



# Balaclava Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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## **November 2023 Balaclava School Newsletter**

### **Principal Message**

This year, some of the school curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education in Ontario has changed. During our October PD day, Balaclava staff engaged in further learning about the changes to the Grade 1-8 Language curriculum (2023), and well as honing their skills about the Mathematics 2020 curriculum. Additionally, staff development is occurring throughout the year around changes to the Grade 1-6 Social Studies curriculum (2023), and Mental Health and Wellness lessons for Grades 7 and 8 (2023). As a parent, you may see a few changes in what you see/hear at home from your child. Your child's teacher(s) can keep you up to date with units of study occurring in the classroom, but if you would like to learn more about the curriculum documents and changes that have occurred, a good source of information is the Parent Guides on the ministry website, which you can find here:

<https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/parents>

### **Progress Reports and Parent/Guardian-Teacher Interviews**

Later this month, you will receive a Progress Report about your child's learning so far this year. Those will come home with your child on **Monday November 13<sup>th</sup>**. HWDSB has scheduled Parent and Guardian/Teacher interviews on the evening of Thursday November 16<sup>th</sup> from 5:05 p.m. to 7:35 p.m., on the PD day Friday November 17 from 9:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and from 12:25 p.m. to 2:55 p.m. Each educator will be available for two of those three time periods for short, in-person interviews. More information on scheduling a time to meet with your child's educator(s) will follow shortly. While teachers will communicate throughout the year, this is a good time to formally meet the educators and find out specific goals and next steps for your child. For parents/guardians unable to meet at the school in person, there will be an MS Teams or phone option available.

### **Weather Conditions and Outdoor Time at School**

Time spent outdoors is an integral part of the school day. There are great benefits when children experience fresh air, exercise and time spent outside. Outdoor play is also a break from the structure of the classroom.

Students at Balaclava are scheduled to go outside for recess each day from 10:55 to 11:15 and 1:15 to 1:35. Additionally, educators may take students outside during instructional time for various reasons. While we don't take students outside in what is deemed dangerous weather (e.g. temperature below -15 or windchill below -20, high temperatures triggering City extended heat warning) we do take students out at other times.

It is important that students come prepared to go outside regardless of the weather – whether that means rubber boots and umbrella or snow pants, hats and mitts or sun hat and light clothing. We don't have supervision for students to stay inside during recess, so please send your child prepared for the weather.

### **Personal Device Reminder**

Some parents/guardians may allow their child to carry a phone or personal device at school. It is important to remember that students do so at their own risk; a device is their responsibility and the school and individuals in the school are not responsible for any damage or theft of any student personal device. As students are reminded at school, devices are only permitted for use during instructional time under the direction of a teacher for the purpose of learning. During non-instructional times, students are still not able to use their phone for taking photos or videos or posting on social media. Any items they are viewing should be appropriate for school. Parents and guardians know your children best – if your child is someone who will not make responsible and respectful decisions with the use of their device at school, we encourage you to consider not having your child bring it to school at all. Students not abiding by these rules may have their device taken away (temporarily), and could face suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Dental Screening**

The City of Hamilton Public Health Services Community Dental Team will be at Balaclava to carry out the Ontario Ministry of Health Oral Health Protocol dental screening on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The screening will include all students in JK, SK, and grade 2. If you have other children in the school that are not included in the program and you wish to have them screened, please send a note to the school office on or before November 1<sup>st</sup>. For more information about the screening, please go to:

[www.hamilton.ca/schooldentalscreening](http://www.hamilton.ca/schooldentalscreening)

### **Balaclava Spirit Wear**

We are offering a variety of Balaclava spirit wear items for sale again this fall. Ordering – using [www.westendsportshamilton.ca/store/](http://www.westendsportshamilton.ca/store/) - will be available from October 30 until November 13. Orders will be delivered and distributed at the school the week of December 11. All funds raised through this sale will be used to subsidize excursions for Balaclava students throughout the year.

### **Balaclava Home and School**

Home and School will be starting their fall term fundraising program using Fundscrip on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Fundscrip is a Canadian-wide fundraising program in which our supporters pay for their shopping using gift cards. There is a wide range of gift cards available such as groceries, gas, entertainment, restaurants and much more! Every purchase automatically includes a donation to our school at no additional cost. Last year's fundraiser was very successful raising \$3500. Please keep an eye out for the order forms that will be sent home on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Orders will close November 9<sup>th</sup> to ensure gift cards are delivered in time for Black Friday shopping and holiday get togethers. For more information, contact [balaclavahands@gmail.com](mailto:balaclavahands@gmail.com)

If anyone is interested in joining the Balaclava Home and School Association, their first meeting is planned for November 9<sup>th</sup>. For more information, please contact [balaclavahands@gmail.com](mailto:balaclavahands@gmail.com)

### **Remembrance Day**

Every year, from the last Friday of October to November 11, tens of millions of Canadians wear a Poppy as a visual pledge to honour Canada's Veterans and remember those who sacrificed for the freedoms we enjoy today. Poppies will be distributed free at Balaclava School to all students who wish to wear one on November 10<sup>th</sup>. The Legion gratefully accepts donations to the Poppy Fund for those poppies. If you wish to send your child with a small donation on November 10<sup>th</sup>, we will ensure it is handed over to the Legion.

## Calendar

Nov 1	Dental Screening, JK, SK, Gr 2 and as requested
Nov 2, 16	Home and School Sub Days
Nov 2	Home and School Fundscrip sale begins
Nov 7, 14, 21, 28	Home and School Pizza Days
Nov 9, 23	Home and School Smoothie Days
Nov 9	Bus Safety Presentations, JK-3 and Grades 4-8, p.m.
Nov 9	Home and School Meeting
Nov 9	Home and School Fundscrip sale ends
Nov 10	Home and School Pasta Day
Nov 10	Remembrance Day Assembly, 10:30 a.m.
Nov 13	Progress Reports Go Home
Nov 13	Last day for Spirit Wear ordering
Nov 16	Photo Retake Day
Nov 16, 17	Parent/Teacher Interviews
Nov 17	PD Day – No school for students
Nov 28	School Council Meeting, 6 p.m.