

Mount Benson Elementary School

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NEWSLETTER

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Principal's Comments

On behalf of all the staff at Mount Benson Elementary School I would like to wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday. Your gifts to us are the wonderful children you entrust to us each day. We are proud and privileged to be working at Mt. Benson School, a very caring community of learners.

During this month of December the generosity of the Mt. Benson community has again been demonstrated. Thanks to the efforts of all the girls and boys and the coordination of Mrs. Burns our total in the Pennies for Presents drive was almost \$500. The boys won the friendly competition to see which gender would bring in the most pennies. Congratulations to Jason Aleck, who was the draw winner of the prize basket donated by the Burns family. Your generosity has also been demonstrated by the amount of non-perishable food items brought in to support families in need in our community. Your donations will allow families to enjoy a more abundant holiday than they may have been able to provide.

Mr. Kirby's grade 6 students were able to send over \$50 to the Children's Hospital Fund with proceeds from their Young Entrepreneur's Fair. The senior students also contributed over \$40.00 to our hamper fund with money raised at their Christmas dance.

Thanks once again to the PAC members who so generously gave of their time and energy to run a most successful Christmas store earlier this month.

Thank you also on behalf of many in our school community who find it increasingly challenging to provide for their families. Several individuals along with Madman McKay and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church are regular donors both in money and in food to our snack and lunch program. Together with a couple of grants which we access we are able to provide nutritious snacks and lunches to several of our students.

With the emphasis on giving at this special time of year don't forget to give yourselves the gift of time with your families, the most precious time you will spend. Enjoy the traditions and rituals that are a part of your family's fabric.



Dates to Remember

January 7th – School Reopens

We know that this time of year can be extra stressful for families and often we notice the strain on the children. Be good to yourselves and take the time to be with your loved ones.

In this the last Mount Benson Newsletter of 2007 let me thank all of the parents and others who have demonstrated generosity of spirit by volunteering your time, talent and energy to increase and enhance the opportunities for the children at Mount Benson Elementary School.

“Generosity is giving more than you can”
Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931)

Christmas Concert

Last week we thrilled to the sound of voices and instruments in our gym as we enjoyed another wonderful Christmas Concert at Mt. Benson. Under the able and energetic direction of Mrs. Murchie all students in our school participated in these performances. A special thanks goes out to Mr. Murchie and to Mr. Scott who were ever present to help with setting up the stage, chairs, lights and to assist with the audio. Special thanks also to a friend of Mt. Benson, Darlene D'Lerma, who designed and constructed the fabulous fireplace for our set. Thanks also to the Great Canadian Dollar Store for their support.

Choir

Patrons at North Nanaimo Town Centre were entertained to some great singing by the Mt. Benson choir earlier this week. The children not only sang splendidly but were also wonderful ambassadors of Mt. Benson Elementary School.

Literacy Goal

As part of our Literacy goal Mt. Benson will implement a “Precision Reading” program in the New Year. This program is being coordinated by Lori Williams our literacy lead teacher and Kristine Letourneau, our student support teacher. Selected intermediate students will be trained in how to assist younger readers and then several times a week these intermediate students will be paired with primary readers to support them one-on-one in improving their reading and comprehension. Precision Reading is a proven program in improving the reading levels of students.

Kindergarten Registration

Children who were born in 2003 are eligible to register for September 2008 kindergarten beginning in January 2008. Bring your child's CARE card and birth certificate to the school office between 8:30 am and 2:30 pm to register.

Mt. Benson Elementary School Nutritional Guidelines

The following guidelines will be in place beginning January 2008. Your school planning council and staff have reviewed these guidelines. We appreciate that most parents are already sensitive to the need for healthy eating and practising most of these suggestions. Useful websites are brandnamefoodlist.com and www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/guidelines.

Guidelines

Mount Benson Elementary School will continue to promote a positive and informed attitude toward healthy eating and active living through nutrition education and physical education. We will ensure that all decisions involving food and drink at Mount Benson Elementary will be carried out in the best interests of our school communities' needs. Our continuing education will incorporate Canada's Food Guide for Healthy Eating and will focus on nutritional foods during classroom and school functions.

- a) All food and beverage items being sold to students (ie. hot lunch, recess sales, concessions, etc.) will be selected from the Choose Most and Choose Sometimes categories of the Nutrition Guidelines for Sales of Food and Beverages in B.C. Schools.
- b) School community members (students, staff, and parents) will be encouraged to bring only snacks belonging to one of the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating as a school day snack.
- c) Parents are asked to not send 'special treats' to school on their son/daughter's birthday.
- d) It is recognized that there are 'special celebrations' occasionally throughout the school year (ie. Valentine's Day, Christmas, etc.). Staff will work to create a balanced approach to these celebrations while recognizing that 'treats on occasion' are part of a balanced approach to a healthy lifestyle.
- e) Staff will not use food as a reward.

