



September 2025 Newsletter

Administrators' Message

Dear St. Richard Families,

It is with great joy and gratitude that we welcome all families—new and returning—back to another exciting school year at St. Richard. The halls are once again filled with the laughter and energy of our students, and we are so thankful to be together again as a faith-filled learning community.

On Friday, September 5 we came together for our first assembly. New and returning staff were introduced to the students and we shared our school theme book for the year *Maybe* by Kobi Yarmada. The story explores the potential each person has and how that can change the world.

We continue to embrace our Division theme for the year: *People of Hope*, inspired by the Jubilee Year of Hope and referencing Romans 12:12 - "*Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.*" This beautiful message reminds us that hope is not just a feeling, but a way of living rooted in faith, perseverance, and prayer. As a school community, we will explore what it means to be People of Hope in our classrooms, relationships, and service to others.

Our school opening liturgy will take place on Friday, September 19 at 9:15 am in the gymnasium. Father Patrick will be leading our liturgy, and we invite all families to join us if they are able.

As a STEM academy, we remain committed to providing innovative, hands-on learning experiences that foster curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. Our staff is eager to guide students through meaningful projects that connect science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with real-world applications—all grounded in our Catholic values.

Thank you for your continued partnership and trust. We are excited for the year ahead and all the beautiful experiences it will bring.

Blessings to you all!

Alannah Muirhead
Principal

Leanne Aura
Assistant Principal

Staff List for 2025 –2026

A. Muirhead - Principal	G. Slusarczyk – EA Kindergarten & Grade 1
L. Aura- Assistant Principal, Grade 4	E. Derus – EA Grade 1 and Library
M. Ghazayel – Admin Assistant	O. Vasliuk– EA Grade 2
D. Verdonk – Kindergarten & Gr. 4	A. Aleas – EA Grade 3
J. Sturgeon – Grade 1	P. Bunge – EA Grade 3
E. Foy – Grade 2	J. Ma – EA grade 5
T. Rehman – Grade 3	K. Dane- EBS
M. Gagnon – Grade 5 & Instructional Coach	E. Hamilton -TASL
M. Sadoway - Grade 5 and Music	D. Marasinghe- FSLW
C. Pleasant – Grade 6	C. Rampersaud – Head Custodian
C. Ramler – Grade 6	
S. Bell – Gr. 2 Reading Support	

Meet the Staff

Thank you to all the families who were able to join us for our “Meet the Staff” event that was held on August 29. We received positive feedback from families that hosting our event before the official first day of school was beneficial in taking away the “Night before school jitters”. If you were unable to join us, you would have received or will be receiving an introductory email from your child’s teacher. Additionally, please feel free to reach out to your child’s teacher or the office if you have any questions or need clarification. We are always happy to help!

Office Hours

Should you wish to contact a staff member or report a student absence via telephone, our office hours are:

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 7:45am – 3:30 pm
- Thursday – 7:45 -2:30

If you are calling outside these hours, please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Communication

A newsletter will be sent home at the beginning of each month and will contain all the news and information about upcoming activities and events at the school.

We love hearing from our families! Please reach out to school staff via email or by calling the office. A reminder to please follow the protocol of first contact. Should a challenge arise please contact your child's teacher first. If you feel the issue requires further discussion, then please contact school administration.

Social Media

Did you know we are on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)? Please like and follow us. Our social media accounts are a great way to see the latest happenings of the school.

Attendance

Regular and consistent attendance is integral to school success. We understand that occasional absences are sometimes unavoidable. However, we encourage families to prioritize attendance whenever possible and to reach out if your child is facing challenges that affect their ability to attend. Together, we can ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Please note that if students are away for extended vacations during regular instructional days, homework will not be provided. Students can access their google classroom account to see assignments.

If your child is late, please ensure they stop by the office to check in, receive a welcome slip and have their attendance updated. Accurate attendance of students is important so we know who is in the building and we can account for all students and staff in the event of an emergency.

Supervision After School/Playing in the Park

While we continue to enjoy the warm weather before the coolness of fall sets in, students may want to linger at the playground after school. Please note that supervision ends approximately 10 minutes after the bell rings. If you allow your child to stay after school, please note there is no supervision. It is recommended that all students go straight home from school and check in with their families first and get parental permission to return and play at the park.

Professional Learning Days

The staff of St. Richard will participate in two school-based professional learning days this year. There will be no classes for students on the following days:

- Thursday, November 13
- Thursday, January 29

Year at a Glance

Please mark your calendars for the following special events at St. Richard this year: The dates and activities listed below are specific for St. Richard, all Division holidays/PD dates can be accessed on the [ECSD Calendar](#). Specific times and information will be sent out closer to each event.

- November 26 – Demo of Learning and Book Fair
- December 16 – Christmas Concert
- March 18 – Demo of Learning

Snack Program

St. Richard was again fortunate to receive a *President's Choice Powerful Kids* food grant. The grant money is being used to have a snack program that provides granola bars and fruit to students in class "on demand", as well as a rotating snack on Tuesday and Thursday for morning recess.

The decision to have granola bars and fruit available in class "on demand" so to speak is to support students in accessing food and not having them feel singled out or stigmatized by having to ask to get food from the office. Maintaining the dignity of our students is paramount, and by providing food in class normalizes that kids can get something if they require it. This includes students who may not experience food insecurity but just happen to forget their snack/lunch at home.

Additionally, as a Catholic School community, it is our duty and obligation to not only attend to the academic and spiritual needs of our students but also their physical needs if required. Please note no student is forced to take or eat the snack offered, it is there if they wish to have it. If you do not wish to have your child receive the rotating snack on Tuesday/Thursday, please let your child's teacher know.

Parent Council

Calling all parents/guardians! Our Parent Council needs you! A robust and vibrant parent council is vital in supporting the learning and opportunities provided to your children. Please see the attached letter from our current council regarding upcoming opportunities to participate in the council, including job descriptions and the variety of "extras" we are able to offer our students thanks to parent council's efforts!

We also want to offer our thanks and gratitude to the families who volunteered to work our casino this past August. We received confirmation that we will have another casino in 2027! The casino is our largest source of fundraising.

Our first meeting of the 2025 -2026 school year will take place on Thursday, September 18, at 6:30 in the library. We hope to see you there!

Parking and Drop Off

A reminder the staff parking lot is for staff parking only and should not be used for student drop-offs. Street parking is available, and we ask that you use the sidewalks to walk around the perimeter of the school. Also, please observe all posted signs for bus parking and use marked crosswalks for crossing the street. The safety of all our students and families is paramount.

Parent Volunteers

We are grateful for the help and assistance our parents and community provide for our school. This is a reminder that per Division administrative procedures all volunteers must complete a Volunteer Registration form. This includes activities such as, fields trips and working with small groups. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the office and we will provide you with the Volunteer Registration form.

Faith Formation

The gift of publicly funded Catholic Education allows us to celebrate, permeate and live out our faith daily. We will have our school opening liturgy on Friday, September 19 at 9:15 am in the gym. Father Patrick from St. Theresa Parish is scheduled to preside. Families are invited to join us in our opening liturgy.

Once again, we continue our relationship with St. Theresa Parish. We will have weekly visits from the parish team of Father Patrick and Father Jake as well we will visit St. Theresa Parish in the spring to attend mass. The parish is currently accepting registrations for families wishing to have their children receive the sacrament of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Please contact the parish via email at: srcristina@strcp.com for more information.

Student Verification

In the coming weeks, you will be asked to log into your Parent Power School account and complete the student verification document. It's important to ensure all information is correct, so we have the most current information for your child. If you've moved or have got a new phone number, please ensure you make those adjustments. Thank you in advance!

School Fees

School Fees will be posted to Parent Power School accounts in the upcoming weeks. Fee payments can be made online. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please contact the office to speak with Mrs. Muirhead to discuss how we can support you.

Transportation

Those families who are using the yellow school bus are reminded to download the Bus Planner App for up-to-date information.

Please note that issues with yellow bus transportation should be addressed directly with the Division's transportation department at 780-441-6078.

Terry Fox Run

St. Richard will be participating in the annual Terry Fox Run campaign. We have set aside time on Monday, September 22 to run in support of cancer research. We are asking students to bring in a Toonie for Terry between September 15 – 22. In the event of inclement weather we will run on Friday, September 26.

Mark Your Calendars

September 18 - Parent Council Meeting

September 19 – Opening School Liturgy

September 22 – Terry Fox Run

September 30 – National Truth and Reconciliation Day – No School