



Balaclava Bulletin

October 2017

From the Principal's Desk . . .



I would like to thank the Balaclava community, staff and students for a terrific start up in September. Students have settled into their classrooms, have adapted quickly to school and classroom routines. Currently, we are a school of 364 students!

Numerous extracurricular activities started up in September and great opportunities are continuing for our students in October as well.

Now that we've all had time to get back into our routines, I would like to remind parents of the importance of arriving on time each day. If your child is late for school, they are to check in at the office for a late slip before proceeding to class. Please do not accompany them to their class. This is important to help your child gain independence, as well as maintain security in the building and minimize disruptions to the learning in the classroom.

Finally, on behalf of the whole staff, we would like to thank our parents/guardians for all their support during start-up. We know that it is only with your support that we can have a great year!

M Wilson
Principal

Save the Date . . .

Tuesday, October 3 (6:00pm) -
School Council Meeting

Thursday, October 12 (9:15am) -
Home & School Meeting

New members are always welcome!

Instead of "**How was your day?**" consider one of the following:

- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- What's the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- Who made you smile today?
- Who brought the best food in their lunch today? What was it?
- What challenged you today?
- If school were a ride at the fair, which ride would it be? Why?
- If you had the chance to be the teacher tomorrow, what would you teach the class?
- What is the most popular thing to do at recess?
- Does your teacher remind you of anyone else you know? How?

It's also great to start the conversation with an anecdote from your own day!

Our Thanksgiving Drive for the Flamborough Food Bank continues until Tuesday, October 3. In consultation with the food bank, in addition to canned food items and other non-perishables, they are in need of the following personal items:

- Toothpaste for adults
- Hand soap
- Toothpaste for small children (no fluoride)
- Body wash
- Toilet paper
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Hand lotion
- Face wash

Please encourage your child/children to help support the approximate 150 local families in need. Thank-you in advance for your generous support. Our community and school are very grateful.



Secure Schools

Although one can never predict when a violent or potentially harmful situation may arise, schools can prepare for responding to such an incident through intentional, scheduled practices. The goal of the practices is to minimize the risk for staff and students during a time of crisis. Like at all HWDSB schools, at Balaclava we hold Fire, Hold & Secure, Shelter in Place, Lockdown, and Evacuation/Bomb Threat drills each year.

••**Fire**•• is used in the event of smoke or fire in or around the school.

- Follow current evacuation procedures (the fire alarm will sound, teachers will lead their classes out of the school in a quiet, calm manner)

••**Hold and Secure**•• is used if the school is secured due to an ongoing situation outside and not related to the school (e.g. bank robbery near a school).

- the school continues to function normally, with the exterior doors locked until the situation is resolved
- staff members posted at each entrance restrict all movement in and out of the school
- where possible, exterior facing windows will be covered or blinds drawn, and lights dimmed
- the school would most likely to be notified by Hamilton Police Services

••**Shelter In Place**•• is used for an environmental, or weather related situation, where it is necessary to keep all occupants within the school to protect them (e.g., chemical spills, extreme weather conditions)

- people enter and remain in the building with the doors and windows closed
- fans, heating/air conditioning units are turned off to prevent air from outside entering the building
- normal operations may continue within the building

••**Lockdown**•• is used if there is a major incident or threat of school violence within the school, or in relation to the school. The threat is inside the school, or on school property, and poses an immediate threat to students and staff

- follow current lockdown procedures (blinds closed, door locked, lights off, everyone is quiet/out of sight)
- all movement in and out of the school and within the school is restricted

••**Bomb Threat/Evacuation**•• is used if a bomb threat is received, an explosive device is reported or discovered, or an explosives incident takes place.

- Follow current evacuation procedures (teachers will lead their classes out of the school in a quiet, calm manner)

In the event of a "real" situation, the Hamilton Police Services/Hamilton Fire Department would also be responding to the situation.

At Balaclava we have already been practising with 3 fire drills in September. We will hold three in the spring. Over the next months we will also be practicing the other types of drills. Staff, students, and parents will be given prior notice of Bomb Threat drills and Lockdown drills. Along with practices at school, we encourage parents/guardians to talk with their children about the importance of being well prepared for emergency situations.

Reassure your child that:

- these drills, like fire drills, are just to practice how to stay safe in the extremely unlikely event that someone dangerous enters the school.
- the adults at school work together to keep them safe
- practising means we are prepared and can feel confident that we all know what to do just in case.
- having a plan like this and practicing means that we don't have to worry about these concerns and instead we can focus on having fun and learning at school.

Balaclava Staff remind the students of these points as well. We talk about all the things that we do to keep safe at school and that practising certain drills help us to know what to do if an unsafe situation happens. Students understand that for a fire drill we need to leave the building, while during a lockdown drill we practice staying safe in our classrooms.

For most students, especially the youngest ones, the language above will be sufficient. However, as students get older they may ask specific questions, speculate about the reasons for such a drill, or share some knowledge with the teacher about situations that have happened elsewhere. Teachers will re-direct to the language above (e.g., practising means that we should feel confident that we're prepared) and not encourage more discussion on the "what-ifs". If it seems necessary, a teacher in the younger grades may use an example such as: if a large animal that shouldn't be inside came into our school, we would stay safe in our classroom until the experts could come and take it where it belongs.

EQAO 2017

Every year Grade 3, 6, 9 and 10 students across the province of Ontario write a variety of EQAO assessments in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Although these grades actually write the tests, preparation for these assessments is a whole school activity.

Skills learned in Kindergarten are built upon in the primary years in preparation for the Primary assessment in Grade 3. The results of this assessment are used by the Junior teachers as they identify areas in need of further development as their students work towards the Junior assessment at the end of Grade 6.

Last year our students in Grades 3 and 6 once again participated in the Primary and Junior Assessments. The following charts summarizes last spring's results:

Primary	Balaclava	HWDSB	Province
Reading	95%	65%	74%
Writing	85%	63%	73%
Math	78%	48%	62%

Junior	Balaclava	HWDSB	Province
Reading	90%	74%	81%
Writing	86%	70%	79%
Math	38%	39%	50%

E.Q.A.O. results of individual students who wrote the assessment last year will be sent home with students later this month.

It is important to remember that E.Q.A.O. results are a snapshot of our student's abilities during one week of the year. During the assessment teachers are not permitted to assist or even prompt their students. Thus marks on report cards tend to be slightly higher as they represent work completed over a term with the opportunity for additional instruction and practice to improve final results. E.Q.A.O. results are analyzed by the school staff to provide information on where our students find success and where they need additional instruction, support or review. Additional information and a more detailed report can be found at www.eqao.com.

School Fundraising Plan

Balaclava students have the opportunity to participate in fundraising activities for the school throughout the school year (such as Tuck Shop, Pizza Days, etc.).

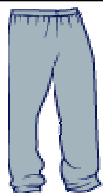
As a school, our fundraising profits have been designated to support subsidizing excursions, purchasing new technology, subsidizing Grade 8 Graduation (up to \$500), and Student Engagement Opportunities.

Thank-you in advance for your on-going support. A copy of our school fundraising plan will be posted on-line on our school website later this month.



Lost & Found

Please check the Lost & Found regularly for missing items.



Donations Needed

We are looking for gently used yoga pants/track pants and t-shirts/sweatshirts to be donated for students who may need to change during the day (mud, water, rips, etc.). Please forward clean items to the office. Thank-you.

Homework Help - Grade 7-10

www.tv.org/homeworkhelp

Did you know that students in grades 7 to 10 have free access to online math homework help? Homework help is run by TVO's Independent Learning Centre with support from the Ontario government.

Students can log in Sunday-Thursday (5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.) for free one-on-one tutoring. Students can also join their grade's tutor room to see what questions other students are asking and then watch teachers walk through problems on the group whiteboard.

Additionally, Homework Help's Student Resources (which have been created in partnership with Ontario educators) are available 24/7. Students can review and learn new math concepts at their own pace through "Best Sessions", Interactive Tutorials and Listen & Learns.

To log in and register, students will need their Ontario Education Number (OEN).

Below is a step-by-step registration video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gS5X9yGh100>.

Please speak to Mr. Hewitt if you have any questions.

Head Lice - Pediculosis

Head lice (pediculosis) occurs from time to time in each school. Anyone can get head lice. School children get lice more than adults. When children play, their heads often touch. Lice crawl from head to head. Head lice are spread by direct contact only (e.g. head to head, shared clothing).

Help us reduce the spread of head lice. Please check your children on a regular basis and if you do find that your child has head lice, **please inform the school**. Your child will never be identified to other parents. An approved treatment (such as Nix, R&C Shampoo, or Resultz) must be used before your child returns to school. Consult with Bug Busters, your pharmacist, or other medical practitioner about the best product to use.

You can also visit www.hamilton.ca/healthyschools to access "Bug Buster Head Lice Clinic Schedule" for treatment supports.

For additional information, guidance and any questions please contact:
City of Hamilton Public Health Services,

Volunteering at Balaclava

Whether it is helping out in a classroom, on an excursion or in our school library, volunteers are important to us at Balaclava. If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please request a volunteer package from our office. As per HWDSB policy, a volunteer package must be completed annually and a Vulnerable Sector Screening every three years. This screening can be obtained either by visiting the King William HPS location or applying online.

<http://www.policiesolutions.ca/checks/services/hamilton/>

