



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
PRINCIPAL: K. Keery Bishop
k.keerybi@hwdsb.on.ca
www.hwdsb.on.ca/balaclava

October 2023 Balaclava Newsletter

Principal Message

The beginning of a new school year is an exciting time. I hope your children have enjoyed getting back into the school routine. I'm very happy to be back here with this wonderful community!

Home and School and School Council

Balaclava is fortunate to have both a Home and School Association and a School Council serving our school and its community. Both agencies have a hand in creating a vibrant, positive school climate.

Home and School Association is an independent organization of members who volunteer to support the school with fundraising, events and school activities. Just this summer Balaclava was able to add a brand new, full sized basketball court on our playground completely funded by Home and School. We thank them for this very generous commitment to supporting physical health and well being with a particular focus on supporting our older students. In the past, other fundraising efforts have included other revitalization additions to the grounds like our playground structures and pavilion. The Association also funds projects within the school that come up throughout the year. As school budgets get smaller every year, their additional support greatly augments the programming that can be offered in classes. Home and School is always looking for new members and new volunteers to help with food days, year book, special events. For more information, please contact: balaclavahands@gmail.com

The School Council is a voluntary group of members who meet 4 to 6 times a year at the school to discuss school programming and strategic directions, and board- and ministry-initiatives. We are currently taking self-nomination forms from parents or guardians who wish to sit on council as an elected member (positions of Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary or Member at Large). We will hold our election and first meeting on **Thursday October 12 at 6 p.m.** in the Balaclava library. All parents or guardians are welcome to attend the meeting, regardless of whether you want to be an elected member. For more information about School Council, please feel free to contact Mrs. Keery Bishop at kkeerybi@hwdsb.on.ca

Parent Portal Updates

All information about phone numbers, addresses and contacts for every child is managed now by parents/guardians through the Parent Portal. Please be sure to review and update these records so we can accurately contact you, other guardians and/or emergency contacts should

the need arise. If you need help accessing your Parent Portal account, please contact balaclava@hwdsb.on.ca or talk to Ms. Nelligan in the office at 905.659.3396

Meet the Teacher

We are pleased to welcome new and returning Balaclava families to come to our Meet the Teacher event on **Thursday, October 5 from 5 to 7 p.m.** Families will be able to visit their child's classrooms, check out the Scholastic Book Fair and participate in the BBQ (pre-order by Tuesday on School Cash Online). We hope to see you then!

Safe Schools Drills and Procedures

All schools are required to participate yearly in a number of safety drills including 6 fire drills, 2 lockdown drills, 1 hold and secure drill, 1 shelter in place drill, and 1 bomb threat drill. To prepare students and classes for these drills, notification is provided in the days leading up to them through our morning announcements and our educators practice or explain routines for each to our students. For lockdown, hold and secure, shelter in place and bomb threat drills, notification in advance will occur for families on the school website.

Daily Attendance Reminders

If your child is going to be absent, needs to be picked up early or will be coming into school late, please make sure to record that information in Safe Arrival. There are multiple ways families can access Safe Arrival, for details, please see:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/secondary/supports/safearrival/> Planned absences can be put in as far in advance as you are able. Same day absences, however, need to be put in the system by 10 a.m. for the system to pick them up.

Please note, while office and school staff do our best to call down children for early pick up, at times this can take some time for the student to actually arrive at the front door. Please also note that early pick ups result in the disruption of learning to your child and to the other students in the class, particularly the 3:00 to 3:30 pick-ups. Please consider these factors when determining when/if to pick your child up early.

Student Bussing and Dismissal Procedures

Students at Balaclava are assigned a specific bus route and bus stop for morning and afternoon. Students are not permitted to ride on alternate buses. If your child normally rides a bus and is going to be picked up by someone instead, please ensure the teacher and office have this information well in advance of dismissal. Thank you for your assistance with this important safety procedure.

October Calendar

Oct 4	School Photo Day K-8
Oct 5	Meet the Teacher and Book Fair, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Oct 6	School Council Nominations Due
Oct 9	Thanksgiving Holiday, no school for students
Oct 10	Grade 7 Vaccinations

Oct 12 Cross Country Meet, Grades 3 to 8
Oct 12 School Council Election and Meeting, 6 p.m., Balaclava library
Oct 17 Fire Safety Trailer – grade 3, 4, 5, 6 and K classes participating
Oct 20 P.A. Day – no school for students