

# Mount Benson Elementary School

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Principal: Mr. Gary Dodd

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# NEWSLETTER

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May 2, 2008

## Principal's Comment

We have had a tumultuous week as we begin to work through the realities of the decision to close Mt. Benson Elementary School. First and foremost is our commitment to ensuring that the transition of our students and their families to their new schools is as positive as it can be. Information has gone home with students advising parents of the options available to them and the process of applying to out of catchment schools.

The safer schools travel committees from both Coal Tyee and Mt. Benson have met with city and District officials to develop plans for best walking routes to Coal Tyee for our students who are assigned to that school. A draft bus route is being developed for students assigned to Pleasant Valley and that plan will be available for parent input and consideration in the next few weeks.

Our school secretary, Mrs. Williamson has been an incredible source of information, guidance, and support for parents and students who have questions or concerns regarding the closure. I know that her patience and understanding of the difficulties facing many of our families in this time of change has been a great help and comfort to many.

Although changes are always difficult, Coal Tyee and Pleasant Valley are excellent schools with caring staffs. Your child and you will be welcomed and supported at these and other schools in the District should you seek to apply for out of catchment schools.

During the coming weeks we will make sure that parents and children are both informed and involved in plans to commemorate and celebrate Mt. Benson Elementary School.

## Out of Catchment Application Deadline

**Monday May 5<sup>th</sup>** is the deadline for making application to out of catchment schools. As explained in earlier communications parents have the option to apply to any elementary school(s) in the District to have their child attend a school other than Coal Tyee or Pleasant Valley. These requests will have priority placement based on the Board's Out of Catchment policy regarding siblings. In effect this will put your request ahead of any other requests to that school except for requests from families which already have children in the school. The Board motion passed on April 23<sup>rd</sup> which gives Mt. Benson families this priority is noted below:

*"Requests by current families at Mount Benson for placement as out-of-catchment students will be considered on a priority basis equal to sibling status until May 5, 2008."*

Your child's acceptance at an out-of-catchment school will depend on space availability.

## Dates to Remember

### Dates to Note:

- Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup> - Music Monday
- Monday May 5 - Fri May 9<sup>th</sup> - Healthamongus for all grades at Beban Park
- Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> - Literacy Evening 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup> - Hot lunch
- Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup> - Skipping Demonstration -12:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> - Jump Rope for Heart - 9:00 a.m.
- Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup> - Victoria Day
- Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> - Science World gr 6 & 7
- Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup> - Author Visit
- Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> - School Assembly 9:30 a.m.
- Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> - Fun Fair 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.
  
- May 23<sup>rd</sup> - Band Concert 9:15 - 11:30 a.m.

### Music Monday

Monday May 5<sup>th</sup> is our second annual participation in Music Monday. Parents and caregivers are welcome to join us outside the school at 10:00 am .

### Literacy Evening

Be sure to come to our Literacy evening on Wednesday May 7<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-8:00 pm Supper provided. If you are able to bring a dessert for our dessert table it would be appreciated. Your family will be fed, and have stories read to them in the classrooms and follow-up with a book take home table in the gym. We still need books donated for the sharing table at the end of the evening.

### Healthamongus

Next week our classes will be bussed to Beban Park for the annual Healthamongus activity day which is coordinated and run by Nanaimo Parks and Recreation. Monday Grade 7s; Tuesday Grades 5/6; Wednesday Grades 3/4; Thursday grades 1/2; Friday Kindergarten. A fun time for all!

### Heart and Stroke Foundation Skip-a-thon and Fundraiser

Next week students will be invited to take pledge envelopes home to participate in this annual fundraiser. Over the 12 years that Mt. Benson has been participating in this event we have raised in excess of a phenomenal \$25,000.00 The Demonstration Team with coach Chuck Tasaka will be performing at Mt. Benson on Friday May 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 and our Skip-a-thon will be on Wednesday May 14<sup>th</sup> in the morning.

**Global Watch**—this group of students from Wellington Secondary will be presenting to an assembly in our Gym on Friday March 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am.

### Student Registration

**Kindergarten Registration.** Children who are five years of age on or before December 31, 2008 may enter Kindergarten in September 2008. You are encouraged to register your child as soon as possible at your neighbourhood (catchment) school.

Children out-of-catchment may register also, filling in an "Out of Catchment Application". **Out of catchment applications must be completed by March 31st, 2008.**

Please bring your child's birth certificate and CARE card to the school office between the hours of 8:30 am and 2:30 pm Monday through Friday while school is in session. Please encourage people in the community with kindergarten age children to register as soon as possible.

**Movie Nite**—thanks to Terry and Lisa Burns and Madman MacKay for hosting another movie night in our gym this Friday March 14<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:30 pm. Terry will be showing "The Bee".

**Our Writing, Reading and Presenting (WRAP) Fair** will be happening on

Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. Students will be making displays (similar to last year's WRAP fair) that will be exhibited in the school gym on that date. Students will be on hand in the gym to discuss their presentations from 1:45-2:45 and in the evening from 6:00-8:00 pm.

### SPORTS REPORT

Basketball season is well under way with Mt. Benson entering teams in Bantam boys and Bantam Girls leagues. Thank you to Ms. Christensen and Ms. Favelle and to Mr. Snowden who are giving their time to coach these teams. Thank you also to the parent volunteers who have assisted with driving, officiating and of course cheering on our teams.

### **URGENT - Toys Needed**

Is it time to clean out your children's toy box? Now that Christmas is over, families find that this is a good time to clean out their children's room. Mrs. Calder's annual sale for The Gorilla Foundation is in need of toys, books, games, puzzles, etc for the sale—date to be determined. You can drop off these items at Mrs. Calder's classroom beginning after Spring Break.

**Ready Set Learn**—Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup> 1:00 to 2:30. Program designed for three and four year olds and their parents to orient them to school and focus on

the importance of readiness play for literacy and learning. Please invite your friends and neighbours with preschoolers to attend. Please call the school at your convenience to leave the name of your preschooler and accompanying adult.

**Literacy Evening**—Mark Thursday April 24<sup>th</sup> in your calendars for our annual literacy evening. Enjoy a meal with parents and children of the Mt. Benson community and then listen to stories read in the classrooms. End the evening with a choice of books from the "take home tables". More information to follow. We will need children's books for the take home tables so please bring any books to Ms. Williams in the library after Spring Break.



### Ministry Satisfaction Surveys

Students in grades four and seven will complete these ministry Student Satisfaction Surveys. The data collected will complement the parent surveys and provide our school with information related to student achievement and school safety. This information is helpful in planning as well as providing a District and Provincial perspective.

### Think First

The John Howard Society will be once again presenting the Think First Program to our Grade 6 class. The presentation will be given in two sessions, one before and one after recess on Monday April 21<sup>st</sup>. The presentation is designed to reinforce with our students the impact of the choices and decisions they make in life. It is a powerful learning opportunity.

