



## Buffalo Head Prairie School 2024-25 Introductory Parent Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another school year. It is so exciting to see children and families returning to school. As a staff, we look forward to seeing parents and families at the **Welcome Back Family Breakfast on Friday, September 6**. Please plan to join us from 8:45-10:40 a.m. on this day! Weather permitting, and with our school population continuing to grow, this year's family breakfast will take place outdoors!

### New Staff

**We welcome two new staff members to BHPS this year:**

- *Mr. Darian Goertzen - Jr. High and Physical Education*
- *Mrs. Shannon Peters - Grade Three Teacher and Assistant Principal*

### 2024-25 Buffalo Head Prairie School Staff

<b>Mr. Benny Dick</b> <i>Head Custodian</i>	<b>Mrs. BettyAnn Dick</b> <i>Custodial Assistant</i>	<b>Mrs. Angie Wolfe</b> <i>Student Support</i>	<b>Mrs. Jasmine Zacharias</b> <i>Student Support</i>
<b>Mrs. Katharine Neudorf</b> <i>Student Support</i>	<b>Mrs. Lana Halladay</b> <i>Student Support</i>	<b>Miss Susie Dyck</b> <i>Student Support</i>	<b>Mrs. Martha Harms</b> <i>Student Support</i>
<b>Mrs. Rosanne Paul</b> <i>Student Support</i>	<b>Mrs. Kathy Janzen</b> <i>Librarian</i>	<b>Mrs. Yumiko Hache</b> <i>Assistant Secretary</i>	<b>Miss Margaret Wiebe</b> <i>Secretary</i>
<b>Miss Kalaina Haag</b> <i>J.H. L.A./Science</i>	<b>Mr. Darian Goertzen</b> <i>P.E./J.H. SS/J.H. Science</i>	<b>Mr. Trent Kenyon</b> <i>P.E./J.H. Math</i>	<b>Mr. John Acreman</b> <i>Grade 6 &amp; J.H. Math</i>
<b>Mr. Jonathan Hache</b> <i>Grade 5</i>	<b>Mr. Aaron Diver</b> <i>Grade 4</i>	<b>Mrs. Raelene Peters</b> <i>Grade 3</i>	<b>Mrs. Shannon Peters</b> <i>Grade 3 &amp; Assistant Principal</i>
<b>Mrs. Cathy Wiseman</b> <i>Grade 2W</i>	<b>Mrs. Rachel Magalona</b> <i>Grade 2M</i>	<b>Mrs. Karen Keefe</b> <i>Grade 1K</i>	<b>Ms. Kari Dalke</b> <i>Grade 1D</i>
<b>Mrs. Robyn Carey</b> <i>Kindergarten</i>	<b>Mrs. Melissa McDonald</b> <i>Inclusive Education &amp; Literacy Coach/Grade 6</i>	<b>Mr. Chris Fehr</b> <i>Principal &amp; Elementary P.E.</i>	



## **BHPS Day Schedule**

Our school day will run from 8:40 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Please see this year's bell schedule below:



*\*8:35- Arrival of Buses at BHPS  
8:40- School Bell- Begin O Canada/Lord's Prayer*

*8:40-9:15- Period 1*

*9:15-9:45- Period 2*

*9:45-10:15- Period 3*

*10:15-10:45- Period 4*

*10:45-11:00- Morning Recess*

*11:00-11:30- Period 5*

*11:30-12:00- Period 6*

*12:00-12:30- Period 7*

*12:30-12:45- Student Lunch*

*12:45-1:05- Student Lunch Recess*

*1:05-1:20- School Wide Silent Reading- Period 8*

*1:20-1:50- Period 9*

*1:50-2:20- Period 10*

*2:20-3:00- Period 11*

*3:00- School Bell- Day end preparations and bus loading for home time*

*3:05- Bus Departure from BHPS*

## **Parents in School**



We value parents in the school and welcome parents to join us frequently! As a community school, we recognize how important it is to utilize the support and involvement of school volunteers. If parents wish to visit to observe or help in a classroom, giving the classroom teacher or the office some notice ahead of time would be greatly appreciated. We thank parents in advance for considering ways that they can be involved in their child's school this year. You make BHPS a better place!

## **MyFVSD Online Enrollment**

For the 2024-2025 school year the Fort Vermilion School Division (FVSD) is providing an online re-enrollment form where parents and guardians can review their child's information and sign the form. The online re-enrollment form is for students who attended an FVSD school last year and will be attending an FVSD school in the 2024-2025 school year.

You can now sign in to MyFVSD at [my.fvzd.ab.ca](http://my.fvzd.ab.ca) to view students you are associated with and review their student profile. There are two ways you can sign into MyFVSD

1. Using a Google (@gmail.com) or 2. Microsoft (@outlook.com) email account.
2. Through text messaging which will require you to enter the Alberta Student Number (ASN) for one of the students you are associated with. A student's ASN can be found at the top of their report card.

Parents unable to use the online re-enrollment form, can still review and sign a hard copy version.

## **Personal Electronic Devices- New**

Due to a new FVSD policy for all schools, school staff will no longer be permitted to utilize personal cell phones or technology during school hours from 8:30am until buses leave the school grounds. **For this reason, all communication between staff and parents will need to be completed via email or telephone before or after school.** Parents may also leave a message for school staff by contacting the BHPS school office. Thank you for your understanding as we navigate this FVSD policy change.

We are also asking parents to refrain from using cell phones and personal electronic devices while in the school building as per FVSD expectations.

## **Student Electronics Policy**

All students will be expected to follow the school's electronics policy. This policy was established to prevent distractions to learning, which has been highly effective in past years.

## **Water Bottles**

All students will need to have a personal water bottle at school. This allows for less distractions during learning time. A good quality water bottle should last all year if students take care of it. Please write your child's name on their water bottle.

All staff will enforce a no tolerance policy on non-educational electronic devices. Should devices such as (but not limited to) cell phones, iPods, and handheld video games be visible during school hours, they will be taken from the student and turned into the office. These devices will not be returned to students and must be picked up by the child's parent(s). At no time during the school day, including recess, will electronic devices be permitted at Buffalo Head Prairie School.

## **Hats, Toques, and Hoods in School**

For many years, with support and encouragement from School Council parents, Buffalo Head Prairie School has maintained the expectation that students will not wear hats during class time as a sign of respect for others and for the learning taking place in the classroom. This expectation will include toques and hoods. Hoods, when placed over the head, do not always allow for eye contact or for faces to be seen, which is necessary for proper communication to take place between students and their teachers. Parents are encouraged to discuss this with their child(ren) to remind them of why it is respectful to remove hats, toques, and hoods during learning times.

## **Bus Arrivals and Departure**



Bus arrival time at BHPS is set for 8:35 a.m. with the goal of having all students in their classrooms by 8:40 a.m. Students will be dismissed at the end of the school day at 3:00 p.m. so that buses can leave the parking lot by 3:05 p.m.

## **School Visitors**

All school visitors are asked to sign in at the office. This allows us to have a record of visitors and allows us to be aware of who is in the building in case of an emergency.

## **Junior High Positive Students Incentive**

To encourage junior high students to maintain a positive focus this school year, they will have an opportunity to be involved in activities that will promote positive school community and connections. Should students pass all their classes, have one or fewer office referrals for misbehavior, and have three or fewer unexcused absences (quarterly), they will be permitted to take part in special events. The necessary information will be tracked by classroom teachers and special events will take place three times throughout the school year, in coordination with report card times.

Parents of junior high students will receive additional information about this program early in the school year. We hope this program will provide additional motivation for junior high students to excel in school.

## **School Phone**

The telephone number at Buffalo Head Prairie School is 780-928-2282. Parents are always welcome to call the school with questions or concerns.

## **Sending Children to School When They are Not Well**

Please do not send children to school if they present symptoms of illness. Children that come to school sick tend to pass illnesses on to other students, which can cause bigger issues. Thank you for considering others and keeping your children home when they are ill.

If your child comes to school sick or if they become sick at school, they will go to the infirmary and a call home will be made asking parents to pick their child up.

## **Indoor/Outdoor Shoes**



Please ensure that students have two pairs of shoes to begin the school year: a pair for outdoors and another pair for indoors with non-marking soles. Non-marking soles greatly help our custodians and help to maintain a clean school.

## **Administration of Medicine to Students**



There are several guidelines that need to be followed if parents need to have medications administered to their children while at school. If this is something your child will need, please stop by the school office to complete the required paperwork.

## **Kindergarten**

Kindergarten classes will run daily with two half time Kindergarten student groups. One group will attend Tuesday, Thursday, and alternating Mondays. The other student group will attend Wednesday, Friday, and alternate Mondays. *Due to holidays, alternate Mondays may be disrupted, and parents are asked to view the school calendar and Kindergarten calendar for accurate dates.*



## **Junior High CTS**



Junior high students will complete their CTF classes at BHPS this school year, rather than at LCPS in La Crete as has been done in previous years. In an attempt to provide students with meaningful programming to support the FVSD Collegiate and a focus on careers, students will change into new CTF classes three times this school year. For the first round, students may participate in one of the following: Building Construction, Learners (driving) Program, Leadership & Teaching, Baking, Learning to Run a Business, Safe Sitting Course (babysitting), and Fitness.

## School Crosswalks



Students, staff, and parents are asked to always use the crosswalks when they are going to or from the parking lot and school. Junior high students are also asked to use a crosswalk when they access or return from the playing field. Parents, please keep this in mind each time you use the visitor parking lot. Thank you for supporting our efforts to keep children safe at school!

## Student Attendance



Parents, please notify the school if your child will not be in school. A phone call to the office, email to the teacher, or comment in your child's agenda (for advanced notice) would be appreciated. Good school attendance promotes positive student learning, so please try to have children in school as often as possible.

## Student Agendas

Elementary students will have agendas to be used as a communication tool between school and home. **IMPORTANT: please ensure that your child's agenda is signed nightly and returned to school again the next day.** Teachers will use the agendas to communicate in a variety of ways so please promote the consistent use of agendas throughout the school year.



## Microwaves



Microwaves are available for students' use in grade 4-9 classrooms. Students in K-3 do not have microwaves for safety and time reasons. For students in grade 4-9, please do not send frozen food as this takes significant time to heat up, and others in the class will need to use the microwave before heading outside for recess.

## Student with Food Allergies

Buffalo Head Prairie School has several students with food sensitivities. For this reason, we discourage students from sharing food in school.

## Student Technology User Agreements

**At Buffalo Head Prairie School, students do not have open access to the internet.**

Please note that this practice remains the same as last school year. The FVSD technology department sets up student accounts in such a way that BHPS students cannot openly access the internet. Students do, however, have access to computers with teacher supervision. In our lowest grade levels, there is minimal computer use, however by the time students move into grade 3 and progress into older grades, there is a gradual increase in time spent using computers. Alberta teachers are required in the Program of Studies to help students learn computer skills like typing and basic operations. BHPS teachers are aware that most parents do not want to see excessive time on computers, and this will be respected at BHPS.



**All students in grades 4-9 must sign a student technology user agreement that their teacher will read through and explain to them.** This agreement essentially outlines important items such as using computers with respect, not sharing passwords, and using computers appropriately.

**Students in K-3 (with limited use of computers) are required to have parents sign a student technology agreement.** If classroom teachers plan to make use of computers in their classes this year, these forms will be sent home for parents to sign and return.



## **Internet Use Agreement**

Although students do not have open access to the internet, they may have access to limited programs to support learning that are closed internet sites. Please note that this practice remains consistent with previous school years. These programs allow students to access a specific internet site, but do not allow any further internet use or exploration. There may be a few programs that students will require access to. If a new program is being considered, it will receive the support of school council before being used in school. As an example, grade 9 students will have access to Exam Bank which helps them prepare for Provincial Achievement Tests.

Students will not be required to sign an internet use agreement due to the fact that they do not have open access to the internet. It is very important to school administration that parents are clearly aware of these internet use details. As always, please feel welcome to ask questions or express any concerns you may have.



## **Home Time Student Messages & Bus Drivers**



Please call the school as early as possible if you have a message for your child. Calling the school with questions or concerns prior to 1:00 pm is greatly appreciated due to the many processes that occur at the end of the school day.

New this year, we will now have 6 school buses running daily. We value our bus drivers immensely and are grateful for their efforts to keep students safe going to and from school each day.

## **Parent Handbooks**

Updated parent handbooks highlighting the school's policies and procedures will be sent home with today's newsletter. Please use this handbook as a reference throughout the year should any questions arise. We encourage parents to call at any time with questions or concerns.

## **Final Thoughts:**

Parents, Buffalo Head Prairie School is a school dedicated to continuous growth and improvement. As a staff, we take our roles very seriously and recognize the incredible responsibility that comes with caring for your children. Thank you for trusting us with the care of your precious children.

As a school, we have observed significant student learning growth in the areas of literacy and numeracy recently, as indicated through the results of required FVSD testing. We have also witnessed student connections and relationship improvements. This year, we will continue to work in these areas, but we will also add a focus on the fourth FVSD priority- Careers! This will support the FVSD focus on the Collegiate program.

It is extremely important to us that you as parents feel welcome at your child's school. Stop in at any time to attend the special events taking place or just to say hello. You are always welcome! If you are stopping in to observe in a classroom, please provide advanced notice whenever possible.

We wish each family a wonderful school year. There is a great deal to accomplish, and we are eager to help your children experience success as they walk through the doors each day.

Sincerely,

Mr. Fehr (Principal)

