**Welcome to 2024! Happy New Year!**

**Here it is January! Just like that!**

**This is an exciting time of the year for all of us at BLT Junior Elementary! Our incredible students are settled into their routines after the first week back and the amazing staff continues to be dedicated to providing excellent programming to all of our Pre-Primary, Grade Primary and Grade One learners. It is such a pleasure to come through these doors every day and to witness the thriving community inside its walls. Thank you to our families for all your support as we venture through this year together!**

**Please contact us at anytime.**

**Your Administrative Team**

**Janet Roy Patty Hoskin**

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**January also brings a wide variety of weather conditions. Within one school day, our temperatures can fluctuate and the precipitation can run from rain to heavy snow: the beauty of living in Nova Scotia!**

**We are asking that you check to make sure that your child has what he/she might need to dress for any type of weather. Students will be outside for recess and lunch if the weather permits, even if it is cold.** We will be outdoors in temperatures (including wind chill) as low as -20C. Students should be dressed as warmly as possible. We have advised the students that to roll around in the snow they must have full snow gear, which ensures each student is dry and able to focus on their work while in school. We encourage the students to enjoy the snow and have fun making forts, sculptures, snow angels and lots of other great activities when outside. The students are aware that throwing or kicking snow are not good choices.

It is always a great idea to have an extra set of socks, pants and underwear packed into his/her/their backpack for those “just in case” situations that might arise.

**With the unpredictability of the weather this time of year, it is vital that we have your most recent contact information on file at school.**

In the event of inclement weather, it is HRCE’s goal to communicate any changes to the regular operations of schools and/or buses as close to 6:00 a.m. as possible.

**A 6:00 a.m. announcement could be:**

·     All schools are delayed in opening by two hours and bus pickups are delayed by two hours;

**or**

·         All schools are open, but some or all busses are not operating for the day;

 **or**

·         Some schools (either individually or by family - \*\***Our Family of Schools is Bay View High School** ) are closed for the day;

**or**

·         All schools in HRCE are closed for the day.

**There are times that the weather deteriorates throughout the day while the students are in school. In this case, an 11:00 a.m. announcement could be made:**

·         Bussed students will be picked up two hours earlier than their regular dismissal time;

**and**

·         Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour.

**How will I find out?**

·         By email to the addresses in PowerSchool

·         By text message, **if you have opted-in** **978338**. If you aren’t sure if you have opted-in, text Y to the following number:

·         On our website  [www.hrce.ca](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/GUo-upPa1tYxIsQYhk8I6A~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRneXbUP0QTaHR0cDovL3d3dy5ocmNlLmNhL1cHc2Nob29sbUIKZZRUQ5hluWBC1lIManJveUBocmNlLmNhWAQAAAAC)

·         On X (formerly Twitter) at Twitter.com/HRCE\_NS

·         On Instagram at  [www.instagram.com/hrce\_ns/](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/S801VmypAG--baetO8xNoA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRneXbUP0QhaHR0cDovL3d3dy5pbnN0YWdyYW0uY29tL2hyY2VfbnMvVwdzY2hvb2xtQgpllFRDmGW5YELWUgxqcm95QGhyY2UuY2FYBAAAAAI~)

It’s important to always have a plan in place for childcare in the event of any cancellation.

For more information on how HRCE manages during inclement weather, visit [www.hrce.ca/families/cancellations](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/yzKzlko_B_XALQ3Yu1h4fg~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRneXbUP0QpaHR0cDovL3d3dy5ocmNlLmNhL2ZhbWlsaWVzL2NhbmNlbGxhdGlvbnNXB3NjaG9vbG1CCmWUVEOYZblgQtZSDGpyb3lAaHJjZS5jYVgEAAAAAg~~)

**News from BLT Jr. School Equity Team**

We are pleased to share with our school community some information regarding our school Equity Team. Our Equity Team was established in the fall of 2022 and consists of school staff members (teachers, administrators, counsellor, etc.). Our goal is to support the students and staff with anything relating to equity and inclusion. Just some of the things we have accomplished since we began are:

* Participated in professional development on the development of an equity team and established a mission and school vision statement
* Established monthly assemblies to bring the children together to celebrate one another
* Professional development for staff on diversity, equity, inclusion, trauma, and more
* Received a grant to fund the purchase of hundreds of diverse picture books for classroom use - organized by topic for teachers
* School makeover and enhancements (new murals, bulletin boards, and projects to increase representation within the school. This also includes adding the “Honour Song” and “Lift Every Voice” to our morning announcements)
* Provided staff with information and resources on teaching and discussing more challenging topics that address beliefs, race, identity, and more
* Provided education and learning opportunities for students as equity-related matters arose (such as incidents or in discussion)

If you have any questions relating to the school Equity Team, please reach out to administration at any time.

**NEW!!! Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Cafe:**

School and community connection is extremely helpful for both caregivers and children. Our school community is diverse and unique in many ways. We wanted to offer some opportunities for our parents/guardians/caregivers to connect with both the school as well as other parents/guardians/caregivers in ways that would benefit everyone. For families who are new to the BLT area, or for parents/guardians to build upon their existing connections, there are many benefits of coming together. This is also an opportunity to support one another as we collectively raise children while navigating today’s world. Please go to the following link (a google form) to help us determine the interest in this idea. The form will take less than five minutes!

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSem2Yhiqp0YVe6JJOAyRvPlbXsO4LofvcBnR0FSb8jYM-MY5A/viewform?usp=sf_link>

If you have any questions relating to the Caregiver Cafe, please contact our School Counsellor, Laura Leslie at lleslie@hrce.ca

**WISDOM: THE MI’KMAQ TEACHING FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR**

Wisdom is the Beaver. We ask for Wisdom so that we will know what is good in this world. Throughout this time at school, the students will be taking part in activities and learning around this teaching. We will be having a student assembly later in the month to recognize and honour Wisdom in our lives.

**AUTHOR’S VISIT:**

We were very excited to welcome author Ayesha Usman into our school on Wednesday, Jan 10th. She read her new book, **“A Butterfly and a Lightning Bug**” to the delight of the students! She will be visiting some of the classrooms in February.

**Maritime Dance:**

On Wednesday, January 10th, our students and staff were fortunate to have members of Maritime Dance Academy come to our school for a performance! It was a great event and it was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone!

**BREAKFAST AND SNACKS**

Each day, the students receive a basketful of nutritional snacks that are delivered to their classrooms. Everyone is invited and welcome to grab a snack from the bin to start off their day.

**LOCKDOWN DRILLS:**

We have a number of safety drills throughout the year: Fire Drills, Lockdown Drills, and Hold and Secure Drills. While it is unlikely we would need to actually do such activities, it is important to practice. We hold two lockdown drills during the school year; one in September and one in February. During a lockdown drill, classroom doors are secured and the students remain inside the room until instructed to resume their activities. Students are kept inside the classrooms when circumstances make it safer to stay in the classroom rather than evacuate.

We are unable to answer the doorbell during these drills.

We are sharing this information with you again as **we will be holding a Lockdown Drill during the week of February 12 - 16, 2024.**

**The day of the drill, we will announce that the drill is coming and explain to the students that it is just a practice and that there is no danger or emergency.**

Please, be assured that the staff will spend time discussing the importance of this practice with the students prior to the drill. We will also take time after the drill to thank and remind them that it was only a practice.

**FEBRUARY IS REGISTRATION MONTH**

February is Registration Month for HRCE. You can visit the HRCE Website to find out further information about registering a student for September. If you have a friend, neighbour or relative who might not receive this newsletter, please, let them know about registration and if they need any information, they can contact us at anytime. Any child who turns 4 years old on or before December 31, 2024 is eligible to register for the Pre-Primary program which will start in September 2024. Any child who turns 5 on or before December 31, 2024, is eligible to register for the Primary program starting in September 2024.

**FAMILY LITERACY DAY – SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2024**

Family Literacy Day falls on a Saturday this year. The students and staff will be taking part in activities to celebrate the love of reading during that week at school.

Here are some suggestions of a few activities that you might want to try at home:

1. Visit a library
2. Be a reading role model
3. Read to them
4. **Try a different method: “**be flexible and come up with a new idea. Why not see how they respond to comic books or graphic novels, which are much more visually oriented while still offering plenty of dialogue to keep them reading?  See if books they want to read are available as audio recordings, so they can listen and read-along at the same time. If your kid is a gamer, read a walkthrough of their favourite game together.”
5. **“Take it off the page.** Is there a way you can present a story off the pages of the book? Try crafts, book reviews, dramatic reenactments, debate the choices of the characters, rewrite the ending, paint a picture of the setting, design a board or computer game about the story, write the author a letter about your thoughts, etc.”

There are plenty of great suggestions on the Internet to celebrate Family Literacy Day!

**CAFETERIA UP-DATE:**

Lunches are to be pre-ordered online from the TinyFeast website and are now available for ordering up to 48 hours before the delivery date.   This is completely automated so we ask for your understanding that late orders cannot be added after the deadline. Complete breakdown of the cut off times can be found on the TinyFeast website on the Order Timeline Page. Daily menu selections can be seen online at TinyFeast.ca.

New Users to TinyFeast:  Set up your account following these instructions:
1.  Go to:  <https://www.tinyfeast.ca/>
2.  Click on the Buy Here tab and then "Create an account"
3.  You will be asked to enter an email address, password and to select a security question.
4.  Once all the fields are filled click "register".  This will take you to your account homepage.
5.  Under Student Name, add the required information.
5.  BLTJr. School code: **220**
6.  Note that you can purchase lunches online for multiple students on the same order.

 If you need to cancel your child's lunch you can do so online up until the cut-off date.  After cut off times or on the days of expected delivery, please call the cafeteria before 9:00 am @ 902-876-4319. Note this is a landline so no texts. Please provide your child's name and teacher.  Our hours of operation are 7:30 am to 1:30 pm.  If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Vickey by email blt@tinyfeast.ca or by phone 902-876-4319.

We wish you all a wonderful start to the New Year!