



## BENCH ELEMENTARY

NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dear Bench Families,

Despite the dark and dreary days in November, the spirits of the Bench community remain high. October was a busy month as we were finishing District Learning Inventories and the Grade 4 and 7 FSA's. Our students and staff approached these activities with really positive attitudes. In November, we are able to really get into a rhythm of learning. We had tremendous participation in Boys' soccer, X-Country Running and both Boys' and Co-Ed Field Hockey. Basketball is starting this week. We also had a beautiful Remembrance Day Ceremony with several service members in uniform joining us. The PAC organized a wonderful Halloween Family Dance and the Pumpkin carving contest and students and families enjoyed these activities. We are starting to look ahead towards the Holiday season. Our Holiday Concerts will be on December 20th and 21st with Divisions 10-21 on the 20th and Divisions 1-9 on the 21st. There will be afternoon (1:00 pm) and evening (6:00 pm) shows on both days.

As you may have heard, in July the Ministry of Education and Childcare announced a new Reporting Order for BC K-12 Education. However, because Cowichan Valley School District was piloting several of these measures already, you as families won't notice enormous differences from what you have previously experienced. In January, you will receive a Learning Update and in June you will receive a Summary of Progress. Both of these reports will look very similar to what you have received in the past. Teachers will also send home another written informal report at some point in April. This one will not be quite as comprehensive as the other two but will still provide you with valuable information about progress. In addition to these reports, teachers will periodically provide parents with informal updates. These can be in the form of emails, phone calls, in-person meeting, written summaries digital portfolios or student-led conferences. It is our intent to make sure that families are kept apprised of the learning as the year progresses. As always, above and beyond these, families are welcome to contact their children's teachers and/or school administration at any time.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support to ensure we continue to ensure that Bench remains the amazing community we are.

Huy ch q'u!

Scott Jackson  
Kyla Bridge

**Bench Elementary School**  
1501 Cowichan Bay Road  
Cowichan Bay, BC - V0R 1N2

(T) 250-743-5552  
(F) 250-743-5807





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### Dates to remember

November 22, Wednesday - 2 hr. Early Dismissal  
November 24, Friday - Non-Instruction Day (School Closed)  
December 20, Wednesday - Holiday Concert (K-4)  
December 21, Thursday - Holiday Concert (4-7)  
December 22, Friday - Last Day of School  
December 23, Saturday - January 7, Sunday - Winter Break (School Closed)  
January 8, Monday - First day of class in 2024

### Young Entrepreneurs

Mrs. Gignac's and Mrs. Greenslade's classes are busy learning how to create a business by manufacturing a low-cost, quality product to sell. They are hosting a Young Entrepreneur Showcase on November 30, 2023 for Bench students to purchase items (\$1.00- \$5.00) for sale.



### Bench Bottle Drive



**Bench Bottle Drive: November 23, Thursday, 8:30 am - 1:00 pm.**

If you have returnable items at home and cannot bring them to our bottle drive, you could still make a donation to Bench at the Fisher Road bottle depot. Choose **Bench Grade 7's** or **Bench PAC** account and let them know it is a donation. Your help is much appreciated, thank you!

### Fundraising - Grade 7s

**Paradise Island Variety Pack - Grade 7 fundraiser for end of year activities**

Bench Elementary grade 7's are offering Paradise Island Variety Cheese pack's (880g) as a fundraiser for their end of year activity, Camp Thunderbird.

Variety cheese packs include:

- 220 g - Paradise Island Monterey Jack Jalapeno
- 220 g - Paradise Island Sharp Cheddar
- 220 g - Paradise Island Gouda
- 220 g - Paradise Island Applewood Smoked Old Cheddar



Online orders must be placed by Monday, November 27, 2023. Unfortunately, no late orders will be accepted. Cheese packs will be delivered to the school after the week of December 15, 2023.

#### Register Online:

Step 1: Access [sd79.schoolcashonline.com](https://sd79.schoolcashonline.com)

Step 2: Register by selecting "Get Started Now" and following the steps.

Step 3: After you receive the confirmation email, select the "click here" option, login in and add each of your children to your household account.



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## PAC

### Upcoming events from PAC:

- November 16 - Popcorn
- November 21 - Subway Hot Lunch
- November 23 - Chicken Fundraiser pick up - at the Gym
- November 28 - Purdy's Chocolate orders due  
(Order at: <https://fundraising.purdys.com/join.aspx/1497663-109381>)
- December 1 - PAC Coffee Chat Outside
- December 8 - Holiday Plant Fundraiser pick up
- December 12 - 15 - PAC Holiday Emporium
- December 14 - Purdy's Chocolate pick up

### Other ways to help PAC:

- Hot Lunch platform: <https://benchpac.hotlunches.net>
- Co-op Gas membership # 132941
- Island Return It bottle depot (Fisher Rd) acct: Bench PAC
- Country Grocer receipts please retain & put them in the PAC box by reception.

## Community Information

### November 20th - World's Children's Day

World Children's Day was first established in 1954 as Universal Children's Day and is celebrated on 20 November each year to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare.

(United Nations website - Nov 10th)



### November is Adoption and Permanency Awareness Month!

Adoption and Permanency Awareness Month takes place every November in BC to draw attention to the children and teens who are waiting for permanent homes through adoption, guardianship, kinship placement, or another form of permanency.

(bcadoption website - Nov 9th)



### December 3rd International Day of Persons with Disabilities

This annual event reminds us of our responsibility to better understand disabilities, and promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in our communities.

(Government of Canada website - Nov 9th)





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## Community Information

### Poppy Stories

This year, the Legion is proud to present “Poppy Stories”, an initiative that allows Canadians to scan a lapel Poppy with their smartphones. With every scan, you’ll be introduced to a fallen soldier with a story to remember.

Not only does each Veteran’s story recognize their sacrifice, but it also honors their life. The stories expand on where and how soldiers grew up in Canada, their family history, pre-war careers, and even some of their passions. We hope Poppy Stories gives every Canadian someone special to think about this Remembrance Day.

Visit [PoppyStories.ca](http://PoppyStories.ca) on your mobile device to scan your Poppy and meet some inspiring Canadians who gave their lives in service of our country.



## BACKYARD SESSIONS

NATURE CONNECTION

ANCESTRAL SKILLS

CARI BURDETT & THE ACORN COLLECTIVE



Sundays 10 am - 1pm

NOV 12th, DEC 10th, JAN 7th, FEB 11th, MARCH 3rd, APRIL 14th, MAY 5th

All ages & stages, Families welcome



At Lila Music & Nature Centre, 3228A Gibbins Rd, Duncan, BC. [CariBurdett.com](http://CariBurdett.com)



# BENCH ELEMENTARY

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## Inclement Weather



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

October 23, 2023

### INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

Dear Parents/Guardians:

With the winter season fast approaching, it is a good time to remind you about the School District's procedures regarding inclement weather. There may be times when bus routes will not be operating as usual, or where schools in the district are closed. This letter outlines how these decisions are made and identifies where you can find this information in the event of severe winter weather.

#### **BUS CANCELLATIONS**

The most likely reason for cancellation of bus service will be for severe winter weather conditions, in which case one or more bus routes in the district may be cancelled. I will determine by 5:45 a.m. whether to cancel one or more bus routes. This is done following consultation with transportation staff who carefully assess local road conditions after severe weather warnings or events.

It is especially important that you take note of what route(s) your child(ren) ride on.

#### **WHEN BUSES ARE OPERATING DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER**

**When road conditions are poor, some of the less maintained and more challenging roads (i.e., winding, steep, or are known to flood) may be determined unsafe to drive. We recommend that parents/guardians on these roads make an advanced plan with Transportation (250-748-1066) for a safer pick-up and drop-off location.**

If buses are running more than fifteen minutes late, drivers will radio in to notify the transportation department. The transportation department will advise the Principals and Vice-Principals of the affected schools.

You can also sign up to get transportation department updates regarding route cancellations, changes, or delays on Twitter ([@TransportSD79](https://twitter.com/TransportSD79)).

#### **SCHOOL CLOSURES**

The closure of schools in the district may occur when we are experiencing severe winter weather conditions, or when it is simply unsafe to ask parents and school-based staff to report to school due to hazardous road conditions. Again, I will make this determination by 5:45 a.m. whether to close schools in the district after assessing the situation with District staff.

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### WHERE TO FIND BUS ROUTE AND SCHOOL CANCELLATION NOTIFICATIONS

Any notice of official school closings due to weather will be posted to the @CowichanSchools [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.

We will notify local radio and TV media outlets prior to 6 a.m. with information regarding bus or route cancellations and school closures. News announcements usually begin after 6 a.m. Media partners will **not** be notified about individual route changes.

The following local radio stations will be contacted about inclement weather notifications:

- The Q! (100.3 FM)
- The Zone (91.3 FM)
- CBC (90.5 FM)
- SUN-FM (89.7 FM)
- CFX (1070 AM)

The following TV stations will also be contacted:

- CTV Vancouver Island
- Global BC
- CHEK News

The school district website ([www.sd79.bc.ca](http://www.sd79.bc.ca)) will also be updated with a banner informing you of any closures.

Finally, you can follow the transportation department on Twitter ([@TransportSD79](#)) for updates regarding bus cancellations or route changes.

In all cases, the safety of students will be the priority. Parents are equally encouraged to keep safety in mind when determining whether to take your child(ren) to school in the event the district is open during winter weather conditions. It is your prerogative to keep them at home if you feel it is the safest choice. When able, students and families should come to the school grounds in suitable winter footwear, use designated walkways, and only park in designated drop off locations.

Let us work together to ensure winter weather days can be safe for everyone.

Yours sincerely,

Robyn Gray  
Superintendent  
Cowichan Valley School District



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### Personal Electronics - iPhones/iPads

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Please note that personal electronic devices are **NOT** permitted during school hours unless supervised by a teacher. If your child does bring an electronic device to school, it **MUST** be kept in their backpack or with the teacher during school hours. Please remember that we cannot guarantee the security of these items. If an item is confiscated by an adult during school hours or is turned in at the office for any reason, it will generally be held until the end of the day and, sometimes, will only be returned to an adult (depending on the circumstances).

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### Visitors

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A reminder that all adults visiting the school must enter through the main doors only and sign in. Thank you for your cooperation.

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### Parking Lot

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Please follow the directional flow signage in the parking lot. Student drop-off should not be occurring in either the bus lane or the Staff Parking Lot. Please report any dangerous driving to the office. Also please encourage your children to use the crosswalk and to look both ways.

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### Student Clothing

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Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each morning. Unless there are extreme weather conditions, Students will be outside every day during the 45-minute lunch break as well as an additional short break with their teachers at some point through the day.

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### Water Bottles

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Our school has a limited supply of glasses for students to use, especially disposable ones. Families are encouraged to please send their child with a water bottle that they can refill from the fountain.

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### School Schedule

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Supervision begins at 8:00 a.m.

8:30 a.m. Classes begin

11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Outside play

11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Eating time

2:13 p.m. Dismissal

Supervision ends at 2:40 p.m.



**LEST WE FORGET**