



Birchland Elementary School

E-News

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Mr. Frank Pearse, *Principal*

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Principal of the Matter – fpearse@sd43.bc.ca

As we head into what would usually be the third week of the school year there is finally some positive news coming from the provincial bargaining table. I, as I am sure you do as well, sincerely hope that the current mediated discussions taking place lead to a settlement in the current labour dispute. Please continue to monitor the district web site (www.sd43.bc.ca) and local media outlets for the most up to date information on the strike (and in case you are thinking it, no, unfortunately I don't know anything that you don't know about a settlement!)

Once the dispute is settled (which will hopefully be soon) I will communicate with parents as quickly as possible to outline the schedule for the first few days. It is likely that the schedule will closely mirror our original plan that was set out last June. This process will involve a registration day (45 minutes) followed by full days from the second day forward. For our new Kindergarten students there will likely be some form of gradual entry although it may be altered from our original plan ([Click here for the original plan](#)).

Frank Pearse, Principal

Staffing Updates

For a variety of reasons there are quite a number of staff changes at Birchland this year. Ms. Lloyd, Ms. Van Straten, Mr. Gibney, Mr. Hernandez, Ms. Kissinger and Ms. Kopf left Birchland in June for other teaching positions in the district, while Ms. Jekova and Ms. Brown moved onto other Educational Assistant positions and Ms. Lim moved into an accounting position at a secondary school. Ms. O'Hara chose to retire at the end of June to spend more time with her grandchildren. Unfortunately, Ms. Petrie was in a temporary position, replacing Mrs. Baruffa until the end of June, and thus won't be with us at Birchland this year. I am still waiting to fill a temporary position to replace Ms. Baruffa until her return in mid October and Ms. Abady (Rosie) who is on a leave for most of the school year.

Our classroom teachers this year will be:

- Kindergarten Ms. Baruffa (will return mid-October), replacement TBA
- Grade K/1 Ms. Rutherford
- Grade 1/2 Ms. Lueck
- Grade 2/3 Ms. Odberg
- Grade 2/3 Ms. Quarin
- Grade 4/5 Mr. Sung
- Grade 4/5 Mr. Cummings

We will also have the following other teachers on staff:

- Resource Ms. Snowden
- Resource Ms. Thomson
- Music Ms. Tjernagel
- Counselling Ms. Sullivan
- Principal / Library Mr. Pearse

For the most part our support staff is remaining stable:

- Secretary Ms. Williamson
- Caretaker (day) Mr. Cave
- Caretaker (afternoon) Mr. Ram
- Mr. Hallifax Aboriginal Youth Worker
- Noon Hour Ms. Dlugos
- Noon Hour Ms. Abady (On leave, replacement TBA)

Birchland will also continue to host two district programs:

- Challenge Center Ms. Wong
- T & E Center Ms. Cheng

We will also continue to have the support of a Hearing Resource Teacher and Speech and Language Pathologist although the staffing for these positions has not yet been announced. As always this staffing could change depending on enrollment during the first week of school. To help ensure I currently have accurate numbers please ask any new families in the area to contact me at the school.

All About Me

The All About Me program will continue at Birchland this year although the scope of the program will need to be reduced. Unfortunately the grant that funds this program (A United Way Grant that we apply for along with Tri-City Transitions Society) has been reduced. I am currently working with Tri-City Transitions to determine what this program will look like this year and once we are up and running will send information out to all families.

