



BENCH NEWS

Phone: 250-743-5552

Principal – Mr. Mike Martin

Principal's Message

Signs of Spring are beginning to appear at Bench Elementary. I am always amazed by how quickly the final few months of the school year go by. Before we know it, another school year will have passed. Accompanying the Spring flowers are several dates for you to mark on your calendars (see "Dates to Remember").

We are looking forward to a busy Spring that includes the following opportunities: Girls Soccer, Track & Field, Try-a-Trade, Young Entrepreneurs and our Fun Fair on May 28th.

As we move into the final stretch of the school year, we're proud of all that our students have accomplished and grateful for the support of families, staff, and the wider community who help make our school such a dynamic place to learn and grow.

Warm regards,
Mike Martin, Principal



Dates to Remember



- April 2 - 1 Hour Early Dismissal (1:13pm)
- April 3 - Good Friday (No School)
- April 6 - Easter Monday (No School)
- April 8 - Parent Info Night @ FKSS @ 7pm
- April 9 - PAC Meeting @ 7pm
- April 10 - Popcorn Day
- April 13 - Non-Instructional Day (No School)
- April 14 - Hot Lunch (White Spot)
- April 16 - District Chess Tournament
- April 22 - 2-Hour Early Dismissal (12:13pm)
- April 28 - Bake Sale and Chicken Orders Due
- April 30 - Grade 6 Immunizations
- May 1 - Pro D Day (No School)
- May 5 - Hot Lunch (Subway)
- May 7 - Bench Track Meet (Gr. 4-7)
- May 8 - Popcorn Day
- May 13 - 2 Hour Early Dismissal (12:13pm)
- May 18 - Victoria Day (No School)
- May 21 - Grade 7s visit FKSS for a tour
- May 28 - FUN FAIR

Grade 7's transitioning to Frances Kelsey Secondary School

It's that time of the year again when our Grade 7 students and parents start to learn more about Grade 8 at Frances Kelsey Secondary. Below are some important dates:

April 1st - Kelsey admin/counselors visit grade 7s

April 8th - Parent info night at Kelsey at 7pm

May 21st - Grade 7's visit Kelsey for a tour.

Learning Survey (Grade 4&7 students)

The 2025/2026 Student Learning Surveys are available online for students/parents in Grades 4, 7 and all staff in BC public schools.

Parents please consider taking this voluntary survey to provide feedback to your child's school. It will take approximately 10-15 min. to complete.

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sat_survey/access.htm

Grade 6 Immunizations

In B.C. the Human Papilloma (HPV) vaccine is recommended to all grade 6 students as part of their routine immunization schedule. Grade 6 students may be eligible for additional vaccines if they are not up to date. **A letter with instructions on providing consent for immunizations will be sent home to students shortly.** Please follow the instructions and provide consent or refusal to immunize using the new digital consent platform.

Immunizations will be provided at the school for Grade 6 students on April 30th, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Moss Health Unit at 250-709-3050.

Building Resilience at Home

We can help prepare our children for school by creating a supportive environment where they feel safe, confident, and capable of handling new challenges. When children know it is okay to make mistakes and learn from them at home,

they will be encouraged to try something new. Below are some ideas on how to build resilience and a growth mindset at home:

- Praise their effort (not just their results)
- Encourage them to stick with tasks, even when they are challenging or new
- Reinforce the idea of trying new things
- Teach emotional regulation by naming feelings and taking deep breaths to calm down if they are struggling with a task
- Arrange playdates with other children their age to practice making new friends
- Let them try new small tasks on their own. If they encounter a problem, guide them with growth mindset questions as opposed to giving immediate solutions (e.g., "What idea could we try next?")

Raising AI Ready Youth Presentation: Safety, Privacy, Ethics, and Success

This presentation by the White Hatter will empower parents, caregivers, and educators with the knowledge and tools they need to understand how artificial intelligence is shaping youth experiences, and to help young people navigate AI's impact on their safety, privacy, digital wellbeing, and learning.

When: Thursday, April 2nd at 6:30pm

Where: Quamichan School Auditorium

To learn more about the presentation:

<https://www.thewhitehatter.ca/programs/raising-ai-ready-youth-safety-privacy-ethics-and-success-plans>

Jump Rope for Heart

On Tuesday, April 14th we kick off our fundraising week for Jump Rope for Heart! This event teaches our students the importance of giving back and encourages them to learn healthy habits, so they understand the importance of staying active, eating well and taking care of their heart and brain health. We aim to create an inclusive and positive environment where students of all ages and abilities feel welcomed and excited to get their

bodies moving and hearts pumping in support of a great cause.

Throughout the week, the students will be encouraged to bring donations to their classroom. The class with the highest fundraising total will win a class set of skipping ropes and each donation will earn the student entry into a draw for prizes donated by the Heart and Stroke Association.

The funds our school raises will help support important heart and brain research funded by Heart & Stroke. Let's work together as a school community and show how generous we can be! Our Jump Rope for Heart event date is scheduled for Friday, April 17th.

PIZZA

Cash pizza sales are available every Wednesday morning before the bell at Mr. Scargall's exterior door. Pizza is \$3 a slice and will be delivered to your child's classroom on Thursday at lunch. Please note that late orders cannot be accepted and no refunds will be issued. Thank you for supporting our Grade 7's with this fundraiser!

Lost Belongings on Busses

Student belongings are left on school busses daily. Please check with your students and if you feel they have a lost or misplaced item, kindly visit the Lost & Found at the Transportation Department at the School Board Office. They are located at 2557 Beverly Street, Duncan Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm.

Extra Clothes

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.

Personal Electronics - iPhones/Ipads

Please note that student use of personal electronic devices are NOT permitted on school property unless supervised by a teacher. If your

child does bring an electronic device to school, it **MUST** be kept in their backpack or with their 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.

Visitors

A reminder that all adults visiting the school must enter through the main doors only, sign in and obtain a visitor lanyard for hallway access. Thank you for helping keep our school safe.

Water Bottles

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.

From our PAC

Dates of Interest

Thursday, April 9th - PAC Meeting @ 7pm

Friday, April 10th - Popcorn Day

Tuesday, April 14th - Hot Lunch (White Spot)

Thursday, April 30th - Island Poultry Fundraiser Orders Due

Thursday, May 14th - Island Poultry Pick Up

Thursday, May 28th - FUN FAIR!

Country Grocer Receipts

Continue saving your Country Grocer receipts! We will be running another class challenge in April & May.

FUN FAIR 2026

May 28th our annual Fun Fair is taking place! We need a few more key volunteers to help with the preparations leading up to this event. We have a great team that is already in place, however, many hands make light work! This year is the PERFECT time to come and learn. Do you have an idea to add to the Fun Fair? Please contact Liz Maco @ benchpactreasurer@gmail.com

Other ways to help our 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 outside the office.

PAC email address: benchpac@sd79.bc.ca

Diverse Learners Parent & Caregiver Network (Update)

Wondering how to support your kiddo at school?
Looking to connect with other parents who get
it?

The Diverse Learners Parent & Caregiver
Network is a welcoming, peer-led community for
Bench Elementary parents and caregivers to
connect, share experiences, and support one
another in helping our kids flourish at school and
at home.

This month's meeting has a special update

Change of Venue: The meeting will be at the
Cook & Butcher for dinner/socializing

We will also discuss:

- What do you really want and need from
this group?
- What's working well and what could
change?
- Should we permanently shift the venue
away from the school?

Who is this for?

Whether your child has a formal designation or
diagnosis, an IEP, or you simply recognize that
they aren't flourishing at school, this space is
for you.

Why join?

- Connect with parents and caregivers
navigating similar experiences
- Share strategies, resources, and lived
wisdom

- Learn how others communicate with
teachers and access school supports
- Build belonging and community within (and
beyond) the school.

When: First Thursday of every month (except
January)

Time: 6:30pm-8:00pm, followed by socializing

Venue: Cook & Butcher (Month of April)

Format: Casual discussion, sharing circles, co-
creation

This is a peer support group, shaped together by
lived experience, mutual respect, and curiosity.

No experts - just real people supporting one
another.

Join us: Add your name to receive meeting

details: <https://forms.gle/gviHXiDZuMjwqTsB6>

Come as you are! We would love to see you there.

APRIL 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 One Hour Early Dismissal	3 Good Friday (No School)	4
5	6 Easter Monday (No School)	7	8 Parent info night at FKSS @ 7pm	9 PAC Meeting @ 7pm	10 Popcorn Day	11
12	13 Non-Instructional Day (No School)	14 Hot Lunch (White Spot)	15	16 District Chess Tournament	17 Jump Rope for Heart	18
19	20	21	22 2 Hour Early Dismissal	23	24	25
26	27	28 Bake Sale	29	30 Grade 6 Immunizations Chicken Orders Due		