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Website: <http://schools.sd68.bc.ca/hamm>
School Year: 2011-2012
Issue #1 – September 22, 2011

Principal: Francine John
Vice-Principal: Sharyn Andruski-Collins
Secretaries: Karen Matthews
Violet Rucpich

Principal's Message

I would like to welcome all of our students and families back to Hammond Bay. We hope that you had a great summer holiday and the staff and I are looking forward to working with you and your children throughout the 2011-12 school year.

Our school organization consists of 14 divisions with a total enrollment of 350 students. During the first week of school students have been introduced to their new teachers, classmates, new classroom routines and expectations. It is important to start the year on a positive note. Please take a few minutes to make yourself familiar with our revised Parent/Student Handbook and all of the communications coming home from your child/ren's teacher(s).

At Hammond Bay we recognize the importance of working together with families to meet the needs of all children. Please do not hesitate to contact the teachers or myself if you have a question or concern.

On behalf of the Hammond Bay staff, we wish you and your children a happy and successful year. *Francine John*

Vice-Principal/Music Teacher's Message

It is with pleasure that I am able to teach Kindergarten to grade 4/5 classes at Hammond Bay this year. Mr. Chappell and I are both using the portable at the back of the school, thus sharing equipment and furniture. If you wish to touch base with me, I am teaching music all day on Thursday and Friday, and Monday and Tuesday mornings only.

Sharyn Andruski-Collins

New Staff

A warm welcome is extended to Sharyn Andruski-Collins who is our new Vice-Principal, Heather Marshall who is teaching kindergarten, Alison Eathorne who is teaching with Anneli Bramley in grade 3, Natasha Proctor who is teaching with Monica Mundy in grade 2, Jacqueline Kellam in grade 1 and Kathleen Loughheed-Mercier in grade 1. We also welcome Violet who will be working in the office on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays for the month of September, Colleen Rickson, Library Clerk, Melissa Smith, EA and Susan Brown, Aboriginal EA.

2011-12 School Staff

Sharyn Andruski-Collins – Vice-Principal
Linda Simard – Kindergarten
Heather Marshall - Kindergarten
Jacqueline Kellam/Natascha Proctor – Grade 1
Kathleen Loughheed-Mercier/Natascha Proctor – Grade 1
Kim Letwin – Grade 2
Monica Mundy/Natascha Proctor – Grade 2
Anneli Bramley/Alison Eathorne – Grade 3
Raynald Mercier – Grade 3
Lynda Williams – Grade 4
Dominique Struch – Grade 4/5
Laura Harrison – Grade 5
Mirela Raduta – Grade 6
Kevin Levesque/Sharyn Andruski-Collins – Grade 7
Kelly Payne – Grade 7
Nancy Cantin - Student Support Teacher
Sharyn Andruski-Collins - Music
James Chappell - Band
Robert Lussier – Librarian
John Scott -Speech & Language Pathologist
Melissa Smith – Educational Assistant
Susan Smith – Aboriginal EA
Colleen Rickson – Library Clerk
Christine Devries – Supervision Aide
Karen Matthews – Secretary
Violet Rucpich – Secretary (Mon/Tues/Thurs)

Emergency Preparedness

Please remember to send your child/ren's personal emergency kits to school. We had our first earthquake practices on Friday, September 16th and the next one will be on Monday, September 26th.

Open House

There will not be an Open House this year due to teachers' job actions.

School/Class Photos

MJM Studios will be here on Thursday, October 20th for student photos.



Professional Day

A reminder that our first professional day is on Tuesday, October 11th. Classes will not be in session on that day.

School Website

Please visit our updated website for important school reminders and class information at: <http://schools.sd68.bc.ca/hamm>. We will also post all permission slips on the website, schedules and PAC fundraising information.

Student Assignments

I would like to review the process that the teachers and I followed in June regarding the assignment of students in classrooms. I hope that this information will answer the many questions that you may have and address some of the rumors and false information that seem to be circulating. I have appreciated parents coming directly to me with their questions and concerns.

The *School Act* states that the Principal is responsible for student placement. I feel strongly that before I make a decision regarding the placement of a student I need to:

- Follow legislation on class size limitations;
- Follow legislation on class composition limitations;
- Consult with the teachers who have worked closely with them all year;
- Take into consideration important aspects that parents would like me to consider in the decision making process.

The teachers and I reviewed our common/shared beliefs regarding student placement. Based on the principles of our shared beliefs I asked the teachers to do some preliminary thinking about student placement. I then met with clusters of teachers (i.e. all grade 2 teachers and possible grade 3 teachers to discuss the placement of grade 3 students). A first draft of proposed class groupings was prepared. Follow up meetings also took place.

Parent letters are also considered in the process but they do not assure placement of students in classes based on parent request.

Some of the principles that guided my decision in establishing the class groupings were:

- Balance of genders (as much as possible) in each grade;
- Consideration of individual student programming needs;
- Student behaviour needs;
- Number of students;
- Needs of students;
- Students' social support.

It is important for parents to know and understand that writing a letter in June does not determine the placement of your child. If this was the case I would receive 300 letters to consider and everyone would expect to have the class of their choice for their child.

It is my hope that over the next few years you will become more familiar with the process and trust the decision made by the staff and me.

Thank you for encouraging your children and supporting them in the classroom they have been assigned this year.

Merci, Francine

Visitor/Volunteer Sign In

If you are coming into the school as a visitor or to volunteer in a classroom or the library, we would ask that you stop by the office to sign in and receive a Visitor Badge. This will help the office know who is in the school and will ensure that we are following District policy. Thank you!

2011-12 School Goals

We are continuing our work in the literacy area this year. We have limited our efforts to one goal.

Our literacy goal is: To increase students' reading comprehension in French and to improve students' attitude towards reading in French. It is our objective to develop stronger and more confident readers in French.

We will also continue the positive work that has taken place in our Social Responsibility Area:

We will make an effort to become a "greener school". We will continue to recycle returnable containers, cardboard and paper. We are now using biodegradable plastic bags for our recycling. Teachers and support staff will attempt to reduce the amount of paper used and recycled in the school. We are hoping that as parents you will opt to:

- Receive our newsletters and permission slips via e-mail;
- Send student lunch items in plastic containers;
- Have students return all organic recycling home (instead of putting it in the garbage can).

Good nutrition and daily physical activity will also be emphasized.

Fruit and Vegetable Program

Our school will be involved in this Province-wide initiative. The students will receive picked, washed and ready to enjoy produce every other week at no charge. You should have received a brochure explaining this project. Mrs. Kotapski and her committee of parent/student volunteers will be coordinating this project. First delivery will be September 20th. We are expecting delicious blueberries.



Silence is Golden

Parents are reminded that students are busy in their classrooms until 2:45 p.m. (1:30 p.m. Fridays) each day. If you arrive early to pick up your child at the end of the day, we would ask that you please respect the usual silence in the hallways so that the children and teachers can continue the learning process. Older students can also be met outside of the school at a pre-determined meeting spot.



School Start Time

Please note that the school start time has been changed. There will be a warning bell at 8:45 a.m. and at 8:50 a.m. another bell will ring followed by the announcements. Students should be at their classroom entrance when the warning bell rings at 8:45 a.m. Please ensure that your child/children arrive at the appropriate classroom entrance by bell time. We have noticed an improvement related to student tardiness for the first week of school. Thank you for your consideration.

Sports

Bantam Girls Soccer Team

Thank you to Mme. Kelly for coaching our team. The team will be playing on Thursdays and their practices will be on Wednesday morning at 8:00. Thanks to parents who will help out with driving our students to the games.

Touch Football

We are also fortunate to have the support of Mr. Cooper and Fridriksson who have volunteered to coach our touch football team. Our grade 7 boys will practice on Tuesdays at 8:00 and Fridays at 1:30 and play their games on Wednesdays after school. Merci to Mrs. Cederberg and Mme John for sponsoring the team.

Cross Country

Interested students from grade 3 to 7 will have the opportunity to practice running in preparation for the zone and district meets. Practices will take place every Thursday at 11:20 a.m. and participants will start their runs on the school grounds and proceed to Neck Point. Thanks to the parent volunteers who are helping out with student supervision. Hammond Bay will be hosting the north end zone meet on October 19th. Parent volunteers are essential for this event. Please contact the office if you can help us out.

Grades 2 and 3 students will have the opportunity to participate in a special cross-country meet hosted by Aspengrove School. The date and time are still to be determined.

Merci à nos bénévoles et professeurs.
Bonne Chance à toutes nos équipes!

The Energy Diet Challenge-Featuring the Belbin Family

The Belbin family is very excited to have been chosen as 1 of 6 families in Canada to compete in The Energy Diet Challenge! Over the next 3 months the family will be blogging their experience about reducing their energy waste at www.energydiet.canadiangeographic.com.

Drew, grade 5 and Kai, grade 3 invite all students to join in this journey and compete along with them! From September 19 to October 14 is Bike Month and the students can fill out a ballot every time they bike, walk or carpool to school. There will be a special ballot box on the

table in front of the office to enter their names into and at the end of the month Drew and Kai will draw names for some very special prizes.

2011-2012 School Calendar

October 10	Thanksgiving
October 11	School-Based PRO D Day
October 21	District PRO D Day
November 11	Remembrance Day
December 16	Last day before Winter Vacation
January 3	School Reopens
February 20	District PRO D Day
February 21	School-Based PRO D Day
March 16	Last day before Spring Break
March 26	School Reopens
April 6	Good Friday
April 9	Easter Monday
April 23	School-Based PRO D Day
May 14	School-Based PRO D Day (Secondary)
May 21	Victoria Day
June 28	School-Based PRO D Day (Elementary)
June 29	Administrative Day school closed

Hammond Bay School is Nut Free

As our number of students, siblings and parents with life-threatening allergy to peanuts and/or tree nuts increase we are implementing a ban on nuts



and peanuts and nut products at Hammond Bay. This is done in order to make our school a safe and all-inclusive place where all students and their families can come and learn and enjoy themselves at our various functions.

Please ensure that you refrain from bringing any food items that may contain peanuts or nuts (noted in the ingredients) to school. It is a question of life or death.

We realize that it is difficult for some students not to be able to bring peanuts or nuts to school. We will provide you with some lunch and snack ideas to diversify your child’s lunch habit.

Thanks for your cooperation and understanding.

Library News

Welcome to the library! *Bienvenue à tous!* We’re off to a great start, all things considered. I’ve met students new to our school and have demonstrated to all early years classes how to take care of books they choose to take home. If kept in a plastic bag ‘in’ the school bag, books should arrive home safely and be returned to school clean and dry. The elementary students

were introduced to research tools for future projects in science and social studies.

As in the past, all parents are welcome to come by and sign up as volunteers for a block of time to shelve books. Your involvement ensures that popular books are circulated promptly. Your time is precious, we do understand, so if you're giving 10 minutes or 50 minutes, every bit of time counts and is appreciated!

The library is open at 8:30 AM on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays for students and their parents to return and select books beyond the regular classroom time and it is also open after school from 2:45-3:15 PM. (Mon-Tues-Wed).

Library time has been scheduled for every classroom and breaks down as follows:

Monday AM classes: M Kevin (gr.7); Mme Raduta (gr. 6); Mme Monica (gr.2)

Tuesday AM classes: M. Mercier (gr.3); Mme Laura (gr.5)

Tuesday PM classes: Mme Williams (gr.4); Mme Kim (gr.2)

Wednesday AM classes: Mme Jacqueline (gr. 1); Mme Heather (K); Mme Natascha / Mme Kathleen (gr.1)

Wednesday PM classes: Mme Dominique (gr. 4/5); Mme Alison / Mme Anneli (gr.3)

Friday AM classes: Mme Linda (K); Mme Kelly (gr. 7)

Do drop by and say hello and check out our new books in French and English for all ages. You can as well select books to take home to share with your family. It only takes a minute to register for access to over 15,000 books!

On a final note, a sincere thank you goes out to our PAC who over the past years has continued to value and support our school library by providing funds to maintain the collection. Your direct support has ensured that our library remains a vibrant hub and information resource centre for students and teachers. We are in the process of cataloguing over two hundred new books purchased last spring and early summer with funds from PAC and credits from Scholastic Book Fairs. Merci!

Sincerely, On behalf of our school library team,
Robert Lussier, Teacher-Librarian
Colleen Rickson, Library Clerk

Terry Fox Run/Walk

Our school has participated over the past years in walking or running in the honour of Terry Fox to support cancer research. We will once again do this year. Do join us on Friday, September 23rd (weather permitting) at 10:45-11:20 a.m. Our school assembly will begin at 10:25 and all students, parents and staff are welcome. Mme. Raduta's grade 6 class will host the assembly and lead the run/walk through Neck Point Park. Students will be accompanied by their respective teachers, keeping to the pathway, with leaders in front, in the middle and at the rear of the student population.

Permission letters signed and returned by parents are necessary for students to participate. The letters will be sent home the week of September 12th. During the week of September 19th, lead students shall visit classrooms to explain the intent of the run/walk and answer questions about Terry Fox. In keeping with Terry's dream, donations of one dollar per student are welcome. These funds will be collected daily from respective classrooms by grade 6 students and deposited in a sealed container placed by the office. All funds collected shall then be sent directly to the Terry Fox Foundation. Thank you for joining us in support of Terry Fox, a legend in our time.

Robert Lussier, Teacher-librarian

Student Council Activities

The Student Council has organized a pajama day on Friday, September 30th. Wear your favorite pajamas to school and bring your teddy bear. We will also be showing a short movie during long recess (11:20 – 12:00 p.m.) in the gym.

Student Safety

In the spring, summer and fall, cougar and bear sightings in the vicinity of schools are fairly common. All sightings should be reported to 1-800-663-WILD (9453). Ask for the conservation officer on duty. Below are a few basic safety rules with regard to cougars. More detailed information is available on the internet at

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/cougs_f.htm.

- Never approach a cougar. Although cougars will normally avoid a confrontation, all cougars are unpredictable. Cougars feeding on a kill may be dangerous.
- Always give a cougar an avenue of escape.
- Stay calm. Talk to the cougar in a confident voice.
- Pick all children up off the ground immediately. Children frighten easily

and their rapid movements may provoke an attack.

- Do not run. Try to back away from the cougar slowly. Sudden movement or flight may trigger an instinctive attack.
- Do not turn your back on the cougar. Face the cougar and remain upright.
- Do all you can to enlarge your image. Do not crouch down or try to hide. Pick up sticks or branches and wave them about.

Students walking to and from schools should always:

- Walk in groups.
- Stick to the roads – do not walk through bush.

Back to School Tips for a Smooth Start and Tips to Improve Studying, Literacy

(from the Ministry of Education)

Parents of Primary Students:

*Have your children choose their outfits the night before school to help start the morning calmly and efficiently.

*Find out how your child's teacher communicates with parents and take advantage of the opportunities available.

*Get involved in the school community. Contact your local PAC for volunteer opportunities.

*Let your children see you read, and set aside time each day for family reading.

*Ask your children to read to you in French and English while you prepare a meal.

*Get your children excited about reading by taking turns reading pages or acting out characters.

*Talk to your children about what they read. Ask them questions that require them to read between the lines and think about what they have just read. This will help improve their reading comprehension.

*Introduce your children to a variety of literary genres and see which one they most enjoy.

*Introduce your children to Aboriginal culture and history through stories and other learning opportunities.

*Help your children get a library card and take weekly trips with them to the library.

Parents of Intermediate Students:

*Talk to your children about the upcoming school year. Be positive and remind them of the friends they will meet, the new things they will learn and the fun they will have.

*Review your children's class schedules with them.

*Continue to be involved in the school community as this is a great way to get to know your children's teachers and other parents.

*Set up a daily homework routine. Designate a homework area away from distractions like the television and Internet, and with adequate lighting and supplies.

*When it is time for your children to do their homework, reinforce strong study habits by also doing yours: balance your chequebook, pay your bills or immerse yourself in a book.

*Let your children read comic books in their spare time because comics can encourage positive reading habits and can play a role in improving literacy.

*Help your children identify difficult and easy homework tasks and get them to tackle the most difficult subjects first.

*Make yourself available to answer questions and offer help, but do not do your children's homework for them.

*Ask your children questions and have them explain what they have just read or studied.

*Encourage your children to write stories, poetry and songs.

*Keep an assignment calendar on the fridge for quick reference of due dates, exams and how they fit with other activities.

Good Food Box Program

If your family is interested in signing-up for a monthly fruit and vegetable delivery service here is your chance! Delivery to Ecole Hammond Bay will occur the second Wednesday of each month. Each bin contains a combination of pre-selected local (season dependent) fruit and vegetables at a cost of \$12 per bin, with an average monthly weight being 17 pounds. Please contact Jo Widmeyer at jwidmeyer@shaw.ca or 250-619-9042 by October 5th to obtain an information sheet and sign-up for the program.

Grade 5 Active Pass

Nanaimo Parks Recreation and Culture is pleased to announce the return of the Grade 5 Active Pass and new this year – to help kids keep active – the Grade 6 Stay Active Pass. Students in grade 5 should have received a form earlier this week. Additional forms are available in the office.

PAC Fundraising Volunteers Needed

The PAC needs parent volunteers for various fundraising activities throughout the school year. Please attend the meetings once a month to stay informed. The next PAC meeting is on Monday, October 17th at 7:00 p.m. at Serious Coffee on Hammond Bay Road.