

Mount Benson Elementary School

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NEWSLETTER

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Principal's Comments

Once again we find ourselves rapidly closing in on the end of another school year. May was an extremely busy month with a very full June calendar coming up. There will be many activities including, Fun Sport Day, Band and choir concert, Grade 7 trip to Capenwray, District track meet, field trips, in addition to grade 7 orientation and the welcoming of new kindergarten families to our school. All the while, staff and students will be working on completing their course of studies for the year and all the other activities that go along with the closing out of another school year. We are also busy planning for September. We will try to keep you posted on the plans and changes we anticipate for September. As usual the number of students registered for next year is being watched critically. Please let us know if you are moving or if you know of anyone moving into the area so we can try to fine-tune our enrolment projections.

School Organization and Planning for 2007-2008

Currently we have 20 kindergarten students registered for September. We are graduating 23 grade 7 students on to high school so the small difference indicates that we are holding our own in terms of enrolment for next year. The staff and I have been consulting on class organization and timetabling for next year. You may recall that last September we were allocated an extra 1.0 FTE teacher because of District primary averages and class composition concerns in our intermediate grades. We have not been allocated this extra staffing for next year and consequently we have to organize with one less division. Our staffing allocation information was shared with the School Planning Council and our tentative class organization for 2007-2008 is as follows:

Kindergarten
Grade 1
Grade 2
Grade 3
Grade 4/5
Grade 5/6
Grade 6/7

This is our tentative plan, and as we have learned in the past there can be changes in enrolment and staffing in September. Staff assignments will be penciled in during the next weeks and shared in June's newsletter.

Student Placement in Classes

As our school becomes smaller the number of classes decreases and hence the number of options for placing students also decreases.

The assignment of students into classes each year is a careful and deliberate one with much time and effort spent by staff to ensure the best possible placement of each student. Staff meets in June to develop tentative class lists and meets again in late August to consult again on the class compositions. Finally, at the start of the school year staff again review and refine the lists.

Dates to Remember

Friday June 1st—Fun Sports Day
Monday June 4th—Woodlands Secondary School Musical Theatre Grade 6 & 7s
Tuesday June 5th—Band and Choir concerts 1:45-2:45 and 6:30-7:30
Thursday June 7th—District Track Meet Rotary Bowl
Friday June 8th—Jive Contest Grades 5,6, & 7 John Barsby 12:00-1:30
Saturday June 9th—PAC Bottle Drive 10:00-12:00
Tuesday June 12th—Kindergarten Orientation
Tuesday June 12th—RCMP Bike Safety Grades 2,3 & 4
Wednesday June 13th—Friday June 15th—Grade 7s at Camp Capenwray
Tuesday June 19th—Assembly Aboriginal Dance performance
Tuesday June 19th—PAC Meeting 7:00 pm
Wednesday June 20th—Aboriginal Evening 6:30-7:30
Friday, June 22nd—Tree Planting Ceremony K & gr 7
Monday June 25th—Rathtrevor Trip Grades 5,6, & 7
Monday June 25th—K, Grade 1 & 2 to Beban Park Swimming
Tuesday June 26th—Bowen Swim and fun day Grades 3,4,5,6, & 7
Tuesday June 26th—Grade 7 Dinner
Wednesday June 27th—Final Assembly 1:00 pm
Wednesday June 27th—Last day of classes. Report Cards issued.

When determining each student's placement the following factors are considered:

Academic abilities
Work habits, levels of independence, learning styles, social/emotional maturity
Gender equity (trying for a balance of males and females in the class)
Teaching styles, the number of years a child has been with a teacher
Keeping students together/apart. Children can have a positive/negative influence on each other and sometimes it is in their best interests to be together/apart.
Special needs children and the scheduling of education assistant hours
Maximizing the positive learning environment for the whole class
The size and composition of the class
Parental input

These individual factors are superimposed on a school class organization, which has to establish class sizes within the contractual limits. The goal in all of this placement process is to create class groupings, which will be able to work as a cohesive group.

Parent participation is valued in this process as parents are their child's first teacher and you often can provide insights that we may not see. You have a valuable role in your child's educational program and we do consider your input for your child's specific educational needs. Please make known any information on your child's specific educational needs that you wish to be considered in our placement decisions. Please do not request an individual teacher. Your information needs to be provided in writing to the Principal by Friday June 15, 2006. Ultimately, the principal has the responsibility and authority to make the final decision on class placement for students.

School Goals

Staff has been developing a renewed vision and direction for our school. A small committee have analyzed school data and reviewed our previous year's goals and drafted our goals and some action plans for next year. These drafts have been presented to staff and will be fine tuned with feedback from all staff members. |

Our preliminary school goals for next year need to be forwarded to the School District by May 31st.

For the 2007-2008 school year we will continue our goals around literacy and numeracy. For the literacy goal our focus will continue to be on student reading and writing and we will also re-state our commitment to improving achievement in these critical areas. The numeracy goal will consider basic computation skills in the younger grades and problem solving in all grades. For social responsibility we will continue with EBS (Effective Behaviour Support), the Second Step program.

Thanks to Mount Benson Elementary School Planning Council members: Lisa Burns, Sharon Preston, and Linda Schultz who have served on the Council and helped support, review, and develop our school goals.

Kindergarten Registrations

There are currently twenty students registered for Kindergarten for next year. As always at this time of year we appeal to any parents of children born in 2002 to come in and register their children as soon as possible. A copy of the child's birth certificate and CARE card can be brought in to the secretary to register. Any in-catchment students must be registered before June 15th to be assured of a place in September.

Music Monday

Thanks to Mrs. Murchie for coordinating this exciting event on the first Monday of this month. We hope to make this an annual event to acknowledge the importance of music and especially music in our schools. We were pleased at the many parents who came out in support of our Music Monday Event.

Fun Sports Day

We are looking forward to our Fun Sports Day on Friday June 1st. A morning of multi-age fun relays and other events will take place on our field. Drop by to join in the fun. Thanks again to our PAC for supplying a hot dog for every student for lunch that day.

Band and Choir Concert

Make plans to join us for the final band and choir concert of the school year. On Tuesday June 4th at 1:45-2:45 in the afternoon or at 6:30-7:30 in the evening for a performance by the Mt. Benson Band and Choir under the able direction of Mrs. Murchie. The students have been working very hard with extra rehearsals these last weeks and they are all looking forward to entertaining you with their music. We are extremely proud of our band and choir and please come out and enjoy them with us next Tuesday.

Also Mrs. Murchie needs someone to embroider Mt Benson on 20 recorder cases; we will supply thread and fabric; please let her know if you can help.

Jive Contest

The grade 5,6, and 7s have been enjoying a series of dance (jive) lessons courtesy of Ken Yung, of Forever Yung Dance Studio in Parksville. As a culminating activity the students have been invited to a fun afternoon of jive, twist and hula hoop competitions at John Barsby school on Friday June 8th. They will join with several other schools at this event.

Kindergarten Orientation

Tuesday June 12th in the morning we will be hosting our new kindergarten families in an orientation session to welcome them to Mt. Benson Elementary School.

Aboriginal Evening

Wednesday June 20th our aboriginal education teacher, Annette Favelle will be hosting an evening of food and celebration for our aboriginal families.

Thanks to the PAC for everything:

Our students and community enjoyed a wonderful time earlier this month at the Vancouver Island International Children's Festival. Our PAC sponsored the entire school including tickets to the events and bussing for this wonderful day. Our PAC continues to support opportunities for students at Mount Benson School. The recent trips by the grades 4 & 5 classes to Victoria, the grades 6 & 7 classes trip to Vancouver and the upcoming Grade 7 trip to Capenwray are just some more examples of your PAC dollars at work. Many class field trips, and activities are all coming up in the next several weeks and all are made possible in whole or in part by PAC sponsorship.

We have a wonderful PAC at Mount Benson School. As our students leave our school at the end of Grade 7 we unfortunately also lose their parents, many of who have put in countless hours in support of Mount Benson School and our school PAC. We are extremely grateful to these parents for their contributions over the years. **Your Mount Benson School PAC needs YOU!!**

Please plan to attend the last PAC meeting of this school year on Tuesday June 19th at 7:00 pm in the school library. Pizza is provided as well as lively discussion and friendly banter. Babysitting available. Come out and meet other parents and share in helping to continue providing opportunities for Mount Benson students.

There will be elections at this meeting to fill vacancies in the executive. It is extremely important that we have a good representation of parents at this meeting so that we can be prepared to start next year

Bottle Drive

The Mount Benson PAC is having a Bottle Drive fundraiser on Saturday June 9th. All refundable recyclables can be brought to the school between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm on that day. For every 20 bottles/recyclables brought in a student will receive a ticket to enter a draw to win a MP3 player. Friends and neighbours are also being asked to place their bottles outside before 10:00 am and a Mount Benson PAC member will pick them up between 10:00-12:00. Volunteers to help sort and count on the day would be most appreciated. Please contact the PAC if you can help. Thank you for your support. All funds raised will help provide a richer learning experience for all of our students.

Year End Activities

We look forward to you joining us in our final assembly of the year on Wednesday afternoon, June 27 starting at 1:00 p.m. Our Grade 7s will be the honoured guests at this assembly as we bid them farewell and good luck in their future years.

School Swims and Activity Days

The Ks, grades 1 & 2 will enjoy a swim at Beban Park on Monday, June 25th with lunch and playtime in the playground.

Tuesday June 26th we'll enjoy a day of swimming and games at Bowen Park for grades 3-7. These events are always a relaxed and fun way to spend the last couple of days of school.

Sunscreen

Students need to be protected from the sun. Cover ups, hats and sunscreen can all contribute to protecting your child from the harmful rays of the sun.

Dress Code

The warmer weather brings out some more "revealing" clothing, especially on some of our girls. Please remember that school is a workplace for your children and what might be considered acceptable attire at the beach or elsewhere may not be appropriate at school. Not only can skimpy clothing expose you to more harm from the sun's rays, but it also may be disturbing or distracting to others within the school setting. A general rule of thumb is that tops touch bottoms and undergarments remain unseen. Proper dress is not a huge issue at our school but it does come up on occasion and students may be asked to phone home for something more appropriate or be given a t-shirt to cover up if needed.

Track and Field

Intermediate students (and several Grade 3s) represented Mt. Benson Elementary at the Zone meet May 24th. Our hard working PAC also organized and worked the concession for this event as another fund raiser. for this year's track and field meets. Several of our athletes qualified for the District meet to take place on June 7th at Rotary Bowl. Congratulations to the following students who have qualified for the District Meet:

Mishka Pidruchney; 100 metre, high jump and long jump; **Cody Munro**; 200 metre and long jump; **Hailey Parnell**; 1500 metre; **Nicole Langford**; 1500 metre; **Nikki Weleschuk**; high jump; **Keira Christensen**; Long jump; **Riley Schneider**; softball throw; and **Alexis Hachey**; softball throw.

Skip-a-Thon for Heart and Stroke Foundation

On May 16th we held our annual Skip-a-thon to raise funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation while at the same time encouraging fitness and a healthy life style.

Both primary and intermediate grades participated and our school collected a total of over \$2700 in pledges for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Congratulations to Keira Christensen whose individual total was over \$300!

Nanaimo Yacht Club Programs for Youth Summer Sailing Program

The Nanaimo Yacht Club is offering a summer sailing program to youth 10 years and older. Boys and girls will learn boat handling, teamwork and sportsmanship from Canadian Yachting Association instructors. Courses starting in July through August, are 2 weeks long and go from basic levels to intermediate with a CYA certificate on completion. This is a fun, challenging and healthy outdoor activity for your child this summer.

Contact the NYC 754 7011 for more info or www.nanaimoyc.ca/sail_training.htm

Nanaimo Yacht Club Junior Membership

The Nanaimo Yacht Club has a Junior program for sailors ages 12 to 19 who would like to advance their skills, and have a summer of challenging fun on the water. Activities include weekly sailing, possible crew positions on larger boats, BBQs, and the odd sailing overnighter. For a small entry fee members will have access to the clubhouse and club boats. They will have the opportunity of participating in racing clinics and regattas as their ability increases. The Junior Membership Program is an exciting way to gain experience on the water.

Fostering a safe outdoor activity in our community builds character and a health body. Contact the above for more info.

Library Books and Lost and Found

Please check for school library books to be returned by June 15th and also check lost and found in box by the gym.