

May 26, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Beginning September 6, 2011, St. Rita School will be implementing the "Reverse Lunch Hour". This means that students will enjoy their recess/play time **before** they eat their lunch. This concept was presented to the School Council last year and is supported by them.

WHAT IS IT?

Before eating lunch, students will be dismissed to the playground to play. After 40 minutes, they will re-enter the building and be given time to wash their hands and sit down to eat their lunch in the classroom. The new schedule will be:

12:00 – 12:40	Outdoor Recess
12:40 – 1:00	Students eat lunch in their classroom
1:00	Classes Begin

Students who go home for lunch will return to the classroom when they return to school, rather than the playground since there will be no one outside to supervise at that time.

Along with, and in compliment to this new initiative, all classes will start the new school year by teaching lessons on "healthy eating" and stressing the importance of hand washing.

WHY?

There is research to suggest that the reverse lunch hour has positive benefits for students and for the school atmosphere.

- Playing first allows students to burn off some accumulated energy before eating and gives them a better appetite for eating their lunch.
- Students are not rushing through their lunches in anticipation of outdoor play and, as a result, will eat and drink more.
- Students often make more nutritious choices when they are not eating in a hurry.
- Improved student behavior on the playground and in the classroom.
- Fewer accidents during the lunch break.
- Students are more focused, calmer and ready to learn when they return to work in the afternoon.
- Cleanliness in classrooms and hallways improves.

We hope that the Reverse Lunch Hour will promote healthy eating and improve student achievement. Further information about this program will be sent to you before the end of this year. In that way we hope to have all your questions answered before the beginning of September. We are looking forward to implementing this new initiative and will monitor the effects of the reverse lunch hour throughout the year.

Sincerely,

U. Fromm
Principal