

April 5, 2024

## RE: Partial Solar Eclipse Observable on Vancouver Island on Monday, April 8, 2024

Dear Families and Staff,

On Monday, April 8, 2024 a total solar eclipse will cross North America, with a partial eclipse observable on Vancouver Island. Although exciting and a unique experience to witness, we'd like to highlight potential viewing risks and share important safety tips with our learning community.

A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun, completely or partially blocking the face of the sun. On Vancouver Island, the partial eclipse is expected to start at about 10:40am and end at about 12:20pm.

It's crucial to resist looking directly at the sun at any time, and especially during the eclipse, as the risk of harm is higher. It can be tempting to look and lower light levels can affect our natural protective mechanisms to turn away from the usual brightness.

For children, the risk is even greater since their retinas let in more light, they may not fully understand the risks, and may require extra care and reminders to avoid looking at the sun. For these reasons it is sensible to keep students indoors during the eclipse, with the blinds down.

Thankfully, it is possible to take part in the excitement of the event safely. The eclipse can be watched through NASA's [online live stream](#) and [additional recommendations](#) for safe viewing are outlined on the Government of Canada website.

In summary, we'd like to stress the importance of the following tips:

- Never look directly at the eclipse
- Only view the eclipse if you have safe viewers and filters that meet international standards, and do not use homemade filters to view the eclipse
- If you don't have eclipse viewers that meet the international standard, create a pinhole projector and focus on the projected image, not the sun itself
- **Supervise children during this event**

Thank you for staying informed and safe,

Greater Victoria School District