

# **Glenwood Elementary School**

## **West Coast Recess Policy**



Living in a rain forest offers many diverse weather conditions. It makes sense therefore, we are well prepared to be outside in the rain. It is important for children to get outside throughout the day for fresh air and exercise. Research has proven time and again, the positive impact that physical activity has on learning. For this reason, many local schools, including Glenwood Elementary, are adopting a *West Coast Recess*.

### **What is *West Coast Recess*?**

Beginning in September 2017, Glenwood Elementary will be adopting a *West Coast Recess* policy. Students will no longer be permitted to remain indoors on rainy days at recess (10:30 – 10:45). Students in grades Kindergarten – grade 2 will be permitted to use the undercover area (near Room 5) as a shelter from the rain. All students are strongly encouraged to bring items from home to be prepared for the weather.

### **Being Prepared for the Weather**

We know that if kids are well prepared to be outside in the rain, they actually enjoy it. As long as they stay dry and warm there is a great deal of fun to be had in all kinds of weather. To be prepared to be outside in the rain it is important for your child to have appropriate clothing. Some items include:

- A Rain Jacket
- Rubber Boots (to enjoy the puddles)
- Rain Pants
- An Umbrella
- A rain hat or coat with a hood
- A change of clothes (to be hung in a bag on in the coat room on their hook)

**\*As always, please label all of your child's possessions\***

### **Commonly Asked Questions**

***Q. I am worried that my child will get sick being out in the rain.***

***A. It is not cold weather that makes us sick but rather viruses and bacteria. People get sick more often in the cold months because they are exposed to each other more in the winter than in the summer. When it is cold outside, people tend to stay inside and are more likely to spread germs to one another. Getting outdoors is more likely to protect our kids from illnesses than keeping them indoors.***

**Q. My child has been sick but is now returning to school. Can he / she stay inside today?**

*A. Students will not be permitted to stay inside during West Coast Recess. First, if your child is still not quite better, it would be better to keep them at home until they are 100% ready to function fully at school. If he or she is to go outside he / she is also probably too sick to get through the day's work successfully – give him or her another day of rest. Secondly, we have very limited supervision inside at recess. Under special circumstances, we can make exceptions. Please contact your child's teacher to talk about your concerns.*

**Q. Why don't you keep them in – they would be more comfortable – it doesn't seem fair!**

*A. We are concerned if we set things up for our kids to avoid inclement weather by staying indoors we are teaching them that they need to protect themselves from it. The habits we set up without kids as they grow up tend to last into adulthood. Rather than feeling that they need to stay indoors we want to encourage them to find ways to enjoy the rain. We are also fortunate to have a large undercover area for students to get out of the rain if they wish.*

*Another reason why it is important that our kids go outside is that it is extremely difficult for most of them to focus on their school work in the afternoons when they have not had the opportunity to get some fresh air. In the past when we kept students inside during rain, they struggled through the afternoons.*

**Q. Are the children ever allowed to stay inside due to weather?**

*A. Occasionally, we have weather conditions that are unreasonable to expect students to remain outside. These days include hard, driving rain with extreme cold or wind. In these situations, we intend to declare an 'inside day'. However, we don't expect to have more than 2 or 3 'inside days' per school year.*

As with anything, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school or your child's classroom teacher.

Thank you for your continued support,

Glenwood Elementary Staff

