



# Balaclava Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

280 10th Concession E  
Freelton, Ontario L8B 1H6  
Phone: 905.659.3396  
Fax: 905.659.0901

EMAIL: [balaclava@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:balaclava@hwdsb.on.ca)  
PRINCIPAL: K. Keery Bishop  
[k.keerybi@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:k.keerybi@hwdsb.on.ca)  
[www.hwdsb.on.ca/balaclava](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/balaclava)

## Balaclava April 2023 Newsletter

### Principal's Message

What does it mean to be a member of a community? Aside from the typical subject-related learning you would expect in a school, a significant purpose of a school is to help teach students how to function and thrive as independent members of a community. This means students are constantly learning how to manage peer relationships in structured and unstructured settings, to problem solve, to understand and respect alternative perspectives, to operate safely within guidelines or rules, and to help and support others. At times, it can be difficult to watch students try to figure out how to navigate this learning and make mistakes in the process. However, releasing that learning to them (with support and guidance) is important, even if it is messy, difficult or time consuming. How is your child doing at this? This is a great topic to discuss with your child and with your child's educator(s) throughout the year. Our educators are skilled at observing and understanding how your child is doing, and will use different strategies to support them when they are struggling, but will also balance this with a willingness to let the student try to navigate it with growing independence. Every child has learned so much already in this school year, academically and socially, and we're excited to see how much more they can learn in the next three months.

### Financial Literacy Night – April 12

Balaclava School Council, with funding from the Parents Reaching Out Grant, are pleased to present a Financial Literacy Night for Balaclava families. On Wednesday, April 12, parents/guardians and their children are invited to attend this presentation by the Dinari Financial Academy in our school gym. Families will learn about tools and strategies to educate kids on where money comes from, ATMs and bank accounts, savings, smart spending, donating and the difference between needs and wants. This workshop is appropriate for K to 8 students. Parents/guardians must accompany children to the event. We look forward to seeing you here, **April 12 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.** in the school gym. No registration is required.

### Planning for the 2023 – 2024 School Year

While we are still in the midst of the 2022-2023 school year, at the school and board levels plans have begun for 2023-2024. This year's educators will work together in the spring to tentatively plan for class placements for our current students. However, unlike in previous years, this information will not be finalized until the beginning of September. This allows schools to account for changes in registration over the summer and to try to balance out

registrations across classes, with the intention of minimizing class changes required of schools at re-organization in October.

This means that we won't be sharing class assignments on June report cards this year. I understand that this change in process might cause additional stress for a child or family, but the hope is that the more students and classes that can be set up in September within board caps and ratios, the less stress on students, families, and staff at re-organization time. Information will be shared later in the year from the board about how families will be informed of their child's class assignment prior to our anticipated September 6, 2023 start. Your child's current educators will have input into tentative class assignments this spring. If there is a child who currently significantly impacts your child's academic or well being success (positively or negatively) and you wish to make a recommendation for placement away from, or with, that student, please let [kkeerybi@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:kkeerybi@hwdsb.on.ca) know via email by April 28<sup>th</sup> for consideration. Recommendations of this nature are not guaranteed, but will be considered. Please note that recommendations for placement with specific staff will not be considered.

### **Balaclava Gives Back**

With leadership support from Ms. Cassidy's 3 / 4 class and Balaclava's student council, we will be running a school-wide Food Drive for the Flamborough Food Bank. Students are welcome to bring in donation items from April 3<sup>rd</sup> to April 21<sup>st</sup> for the collection. Not sure what to donate? See the food bank's site here for suggested needed items:

<https://www.flamboroughfoodbank.com/> Thank you, in advance, for your support.

### **Clubs and Activities**

This spring, we have had a number of new clubs and activities begin as options for different groups of students who choose to participate. Thanks to the volunteering efforts of many members of staff, the following groups are currently running: Junior Girls Basketball, Junior Boys Basketball, Newspaper Club, Positive Space Club, Student Council, Senior Band, Junior Choir, Checkers Club, Senior Book Club, Chess Club, Library Helpers, Forest of Reading, Senior Swim Team, and Lego Club. What a great place to learn new skills!

### **Families Worrying Less Together Workshops – April 18, 2023**

If you are the parent/primary caregiver of a student in Grade JK to 2 or Grades 3 to 8 who is excessively shy or has intense worries or fears, come learn about the "Families Worrying Less Together" program. This program will give you practical strategies to help your child learn to cope differently. Please note: This program is for parents and primary caregivers, children do not attend. To register, please use link on accompanying flyer.

### **Save the Date**

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, Balaclava will be hosting a Kindergarten Orientation session for new incoming JKs and their families.

If you have a child who will be entering JK or SK for the first time in the 2023-2024 school year and you haven't yet registered them, please do so in April so that you will receive an invitation to the Orientation. For more information about registration, please go to:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/kindergarten/>

May 11<sup>th</sup> will also be the date of Balaclava's Spring Open House for all current students and families. More information will follow, but for now, save the date!

### **Calendar**

April 3-21	School-wide Food Donation Drive
April 5	Bandfest for Senior Band
April 7	Good Friday, no school
April 10	Easter Monday, no school
April 12	Financial Literacy Night, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
April 14	Gr ¾ Trip to Mountsberg
April 24	Earth Day Clean Up, all classes
April 25	Choirfest for Junior Choir
April 26	Blue Jay Game, Grade 7 and 8
April 28	Home and School Special Lunch – Pasta Day
April 28	Spirit Day – Pyjama Day