



Balaclava Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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January 2024 Balaclava Newsletter

Principal Report

Welcome to 2024! The return to school in January marks the start of a busy few months in a school. Students and educators are able to pick up where they left off in December with some renewed energy and maybe some new year resolutions. Teachers will be gathering assessment data throughout the month to use on Term 1 report cards, which come home in mid-February. If you didn't have a chance to have an interview with your child's educator(s) in November, this is an ideal time to connect with them to see how your child is doing.

Boundary Review Process

The HWDSB Board of Trustees have recently expanded an on-going boundary review to now include Balaclava School. Previously, the review was attempting to find ways to support Mary Hopkins School with their overwhelming population growth using Flamborough Centre School. Now, the review will consider Balaclava, AA Greenleaf and Guy Brown Schools in their strategy to alleviate the population strains. This month, a Public Meeting will be held on **Monday, January 22 at 6 p.m.** for interested families from all of those schools to hear the proposed plans and how it will impact each of the participating schools. Changes made by this process will take effect in September 2024. For more information on the process so far, and to look for updates about the process as it continues in January and February, go to:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/school-renewal/boundary-reviews/>

Cold Weather Reminders

Students need to come to school prepared to be outside at recess and during some class time every day. In the winter, there may be a small number of days that we need to stay inside because the temperature falls below -15 or the windchill is below -20 but most days will see us outside at least some of the time. Students do not have the option to stay in at breaks – fresh air, exercise and a break from their classrooms is the best option to support student learning all day long. Please ensure your child is bringing clothing they will need to be safe and warm outside at school.

Use of Personal Devices at School

Currently, students are able to bring a personal device to school if approved by their parent or guardian. Keep in mind that personal devices are the sole responsibility of the student. The school and other individuals within the school are not responsible for any damage, misuse or loss. Students are only permitted to use their device during instructional time at the discretion of the teacher for educational purposes. Students cannot take photos or videos during school, including before and after school or on school transportation. Students and parents/guardians are advised to use the office for communication instead of relying on texting/phoning from student devices during class time. At this time, students are able to use their devices during non instructional time (lunch) for appropriate purposes, but are strongly encouraged to use that time instead to eat, talk with friends and take a break from their screens.

It is important to note that, while permitted, families should be cautious when determining whether your child needs the responsibility of carrying a personal device at school. If having a device at school may tempt your child to be distracted or waste time in class, or to use it for purposes inappropriate for school, it may be best to have your child leave their device at home.

Home and School Association

The Home and School Association will open Cheddar Up for Term 2 pizza, sub and Booster Juice orders from January 12 to 21st. Don't miss this window to place food orders for February to June. The much-anticipated Balaclava YearBook will also be listed for order during this window on Cheddar Up, if you missed it in the fall.

And, in exciting news, we will see the return of the Balaclava Fun Fair this spring! See below for information regarding the date of the fair. More information will follow in the next few months with donation, activity and volunteering information. Thank you to our Home and School volunteers and Association members for their efforts in Balaclava on behalf of our students.



Balaclava Fun Fair

Thursday, May 23 from 4:30-7:30 pm
Event will be held at Balaclava School
Coordinator Amy Douma
Email—balaclava.funfair@gmail.com

Calendar

Jan 8	Return to School – Welcome Back!
Jan 9, 16, 23, 30	Home and School Pizza Days
Jan 11	Boundary Review Committee Meeting
Jan 11, 25	Home and School Sub Days
Jan 11	Home and School Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
Jan 12	Home and School – Cheddar Up Opens for Term 2 Ordering
Jan 16	WDHS Guidance Dept works with Grade 8s on Option Sheet Planning
Jan 16	School Council Meeting, 6 p.m., library
Jan 18	Home and School Booster Juice Day
Jan 19	Home and School Special Food Day – Pasta Day
Jan 21	Home and School – LAST DAY for Cheddar Up Term 2 Ordering
Jan 22	Boundary Review Public Forum, 6 p.m. at WDHS
Jan 24	Parent Info Night at WDHS for Gr 7-8 parents, 6 – 7 p.m.
Jan 26	PA Day – no school for students