



BENCH NEWS

Phone: 250-743-5552

Principal – Mr. Mike Martin

Principal's Message

Welcome Back Everyone!

We hope you and your family had a wonderful summer and are settling back into familiar routines.

Our school team has been hard at work to ensure a smooth and successful start to the year as we finalize enrollment, class configurations and teacher assignments. Earlier this week, students transitioned to new grade groupings. Our students did a fantastic job as they shifted to a new classroom environment. This is an opportunity for students to meet new teachers and begin learning activities. An email will be sent to families once final class placement and staffing is confirmed.

Looking ahead, we have some exciting events coming up. Our first Book Fair will be occurring in the library next week from September 14th to 17th. A schedule was sent out this week and is included in this newsletter. On Friday, September 18th, students will be participating in our annual Terry Fox Run as we honor Terry's legacy and raise funds for cancer research. We would love to see you join us at 1:15! Another highly anticipated day is Picture Day. Student photos will be taken on Oct 9th - please mark your calendar.

Lastly, we would like to welcome all new Bench families and encourage parents/care givers to introduce themselves if we haven't met.

Thank you to all our staff, students and families for an upbeat and exciting start to another school year.

Mr. Martin Mr. Koop
Principal Vice-Principal

School Schedule (New Times!)

Supervision begins at 8:00 am

8:30 am Classes begin
11:15 - 12:00 pm Outside Play
12:00 - 12:15 pm Eating time
2:20 pm Dismissal

Supervision ends at 2:50 pm

Staff

Welcome to all new staff joining our Bench Elementary team this year!

New Teachers:

Sarah Kimmerly (gr. 1/2)
Anna Sferrazza (gr 3)

New Educational Assistants:

Robyn Clark
Jessica Uilenberg

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sept. 14 - 17 - Scholastic book fair
Sept. 18 - Terry Fox run - 1:15 pm
Sept. 24 - PAC Meeting - 6:30 pm
Sept. 30, Wednesday - Truth & Reconciliation
(No School)
Oct. 9 - Picture Day

Late Sign in Procedure

Reminder, please have your child sign-in at the office if they arrive after the bell. We kindly ask that once we settle into our new routines, you say goodbye to your child at the office area. This will limit class interruptions and help with building safety and security.

When picking up your child early, please come to the office to sign them out and we will notify the classroom.

Safe Arrival

Bench Elementary will once again be utilizing the Safe Arrival program that notifies parents of a student absence.

We kindly ask all parents to report your child's absences using any of these 3 convenient methods:

1. Using your mobile device, download and install the School Messenger app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store or from <https://home.schoolmessenger.ca>. The first time you use the app, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence. See the attached Parent's instruction guide.

OR:

2. Use the Safe Arrival website home.schoolmessenger.ca. The first time you use the website, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence.

OR:

3. Call the toll-free number 1-833-784-0364 to report an absence using the automated phone system. Please save this number to your contacts, as it is the number that will contact you, if you did not call in your child's absence. These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future planned absences may also be reported at any time.

Note#1: You must use the email and phone number on file with the school. If you update either of these, you will need to re-register for the system to recognize you.

Note #2: Please save 1-888-784-0364 into your phone contacts, as this will be the number to contact you, if you did not call in your child's absence."

Visitors

A reminder that all adults visiting the school must enter through the main doors only and sign in. We ask that all scheduled visitors pick up a visitor lanyard at the office. Thank you for keeping our school safe!

Extra Clothes

No matter the age, please ensure you have supplied an extra set of clothing in your child's backpack (**socks & pants particularly!!**) This can save you time used to deliver clothing.

Bench Terry Fox Run

Bench staff and students will participate in the 46th annual Terry Fox run on Friday, September 18th. We are hoping that each child will bring a "Toonie for Terry" in support of the Terry Fox Foundation. Parents are invited to join us at 1:15 for this annual activity.

There are three ways families can donate to the Terry Fox Foundation:

1. The Bench school donation page online <https://schools.terryfox.ca/99159>
2. Cash or cheques payable to The Terry Fox Foundation can be brought to the office
3. Students will be asked to bring "A Toonie For Terry" the week of September 14-18th

Every Child Matters Week

The District designates the last week of September as Every Child Matters Week to support ongoing reconciliation efforts in schools. Throughout the week, the District emphasizes two key themes: honoring the lives and generations lost to the Residential School System, and celebrating the resilience, vibrancy, culture, and bright future of Indigenous peoples.

If possible, we encourage our students to wear orange to school on Tuesday, September 29th.

Photo Day

Edge Imaging will be at the school on Friday, October 9th. Photo order information will be sent home once we receive it from Edge Imaging. Retakes are tentatively scheduled for November 5th.

Choir

The Bench Elementary choir will be resuming rehearsals on Mondays at long recess beginning September 21st. Choir is open for any interested students in grades 4-7; this group performs at school assemblies, the Christmas concert, and the Cowichan Music Festival in February.

Personal Electronic - iPhones/iPads

Please note that 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 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 at times will only be returned to an adult (depending on circumstances).

Parking Lot

General Etiquette

1. Follow the flow of traffic: Drive in the direction indicated by signs and arrows to avoid confusion or accidents.
2. Drive slowly be extra cautious of children and pedestrians.
3. No idling in parking spaces: If you need to stop for an extended period, park in a designated spot instead of holding up traffic.
4. Use crosswalks: Always cross at designated areas and encourage kids to do the same.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

1. Stay in your car in the drop-off lane: If you need to exit your car, use a parking space to avoid holding up the flow.
2. Be ready: Ensure kids have their belongings ready to exit the car quickly.
3. Pull forward: Move as far forward as possible in the drop-off line to make room for others.

Parking Tips

1. Park only in designated areas: Avoid parking in fire lanes, reserved spots, or blocking driveways. Please do not park behind cars already parked.
2. Avoid double parking: This creates unnecessary congestion and safety hazards.
3. Be mindful of pedestrians: Look carefully before backing out of a space.

Pedestrian Safety

1. Hold your child's hand: Especially in busy areas or near moving cars.
2. Make eye contact with drivers: Ensure they see you before crossing.
3. Use the designated cross-walks to avoid pedestrian blind spots.

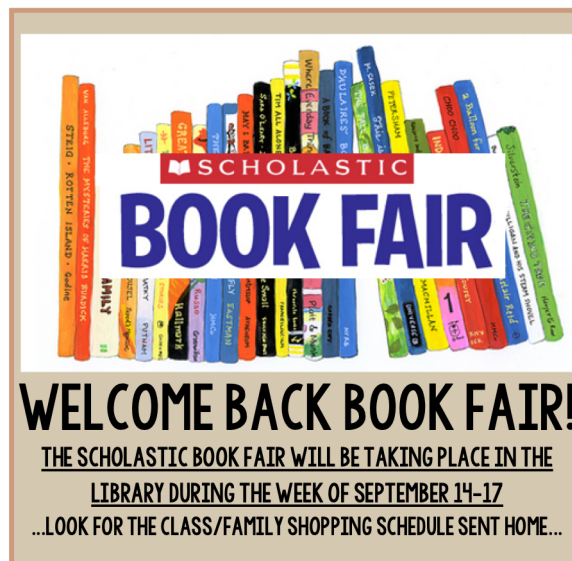
Additional Considerations

- Be Patient: Parking lots can be frustrating but staying calm and courteous helps, everything run smoothly.
- Arrive early: Giving yourself extra time can reduce stress and prevent rushing.

Thank you for helping with safety concerns in our busy parking lot area.

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day (Holiday)	8 First day back to school!	9	10	11	12
13	14 Book Fair	15 Book Fair	16 Book Fair	17 Book Fair	18 Terry Fox Run 1:15pm	19
20	21	22	23	24 PAC Meeting 6:30 pm	25	26
27	28	29	30 Truth & Reconciliation Day (No School)			



BOOK FAIR SHOPPING SCHEDULE

(September 14-18)

	MON 14	TUES 15	WED 16	THURS 17	FRI 18
8:40 - 9:10					CLOSED
9:15 - 9:45			Ingram		
9:50 - 10:20	Uzzell	Koop/Merrick	McDonald		
10:25 - 10:55	Johnstone	Barber	Tan	Andrew Dodd	
11:15 - 12:15	RECESS AND LUNCH EATING				
12:20 - 12:50		Coleman			CLOSED
12:55 - 1:25	Kimmerly	Scargall	Paziuk	LAST CHANCE	
1:30 - 2:00	Wilson	Dougan	Gignac	(2 nd shop or for those that missed...)	
2:00 - 3:00	FAMILY SHOPPING 2:00-3:00 MONDAY-THURSDAY				

*Schedule subject to change

**Kindergarten students are invited to shop with their families during the open Family Shopping times

Parents and Guardians

You can take advantage of our Text Messaging Service

Our school utilizes the SchoolMessenger system to deliver text messages, straight to your mobile phone with important information about events, school closings, safety alerts and more.

You can participate in this free service* just by sending a text message of "Y" or "Yes" to our school's short code number:

For **CANADA-BASED** numbers: **978338**

For **US-BASED** numbers: **61569** (see next page for QR code)

You can also opt out of these messages at any time by simply replying to one of our messages with "Stop".

SchoolMessenger is compliant with the Student Privacy Pledge™ so you can rest assured that your information is safe and will never be given or sold to anyone.



*if your number is Canada-based.

For Canada-Based Numbers:

**Opt-In from
your mobile
now!**



**Just send "Y"
or "Yes" to
978338**