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We are in Mi’kma’ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi’kmaw people. We are all Treaty people, and our relationship is based on peace and friendship.

**Celebrate African Heritage Month 2024:**

The theme for African Heritage Month 2024 is "Our Smiles, Our Joy, Our Resilience as African Nova Scotians." This month-long celebration is dedicated to recognizing and honoring the history and culture of people of African descent. The theme coincides with the final year of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent (DPAD) 2015-2024, which aims to promote global cooperation in support of people of African descent, raise awareness, and aspects of society.

Nova Scotia is home to more than 50 historic African Nova Scotian communities with a rich, deep, and complex history that spans more than 400 years. BLTJr Elementary’s School Community of Beechville is a vital and respected part of this inspiring African Nova Scotian history.

We are very fortunate to, also, have our new BLTJr community members from countries in Africa enriching our lives with their culture.

African Heritage Month is an excellent opportunity to celebrate and showcase the culture, accomplishments, and contributions of African Nova Scotians, both past and present.

We are inviting anyone who might want to come into our school to share their African Nova Scotian or African knowledge and culture, with our students and staff. Please, give the school a call or send an email to [BLTJr@hrce.ca](mailto:BLTJr@hrce.ca). Thank you.

**February is Registration Month:**

Do you have a child who will be starting pre-primary or primary this fall? It’s time to register! Registration for the 2024-25 school year begins on February 1. To ensure we have the right staff and supports in place for September, it’s important that we gather enrolment numbers now.

Tip: Before you begin, make sure you have the following documents in electronic form (image, PDF or Word document):

● Proof of identity/age with one of the following: birth certificate, passport,

immigration papers, or legal adoption papers) if you are new to the HRCE;

● Proof of home address (a recently dated official government or utility document

with your current address that includes your name and date, such as water bill,

power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment or a

mortgage contract); and

● Nova Scotia Health Card or Canadian Province Health Card or, for non-citizens while in Canada, proof of Medical Insurance Information.

Visit the HRCE website for more information and to enroll your child today through PowerSchool Enrollment!

Don’t have a child to register? Maybe you know someone who does! Please help us spread the word and pass this information on to friends, neighbours or relatives who will be looking to register for the fall.

**Caregivers of present Pre-Primary students:**

The present Pre-Primary students who are attending our school now and moving into Primary in September, do not need toregister as they are already in the system. ECEs will be reaching out to confirm whether students will be going into the English Program or the Early French Immersion Program.

**Early French Immersion Program Caregiver Information Session:**

An information session will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 13th at 6:30pm in our school cafeteria. This session is for any caregivers of incoming primary students, who would like more information before making the decision between Early French Immersion or English programing.

**BLT PTC Winter Warm – up!**

BLT Junior’s students and families are invited to come to our gymnasium on Thursday, February 8th from 6 – 7 to cozy up in your PJs and enjoy a hot cocoa while we read a bedtime story. The cost is $5.00 per family which must be paid electronically via SchoolCash on the following link.

<https://hrce.schoolcashonline.com/>

**January School Assembly:**

We had a very exciting day on January 25th as we celebrated Wisdom, which was our Mi’kmaq teaching for the month during our school assembly. Our beautiful students were incredibly respectful and attentive and loved learning about the Beaver and the Wisdom he shared with all of us. As well as several of our students presenting during the assembly, our whole school population sang a heartfelt song that was learned in Music class. On February 22th, we will be highlighting LOVE as our teaching of the month.

**Lockdown Drill:**

We will be having our second Lock Down drill for the year on Feb 15th. 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. 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.

**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.**

We will once again speak to our students prior to the drill about the importance of practicing these types of drills. The drill will last approximately 5 minutes.

**BLT Jr/Sr SAC**:

Our next SAC meeting will take place on Feb 12th at 6:30pm. The meeting will be held in person at BLT Sr. Elementary School. The purpose of the SAC is to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning opportunities by engaging all partners in an ongoing process of problem solving and shared decision making.

All SAC meetings are open to the public and we encourage any parents, or community members, interested teachers or support staff, to attend our meetings. We are looking for additional committee members so if you are thinking about getting involved, please feel welcome to come to the meeting on Feb 12th to experience a meeting and determine if you are interested in becoming a full time member. The overall commitment for members is 6 meetings a year.

**Heritage Day** **February 19th:**

Observing Nova Scotia Heritage Day is an annual occasion to reflect on our

province's rich history. It's a chance to recognize the remarkable people, places, and events that have shaped our unique heritage.

Please take time to learn about William Hall, the 2024 honoree, here.

**Visitor in Music:**

Our students were very fortunate to have had a wonderful guest musician, James Jackson, come into work with them on various instruments in Music classes during the month of January.

**Lost & Found:**

Our lost and found is set up in the hallway by the cafeteria. Please,

encourage students to look for any missing items. Caregivers are also welcomed to come into the school to claim lost items. Any unclaimed items prior to March Break will be donated.

**School Breakfast:**

On Friday, January 26th, our student population was treated to yogurt parfaits that were prepared by RBC volunteers. This breakfast treat was greatly appreciated by all.

**Reading Tips for Home:**

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**Bus Safety**:

Here are some safety tips from Safety Services Nova Scotia to keep in mind

when waiting for or exiting the bus:

-Stand back from the edge of the road.

-Line up in single file when you see the bus coming.

-Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop.

-Walk, never run.

-Make sure the bus driver sees you if you are crossing the road. Take 10 giant steps in front of the bus before crossing.

-Wait for the bus driver to signal that it is okay to cross.

-Always look both ways before crossing the road and listen for traffic.

-Never cross the road from behind the bus.

Please, take a few minutes to review these safety tips and we will do the same at school. Together, we will help our children be bus wise.

**Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Cafe:**

We are excited to begin our Caregiver/ Parent/ guardian café at school this month. We will be sending out a message to let you know of the time and day.

Below is the link for he café survey if you happen to have missed it.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1qd7MsYib4gWod6oT_Zp0wA8RFwPpXblYbRj4DJvMC-M/edit?usp=drivesdk>

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

**Library News!**

We'll be having some extra fun in the library this month as a fundraiser for Tattletale Books.

Starting next week (February 5th), students are asked (but not required to) to bring in $1.00 each week for the month of February.  Tattletales Books will donate on top of the amount we collect to go towards books purchased there.  Students can bring in their donation during their regular Library time.

Each week, there will be a different theme:

Gnomes on the Roam is a scavenger hunt we'll have in the library.  The class that finds the most gnomes each day will win a prize

Pick-A-Pop is a game where they pick a lollipop.  If it has a mark on the bottom, they win a prize (bookmark/pencil/sticker sheet).  If not, they still keep their lollipop.

Storytime with Stuffies is a day when students can bring in a stuffie from home to the library to cuddle with them.

Build & Play week involves having activity centres set up in the library.  There will be various things for the students to do during the last half of library class.  This includes Lincoln Logs, a collective wall poster to color, a puppet theatre with puppets, Build My Garden set and Magnatiles.

**We are here to help**:

With our busy family personal schedules and the hustle and bustle of trying to make it out the door early every morning, we recognize that it often can be a little challenging to get your little ones to school, and to school on time for the beginning of their day. This is just part of our family lives and can happen to us all. We want you to know that we are here to support you in any way that we are able. We do know that there are some of our students that, because of medical situations, need to take time away from school to take care of themselves. Again, we are here to help and totally understand and support you and your family.

We do notice that students who are chronically late or absent for other reasons, are missing out on valuable classroom discussions, curriculum outcomes, activities and participation. This may create a stressful situation for them when they return to the classroom. Our students are amazing individuals and providing them with every opportunity to be successful as a school community is vital. Below is an excerpt from the Provincial Student Attendance and Engagement Policy:

This policy recognizes that regular attendance at school supports greater **student success and**

**achievement**. Attendance supports student learning and promotes a sense of responsibility that

students will need as they transition from the school system to post-secondary studies and/or

the workforce.

Promoting and supporting regular student attendance is a **shared responsibility**. All partners, including

students, parents/guardians, teachers, principals, school boards, and community partners must

work together.

Let us know if there is anything we can do.

Wishing our school community a great February!

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| **February Calendar 2024** | | | | | | |
| **Sunday** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
|  |  | **African Heritage Month** | **Registration Month** | 1First day of registration | 2 | 3 |
| 4 Gnomes on the Roam Games | 5 SAC Meeting 6:30pm @ BLT SR | 6 | 7 | 8 PTC Event: Winter Warm up 6:00pm | 9 | 10Chinese New Year – Year of the Dragon |
| 11 Pick a Pop Game | 12 | 13 French Immersion Info Session 6:30pm | 14 | 15 Lockdown Drill | 16 | 17 |
| 18 Storytime with Stuffies | 19 William Hall Heritage Day-No School | 20 | 21 | 22 Assembly 9:15am - LOVE | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Play Centres | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |  |  |