

BLT SR. Elementary School

24 James Street, Timberlea, NS

902-876-3230

tjh@hrce.ca

Principal: **Craig Myra** Administrative Assistant: **Jillian Butler/Amber Grimmer-Collins** Vice Principal: **Tracey Quinn**

Principal's Message

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone to BLT SR. for the 2024-25 school year! With the starting of a new school year, there is a lot of excitement from parents, students and teachers, as we all move along this journey of personal and academic growth together. As the Principal, I intend to work hard to ensure that each and every child in this school thrives in a safe and academically challenging environment.

ALLERGIES

We have a number of students at BLT Sr. who are allergic to specific foods, especially nuts. Because all students will be eating together in designated lunch rooms,



BLT Sr. continues to be a **Nut Aware School** – similar to many other elementary schools in the HRCE. Please send recess snacks and lunches that contain **only nut free products**.

Strongly scented products cause many children and adults to experience breathing problems, dizziness and/or headaches. Our school is a **Scent Aware School**. Please refrain from wearing strongly scented products when visiting the school.

2024-25 School Bell Schedule

8:15 AM:	Soft Start, Students Come into Building and go to Class
8:30-8:35 AM:	Morning Announcements and Attendance
10:05 - 10:20 AM:	Recess
12:05-1:05 PM:	Lunch (ALL CLASSES)
2:35 PM:	Dismissal



September 2024

Dates to

Remember:

September 12: Stand up Against Bullying Day—Wear Pink

September 20—Terry Fox Run in Afternoon

September 25: Lock-down Drill

September 30: Truth and Reconciliation Day—NO CLASSES

October 1—Treaty Day—Schools Open—Assembly this Day

October 7—SAC Meeting 6pm

October 11—Professional Development Day—NO SCHOOL

October 14—Thanksgiving Day—NO SCHOOL

October 17 and 18—Picture Days

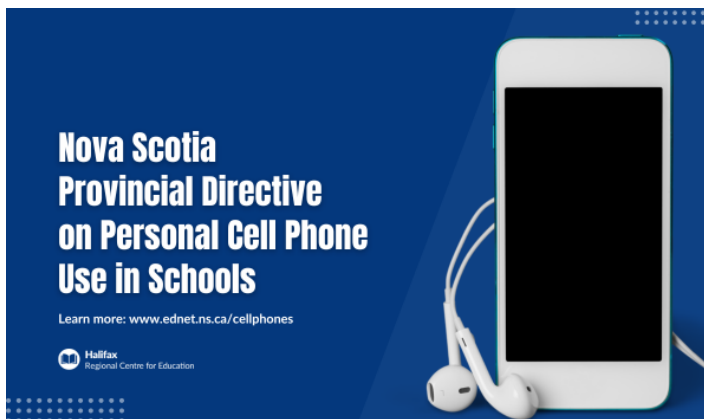
October 24—Halloween Dance

October 25—Conference Day—NO SCHOOL



All students in **Grades Primary-Six** are **NOT permitted to have their cells phones during the school day**. All phones need to be put away and out of site for the entire school day, including during recess and lunch. We understand this will be an adjustment for some people. Please share the below information with your child as this is how we will be responding to students who are not following this new Provincial Directive.

- The first time a student is found using their cell phone when not permitted, they'll be reminded and asked to turn it off and put it away.
- The second time, they'll be asked to leave it with the teacher until the end of class or break. Their parent or guardian will be notified.
- The third time, they'll be referred to the office and the cell phone will be left in the office for the day. Their parent or guardian will be notified.
- The fourth time, they'll be referred to the office and the cell phone will be held until a parent or guardian meets with the Principal to retrieve the phone. Their parent or guardian will be notified.



Stand Up Against Bullying Day
Thursday, September 12th



- The second Thursday of the school year we will be celebrating Anti Bullying Day by Students and Staff wearing pink, if possible. Teachers will be talking to their students about bullying awareness and we will be doing presentations throughout the day with students.
- Let's all stand up against Bullying today and everyday!
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School Closures/Bus Cancellations :

Decisions on school closures are posted on the Halifax Regional Center of Education website at www.hrce.ca, on Twitter at hrce_ns, recorded on 464-INFO (4636) and communicated to all local radio stations. You can also receive notice of school and bus cancellations by e-mail or text message by following the link on the front page (left side) of the HRCE website.

In case of a school closure during the day, you can help us to ensure that your child is dismissed safely by making sure that we have up-to-date contact information.

Visiting the School and Volunteering

A reminder for those considering volunteering for anything upcoming in their child's class that both the Criminal Records Check **with Vulnerable Sector Check** and Child Abuse Registry Check must be completed. If you did it at BLT junior, please contact them to send it to us or you can share your copy with us. We can also send you the link to get a reduced rate on MyBackcheck.com or we can provide a letter to receive a reduced rate on the Criminal Records Check, if done in person at the Tantallon RCMP. Please contact us with any questions.

Combined Classes

Many people have questions about combined classes. Here is some information that you may find helpful. Today's elementary schools commonly include combined grade classes. We have several at BLT Sr. Elementary this year. Combined grade classes consist of two groups of students who have birth dates within a two-year range. Each group is working towards the achievement of its own set of grade-level expectations. Even though there is a greater age range in a combined grade class, there is much diversity and a variety of ability levels in any classroom. It is important that all classes be considered a unified community of learners, where the individual needs and qualities of each student are honoured and nurtured.

Combined grade classes are formed to maintain a balance of class sizes across the school, when there is uneven enrollment at particular grade levels. We also have to take Provincial Cap sizes in mind. Within each classroom setting there are children at various stages of social, physical, and intellectual development. This is true regardless of age or grade level. Research has found that students in combined classes have a good sense of belonging, support, security and confidence. As well, combined grade classes have been found to foster:

Social growth and Independence

Respect for others and increased motivation to learn

The teacher may use many teaching strategies that:

- Provide a learning environment with a range of materials and resources to meet the needs of students;
- Use direct instruction with individuals, small groups or the whole class to develop necessary skills and concepts;
- Establish various groupings of students such as cooperative groups, pairs, interest groups or ability groups to promote learning among peers;
- Develop integrated curriculum approaches which allow separate curriculum areas to be integrated in a meaningful way; and
- Develop student choice and ownership through activities that are tailored to each grade.

Assessment and evaluation in a combined grade class focuses on the achievement of grade related expectations. Teachers tailor assessments, cluster expectations and create a continuum of learning of skills to meet the needs of both grades. Teachers may use assessment tools such as: rubrics, exemplars, checklists, and anecdotal comments.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

We are having a Lockdown Drill this Month!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The safety and security of our students and staff is a top priority for BLT Sr. Elementary and the Halifax Regional Center of Education. We have been implementing a number of measures as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at ensuring our school remains a safe place for our students to learn.

One of the procedures our school will be practicing is a lockdown drill. During a lockdown drill, classroom doors are secured and the students remain inside the room until instructed by the teacher to resume their activities. All exterior doors are locked and no one is permitted to enter or leave the building.

Students are kept inside the school and classrooms when circumstances make it safer to stay in the classroom rather than evacuate. Just as we prepare our students to properly respond to a fire drill, they also need to be aware of the proper response during a lockdown drill. These drills should be treated with the same level of importance as fire drills.

Please be assured that staff at our school will spend time discussing the importance of this procedure with students prior to running a drill. We will also take time after the drill to remind them that it was only a practice and there was no danger. When possible, our School Liaison Officer/RCMP may assist us in conducting the lockdown drills just as the Fire Department assists with evacuation drills.

Please take the time to speak with your son/daughter about this procedure and reinforce its importance. We practice these drills to ensure our school remains a safe place for teaching and learning.

Please contact me if you have any questions about lockdown drills.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Regards,

Mr. Myra

Other Reminders:

Bussing

Please be reminded to check for your child's bus stop information, which can be found at <https://hrce.mybusplanner.ca/> . (Please register your child if you have not yet done so.) Please be reminded that at this time of the year the pick-up and drop off times will be a bit slower until everyone gets into the swing of school. Please be reminded that the HRCE Transportation Team can support your family with all of your busing needs; please contact them to get any busing situations figured out 902-431-4723 or transportation@hrce.ca. The bussing system sends messages if a bus will be more than 15 minutes late.

Student Drop Off

If you are dropping a student off during the morning please do so in the area painted orange up to our orange barriers. Please have your child prepped and ready to hop out as soon as you pull up. Parents will not need to exit the car to help with a bag as this is part of a student's growing independence. Also please do not have your child exit your car in the bus area and walk through the buses. We always want them to be safe and that is why we have made our drop off area highly visible. This year the Junior School will use a crosswalk drop off location but we ask our parents to be patient until able to get to our orange zone.

Telephone Messages

Please be reminded that teachers will not be able to return any telephone messages until after the students have left, returning all messages within 48 hours. Also, our school is not able to give students last minute messages about any changes to their dismissal procedures for that day. Students are not to use cellular telephones while at school or even have them visible. We can always make arrangements to convey a student's message to their family during the day.

Office Hours

The hours in which our school will have our administrative assistants in our office area is 8:00-12:00 and 12:15-3:00.