

# Parent Handbook 2023 – 2024



## **Ross Elementary School**

2451 Ross Road, Abbotsford, BC  
V4X 1J3

Phone: 604-856-6079

Fax: 604-856-6557

Principal

Ms. Kristen Vogel

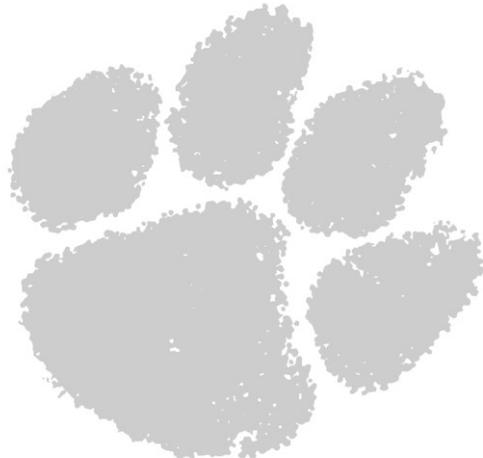
## Principal's Message

Welcome to Ross Elementary School. The following information serves as a student and parent handbook and is intended to provide you with useful information about the school and its organization. Please read and discuss the contents of this handbook with your child.

At Ross Elementary School we believe that the school, the family, and community, all share the responsibility for the growth and development of our children. Research has shown that active parent involvement contributes to a child's success at school. As such, we welcome you in the building to volunteer by helping students, assisting in the library, supervising field trips, or getting involved with our Parent Advisory Council.

We hope that you will take every opportunity to be part of our school, bringing to it all of your energies, talents, and interests. Together, we can strengthen our school community and consistently seek to improve the quality of our programs and our communication.

We encourage all of our students to become lifelong learners and to be leaders of their own learning. The teachers, support staff and I are looking forward to working with you to provide the best education possible for your children. I wish all students, parents, and staff a successful and productive year!



## Bell Schedule

First bell: 9:00 am  
Recess: 10:40 – 10:59 am  
Lunch: 12:30 – 1:20 pm  
Dismissal: 3:00 pm

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## Notes

## **2023- 2024 School Year**

**Principal:** Ms. Kristen Vogel

### **Teachers:**

Corinna Ulvild  
Rhonda JantzKrahn  
Bonnie Lanigan  
Teresa Liaw  
Kaila Mungaroo  
Dinah Guttormson  
Jennifer Johnson  
TBA - PE

### **Learning Support Services:**

Janal MacDonald

### **English Language Learning:**

TBA

### **Support Staff:**

EA's

Lisa Rohweder  
Mackay Potter  
Brenda Lauer

Elaine Van Dyk

Collen Bertrand

**Custodian** – Elmer Chavez

**Office**- Ms. C. Paterson

### **Regional Learning Services Team:**

Speech Therapist - Kim Rioux

### **Social Development Team:**

Counselor -Shawna Enns

Indigenous Support Worker – Thea Zosiak

## **Student Support Services**

### **Learning Assistance**

Learning Assistance is a service that supports students in the regular classroom. Students learn in a variety of ways and at different rates, and some students require more teacher assistance than others. Referrals are made by the classroom teacher with caseloads being determined by the School Based Team. Long or short-term assistance may be provided.

### **Counseling**

Our school counselor works with students, staff and parents addressing preventative, developmental and crisis issues. Our counselor works with students as individuals, sometimes in small groups and with classrooms and is available to parents for help and consultation.

### **English Language Learners**

ELL is a service that supports students whose first language is not English. As per Ministry of Education policy, students are eligible for a maximum of five years of ELL support, which may be provided within the regular classroom setting, or on a pullout basis for students that meet Ministry of Education designation criteria.

### **Regional Team of Support Teachers**

A regional team consisting of a psychologist, speech therapist, and vision and hearing teacher, among others is available to serve our students. If you feel that your child has a need for any of these services, please discuss a referral with the classroom teacher or the learning assistance teacher.

### **Acceptable Conduct**

While going to and from school and while attending any school function students are expected to:

- demonstrate with words & actions, respect for self/others
- be honest, forthright and kind
- respect the property of others and the school
- help make the school a safe, caring and orderly place
- inform an adult of any unsafe behaviour, including bullying, harassment or intimidation
- attend regularly and punctually
- work to the best of their abilities
- be aware of and obey all school rules and guidelines

### **Communication**

School staff has a responsibility to inform other parties of a serious or reoccurring breach of conduct. For example:

- parents of student who threaten or physically fight on school ground
- parents of the student victim
- school district officials as required by board policy
- police and other agencies as required by law
- all parents in a situation deemed by the principal to be important to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation and are taking appropriate action to address it.

### **Unacceptable Conduct**

Unacceptable conduct is behaviour that:

- interferes with the learning of others
- creates unsafe conditions
- acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, cyber-bullying
- physical violence and aggressive play
- foul and/or sexually explicit language

### **Daily Physical Education**

Students will have 1-2 classes with a PE teacher each week as well as PE taught by their classroom teacher. Please ensure your child has a pair of clean gym shoes at school each day along with shorts and a t-shirt in a cloth gym bag for grade 4 and 5.

Please label all items with your child's name.

### **Home Reading**

It is expected that all students, with the support and encouragement of parents, participate regularly in home reading. While the amount of time will vary by grade, parents are encouraged to ensure that their child does a minimum amount of reading every evening.

### **Homework**

How long students spend on homework each evening depends greatly upon the age & ability of the student. If your child is having difficulty completing homework or seems to be spending too much time on homework, please discuss this with the teacher so we can address other factors that may be contributing to the situation and/or make adjustments. We need to keep in mind that although an evening school activity is important, students need time to be children too. There must be a balance of work and play. School district policy recommends the following limits to homework time:

Primary students - 15 minutes / day for 4 days

Intermediate students - 30 - 60 minutes / day for 4 days

### **Conduct Expectations:**

The Board believes that acceptable behaviours and conduct are fostered in a positive climate in which:

- all students feel safe, valued and trusted, and have the opportunity to develop, assume and maintain responsibility and self-motivation;
- all students feel supported without fear of retaliation in reporting unsafe conditions, actions or potential incidents;
- there is a joint effort to learn and a feeling of mutual respect among staff, students and parents;
- appropriate behaviour is taught, encouraged, modeled, practiced, and acknowledged, thereby increasing student self-respect and positive social behaviours;
- disciplinary action, wherever possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than punitive; expectations for student behaviour increase as they become older and more mature;
- disciplinary action is considerate of students with special needs if these students are unable to fully comply with the code of conduct due to a diagnosed disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature.

The Board believes that acceptable student conduct, based on respect for oneself, respect for others, and respect for property is essential to the development of responsible citizens.

Our parent community works closely with the administration and staff to support, encourage and provide assistance to enhance the quality of education and the well being for all students in our school community. The purpose of the Parent Advisory Council is to promote and support education and to

contribute to this sense of school community. The PAC provides many opportunities for parents to participate in many meaningful processes (policies, goals, programs, School Planning Council and resources) both in our school, our school district, and provincially.

If you have ideas, talents to share, or just want an opportunity to meet with parents and know what is happening at our schools, we encourage you to come out to our meetings or speak with any of the PAC executive team.

### **Parking Lot Safety – Drop Off and Pick Up**

We appreciate parent help and support of our procedure for student drop-off and entry into the school. Students can enter from the front or play and wait outside together in the supervised area until the bell is rung at 9:00 am. This will allow us to have better supervision of all students and a more efficient drop-off flow of traffic. Our goal is to make the beginning of our school day safe for all children.

### **Code of Conduct – Abbotsford School District**

#### 1. Purpose:

The Board of Education has a responsibility to establish expectations of student conduct in schools as part of its governance role for the District. The Board believes that the responsibility for student behavior and conduct in schools is shared among students, staff and parents in order to create a safe, caring and orderly learning environment. To support these aims, the Board has established a District Code of Conduct of Students that shall be followed in all schools.

## 2. Responsibilities:

School staff are responsible for consistently supporting and applying the District's and School's Code of Conduct and establishing a positive climate in which structure, support and encouragement assist students in developing a sense of self-discipline and responsibility. School staff are required to inform volunteers and the school community about the Code of Conduct and its expectations. Students are responsible for respecting the rights and dignity of others in learning environments free from discrimination as set out in the BC Human Rights Code and becoming actively and productively involved in their own academic learning and social growth.

Parents/Guardians and all other adults working with students are responsible for knowing and supporting the District's and School's Code of Conduct, and encouraging students to understand and follow these Codes of Conduct.

### **Fair Notice Letter**

The Board of Education has a responsibility to establish expectations of student conduct in schools as part of its governance role for the District. The Board believes that the responsibility for creating a safe, caring and orderly learning environment must be shared among students, staff and parents. To support these aims, the Board has established both a District Code of Conduct for Students and a Threat Assessment Protocol for all schools.

### **Playground Supervision**

Ensuring student safety is of utmost importance. Supervision of students is provided before school, beginning at 8:45 am. As such, students should not be arriving at school, unless specific alternate arrangements have been made, before teacher supervision begins. At recess, two or more staff members are on duty. During lunch, a noon supervisor plus educational assistants provide supervision. A staff member is on duty until the bus leaves after school.

## **The Four 'Pillars' of Ross Elementary**

The four 'pillars' of Ross Elementary are listed below. We are very proud of our students for the many ways they demonstrate these positive attributes on a daily basis.

- **Be Kind and Helpful**
- **Work Well With Others**
- **Leave a Situation Better Than You Found It**
- **Become an Expert at Something**

### **School Goals**

In the 2019-2020 Ross staff continue working on the following goal areas:

1. K-3 Goal: To increase our reading results in our primary students me met the district target of all students minimally meeting grade level expectations by the end of grade 3. (Currently 100% are minimally meeting or better by end of grade 3.)
2. Gr. 4-5 Goal: To improve gr. 4-5 writing results in the area of informational writing (inclusion of accurate information) to 90% minimally meeting of better. (Currently 80% are minimally meeting or better.)

### **Sports**

The Ross Tiger Extra-Curricular Program has the following sports activities throughout the year. Go Ross Tigers!

September – Cross Country

October – Soccer

November - Hockey

January – Handball

February - Basketball

May - Track and Field

## **Healthy Eating and Living**

### **BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program**

Ross is a proud participant in this program and we receive free fruits and vegetables every second week for students to enjoy in class. Fruits and vegetables contain many vitamins and minerals that are important in children's growth and development. Students who eat 5 or more servings of fruit and vegetables each day have better concentration and achievement overall at school. Please inform the office if you do not want your child to receive these fruits or vegetables.

## **Lunch and Snacks**

Please only pack your child a healthy and balanced lunch each day. Save treats for after school at home. Please *do not send pop, candy or chips* with your child to school.



## **Communication With Your Child's School**

While many factors affect a child's education, there is one that can be of paramount importance – communication. Frequent and open communication between parents and teachers leads to a greater understanding and appreciation of the educational process, as well as each child's participation in it. From time to time during the school year, individual parents may wish to raise questions of general concern regarding the education or safety of their children. I am available for discussions with parents whenever necessary.

However, in cases related to specific classroom concerns, the first dialogue should take place between the parent and the teacher, as most concerns can be successfully and appropriately resolved in this manner. We welcome and appreciate your inquiries and visits, and trust you will contact us when, and if, concerns or questions arise.

## **Bus Students**

In the morning, all bus students will exit off the bus and walk to the back of the school. Students are asked to go directly to the back doors of the school, under teacher supervision, until the bell rings at 9:00 am.

## **Children in All Grades who are Driven or Walk to School**

Parents of all children, who drive their children to school, can use the bus loop for a quick 30-second drop off. Please do not stop for any longer than the quick drop off and please don't pull in until it is safe and clear to do so (i.e. do not block the flow of traffic on the road). If you need to park, please park on Ross Road. There is a handicap parking spot for parents/guardians that need it. Parents are asked to not drive to the back of the school area.

### **Late Students**

If you are dropping your children off late, after the second bell has already rung at 9:00, then please use the front entrance to check in with the secretary for attendance purposes.

### **Parent Involvement**

Schools are better places when parents stay informed and get involved as much as possible. This may include one or more of the following:

- Consistently monitor your child's academic progress and make an appointment with individual teachers when a concern arises.
- Attending parent-teacher conferences.
- Take part in the Parent Advisory Council, meets monthly.
- Offering your skills as a parent-volunteer in the library or in a classroom.
- Keeping up with school news thru the Ross website ([ross.abbyschool.ca](http://ross.abbyschool.ca)).
- Support the extra-curricular program with driving, fundraising or sponsoring a team or club in partnership with a staff member.
- Participating as a parent rep.
- Take an interest in what your child has learned that day. Ask what was the best part of the day and why.
- Listen to your child read – a very powerful activity. Read aloud to your child to help foster vocabulary development and comprehension.
- Promote a positive attitude toward school and learning. Your value of education and our school will have a profound impact on your child's attitude toward learning.

### **Parent Advisory Council**

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is your parent community at Ross Elementary School. All parents of students registered at this school are welcome and encouraged to be involved with the Parent Advisory Council. You are the PAC!

#### **2023/ 2024 Parent Advisory Council Executive:**

President: Aissa Blanchard

Treasurer: Emily Rempel

Secretary: Jacqui Wiens

Fund Raising: Christina Roberts

### **Volunteers**

We appreciate parents that have even a small amount of time available to volunteer at our school. At times the school is fortunate enough to also have university students volunteering at our school. All volunteers (including parents) are required to complete an annual form and must have a criminal record check completed which is free at the Abbotsford School Board Office and go for 5 year.

### **Volunteer Drivers**

At times, and especially for sporting events, parents may volunteer to drive other students to special or extra-curricular events. All parents driving children (other than their own) to a school event are **REQUIRED** to complete a volunteer driver application, provide a driver's abstract, copies of your driver's license and insurance. See the office for the application, the process only takes about 5 minutes and there is no cost

### **Surveys**

Periodically, parents will be called on to solicit feedback regarding the operation of the school. Please respond to these surveys, as they are an important means for us to gather feedback from you regarding our various programs.

### **Leaving the School Grounds**

Unless students regularly go home for lunch, we expect all students to remain on the school grounds. Students need written permission from their parents to leave school grounds.

### **Library Books, Textbooks Student Desk and Chair**

Students are issued the textbooks they will need for the year at no cost. Students will be billed for lost or damaged textbooks, library books or intentional damage to their desk and chair. Please encourage your child to take good care of both school and personal property.

### **Lost and Found**

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their belongings. Students should clearly label all personal possessions including clothing, footwear, stationary, and personal books. The school is **not** responsible for lost money, jewelry, or personal possessions. Students should not bring these items to school unless they are specifically required. Students are also asked not to bring electronic devices or cell phones to school or any other 'special' or expensive belongings. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each term.

### **Medication for Students**

On occasion we are asked by a parent to ensure their child receives prescribed medication. Administration of medication is only recommended for students in the school environment where no other options are available and the designated school personnel have received complete information from the parent/guardian about the medication. If your child requires school personnel to administer medication on a regular or emergency basis, please be aware that in order to do so, we **require** the completion of the form, *Request for Administration of Medication at School*, which is available at the school office. This form must be completed and signed by your family doctor or pediatrician each year. If your child has a medical condition, please ensure that the school is fully aware of this condition by calling the secretary to check our medical alert list at the beginning of each school year.

### **References**

Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools, School Act, BC Human Rights Code. Canadian Charter of Rights, Constitution Act, Multiculturalism Act, Official Languages Act, Youth Criminal Justice Act

## **Code of Conduct – Abbotsford School District**

Students are expected to:

- be aware of and obey all school rules;
- respect the rights of all persons within the school including peers, staff, parents and volunteers;
- refrain from lying, cheating, stealing;
- attend classes punctually and regularly;
- work cooperatively and diligently at their studies and home assignments;
- respect the legitimate authority of the school staff;
- respect all school property, including buildings and equipment;
- respect the diversity of our school community;
- behave in a safe and responsible manner at all times;
- refrain from any behaviour that would threaten, harass, bully\*, intimidate, assault or discriminate against, in any way, any person within the school community on or off school property; (\*Bullying includes but is not limited to physical or verbal intimidation, verbal harassment and cyber bullying).
- refrain from being in possession of or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol in all school facilities or on school grounds or at school sponsored functions and activities;
- refrain from being in possession of weapons of any kind in school or at school activities;
- refrain from inappropriate computer usage and/or multi-media devices in accordance with Board policies (cell phones, cameras, Blackberries, etc).

Students are responsible for respecting the rights and dignity of others in learning environments free from discrimination (race, religion, gender, age or orientation) as set out in the BC Human Rights Code. It is understood that as students become older, more mature and move through successive

grades expectations of increasing responsibility and self-discipline will be evident. This may lead to increasing consequences for inappropriate behavior.

School staffs are responsible for consistently supporting and applying the District's and School's Codes of Conduct. This involves actively teaching and encouraging the positive expectations we hold for all students. Schools are to be free from discrimination due to race, religion, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation as set out in the BC Human Rights Code. The Abbotsford School District is dedicated to the creation and maintenance of school environments where all students, parents, staff, and visitors feel safe. In keeping with this commitment, we have also established a District protocol for dealing with threats to members of the school community, and/or school facilities. When knowledge of a significant threat is made, each school's Violence Threat/Risk Assessment Team will complete a threat assessment. The purpose of the threat assessment is to:

Determine if the threat is widespread and/or needs specialized intervention

Ensure the safety of the individual(s) who has been threatened  
Determine the best way to support the high-risk student who has made the threat so his/her behaviour does not become hurtful or destructive

Act in a timely and fair manner as set out in the District Policy for Codes of Conduct.

There are situations when a child or youth shares with her/his parents information concerning a student in their school who is behaving in a threatening manner. As important members of our school community, you are encouraged to share such information with a staff member at your child's school. Should you, as a parent, be invited to attend a meeting to discuss safety concerns regarding your child, please be assured that

the goal of this meeting is to primarily ensure safety. With your assistance, we will ensure that each student in our schools is safe, so we can create the most enabling learning environments for all students.

### Consequences

The severity and frequency, age and maturity of the students are taken into consideration when unacceptable conduct occurs. Responses to unacceptable conduct are consistent and fair. Disciplinary action, whenever possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than merely punitive. Students, as often as possible, are encouraged to participate in the development of meaningful consequences for acts of misconduct and ways to make it right. Special considerations may apply to students with special needs who are unable to comply with expectations due to having a disability.

The Board believes that any breach of Code of Conduct behaviors / expectations would be considered unacceptable. Students are encouraged to inform a responsible adult when becoming aware of any infraction of the Code of Conduct.

Sincerely,  
Kevin Godden, Superintendent of Schools

### **Code of Conduct - Specific to Ross Elementary**

#### Purpose

At Ross Elementary we want all children to feel safe and secure both physically and emotionally. Through shared responsibility involving home, school and community, we strive to provide a safe, positive and orderly environment where all students can learn. Our code of conduct takes into account the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of both individuals and the school community, and clarifies expectations for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

### Conduct Expectations

Our Code of Conduct at Ross is designed to teach children to make choices which show that they:

- care about others, themselves and their school
- dress with dignity and self-respect as outlined in the dress code
- display the qualities of a positive leader including being kind and helpful, leaving a situation better than they find it, working well with others and becoming an expert at something.

### **Reporting Student Progress**

The Ministry of Education requires schools to report five times a year to parents on their child's progress. This consists of three formal report and two interim reports. The formal reports take the form of traditional report cards, while the interim reports are more informal. A Parent/Teacher Conference is scheduled along with the first formal report in the fall, and we encourage all parents to make an extra effort to attend.

### **School Closure**

In the event of power failures or severe winter weather conditions, please listen to our local radio station AM 850 for information regarding school closure or check the district website after 6:00 am for school closure and transportation updates at < [www.abbyschools.ca](http://www.abbyschools.ca) >

### **Bicycle Safety**

Parents are asked to review bicycle safety with their children. Cyclists should always ride single file with the traffic when they are on the road, and they should know and follow the rules of the road. When students arrive at school they are asked to dismount and walk their bicycle until it is parked and secured with a lock in the bike racks.

### **Bus – Bringing a Friend to Ride**

If arrangements have been made in advance with the parents of both children involved, on occasion, children are allowed to have a friend join them on their bus ride home. In this case, the bus driver will require a note from the parent of the child visiting. The Transportation Department does not make exceptions and will not accept verbal or school permission. If your children are having a friend to visit after school and plan to use the bus, please ensure the visiting child's parents provide a note for the bus driver.

### **Closed Campus and Visits**

To help us maintain the security of the building and safety of the students, all visitors (including parents) are asked to please check in at the school office immediately upon entering the school.

### **Use of Office Telephone**

A telephone is available in the school office and in each classroom. Students are permitted to use the school telephone only in "emergency" situations. While students are expected to notify their parents whenever they are delayed or expect to be late in arriving home, phoning home to make after school arrangements to play with a friend is not an emergency.

### **Absences**

*Every morning and afternoon, teachers take attendance in the classroom. If your child is absent or late, we request a phone call from the parent before 9:00 am. In the interest of your child's safety, we will contact all homes that have not notified the school by 10:00 am.*

### **When Children are ill**

In fairness to all, please do not send your child to school if there are definite signs of ill health in the morning. We have neither the facilities nor the personnel to care for sick children. Good health is necessary for effective learning. Students who become ill during the day are to come directly to their teacher. Our policy is to get students who are sick home as soon as possible. Our practice will be to call parents and ask for the student to be picked up. For this reason, it is important that parents keep work contact phone numbers current and that all students must have an emergency contact who is available during the day.

### **Arriving Late**

*If students are late, stop by the office to sign in & let us know that you have arrived, your cooperation is appreciated.*

### **Agenda – Why do we issue each child an agenda?**

We issue an agenda to all our students, helping them learn to manage their time and plan their days, and to keep you as parents informed of your child's school activities. We require that students keep their Agendas with them throughout the school year. Individual teachers may ask parents to sign or initial the Agendas on a daily basis. Children can carry home his or her school work in the front pocket of the agenda. Please check this front pocket daily for newsletters, notes from the child's teacher, etc.

## **Mission Statement**

*Dedicated to helping all students succeed and to be the best they can be.*

It is our commitment, that all learners will have access to a safe, enjoyable and nurturing environment, which will promote the development of appropriate knowledge, skills and values.

At Ross Elementary School, all students will have the opportunity to develop their full potential. Students will be encouraged and expected to achieve their personal best in school, to maintain a positive sense of self-worth, and to become socially responsible individuals. We believe that the school should foster in students a love of learning and that students should be active participants in the learning process. The home and the school share the total education of a child. Parents and teachers should work closely together in the interest of the child in an atmosphere of open communication, mutual support and respect.

### **If concerns do arise:**

**First:** Talk to the classroom teacher,  
**Then:** If unresolved, talk to the principal,  
Ms. Karma Rustad  
If you are not satisfied,  
**Phone:** Mrs. Carla Danielssen (604-859-4891)  
Asst. Superintendent  
If you are still not satisfied, you may,  
**Phone:** Trustee Phil Anderson (604-859-  
4891) Board of School Trustees

## **Computers**

Ross Elementary is a wireless site for Internet access. Students will often have daily access to the computers to support and enhance their learning. Each child is therefore required to have a set of good quality headphones to use in the computer lab.

## **Dress Code**

The Abbotsford School District expects all students to adhere to standards of dress that allows for a dignified school environment. Students are expected to wear clothing appropriate to the school setting. Clothing is to be free of inappropriate language, references or symbols and may not advertise drugs, alcohol or violence (brands like Ed Hardy and Tapout). Specifically prohibited are bare midriffs, tank tops, tops with spaghetti straps and low necklines. Regular clothing must cover undergarments. Inappropriately revealing clothing is not allowed. Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will be asked to change and may be required to wear a school issued shirt. Hats are allowed during transition times but students are asked to remove hats in the classroom.

## **Electronic Devices**

As now required by School District Policy, cell phones, blackberries, photographic devices, game-playing devices and music-playing devices may not be used during school hours unless as part of instruction in class under the direct supervision of a teacher. All such personal devices must be stored out of sight during school hours; may not be used inside the building and cannot be taken into change rooms or bathrooms. If a student is using such devices during school hours or inside the school, the device will held at the office and consequences as outlined in the code of conduct will follow. Students are encouraged to leave all electronic devices at home.

### **Emergency Response Drills**

Fire, Earthquake, and Lock Down Drills will be held on a regular basis throughout the year to practice student safety and evacuation procedures. These dates will often be provided to parents in advance, refer to school calendar.

### **Field Trips, Fees and Financial Hardship**

Curricular field trips offer a wonderful opportunity for students to extend their learning. At Ross, we ensure that all students have the opportunity to partake in these learning experiences. At times a fee may be requested to assist in covering transportation and/or admission costs. **If this request places a financial hardship on your family, please speak in confidence with the classroom teacher or principal.** All children will have full access to these learning experiences and these optional fees will be covered with school funds if parents are unable.