

From the Principal's Pen  
September 2022  
Submitted by: Jennifer McGee, Principal of Atwood Primary School



**"Peace begins with a smile." – Mother Theresa**

I always like my first Principal's Pen of the year to include our school mission and vision! Our mission is simple, two words: Atwood Awesome! We simply want your child's school experience to be AWESOME!

Our school vision is a bit more detailed and is as follows:

The Atwood Primary School Community creates a safe, happy, and healthy beginning to each child's successful educational journey by:

- Focusing on individual children's academic, wellness, and mindfulness needs
- Engaging our learners in a meaningful and well-rounded curriculum incorporating the whole child
- Modeling, valuing, and explicitly teaching emotional wellness and social skills
- Welcoming our families and community to come along...

"Insist your schools are happy places." – Ralph Atwood

We very intentionally chose the words: safe, happy and healthy as the beginning of our vision statement. As we work to teach your children to be readers, writers, problem solvers, mathematicians, and well-rounded learners, we want that journey to be embedded in joy and happiness and the freedom to take chances and make mistakes! After all, that's how we all want to learn!

Naturally, although we want it to be, school is never pure utopia. There will be "those days". Children don't always get along, learning can be hard, the days can feel long, and children (maybe you've noticed) don't always follow adult directions, sometimes children didn't get enough sleep, and sometimes we didn't. In those moments, and on those days, we ask for you to work with us, communicate with us and trust us to, sometimes make, hard decisions that will ultimately help your child learn and grow.

We work as a community to teach your children skills to help them regulate their feelings. Last year, we started a weekly show, "Moments with Marvin". The intent of this show was to celebrate learning, teach self-regulation skills and mindfulness, and to work through weekly problem solving in a fun way. I hope you will take a moment to go into this website. These weekly episodes will introduce you to the language we use with your children, and there are also fun dances to learn that we perform as a whole school. Here is the website: <https://sites.google.com/rsu18.org/marvin/marvin>

There are things you can do at home to make sure your children have the absolute best chance for successful days at school. On the following page you will find a list of tried and true suggestions that help children arrive at school calm and ready to learn!

- Establish a routine in the evening for a regular bedtime that allows your child 9-12 hours of sleep
- Establish a calm morning routine that allows your child to prepare for the school day: getting dressed, brushing teeth, packing back pack, and eating a healthy breakfast
- If your child is going to eat school breakfast, have your child at school by 7:40 so he/she has time to eat
- Practice getting into these habits a couple of weeks before school starts so your child's inner clock gets adjusted
- Have your child follow directions and praise and reward good listening!
- Talk to your child about turn taking, sharing and getting along with new friends
- Read to your child, color with your child, and spend time having your child complete tasks for you
- Cut way down on sugary drinks or junk food...those little bodies need healthy nourishment in order to focus
- If your child is in the habit of rough play or hitting, tell your child that is a "Never, Never" rule at school
- Practice being on time...children who get to school late struggle to catch up for the rest of the day
- Have fun with letters, numbers and books!

A big focus for Atwood this year will be establishing our school as a peaceful village. There is a great deal of chaos in the world, but we like to think of our little school as a safe haven for learning. Our student population is 4 years old to 8 years old...the sweetest ages for fun and joy, and they are little sponges for learning. Right away, we see the magic begin to unfold. Children learn to read, they learn to write, they create masterpieces, they count farther than they have ever counted. And we celebrate all of it! So will you! Soon your refrigerators will be like art museums...filled with the papers that come home in backpacks!

This promises to be an exciting year. We have had hardly any teacher turn over for the past decade, but for a variety of reasons, this year we have FIVE new teachers! It's exciting to be rebuilding our teaching team...energizing and renewing.

So let's go Atwood Awesome Families! Let's begin this peaceful, joyful journey. Buckle up!

Educationally Yours,

Jennifer McGee, Principal of Atwood Primary School

**Dates to Note:**

**Wednesday, August 31: 1<sup>st</sup> day of school**

**Monday, September 5: Labor Day, no school**

**Tuesday, September 20: Early Release Day/ 12:00 noon release time**

**Thursday, September 22: Flu Shot Clinic**

**Monday, October 10: Indigenous People's Day/ no school**

**Tuesday, October 11: School Photo Day**

