SLPS@ocdsb.ca)

SLPS e-News September 5th 2017

What a wonderful first day of school it has been. We welcomed many new students and returning students this morning. Students and staff were excited to see some of the great work that has been done at the school over the summer months. All of the planned work inside the school is completed. You will notice a bright new school office space located at the very front of the school. Other learning areas within the school have also been upgraded. Several outdoor projects have also helped to enhance our school space.

- The pavement around the school has been completely resurfaced
- We have a lovely new walkway and new foyer entrance and doors
- We are awaiting the completion of our junior playstructure as well as our outdoor learning area

The work in those outdoor areas (junior playstructure & outdoor classroom) will continue in September. All work will take place when students are not using the outdoor space. The spaces are fenced off and not accessible to students. We anticipate completion shortly and look forward to exciting new outdoor spaces.

We look forward to a wonderful exciting year together. We have a current enrollment of 512 students. We have 4 JK/SK classes, 10 primary classes and 8 junior classes.

Regular weekly communication will be sent out **via email newsletter every Friday** beginning Friday September 15th 2017. Please visit the website stephenleacockps.ocdsb.ca for general information and links to the weekly school communication as well as the school google calendar.

Please check backpacks for classroom communication going home today.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal

If your child will be late or absent, please call or e-mail to advise us.

You may email an absence by contacting SLPS@OCDSB.CA

To report a student's absence, please enter the following information in the subject line: **Name of student, reason for absence, and teacher's name or homeroom number**. Due to time constraints, the office staff will not open each e-mail; therefore, it is important that the above information is in the subject line.

You may leave a voicemail/call: 613 592-2261 **then *1 to reach the attendance mailbox.**
Please state your child's name, teacher, and the reason for their absence.

Late Arrivals/Early Departure/Appointments

School starts promptly at 8:00 am. We ask for your cooperation in ensuring your child arrives on time and ready to learn. Frequent late arrivals impact learning for everyone as students miss valuable lesson time and disrupt the class when arriving late.

If you wish to have your child leave the school during the day, send a note to the teacher or contact the office indicating the reason for leaving as well as the time. Parents are asked to pick up their child from the main office and sign him/her out. Students who arrive late, or who return to school following an appointment, must report to the office upon arrival at school to sign in.

If you have an emergency last-minute change to your child's regular dismissal arrangements, please arrive or contact the office prior to 2:00 p.m. This enables us to have the time to communicate with your child's class and share the information with the teacher.

School Day	8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Before school recess	7:45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Learning block 1	8:00 a.m – 10:00 a.m.
Nutrition/Recess	10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
Learning block 2	10:45 a.m.– 12:45 p.m.
Nutrition/ Recess	12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m
Learning block 3	1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Dismissal	2:30 p.m.

Healthy Choices and Allergies

As part of a broader effort to develop healthier learning environments and choices, we have adopted some practices for our students at Stephen Leacock. **We are asking parents not to bring in food for sharing for their child's birthday or other celebrations.** Rather, parents might choose to send in a book with the child's name in it for the class library, stickers, pencils or other school items (all optional for each family). It is important to know that teachers and students do celebrate each child's birthday in many different ways.

It is also imperative that we ensure the safety of all our students. Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life threatening. Each school is required to follow procedures to ensure student safety; these procedures include staff training, proper identification and medical information for all affected students, emergency protocols and communicating allergy needs with all families. We would like to make our school community aware that there are several students in our school with a severe life-threatening food allergy to peanuts and nuts (anaphylaxis). Although this may or may not affect your child's class directly, we want to inform you so that you can help us ensure a safe learning environment for all students by **NOT sending any foods to school that may contain peanuts or nut products.** Information regarding specific allergies within your child's class will be sent home at the start of the school year. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Medical Information

For those parents of children with a medical condition or who require medication during the school day, forms need to be newly completed by your physician and brought into the school office, along with any medications. **Please visit the school website for commonly requested forms.**

Student Accident Insurance

Creating a caring and safe environment for our students is our top priority. Unfortunately, despite all reasonable precautions being taken, accidents can still happen. Some injuries may result in medical, dental or other expenses that are not covered by provincial health care or employer group plans. As a parent/guardian, you become responsible for these expenses.

Student accident insurance is available for purchase, on a voluntary basis, through Reliable Life Insurance Company. Parents may apply online at www.insuremykids.com, forms may be downloaded at www.binks.ca or hard copies may be picked up from the school office.

The OCDSB encourages all parents/guardians to consider purchasing this insurance. If your child is involved in school related sports activities or is participating in any field trips out of the province you may wish to seriously consider the coverage options, which range from \$13.00/year to \$33.00/year. This coverage is for the entire calendar year and also applies outside of school hours. If you have any questions, please call Binks Insurance Brokers directly at 613-226-1350.

Student Transportation Information

Route information is available to parents via the online Parent Portal <https://ostabusplanner.ottawaschoolbus.ca/StudentLogin.aspx>

Please enter the student's last name, birthdate, school and grade in order to access route and stop information. The "Stop Finder" feature returns bus stop and route information for eligible students who are assigned to regular yellow school bus or small school purpose vehicle service.

❖ Changes to Transportation

When contacting the school about changes to your transportation arrangements, please have the route number handy. Please email your requests to SLPS@OCDSB.CA as we must have a written request in order to process any changes. Please know that changes to transportation arrangements may take **5 business days to process**.

To report a late bus or to report a problem regarding a route, please complete a form on the OSTA parent portal **or** contact the bus company directly.

Applications for Seat Availability on a School Bus

Where school bus routes have been established and there are empty seats on a bus, students may be provided transportation even though their distance from the school is within walking distance. OSTA may authorize and assign empty seat requests for their students, after receiving a completed Empty Seat Application form. When assigning students to empty seats, approval is based on knowledge of the family situation as well as consideration of the following criteria:

- Grade level (priority given to younger Kindergarten students);
- Distance from school (furthest to closest);
- Special needs and/or compassionate grounds;
- Child care / daycare provider needs;
- Date of the application; and
- Siblings attending the same school.
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Parents/guardians must first complete and sign the Empty Seat Application Form. Parents will receive notification from OSTA after October 1 regarding the approval or denial. Empty seats will not be assigned until after October 1 of the school year to allow sufficient time to determine the load counts on school buses and the actual number of empty seats that may be available. Students approved under this provision will ride the school bus on a courtesy and space available basis for the current school year only. Students assigned under the empty seat provision must use the existing bus stop locations that are already in place for the regular eligible riders. No special routing or additional stops will be created for empty seat riders. The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) reserves the right to withdraw such approval at anytime based on changing load count information (for eligible students) and route efficiency requirements.

For more information and the EMPTY SEAT FORM please visit

<http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/policies-procedures/empty-seat-seat-availability-provision/>

❖ **SLPS Student Drop Off and Pick Up**

- **Please exercise caution when entering the parking lot and reduce your speed.**
- **The drop off loop is meant to be constantly moving, with only brief stops to load or unload students.**
- If you have to leave your vehicle to help your child with backpacks etc., please park your vehicle in the parking spaces. This significantly impacts the flow of traffic.
- To ensure student safety, parents of kinder students who are driving to school are asked to park and accompany their children to the kinder yard.
- Students using the drop-off lane should always exit from the right passenger side.
- Please keep right in the drop off lane and circulate with caution. **The entry into and out of the parking lot is a single lane. Please do not pass cars on the left to move ahead in the drop off queue.**
- If you are driving a kinder student to school, please park your vehicle in the school parking lot and walk your child to the gated kinder yard. **Please be aware that the laneway next to the school is not to be used for pick up and drop off and is restricted to OCDSB staff.**
- Kindly remember that the parking lot adjacent to the school belongs to the church. The United Church is a wonderful neighbour to SLPS and we ask for your understanding in respecting their parking lot space.
- **We recognize that our parking lot is a busy place especially during drop off and pick up times. Your patience and cooperation will help to ensure the safety of all students at the school.**
- **Always yield to buses when exiting the drop off lane. The bus lane is for bus & emergency vehicles at all times 24hrs/day**

If your child takes the bus, kindly remember these OSTA guidelines

- To ensure the safety of Kindergarten students, school bus drivers shall not drop off these students unless the parent/guardian or a responsible individual identified by the parent/guardian is present at the stop location. **If there is no one at stop to receive your kindergarten child, s/he may be transported back to the school to be picked up by the parent/guardian. Repeated failure to receive your KG child at the stop may result in termination of transportation services.**
- Please arrive at the bus stop 5-minutes before the scheduled arrival. This ensures the bus stays on time. **This is particularly important in winter when students are waiting for the bus outside.**
- When we are experiencing inclement weather, please stay informed about possible bus cancellations by monitoring the radio, OSTA website and other media channels. If transportation is cancelled in the morning, afternoon transportation will not operate.

SLPS School Council

Our school council is very active and supports the school through fundraising, parent workshops, community events, hot lunch programs and volunteering. The council meets on the third Tuesday of the month. This year's first meeting and election of school council members will take place on Tuesday September 19th 2017 at 7pm in the SLPS library. The parent council provides great opportunities to get involved in school life. For more info, please visit <http://slpsparentcouncil.com/>

Community Information:

The Kanata Beaverbrook Community Association has shared the following with us : *Please be advised that there are 6 to 10 (mostly large) dead or dying trees in close proximity to the pathway in the park @ 16 Leacock DR. that links Kanata Lakes to Stephen Leacock School and is a popular pathway for students to/from school. Caution is advised.*

Looking Ahead

2017-2018 school year calendar:

<http://ocdsb.ss13.sharpschool.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=55478&pageId=213991>

- **September 15th:** FYI-Several forms from the office will be going home:
 - *STUDENT VERIFICATION SHEET*
 - *APPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FORM*
 - *MEDIA PERMISSION FORM*

When you receive them, we ask that you review them, complete them and return them to your child's teacher ASAP by September 28th. This ensures that we have up to date and accurate records for your child.

- **September 19th @ 7pm :** **SLPS Parent Council meeting and Elections in the library.** This will be the first meeting of the 2017-2018 school year. We are looking for new members and several positions are vacant - please join us and find out more about how to get involved !
- **September 28th 2017:** Mark your calendars- "Meet the teacher evening" - more info. coming soon