



BORDEN SCHOOL

Achieving Success Together

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Dear Borden School Families,

The students and staff keep working and growing as we push into the month of December. In the recent weeks, Progress Reports were sent home for students in Grades 1-12 and Conferences were engaged in for many families. These times of connection are valuable and exciting for the whole school. As always, we ask and invite all families who have questions to connect with their child(ren)'s teachers.

- In this update I will share information on the following topics: Staffing Update & Meet the Counsellor, Christmas Carol Parade, SCC Meeting & Communication, Mental Health Information and Resources, Parent Volunteers, Dressing for the Weather, PowerSchool Parent Portal, Curling, Fundraisers, and Secret Santa at School.

Staffing Update:

Since our last update for families, we have had a new Counsellor begin her work at Borden School. We are grateful to welcome Carmelle Blomquist to our school community and team. Also, Carina Logue's time at Borden School as an EA is winding to a close. December 17th, 2021 will mark the end of Carina's time at Borden School. Carina is moving on to the next chapter in her education career, and we wish her all the best moving forward! On that note, there will be an EA position posted in the near future. If that position interests you, please reach out to the school so that we can discuss in more detail.

Based on recent feedback, we are going to begin providing a brief biography and introduction for new staff members when they begin at Borden School.

Meet the School Counsellor, Carmelle Blomquist:



As your school counsellor, my goal is to help students reach a high level of growth and success in academic, emotional, behavioral and social areas. I started my career as a high school sciences teacher then enrolled in a graduate program to pursue education and training to become a counsellor. Following experience in a clinical counselling agency, I continued my career as a teacher and counsellor in high school and adult educational institutions. I am happy and excited to join Prairie Spirit School Division and the Borden School community.

I will be at Borden School on Mondays. Students may stop by my office to speak with me or make an appointment with Mrs. Lukan. Parents may call the school or email me (carmelle.blomquist@spiritsd.ca).

Christmas Carol Parade:

We are welcoming families and friends to watch our upcoming first annual Borden School Christmas Parade on December 15th, starting at 1pm. Students and staff will be dressed in their Christmas gear and singing their favorite Christmas songs as they walk down the streets of Borden. Feel free to join us in singing, but we ask that observers stay on sidewalks. We will return to school for fun Christmas activities and SCC treats. Stay tuned for a Christmas Parade route announcement in the near future.

SCC Meeting & Communication:

The Borden School Community Council has its next meeting scheduled for Thursday, December 9th at 7:30 PM. SCC Meetings are typically open to the public. We have been meeting digitally during the Covid pandemic. Any parents/community members who would like to attend are welcome. Please let us know at the school so we can invite you to the meeting with a link.

Recently, a message was sent to all families inviting everyone to share their contact information with our SCC. Please consider that invitation and also be aware that parents/families are encouraged to send questions or topics to the Borden SCC email account: bordenskcc@gmail.com

Mental Health Information and Resources:

Carmelle Blomquist was introduced above. Carmelle is happy and eager to work with students and families across all grades. If you would like to connect with Carmelle, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school.

Carmelle has compiled the following resources for families as well.

1. [Stress Strategies](#)

In addition to the information and interventions for managing stress provided on the main page, the Resources tab (found lower on the main page) links to an extensive and excellent list of primarily Canadian resources.

2. [Stressed Teens](#)

An online resource featuring the benefits of mindfulness in managing stress. The toolbox includes several activities, videos and suggestions for mindful interventions.

3. [Kids Help Phone](#) **1-800-668-6868**

Provides direct and immediate access to text/message and phone crisis support. The site contains tons of information about numerous issues such as: depression, ADD/ADHD, body image, gender identity.

4. [Family Service Saskatoon](#)

Provides access to youth, couples, families, group and individual counselling and support services.

5. [Catholic Family Service Saskatoon](#)

Delivers information, programming and counselling support for kids, teens, adults experiencing family and personal difficulties.

6. [Sask First Responders Mental Health](#)

Provides contact information for immediate assistance with mental health crises.

Parent Volunteers:

Recently information was shared regarding parent volunteers at the school. Although there are criteria for parents to volunteer, we are really craving that connection with our community and families. We encourage folks to get engaged. We look forward to having parents in the school more frequently again! Let us know if you have questions, or if you could use support getting set-up to volunteer with us, please reach out to us.

Dressing for the Weather:

So far, we have enjoyed a mild start to winter. Moving ahead, we can anticipate that weather will continue to get colder. It is important that all students (K-6) dress appropriately for the weather (suitable jacket/parka, boots, ski-pants, toque, mitts, scarves, etc.). Also, all students who ride the bus (K-12) need to be dressed for the weather.

As a school, we move recess breaks indoors for K-6 when the weather is too cold. We use the temperature of -27°C as a benchmark to determine if a recess break will be outside or inside. There is an element of professional judgement too, as -27°C on a calm, windless day is quite different from a blustery and windy -27°C or lower. It has also happened in the past when the AM recess has been indoors, but the PM recess has been outdoors as the weather changed throughout the day. If an outside recess determination is made (it is announced prior to recess breaks on days when it is an issue), we expect all students in K-6 to be able to go outside. Students who are unable to go outside because of unsuitable clothing put a strain on the supervision of students (having students in too many places for the number of adults who are required to supervise). Your understanding and support in this area is greatly appreciated. If you would like to speak more about this, please reach out to the school.

PowerSchool Parent Portal:

For students and families from Grades 7-12, the PowerSchool Parent Portal will be open from December 13th – 17th. These dates are a little bit past the halfway point of Quarter #2.

As a school, we are continuing to evolve our assessment practice from the traditional model of task completion to more of a holistic approach of evidence collection. The shift in assessment means that Gradebooks are more organic as the evidence provided deepens or changes. By opening the portal at specific moments, it provides the staff the time to collect evidence fully and apply their professional judgement (based on evidence) while determining achievement scores.

As a result of this evolution, Gradebook achievement scores may adjust as more evidence is collated. I have decided that having the portal open for windows of time would be better than having the portal open all the time and potentially causing confusion or distraction if/when the adjustments are applied and entered into PowerSchool.

If you would like to discuss this more, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Curling:

Curling season is upon us! The grade 7 – 12 students will have the opportunity to participate in curling this year. The practices will be split into junior (grade 7/8) and senior (grade 9 – 12) and we will practice out of the Radisson curling rink.

Some students have already signed up, but if you want your child to join the team, please talk with them and let Mrs. Martell know.

Practices will start in December – a schedule will be sent out once the practice times are finalized. Students are expected to find their own transportation to and from practice.

Students with their drivers' licenses are able to drive themselves (and siblings if applicable) to practice.

If you have more questions, please reach out to Mrs. Martell or Mr. Morris.

Fundraisers:

Borden School would like to extend thanks to everyone who supported the Cookie Crumble fundraiser and Bottle Drive (raising money for the 2022 Grade 12 Graduation). Also, we are grateful for the support on the Purdy's fundraiser (raising money for our Breakfast Program). The generosity and support throughout the whole community of Borden is always amazing and deeply appreciated. Thank you!

Secret Santa at School:

This is just a quick note that Secret Santa is going to be a class-by-class decision this year. Connect with your child(ren)'s homeroom teachers if you would like to know more.

Important Dates:

December 2 – K Conferences Day #1

December 3 – K-2 Field Trip to Wonderhub (make-up date after initial date had to be cancelled for road conditions)

December 9 – K Conferences Day #2

December 9 – SCC Meeting at 7:30 PM

December 13-17 – Parent PowerSchool Portal opens for Grades 7-12

December 15 – First Borden School Christmas Caroling Parade (K-8)

December 17 – Final school day before Christmas Break

January 4 – First school back from the break (Grade 1-12)

January 5 – First K school day back from the break

January 27 – Quarter #2 Final Day of Evidence Collection (Grades 9-12)

January 28 – Quarter #2 Final Day of Evidence Collection (Grade 9-12)

January 31 – Staff Prep Day (No classes K-12)

February 1 – Quarter #3 begins (Grade 9-12)

Conclusion:

I thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you have questions or would like to speak about anything at Borden School, please reach out to me. I can be reached by email at brody.morris@spiritsd.ca, a phone call to the school at (306) 997-2090, or you can call or text my cell phone which is (306) 371-2888. Your gracious support and kindness are always appreciated!

Brody Morris – Borden School Principal