



Buffalo Head Prairie School 2019-20 Introductory Parent Newsletter

Dear parents,

Welcome back to school! With the wild fire school closures that occurred to extend the summer break for students, it feels like a long time since regular school practices were in place. It is so exciting to be back at BHPS with a fresh start and we as a staff are thrilled to welcome students back to school!

Our three school goals this year are:

- *Connectivity - to grow our learning community with strong relationships among and between students, teachers and parents*
- *Literacy - to improve student reading and writing levels.*
- *Math - to improve student mathematics skills*

To focus on student reading from the beginning of the year, watch for a special reading challenge, “What is S’more Fun Than Reading” to be sent home the second day of school. Students who complete the reading tasks and return their signed paper to school by September 30th, will have the opportunity to participate in a campfire and s’more making at the end of the month.

We hope to see all parents at the annual family breakfast as we continue the tradition of opening the school year with a focus on our families. This year’s family breakfast and open house will take place on Friday, September 6 beginning at 8:45 a.m. This event will provide parents with the opportunity to tour their child’s classroom, meet their child’s teacher, and enjoy breakfast while visiting with staff and other parents. Please note that for Kindergarten students, the Tuesday/Thursday group is also welcome to come and enjoy the pancake breakfast, if attending with their family.

In addition to the family breakfast and open house on September 6, we will be hosting the 2018-19 school year awards ceremony the same morning. This change is a result of the wildfires and the fact that we were unable to hold the awards ceremony in June. The schedule for the day on Friday, September 6 will be as follows and we welcome all parents and families!

8:45 a.m.- Family breakfast and open house. Breakfast prepared by school staff.

10:15 a.m.- Student recess

10:30 a.m.- Awards ceremony

*after the awards ceremony, a regular student lunch, lunch recess, and afternoon classes will occur.

There are many items to share with you in the pages ahead and it is our hope that this newsletter will answer all or most of the questions you may have to begin the school year.



New Staff:

We welcome five new faces to BHPS this year:

- Miss Sarah Lawlor will be transferring to our school from Blue Hills Community School, where she taught for several years. Miss Lawlor will be teaching grade one at BHPS and she is well known for her strong dedication and work ethic.
- Mrs. Rachel Magalona comes to us from Edmonton where she worked with children most recently at Meadowlark Christian School. Mrs. Magalona will be teaching Kindergarten and is excited about covering this maternity leave position for one year.
- Miss Patti Morgan will be joining us from Newfoundland and will be teaching junior high Language Arts, Social Studies, and a variety of non-core classes. Miss Morgan has an interesting story about why she decided to become a teacher. Ask her about it if you can.
- Mrs. Liane Unrau is a local community member who many of you parents will know well. Mrs. Unrau will be an ESL assistant each morning to support the school focus on literacy.
- Miss Jasmine Rempel graduated from High School in La Crete last year. Miss Rempel, similar to Mrs. Unrau, will be an ESL assistant each morning working with children to support our focus on building literacy skills in students this school year.

2019-20 Buffalo Head Prairie School Staff

Mrs. Eva Friesen <i>Bus Driver</i>	Mrs. Helen Peters <i>Bus Driver</i>	Mrs. Martha Harms <i>Bus Driver</i>	Mrs. MaryAnne Teichroeb- <i>Bus Driver</i>
Mr. Jake Froese <i>Bus Driver</i>	Mrs. Betty Ann Dick <i>Custodial Assistant</i>	Mr. Benny Dick <i>Head Custodian</i>	Mr. Nick Gray <i>Student Wellness Coach</i>
Mrs. Brenda Wiebe <i>ESL Assistant</i>	Miss Jasmine Rempel <i>ESL Assistant</i>	Mrs. Liane Unrau <i>ESL Assistant</i>	Mrs. Angie Wolfe <i>Special Needs Assistant</i>
Miss Nicole Neudorf <i>Special Needs Assistant</i>	Mrs. Lana Halladay <i>Special Needs Assistant</i>	Mrs. Tina Schellenberg <i>Special Needs Assistant</i>	Mrs. Mary Ann Krahn <i>Early Literacy/Speech</i>
Mrs. Kathy Janzen <i>Librarian</i>	Miss Margaret Wiebe <i>Secretary</i>	Miss Patti Morgan <i>J.H. L.A./Social</i>	Mr. Dean Keefe <i>J.H. Math/Science/P.E</i>
Mrs. Amanda Colbourne <i>Grade 6</i>	Mr. Jonathan Hache <i>Grade 5</i>	Mrs. Melissa McDonald <i>Grade 4</i>	Miss Joanna Vandervalk <i>Grade 3</i>
Mrs. Cathy Wiseman <i>Grade 2</i>	Miss Stephanie Rose <i>Grade 2</i>	Miss Sarah Lawlor <i>Grade 1</i>	Mrs. Karen Keefe <i>Grade 1</i>
Mrs. Rachel Magalona <i>Kindergarten</i>	Mrs. Wendy Morris <i>Assistant Principal, Literacy Coordinator & Inclusive Education</i>	Mr. Chris Fehr <i>Principal & Elementary Physical Education</i>	

we care about
YOUR KIDS



BHPS Bell Schedule- *Revised This Year!

8:44am- Lord's Prayer, School Announcements, Period 1 Begins

9:15am- Period 2 Begins

9:45am- Period 3 Begins

10:15am- Morning Recess Begins

10:30am- Period 4 Begins

11:10am- Period 5 Begins

11:45am- Lunch

12:00pm- Lunch Recess Begins

12:20pm- Period 6 Begins

12:50pm- Period 7 Begins

1:20pm- Period 8 Begins

1:50pm- Afternoon Recess Begins

2:05pm- Period 9 Begins

2:40pm- Period 10 Begins

3:15pm- Dismissal Bell

Bus Arrivals

Bus arrival time at BHPS has been set for 8:40am this year. Please be patient with bus drivers as they sort out the timing of their runs to begin the school year. As in previous years, buses will continue to drop students off at the north side of the school.

Hot Lunch Program- New Information!

On behalf of Mrs. Brenda Wiebe, please note that there are several moms willing to lead the hot lunch program this year. Additional moms are still needed in a support role and if interested, we ask that parents interested in helping with hot lunch contact Mrs. Brenda Wiebe as soon as possible. Parents have indicated that they greatly appreciated the new layout of the hot lunch program last year and we are grateful for the assistance of all hot lunch volunteers!

New Classroom

Parents, when you have a moment, please take time to check out the new grade 2 classroom. For those that have been around a while it is in the location of the old computer room. For those relatively new to BHPS, it is the room on the south side of the library. We are appreciative of central office's support to have small class sizes and the new classroom looks fantastic!

Indoor/Outdoor Shoes

Please ensure that students have two pairs of shoes to begin the school year; a pair for outdoors and another pair for indoors with non-marking soles. Non-marking soles greatly help our custodians and it also provides a clean school. Note: Roller shoes or shoes that increase the likelihood of injury, will not be permitted.

Peanut Free Classroom

Parents with students in junior high classrooms this year are asked to use consideration when packing lunches or bringing food items into the classroom. Due to a serious student safety concern in the grade 7/8 classroom this year, both junior high classrooms will maintain peanut free classrooms this year. All students will be asked and encouraged to wash their hands after eating to maintain a safe school environment.



Administration of Medicine to Students

There are several guidelines that need to be followed if parents need to have medications administered to their children while at school. If this is something your child will need, please stop by the school office and we will work together to ensure your child's health and safety.

Study Hall

The Study Hall program will continue this year. On days 1,3 and 5 during lunch recess, homeroom teachers may sign students up for study hall if their in-class work is not completed due to needing more time or there is a lack of work ethic. A teacher supervisor will be on hand to assist students working to get caught up on their work. Study hall will take place in the grade 4 classroom this year.

Family Ice Cream Night

After a very successful introduction last school year, the Family Ice Cream Night will be continued this year in coordination with the school's Annual General Meeting. Please join us on Thursday, September 26 at 6:30pm for an ice cream event that will be set up for the whole family. Ice cream and visiting will take place in the school gymnasium prior to the Annual General Meeting where school council elections will take place.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten at Buffalo Head Prairie School will run every day this year. Due to the large student numbers in Kindergarten, one group will attend Tuesday, Thursday, and alternating Mondays. The other student group will attend Wednesday, Friday, and alternating Mondays. Due to holidays, alternate Mondays may be disrupted and parents are asked to view the school calendar for accurate dates. This year, Mrs. Magalona will teach both classes during Mrs. Palin's maternity leave.

Junior High CTS

Junior High CTS classes in La Crete have been scheduled for every Day 2, similar to past years. If you would like your child to remain in town at the end of the day, a parent note must be submitted at the BHPS office prior to 11:45am. It is the practice of Buffalo Head Prairie School to have school administration sign the note prior to students going to La Crete.



Junior High Fees

School fees are required to be paid for all junior high students at BHPS. The fee is \$20 for Shop/Home Economics. Payment can be made in cash, by cheque, or online with SchoolCash Online. *Cheques need to be made payable to Buffalo Head Prairie School.*

Student Attendance

Parents, please notify the school if your child will not be in school. A phone call or comment in your child's agenda (for advanced notice) would be appreciated. Good school attendance promotes positive student learning and understanding so please make an effort to have children in school as often as possible. Parent informational note: students leaving school early show up as being late on report cards.

Student Agendas

Elementary students will have agendas to be used as a communication tool between school and home. **Please ensure that your child's agenda is signed nightly and returned to school again the next day.** Teachers will use the agendas to communicate in a variety of ways so please promote the consistent use of agendas throughout the school year.

School Crosswalks

Students, staff and parents are asked to use the crosswalks at all times when they are going to or from the parking lot and school. Junior high students are also asked to use a crosswalk when they go to or from the playing field. Parents, please keep this in mind each time you use the visitor parking lot. Thank you for supporting our efforts to keep children safe at school!



Microwaves

As in previous years, students in grades 4-9 will have access to microwaves at lunch time. To ensure that all students in each class can use the microwaves (2 are provided in each 4-9 classroom), we ask that parents refrain from sending frozen items and microwavable popcorn.

Student Profile Forms

We are sending student profile forms home today. Please look them over carefully and ensure that all information is up to date. Please make any corrections necessary and return each student's form with a parent signature, even if no changes are required. Pay particular attention to the **FOIP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act)** document which is on the fifth page of each child's form. This section must be completed annually for each student. The FOIP form for this year has yes or no checkboxes for each of the four different sections. Each section requires that one of these boxes be checked off and a parent signature is required at the end of the form. This will allow you to gauge the level of information you wish to share in regards to your child in an appropriate manner. Again this year, you will see an anti-spam legislation section on these forms. If you are choosing to or have in the past provided us with an email address through which we may contact you please make sure you read and check off this section as well. Thank you in advance for returning these forms and for assisting us

in keeping our school records up to date and accurate. If you have any questions on these forms please stop by the school office when you come out for the Family Breakfast on Friday, September 6.

Home Time

We would ask that parents notify the school by note (a note in student agenda is acceptable) if students are to be going somewhere on the bus other than their home. If a phone call is necessary, please call as early as possible in the day, preferably prior to 3:00 pm, to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made. Calling the school with questions or concerns prior to 3:00pm is greatly appreciated due to the many end of day processes that occur between 3:00-3:20 pm.

Student Technology User Agreements- Important Information for Parents!

At Buffalo Head Prairie School, students do not have open access to the internet. Please note that this remains the same as last school year. The FVSD technology department sets up student accounts in such a way that BHPS students cannot openly access the internet. Students do, however, have access to computers with teacher supervision. In our lowest grade levels, there is minimal computer use, however by the time students move into grade 3 and progress into older grades, there is a gradual increase in time spent using computers. Alberta teachers are required in the Program of Studies to help students learn computer skills such as typing and the use of basic operations. BHPS teachers are aware that most parents do not want to see excessive computer time and this will be respected in BHPS classrooms.

All students in grades 4-9 are required to personally sign a student technology user agreement that their teacher will read through and explain to them. This agreement essentially outlines important items such as using computers with respect, not sharing passwords, and using computers appropriately.

Students in K-3 (with limited use of computers), are required to have parents sign a student technology agreement. This will be sent home for parents to sign and return.

Internet Use Agreement- Important Information for Parents!

Although students do not have open access to the internet, they do have access to three programs that are considered closed internet sites. Please note that this remains the same as last year. These programs allow students to access a specific internet site that supports student learning, but do not allow any further internet use or exploration. Specifically, students in grades 3-6 will have access to Accelerated Reader, which is a reading comprehension support. Additionally, students in 4-9 MAY require access to the Tell Them From Me surveys that provide our school with important student information to help improve our school. Grade 9 students will have access to Exam Bank.

Students will not be required to sign an internet use agreement due to the fact that they do not have open access to the internet. It is very important to Mrs. Morris and myself that parents are clearly aware of these details. As always, please feel welcome to ask questions or express any concerns you may have.



Parent Handbooks

Updated parent handbooks highlighting the school's policies and procedures will be sent home with today's newsletter. Please use this handbook as a reference throughout the year should any questions arise. We also encourage parents to call the office anytime with questions or concerns.

Volunteers in Schools- Important Update for Parents!

Criminal record checks and intervention record checks continue to be required for volunteers in school, however there is now an update to this expectation. Checks will typically last for the length of time a parent has student(s) enrolled in a particular school. A new record check must be obtained when a student enrolls in a new school. From time to time volunteers may be required to obtain a new vulnerable sector check and intervention record check.

Final Note:

As you may have been wondering, we still plan to properly celebrate Mrs. Joch's years of service at Buffalo Head Prairie School. At this point in time, we are in conversations with Mrs. Joch to find a date that will work for her. We will inform parents of Mrs. Joch's retirement celebration date as soon as it becomes known.

With the wildfires behind us, our school staff looks forward to an exceptional 2019-20 school year. At BHPS we truly do have so much to be thankful for when it comes to a caring, hard working, supportive school community.

Please know that you as parents are always welcome at the school and my hope is that our staff makes you feel this way each time you enter. A school with invested and caring parents is a better school for children.

Wishing each family a wonderful school year and one where you genuinely feel that your children are cared about while receiving a strong education.

Sincerely,

Mrs. W. Morris and Mr. C. Fehr

