



# Balaclava Bulletin

## December 2017



### *From the Principal's Desk . . .*

As we head into the notoriously busy holiday season, we have a lot going on at Balaclava!

Our Bobcats are very focussed on giving at this charitable time of year. We are continuing our annual Toy & Food Drive until December 12. The toys will be donated to the students at Queen Victoria School and the food items to the Flamborough Food Bank. What a great tradition for our Bobcats! We are certain your generosity and contributions will be greatly appreciated by the families who will receive these items.

With the cooler winter weather on its way, I would like to take the time to highlight that time spent outdoors is an integral part of the school day. Children need fresh air and exercise. Time spent outside affords students an opportunity to take a break from the structures of the classroom. **It is important children come to school prepared for the cold.** Boots, mittens or gloves and hats should be worn to school. It is a good idea to leave items such as extra socks in your child's backpack and a pair of "indoor shoes" at school for all grades. Although it is tempting for parents to put on mittens and zip coats to expedite exits at home, for our younger students, it is important to practice getting dressed independently so that they are well prepared for school.

With the holiday season approaching, the staff at Balaclava wish all of our families and students a very enjoyable and memorable break. We hope you find the time to rest and relax with family and friends. We look forward to our students' safe return in 2018!

*M Wilson*  
Principal

### **Save the Date . . .**

**January 9** (6:00pm)

- School Council Meeting

**December 12** (9:10am)

- Home & School Meeting

New members are always welcome!

**December 13** - 6:00pm

- Gr4-8 Play

**December 18** - 9:15am

- FDK-Gr3 Concert

## **Annual Christmas Toy & Food Drive**



November 15-December 12

Our annual *Christmas Toy and Food Drive* will be held November 15-December 12.

We are collecting new, unwrapped toys for children aged 4-11 who attend Queen Victoria School (in Hamilton).

We are suggesting a donation of a toy valued between \$15 and \$20, if possible.

Please send in a new or gently used gift bag with each toy you donate.

Additional new or gently used gift bags are always appreciated.

Food items sent it will be donated to the Flamborough Food Bank.

Thank-you for your support of our annual outreach. We know this will make a difference to the QV students and Flamborough residents.



## Social Media - Parent Presentation - January 23

Balaclava School Council is excited to share with you that we will be hosting Chris Vollum for a parent information session called **Social Media Fitness**.

Chris is an experienced speaker with a wealth of knowledge to share. You will leave inspired, skilled and confident to support your family's journey through Social Media (Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and more).

Mark your calendar - Chris will be at Balaclava **Tuesday, January 23** at **6:30pm**.

All families and community members are welcome. Please invite your friends!

Should you require child-minding, please let us know at [SchoolCouncil016@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:SchoolCouncil016@hwdsb.on.ca)!

Looking forward to seeing you there!

### social media fitness



### Swim Team

Congratulations to the Balaclava Junior Swim Team on a very successful swim meet. On November 13, 2017 the junior swim team went to McMaster pool to swim against 6 other schools. This was Balaclava's first time at the swim meet and wow did they swim.

Special mention goes to:

- Merrick B 2nd place in Freestyle
- Leela R 1st place in Freestyle
- Briar P 3rd place in Freestyle
- Stella V 2nd in Freestyle and 3rd in Backstroke
- all our relay teams for placing in the top 3.

Congratulations to all swimmers who participated! Can't wait to see what next year will bring.

Senior Swim team will be in the spring

Sincerely,

Mrs. Cassidy and Ms. Keyte



### 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/>. Please stop in at the office if you have any questions.

### Follow Us on Twitter

Twitter is a social networking site where users can post short messages called tweets. Tweets are publicly visible, just like a web page:



- You don't need a username
- You don't need to sign in
- You don't need to join

Please have a look at the Balaclava Twitter page: [twitter.com/Balaclava\\_HWDSB](https://twitter.com/Balaclava_HWDSB)

### Inclement Weather and School Closures

The decision to cancel School and Board Administrative Operations is often a difficult call to make. Please be assured that the decision to remain open or to close is always made with the safety and security of our students and staff in mind.

In the event of inclement weather, our Transportation Department advises our carriers to drive predetermined routes to assess the condition of the roads. The decision to close our schools is made in conjunction with our colleagues at the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board based on relevant information at that time.

School Boards across Ontario have varying policies about the cancellation of schools. At HWDSB, the cancellation of transportation due to **inclement weather** immediately triggers the closure of our schools. However, at its meeting of November 2014, the Board of Trustees approved a resolution that allows the Director, at the discretion to keep schools open in the event transportation is cancelled due to **extreme cold temperatures**.

Please remember, as a parent/guardian you always have the choice on whether or not to send your child to school.

HWDSB will NOT post a weather alert on its website to signal that schools are open.

School Closure Hotline 905.521.2535

### Parking Lot Safety

A reminder to all to be mindful of other cars and people when in our parking lot and on Concession 10 near the school. Students are to use the sidewalk when walking to and from the buses but drivers are asked to be especially aware in our lot. Parents should never use the School Bus Loading Zones for picking up/dropping off their children.

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

- Tell me about what you read in class.
- Do you think math [or any subject] is too easy or too hard?
- What new fact did you learn today?
- If one of your classmates could be the teacher for the day who would you want it to be? Why?
- What is your teacher's most important rule?
- 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.