

BLAKEBURN ELEMENTARY

A caring, creative, intelligent school!

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# NEWSLETTER –September 2014

# [http://www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/blakeburn/](https://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/blakeburn/)

Sept. 22, 2014

***Dear Blakeburn Families,***

Welcome back to school. It was wonderful to meet so many of you on our first day. I will continue popping into classrooms to get to know the students throughout the week.

For your information, **Emergency Preparedness** and **Verification Forms** will be sent home in **paper form** in the next week. Please **do not** fill them out this year on line. Also, please check with the person you are using as an emergency contact so they know they may be called. This information is absolutely critical to have; please send the forms back to school with your child, **with any changes made in a different color,** as soon as possible. Thank you.

If you plan on volunteering, volunteer forms can be requested from the office or through your teacher.

Photo permission forms, which allow photos to be posted in hallways and our non-public webpages, can also be printed and returned if you choose.

Medical forms will be sent home with students who have medical issues and it is mandatory that these forms are filled out **each year.**

September is a time to review our routines based on our shared values and beliefs. In the end, the goal is always to create a safe and effective teaching and learning place for all of us. Some information is a follows:

**OPENING WEEK**

On Tuesday, students will be going to their last year’s classroom for attendance, where they will be arranged in grade groupings.

**Grade one students were told by last year’s teacher where to go to on Tuesday morning. That is where you go and that is your class for this week only. If any grades ones are lost or unsure please come to the library and we will help.**

Tuesday through Friday, students will be with others in grade groupings where we have developed opportunities for students to work together. This gives an opportunity for both teachers and students of grade groups to become familiar with each other and to work together.

Our plan this year, because most of our classes will be blends, is to provide lots of opportunities for students to work with others of the same grade when appropriate.

Please refrain from sending school supplies to school until Monday, September 29.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Our school calendar is now up on our website. Please check it regularly because there will most certainly be changes, additions and deletions throughout the year.

**PAC**

If you have any time to give and you enjoy working with other enthusiastic, collaborative people, please consider becoming involved in our Parent Advisory Council. They make an important difference to your children by providing opportunities the school is not able to do on its own. The **first PAC Meeting is Monday, October 20th at 6:30 pm** in the library. Please consider being involved in your child’s (children’s) school. We’d love to welcome you.

**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL**

**Important Information:** Students should be arriving after 8:30am. **When students do come inside at 8:30, please remind them, as we have, that they are to go directly to their classroom door and line up, sitting along the wall quietly to wait for the morning bell.**

Please be reminded that the school office and foyer/halls are school workspaces and staff/students need quiet until 2:45 in order to fulfill their teaching/learning responsibilities. Quiet in the hallways is a student expectation as our voices in the hallway distract students from their learning. This is just a friendly request that each one of us models this common expectation for our students.

Also, this year we want to keep our narrow hallways clear, so we are asking that you refrain from waiting with/for your children outside their classroom doors. With close to 380 students, there will simply be too many bodies and noise in hallways.

Hallways clear of people allow students to move easily and confidently to and from classes. You are more than welcome, however, to wait until dismissal of students and then walk down to pick up your child from his or her classroom if your child is in early primary. Students in grades 2-5 are confident to meet parents and guardians outside.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

**TRAFFIC SAFETY REMINDERS**

Once again this year, the driveway/roundabout is open for DROP OFF only in the mornings. If you wish to walk your child into the school, you must park on the street or in the public park parking lot. We will be organizing volunteers to help with parking lot safety. Please follow their directions. Their goal is to keep your children safe.

Over the summer I have been in consultation with the School District Facilities Department and the City of Port Coquitlam regarding the Blakeburn Elementary parking lot and traffic patterns.

The City has received requests from Blackeburn’s Principal and the PAC to improve the traffic patterns for our school with the ultimate goal of improving student safety. The City has now approved the installation of white pylons, changes in signage, and crosswalk improvements for Riverside Drive. These changes will occur in the near future. I will explain more of these upgrades in the future.

As a result, starting tomorrow the school drive-way will be open for student drop-off and student pick-up only in the morning and afternoon.

This is the start of a collaborative approach to improving the safety of our students and our community.

**BOUNCE AT THE BELL**

You are officially invited to participate in Bounce at the Bell any morning you are able! It is wonderful to have parents and guardians participating with us, hearing our messages of Social Responsibility and celebration. It sets the example that at Blakeburn we are a community and we all contribute! We do ask that when you attend Bounce you model participation for our students. We will be encouraging you☺ Also, if young ones attend Bounce (and we love that they do) please remember this is part of our teaching time with students so voices must be quiet and little ones with their parents (hopefully Bouncing!).

**LUNCHES, MESSAGES, ETC…..**

The time we have with your children for teaching and learning is precious and must be protected. It is our common expectation at Blakeburn that we not interrupt teaching time. Each interruption affects the flow of a lesson and the creative thinking of students, and it can be a challenge to re-establish that flow.

For this reason we all request that you always

* Please drop off lunches at the office, rather than walking directly to classes. Ensure that your child’s name is on the lunch and that he/she knows that you will be bringing it.
* Please send a note in your child’s planner if there is something your child’s teacher needs to know (appointment, early pickup, etc.) or leave a message with the office staff.

Also, please consider sending reusable juice containers to school with your child/children. This will lessen our recycling and reduce our garbage. It is an environmentally friendly alternative that will help us, too.

**HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

We strive to maintain close communication with our parent community throughout the school year. Newsletters, Week at a Glance, and notes in planners are issued on a regular basis and represent ways we plan to keep everyone informed. Newsletters will be posted on the school website: [http://www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/blakeburn/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/blakeburn/Pages/default.aspx)

Any families who do not have access to the internet can retrieve a paper copy from the office. If you haven’t been receiving school email, please resend your email addresses to Ms. Sheri Fiset at [sfiset@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:sfiset@sd43.bc.ca) or, if your email address is printed on a note, make sure that it is easily read. There may be glitches and missed emails for a while until everything has been added/sorted. Please be patient with us☺

**LATES, SIGN OUTS AND ABSENCES**

Please telephone the school to advise us if your child will be **late or absent** from school. There is an answering machine if we are away from the phone, the lines are busy, or it is out of school hours. In addition, when **taking your children with you early or if they are arriving late at any time**, please come into the office and sign them out. We are responsible for knowing where your children are during school hours at all times. **THANK YOU!**

**RAINY DAYS ARE ON THE HORIZON…..**

We believe fresh air and exercise is good for our students and helps their concentration and learning throughout the day. Please make sure students have appropriate rainwear as **we will be going outside at recess and lunch unless it is pouring rain**☺ Staff also encourages you to send a change of clothes regularly in your child’s backpack.