



# Welcome to Fox Creek School October 2020



## Parent Newsletter

### Principal's Message

Wow, time flies when you are having fun! It is October already!?!

I already knew this, but it has been confirmed, Fox Creek School indeed is an amazing place. I need to thank the staff for their dedication in making the school start up as smooth as possible given the requirements set out by our relaunch plan. I would like to thank our students and parents for their cooperation and support as we move forward during this New Normal. Our Awards Day celebrations were great and we finally had an opportunity to celebrate with our Grads from last year. Today we held the Terry Fox Run/Walk and it was a great success.

Last night we held our first School Council Meeting of the year. We paid tribute to Sheila Gilmour who has worked tirelessly as Chair of the School Council for many years. We welcome Gord Ashmore as our new School Council Chair and look forward to working closely with him. Lara Stadnyk is the Co-Chair and Jenn Ashmore is the Secretary-Treasurer. Thank you to the parents who joined us for the meeting.

As we look forward to the month of October, the action continues. We have a long weekend, picture day and a spirit day to look forward to. By the way, we do a lot of learning here too. As a staff we are working on our Strategic Plan and our school goals. These align with Northern Gateway Public School and the Ministry of Education Strategic Plans. All of these are living documents that guide our planning and our focus on student achievement. We do formative and summative assessments throughout the year to monitor and measure student success. The results allow us to plan appropriately to meet the needs of the students and to ensure academic growth.

As Summer turns to Autumn, and the green changes to shades of orange, gold and red, we continue our journey through the 2020 - 2021 school year and towards all of the exciting times that lie ahead.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school at your earliest convenience.

Ian Baxter  
Principal

### Email List:

If you would like to be added to our email list and receive an electronic version of our newsletter, please contact Mrs. Thackeray at the office or [pamela.thackeray@ngps.ca](mailto:pamela.thackeray@ngps.ca)



### Dates to mark your calendar

October 8  
Picture Day

October 9  
PD Day  
No School

October 12  
Thanksgiving  
No School

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Website: [foxcreekschool.ca](http://foxcreekschool.ca) Facebook: Fox Creek School Twitter: @ngpsfcs

Mr. Ian Baxter, Principal

## Elementary News

First day of fall leads to a leaf hunt and an adorable leaf craft. 1H had an awesome time creating little leaf people and pets!!





The annual Orange Shirt Day on September 30th opens the door to global conversation on all aspects of Residential Schools. It is an opportunity to create meaningful discussion about the effects of Residential Schools and the legacy they have left behind. A discussion all Canadians can tune into and create bridges with each other for reconciliation. A day for survivors to be reaffirmed that they matter, and so do those that have been affected. Every Child Matters, even if they are an adult, from now on.

The date was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes to residential schools, and because it is an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year. It is an opportunity for First Nations, local governments, schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come [#everychildmatters](https://www.instagram.com/everychildmatters)







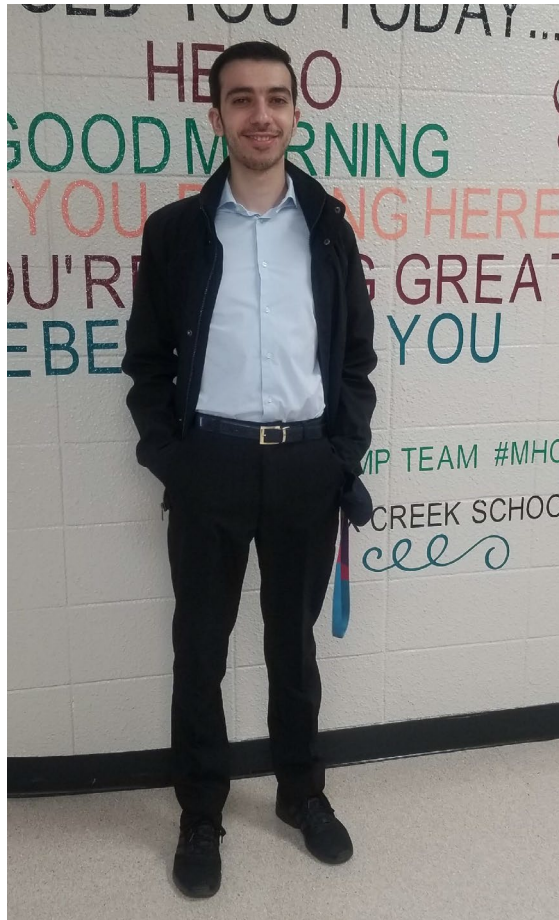
## Meet Our New Teachers:

Jessica Gingras



"I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Jessica Gingras and I am the new Social Studies teacher here at Fox Creek School. My interests include history, reading and learning new skills. Previous to this year, I have taught in Edmonton. I look forward to the year ahead. I know that there are great things to come in this school!"

## Ameer Jaber



“Hello everyone! My name is Ameer Jaber and I am the new math teacher at Fox Creek School. I lived in Edmonton and graduated from the University of Alberta with a focus in Physics and Mathematics. I spend my spare time watching Soccer, Basketball, and Hockey. I also enjoy music, art, hiking, and travelling to Alberta's national parks. Most importantly, I am very grateful to be working with fabulous students at Fox Creek School.”



## Ashley Heyden



My name is Ashley Heyden. I have been teaching for 10 years now, both here and in Japan. I can speak Japanese and I love reading, hiking in the mountains, and swimming. I love teaching English, as well as social studies. I look forward to being here in Fox Creek!



Each year, students across Northern Gateway Public Schools complete a MIPI (Math Intervention/Programming Instrument) and HLAT (Highest Level of Achievement Test - Writing) in class. MIPI and HLAT are diagnostic tools used to assist with programming. They differ from PAT (Provincial Achievement Test) and Diploma exams, which are measures of student achievement.

Fox Creek students in Grades 2- 10 will be completing the MIPI by the end of September, while Grade 1 students will be writing it in the spring. Fox Creek students in Grades 2- 9 will be completing the HLAT by the end of October and again in the spring, while Grade 1 students will be writing it only in the spring.

**Please see the information below explaining these diagnostic tools.**

## Key Messages for Parents

### What is the MIPI?

- The Math Intervention/Programming Instrument (MIPI), is a tool used with all students in Grades 2 to 10.
- Students will complete this short assessment on math concepts they learned last school year. For example, a student who is being programmed for at Grade 6 will answer a series of questions based on Grade 5 outcomes.
- The results will **not** count toward your child's grades, and there is no need to prepare or study ahead of time.
- Teachers will use the MIPI results alongside other information and evidence gathered about your child to determine the programming needed to be successful.
- If it is determined that your child requires more support, the teacher will communicate with you regarding strategies for classroom instruction.
- Every student is different; teachers offer a wide range of assistance and support to meet each child's unique needs.
- School administrators have the choice to allow **test accommodations** such as a reader, frequent breaks or extra time for individual students who would regularly utilize them. Your child will not write the MIPI if they qualify for an exemption using guidelines similar to those used to determine exemptions for the Provincial Achievement Tests

### Why the MIPI was implemented?

- We currently have the HLAT, or Highest Level of Achievement Test to help us see how well students are doing in their writing skills.
- The MIPI is similar to the HLAT, in that it will help us gauge how well students understand different math concepts. It's a tool that will allow us to identify where your child may be having some challenges. Because it's taken at the beginning of the year, teachers can use it to identify areas of difficulty, so they can help students succeed.
- The MIPI will be used in schools across the District, to give us district-wide information in order to help coordinate and improve math programming and support for all students.





## COVID-19 Information—Student illness

### STAY AT HOME GUIDE

This summary, based on the September 2020 Government of Alberta update, [COVID-19 Symptom-Student illness](#), provides further clarity to parents about the 'isolation' period or 'stay home and minimize contact with others' period if a child has presenting symptoms.

It is still expected that parents complete [Alberta Health's Daily Checklist](#), each day, before sending your child to school.

### My child has COVID-19 symptoms. How long must my child stay home?

<b>If my child has any of these core COVID-19 symptoms:</b>	<b>If my child has any of these (secondary) symptoms:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fever</li> <li>Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough)</li> <li>Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening)</li> <li>Runny nose</li> <li>Sore throat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chills</li> <li>Painful swallowing</li> <li>Stuffy nose</li> <li>Headache</li> <li>Muscle or joint aches</li> <li>Feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion</li> <li>Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite)</li> <li>Loss of sense of smell or taste</li> <li>Conjunctivitis (pink eye)</li> </ul>
<b>What should I do next?</b>	<b>What should I do next?</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete AHS' <a href="#">Online Self-Assessment Tool</a> and call 811.</li> <li>2. You are legally required to have your child isolate for at least 10 days from the start of symptoms or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.</li> <li>3. It is strongly recommended that your child be tested for COVID-19.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete AHS' <a href="#">Online Self-Assessment Tool</a> and call 811.</li> <li>2. Keep your child home from school and minimize your child's contact with others until symptoms resolve.</li> <li>3. It is recommended that your child be tested for COVID-19.</li> </ol>
<b>When can my child return to school?</b>	<b>When can my child return to school?</b>
<p>Your child may return to school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once the 10-day isolation is complete and symptoms have resolved,</li> <li>OR</li> <li>When your child has received a negative COVID-19 test result, has no known exposure to the virus, and symptoms have resolved.</li> </ul>	<p>Your child may return to school once symptoms have resolved and your child is feeling better.</p> <div style="background-color: #E91E63; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Please see Alberta's <a href="#">COVID-19 Symptom-Student illness</a> document for information regarding pre-existing conditions.</p> </div>



## KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE

I have shared information about keeping children and youth safe online previously. However, with the increased reliance on technology during COVID-19, we could use an updated reminder of basic safety and appropriate digital citizenship.

### WHAT IS DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP?

The online dictionary definition of DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP is "the responsible use of technology by anyone who uses computers, the internet and digital devices to engage with society on any level".

When it comes to safe use of technology, Northern Gateway Public Schools Administrative Procedure 140 1.3 states

*Accessing, uploading, downloading, transmitting, displaying or distributing obscene, violent, illegal or sexually explicit language is unacceptable. All users are responsible for their appropriate use of resources in all areas of the school program.*

### DANGERS

With just a click, we can have access to any terrifying, vile, twisted and horrific image. It is not a matter of IF our children will witness extreme violence, perversion and brutality, it is a matter of WHEN. I do not say this to cause fear. Rather, we as parents and/or grandparents, must protect our children. If not us, then whom? We need to arm ourselves with the knowledge and skills to teach our children how to report obscene sites, reject requests from strangers, block inappropriate followers, and talk to you when they see something upsetting.

### HELPFUL SAFETY HINTS

**Keep devices and computers in high-traffic areas of your home.** The Canadian Pediatric Society tells us that solitary use increases the risks for exposure to negative or harmful content.

**Talk, talk and talk some more with your children.** It is never too early or late to start conversations staying safe online. See "Discussion Starters" below.

**Set limits and boundaries.** Just like giving bedtimes and curfews, children need to know what you expect online, time limits, sites to go on, etc. According to the Canadian Pediatric Society, for children under 5 years of age, screen time should be less than 1 hour per day. Screens should be avoided at least 1 hour before bedtime, and "screen-free" times must be incorporated daily, for activities such as exercise, sports, board games or family meal time.

**Surf the internet together.** Let your children show you what they like to do online.



**Be a good digital citizen.** Start talking with your kids early about being respectful and responsible online. Discuss your family values in relation to the acceptable uses of technology. Use your own online behavior as a **role model**. Limit the amount of personal information you share and keep a healthy balance between time spent on screens and face to face relationships.

**Set strong passwords for all devices.** It's important to **NOT** use the same passwords for critical accounts, and to change passwords regularly. Reinforce with your children that they should **NEVER** share their passwords with anyone other than you, not even their best friend. **Know your child's passwords.**

**Set privacy settings.** They should be at the highest possible setting for each site and each app your child is accessing.

**Share with care.** Younger children should not post personal information — including their name, phone number, email address, postal address, school, or photos without consulting with you.

**Talk with older children about the information they are posting.** Putting personal information online leaves them open to cyberbullying or to people who want to take advantage of them. Social networks (Tik Tok, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.) are a great way to connect with other people, but children need to consider carefully what they post on these sites. Reinforce the message that the internet is **FOREVER** and that information they post can be shared with **ANYONE**. In addition, be knowledgeable on the age requirements of apps, games, movies and television shows. Most social media apps are a minimum of 13 years old. Many apps, games and Netflix shows are **Mature** due to violence, sex and profanity.

**Don't respond to a bully or try to retaliate.** **STOP, BLOCK, TELL** is a good rule. Teach your children to stop communicating with someone who is sending insulting, hurtful or disturbing messages online. If the messages continue, ask your child to save them and then block that person. Then they need to tell a parent or trusted adult. Cyberbullying can have tragic outcomes for the **bullied** and serious legal consequences for the **bully**.

**Think before you click.** Children should never click links in messages from people they don't know or in messages that look suspicious. They should not download files to their phones or computers unless they are absolutely sure they're safe.

**Be wary.** Children should not get together with anyone they "meet" online. The person they think they're talking to online may not always be who they say they are. If a person asks for personal information or makes them uncomfortable, they need to come to you or another trusted adult.

**Inform yourself.** It can be difficult to keep up with technology, but just as you need to know where your children are in their offline lives, it is just as important to know where they go when they're online. Talk to other parents, learn from one another. As noted earlier, open communication with your children is your best route staying informed.





**Randomly Check Your Child's Browser and Chat Histories.** Don't be afraid to take a close look at what your children are looking at and who they're chatting with online. *Forewarned is forearmed.*

[Protectkids.com](http://Protectkids.com) and [Internet Safety 101](http://Internet Safety 101) are excellent sources of information about sexual predators and advice to help avoid the dangers associated with online predators.

**Check With Your ISP for Parental Control Software.** Most Internet Service Providers offer free parental control software that can help parents keep their kids safe online. Some providers have it built into the modem/router used to access the service.

**Set Parental Controls on the Connected Devices Your Kids Use.** Windows and Mac computers, iOS and Android phones and tablets, and gaming consoles all offer parental controls. Familiarize yourself with these controls and adjust them as needed.

Check out these sites for the best apps to keep your entire family safe and responsible online.

<https://www.safewise.com/resources/parental-control-filters-buyers-guide/> and

<https://pixelprivacy.com/resources/keep-children-safe-online/> and

<https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-parental-control-software>

### WARNING SIGNS

Kids who are being cyber-bullied, have been contacted by an online predator or viewing inappropriate material often exhibit changed behavior. They may act secretly, react unusually, close browser windows when you enter the room, take a device into the bathroom or other locked doors, spend excessive time online, especially at night, moodier than usual, and have mature knowledge about adult situations. Do not get angry at your child but talk to them in a non-judgmental manner.

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What are your favorite things to do online?
- What is personal information? Why should you keep it private?
- Tell me about a time that you were scared or worried about something you saw online.
- What could you do to be safer online?
- What would you do if anyone online asked to meet you face-to-face? Besides me, who do you feel that you can talk to if you are in a scary or uncomfortable situation?

("National Center for Missing and Exploited Children" website [\[www.netismartz.org/internetsafety\]](http://www.netismartz.org/internetsafety))

Parenting is hard! It takes a lot of time and energy to stay informed on keeping children safe online and in real time. Do not lose hope! With positive relationships, open communication and a healthy connection with your child, you will all survive and be stronger because of it!

### More resources for parents:

[Government of Canada: Get Cyber Safe](#), [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#), [Need Help Now](#),

[www.kidshelpline.com](http://www.kidshelpline.com), report concerns to <https://www.cybertip.ca/app/en/report> and/or the RCMP

[Sources: CBC News](#), [Scholastic](#), [Privacy Canada](#), [Pixel Privacy](#), [Protect Young Minds](#), [Canadian Pediatric Society](#)

This article was submitted by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She advocates for students and parents, providing a link to other supports within the community. Tammy has been a social worker for over 20 years and is a mother to 4 teenagers.





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**AMA Letter for the PArent Bulletin/Facebook/Wwebsite**



Fox Creek School has been involved with the AMA School Safety Patrol program for a number of years. Students volunteered from Grade 5 or 6 and were trained to use signs and voice signals. They helped the younger children of the school cross the street safely, before and after school.

The 2020/2021 school year has brought many challenges to the previous school practices. Some grades start at 8:30 am, other grades enter the school at 8:40 am. The dismissal times have also changed for groups of students. We also try to deter students from interacting with others that are not in their cohort, by having staggered recesses. All of these procedures are in place to protect students by limiting the number of people they come in contact with and helping them maintain social distancing.

Because of these changes, it has been decided that the AMA School Safety Patrol Program will be suspended for this year.