



Balaclava Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Balaclava December 2023 Newsletter

Principal's Message

During the October 2nd Board meeting, the HWDSB Board of Trustees approved a Multi-Year Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2028. The new mission is: "To ensure that every student experiences a sense of belonging and engages in dynamic learning to reach their potential and build their own future." To see more details of the board plan, go to:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/blog/hwdsb-trustees-approve-2023-2028-strategic-directions/>

Here at Balaclava, students, staff, families and volunteers work to help every student feel like they belong and learn every day. I look forward to seeing what the board's new mission will mean in terms of opportunities, resources and next steps at our school over the next five years to enhance our work even further.

Balaclava Winter Food Drive

From December 1st to December 15th, Balaclava families are invited to bring in donations that we will be sending to the Flamborough Food Bank on the 15th. Non-perishable items and cash donations will be gladly accepted throughout that time period. Donation collection bins will be set up in each classroom and in the office. Monetary donations can be made directly to the office. On behalf of our community, thank you!

Winter Primary Concert

Our Kindergarten to Grade 3 and 4A classes are pleased to present a Winter Concert and you are invited! On Wednesday, December 20th, our primary students will perform in our gym, beginning at 12:00. Guest family members will be admitted in the school for seating in the gym beginning at 11:35 a.m. Please note that our older students will be viewing the rehearsal to this performance earlier in the week; we will not be able to call older students out of class to watch this show.

If you intend to have your child(ren) leave with you after the show it is imperative that you sign them out before 10 a.m. in School Messenger.

Stay tuned in the new year for performance opportunities for our older students.

Use of Playground in the Winter Months

OSBIE, the insurance organization governing safe guidelines and restrictions in school boards in Ontario, has issued a safety advisory about the use of playground equipment in the winter. Due to the dangers cold, ice, snow, and winter clothing can have on the safe use of playground equipment, we will be closing our play structures on the playgrounds and kindergarten playground for the winter months. Once the ground has thawed and temperatures are consistently above 0° again in the spring, we will re-open them for use during the school day. Although the playground equipment is considered off limits during school hours over the winter months, the public may opt to use it after-hours and on the weekends, at their own risk. For this reason, the structures will not be roped off during the winter months, but we will rely on staff reminders with students during the school day.

Umbrella Before and After School Care PD Day on December 1

Our Umbrella program at Balaclava, that provides before and after school care to a number of our students, will be closed on Friday December 1st so the staff can engage in professional development for the day.

Any Balaclava student who typically goes to Umbrella after school that will need to go on their assigned bus or be picked up at 3:35, please ensure the dismissal arrangements are shared with the homeroom teacher and/or the school office so we can support a safe dismissal.

Calendar of Events

Nov 28	School Council Meeting, 6 p.m., School Library
Nov 29	Grade 8 Mass Band Clinic Trip to WDHS
Dec 1	NO Umbrella Before and After School Care
Dec 1-15	Balaclava Food Drive for Flamborough Food Bank
Dec 5, 12, 19	Home and School Pizza Days
Dec 14	Home and School Sub Days
Dec 7, 21	Home and School Smoothie Day
Dec 20	Primary Winter Concert, 12 p.m.
Dec 22	Last day of School
Dec 25 to Jan 5	School holiday closure
Jan 8	Return to School