

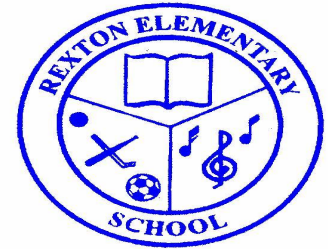
# REXTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

## September 2009 Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2009

***School Mission:** To encourage the development of each student's full potential by nurturing a love of learning and fostering respect for the uniqueness of each individual through a safe and friendly school community.*



### Welcome Back!

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year everyone! We trust that, despite our cool and wet maritime summer break, all students and their families enjoyed a restful and care-free vacation. The teaching and non-teaching staff at Rexton Elementary extend the warmest, heart-felt greetings to all students and their parents; we would particularly like to welcome the new children and their families to the Rexton Elementary learning community and we look forward to working with you and your child(ren) over the course of this

### Inside this Issue:

### RES' New Staff

Rexton Elementary has a number of new staff members for the 2009-2010 school year. We are very pleased to welcome a new teacher to Rexton Elementary this year. **Mrs. Kelly Russell** will be teaching Physical Education until the end of December; Mrs. Russell will be filling in for Mrs. Bowes who will be enjoying her Deferred Leave until after the Winter Break.

We are also delighted to welcome two Teacher Assistants to Rexton Elementary School: **Ms. Denise Kavanagh** (formerly from BLMS) and **Ms. Betty Comeau** (formerly from EGMS).

Finally, we are very happy to announce that **Ms. Gisele Carter** has officially joined RES' custodial team. At this time, I want to personally thank our eager and efficient custodians (Gerald Richard, Donald Hudson, and Gisele Carter) for all their hard work during the summer months, preparing our learning environment for the 2009-2010 school year!

We envision that all new and more "experienced" staff will enjoy a deeply rewarding and professionally satisfying school year in our learning environment!

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### Changes for the 2009-2010 School

**There have been a number of important changes at RES this year:**

- 1) District/provincial funding for RES' **Accelerated Grade 3** class has been discontinued,
- 2) RES' **Grade 4** students will be involved in the provinces' **Pre-Intensive** French Program,
- 3) RES' **Art instruction** responsibilities will be shared between our Administrative team,
- 4) We have 2.5 fewer **Teacher Assistants** than last year,
- 5) We have a new cafeteria service provider: **Chartwell**
- 6) All students will have **30 minutes of curriculum-based physical education** every day, (mandated by the Department of Education)
- 7) Students in **grades 3-5** will be going **outside** to play during their **morning recess**,
- 8) All RES students and staff will be following a **5-day schedule** this year, AND
- 9) Rexton Elementary has made significant **changes to its homework policy**.





**MARK  
THIS  
DATE**



## **RES' Safe & Positive Learning Environment**

### **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:**

There will be no school for students on **Thursday and Friday, October 8th & 9th** because all District 16 teachers will be attending Curriculum Implementation meetings in the Miramichi.



**RES' 2009-2010 School Pictures will be taken on Wednesday, October 14th** (two days after the Thanksgiving weekend).

Once again, we have arranged for **Harvey Studios** to take our photos. Parent volunteers would be especially helpful on this date, so if you are willing/available, please contact Ms. Agnew @

### **Peanut, Nut, Egg, Shellfish-Safe Environment:**

Rexton Elementary has students who are allergic to peanuts, nuts, eggs and/or shellfish. In order to provide a safe environment for all our students, we are appealing to all parents to closely monitor their children's lunches/snacks (reading labels carefully) to ensure that their lunches/snacks are peanut/nut-free, containing no boiled eggs, egg salad/sandwiches, and/or shellfish.

### **Bus & Fire Evacuations Drills:**

RES' classroom teachers and our Guidance counselor, Mr. Melanson, are currently working with students at all grade levels in learning the proper procedures whilst traveling on and evacuating from our school buses. We intend to begin **bus evacuation drills** during the week of September 21st.

Within the first month of school, RES students will participate in three **fire drills**; one drill was completed (very successfully) on Friday, September 11th and the other two will be unannounced and completed during the week of September 14th - 18th (weather permitting).

**Lockdown Drills:** We are required by the Department of Education to have a **Lockdown Drill every year**. RES parents will be informed by notice/Talk Mail the day before our lockdown drill. When our school is practicing a lockdown drill there will also be a notice on the front doors indicating why our doors are locked. We intend to have our first lockdown drill of the 2009-2010 school year before September 30th.

**Before & After RES' Instructional Day:** A "gentle" reminder that RES' school doors open to students and supervision of RES students begins at our fine, fine school at **8:00 a.m. sharp every weekday**. Parents are reminder that dismissal for K-2 students is at 1:50 and our students in grades 3-5 are dismissed at 3:00.

**School Parking/Drop-off & Handicapped Zone:** Please note that RES' handicap parking spot in front of the school is for handicapped drivers only. We have two drop-off spots in front of the school and we thank you for using these spots as "Kiss & Drive Away" spots — not as parking spots. If you need more time with your child in the mornings when you arrive at our school, please park your vehicle in our parking lot. We sincerely thank-you for your ongoing consideration in regards to this very important safety matter.

**Starfish Program** — It's a brand-new school year and so that means that all RES students begin their school year as a RES Starfish! Those who exhibit strong character traits throughout the school year are eligible to be nominated as **RES Sparkling Starfish** and could possibly be celebrated as "Sparklers" at our school-wide assemblies.

# Rexton Elementary's 2009-2010 Staff



Roles & Responsibilities	RES Staff Members	
Principal	Mrs. Diane Wilson	
Vice Principal & Reading Recovery	Mrs. Virginia Richard	
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Connie Agnew	
Kindergarten Teachers	Ms. Lisa Collins & Mrs. Danelle Rioux	
Grade 1 Teachers	Mrs. Susan Campbell, Ms. Julie Mazerolle, Mrs. Haley Murphy	
Grade 2 Teachers	Mrs. Angela Savory & Mrs. Marie Walsh	
Grade 3 Teachers	Mrs. Stephanie Flanagan & Ms. Cynthia Wood	
Grade 4 Teachers	Mrs. Toby Daigle & Mr. Kevin Rioux	
Grade 5 Teachers	Mrs. Melanie Cox & Mrs. Devon Stoddart	
RES' Specialty Teachers	Music/Physical Education: Mrs. Janice Hall-Short Physical Education: Mrs. Kelly Russell & Mrs. Kim Bowes Mr. Kevin Rioux	
Guidance Counselor Technology & Art	Mr. Paul Melanson	
Resource Teacher	Mr. Barry Robertson	
K-2 Literacy Clinician Grades 3-5 Literacy Clinician	Mrs. Nancy Scully Ms. Sonya Tower	
Librarian Assistant	Ms. Janice LeBlanc	
Teacher Assistants	Ms. Toby Campbell Ms. Rose-Jean Cormier Ms. Denise Kavanagh Ms. Jan Mingrone	Ms. Betty Comeau Ms. Nora Fillier Ms. Margaret Martin
Elsipogtog & RES Liaison	Ms. Mona Francis	
Indian Island & RES Liaison	Ms. Shauna Stark	
Custodians	Gerald Richard, Donald Hudson and Gisele Carter	
Cafeteria Staff	Dianne Robinson, Pamela Beers & Brenda MacDonald	
Intervention Workers	Mrs. Donna Hebert & Mrs. Keitha Gallant	
Breakfast Program Coordinator	Mrs. Anne Robichaud	

Once again this year, RES is involved in the **Medic Alert Foundation's NO CHILD WITHOUT** program. There is no cost for students who attend our school and are between the ages 4-14. If your child has a medical condition, allergy, or is required to take medication on a regular basis, then you should consider this program. To register, you will need a *No Child Without* brochure from our office.

## TERRY FOX RUN



Rexton Elementary students will be participating in our annual Terry Fox Run Friday, September 25th. We encourage all students to contribute \$1 (or more) for this very worthwhile cause.



REXTON  
ELEMENTARY

Phone: 506-523-7152  
Fax: 506-523-7464

19 School Street,  
Rexton, NB

Cafeteria Phone #:  
523-0923

*Homework Expectations:*  
*ALL RES students are  
expected to read  
to/with a parent every*



RES' September  
Newsletter Student  
Ballot Question:  
(Please clip & return to  
the school by  
September 18th)

Name a food item  
that could cause a  
severe allergic  
reaction for some of  
RES' students?

Student's Name:

Class: \_\_\_\_\_



**WHAT? RES' 2009 OPEN HOUSE**

**WHO? RES' Parents/Guardians**

**WHEN? Thurs. September 17 @ 6:30 pm**

**WHERE? RES' Cafeteria**

**WHY? a) To elect new members for RES'**

**Home & School and/or Parent School  
Support Committee.**

**b) Meet & greet your child's homeroom  
and specialty teachers.**

**c) Learn about grade level curriculum out  
comes, routines & procedures.**

Our Health Nurse will provide information about how to prevent head lice, swine flu, and exposing our students to food items that could cause life-threatening allergic reactions.



Please join us at  
**RES' 2009  
OPEN HOUSE!!**

## RES' New 2009-2010 Homework Policy

In the spring of 2009, many of RES teachers attended a presentation by educator and author, Alfie Kohn, entitled: *The Homework Myth* that convinced our elementary teaching team to reconsider its homework policy. By now, most parents have heard that RES has modified its homework policy for the 2009-2010 school year. The following is a list of factors, presented to our teachers by Mr. Kohn that helped to contribute to RES' new homework policy:

- 1) "There is **no academic benefit** for assigning homework until high school,
- 2) RES staff made a conscientious decision to change from a test oriented school to a **learning oriented environment**.
- 3) Research shows that you don't get an increase in **achievement** because of homework,
- 4) Assigning homework in an effort to have students "get-used-to-it" is not a **developmentally appropriate practice** for young students.
- 5) We want our students to develop as human beings; **there's more to development than academics**. If children are not bombarded with homework, they will have more

time for reading for pleasure to/with parents, their friends and PLAY (which is the real work of young children).

- 6) All too often, homework is **"busy-work"**. Learning is not about pouring stuff into kids.
- 7) Homework doesn't result in learning because it: a) is stressful, b) is frustrating and exhausting to the child and his/her parents, c) often causes family conflict, and d) is an **extinguisher of curiosity**.
- 8) Homework often **infringes on family-time unnecessarily**; families should decide what happens during family time—not schools, and
- 9) Finally, like adults, when our children get home from a hard day at work they too want to **chill-out!**" (Alfie Kohn, 2009)

Alfie Kohn stated that, better teachers don't need to assign homework. Thus... for the 2009-2010 school year, RES students/teachers will be collectively involved in an action-research project to determine whether not assigning nightly homework will increase student motivation and learning. RES teachers feel that

this decision will enable us to meet the educational needs of their students by focusing on best teaching practices and less on creating, assigning, and policing the completion of homework. Teachers will be focused on the mastery of concepts and not on assuming that their students have practiced/learned the concepts through reams of homework.

There are, however, certain conditions when RES students will be assigned homework:

- A) When a child is involved in a District/School Intervention (Reading Recovery, etc.),
- B) Preparing for school or provincial literacy or numeracy tests,
- C) When a child would benefit from extra practice in acquiring basic sight words and/or math facts
- D) For catching-up if s/he needs extra support or has missed time at school due to illness.

For more information about this homework issue, we encourage you to attend our Open House this week or visit [www.alfiekohn.org](http://www.alfiekohn.org).