



BENCH NEWS

Phone: 250-743-5552

Principal – Mr. Mike Martin

Principal's Message

Welcome to October and all the bright colours that it brings! As we embrace this vibrant month, we are excited to share some updates from our school.

This month, our students will continue to diligently work on Literacy and Numeracy assessments, with our Grade 4 and 7 students also beginning the FSA. These assessments add valuable insight to your children's learning profile which helps inform teachers as they approach their instructional planning for the year.

This month, we're excited to highlight several district sporting events, including Boys' Soccer, Co-Ed Field Hockey, and Cross-Country Running. Our Choir is also back in action! These activities are supported by our dedicated staff who generously volunteer their time. We believe that participation in extracurricular activities strengthens students' connections to school, and it's always fantastic to see so many getting involved.

Please keep an eye out for information from the PAC, who play a vital role in supporting our school initiatives. We are particularly looking forward to the Bench Halloween Dance on October 22nd which promises to be a fantastic event with your support. Additionally, be sure to stop by the front of the school for this year's first PAC Coffee Chats on Friday, Oct. 9th.

As we enter the Fall season, I want to extend my thanks for your support throughout the first month of school. Together we will continue to build a strong and vibrant school community. Enjoy the beautiful fall days ahead.

Mike Martin
Principal



Dates To Remember

October 12, Monday - Thanksgiving Day (No School)

October 21, Wednesday - 2 hour early dismissal (12:20pm)

October 23, Friday - Pro-D Day (No School)

Picture Day

Picture Day is on Friday, October 9th and photo retakes will take place on November 5th.

Cross Country

X-C running has been taking place on Fridays at long recess with Mrs. MacLean and a large, dedicated group of runners who have been braving the hills, and sometimes, the elements! The district X-C race will take place on Thursday Oct. 29nd at Evans Park. Parents are invited to spectate! Notices will be sent home in October.

Last year the district race adhered to the following schedule; this is **likely** the schedule for this year as well:

Grade 3-5: 1.2 km

Grade 6 and 7: 2.2 km

Race schedule:

Grade 3 boys: 9:30 a.m.

Grade 3 girls: 9:40 a.m.

Grade 4 boys: 9:50 a.m.

Grade 4 girls: 10:00 a.m.

Grade 5 boys: 10:10 a.m.

Grade 5 girls: 10:20 a.m.

Grade 6 boys: 10:30 a.m.

Grade 6 girls: 10:45 a.m.

Grade 7 boys and girls: 11:00 a.m.

Choir

Choir has started up on Mondays at long recess with Mrs. MacLean. Choir students will have the **option** of purchasing a Bench choir shirt before the Remembrance Day assembly. Notices will be sent home in October.

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 Oct. 8 - Dec. 17. 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!

Darker Mornings

With the change to Daylight Savings and the traditional fall clock change, mornings will be

darker this fall and winter. Here are a few safety tips to help support this change.

- Avoid dressing children in dark jackets or hoodies. Bright colored clothing or reflective attire will help drivers spot students from a distance.
- Carry light aids to help illuminate walking and visibility.
- Stand well back from the road while waiting for a bus or when nearing an intersection.
- When using a crosswalk, look in all directions and attempt to make eye contact with a driver that is stopping.
- Avoid distractions such as phones and music.
- Avoid walking between parked cars. Parked cars often block visibility for approaching vehicles (particularly in parking lots).
- Travel in groups, when possible, to increase visibility.

Kindergarten Immunizations:

In British Columbia, routine immunizations are recommended for children at kindergarten entry (4-6 years of age). If your child has not received their kindergarten immunizations, please contact Margaret Moss Health Unit, 250-709-3050, to book an appointment.

For more information about immunization, visit:

Immunizations for School Aged Children and Youth:

<https://www.islandhealth.ca/health-topics/immunizations/immunizations-school-aged-children-and-youth>

HealthLink BC:

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-library/immunizations/children>

Contact Your Local Public Health Unit:

<https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-locations/health-unit-locations>



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.

SD #79 Policies and Procedures

Each year, schools are required to inform parents about the following policies and procedures:

- AP 162 - Smoke and Vapor Free Environment
- AP 164 - Food and Nutrition
- AP 104 - District Code of Conduct
- Policy 13 - Appeals Procedures Bylaw
- Policy 25 - Identify Belonging and Connections

These documents can be viewed on the SD79 website, by clicking on the "Board of Education" tab.

Code of Conduct

The Bench Elementary Code of Conduct can be reviewed at www.bench.sd79.bc.ca/code-of-conduct/. Please contact the office if you have any questions or would like clarification regarding any of our code of conduct policies.

From our PAC

PAC Halloween dance

It's that time of year again! Halloween is just around the corner, and with it comes two of our favorite annual school traditions: the **Bench Bootacular** and our always-fun **Pumpkin Carving/Decorating Competition!**

Bench Bootacular - Thursday, October 22nd
Get ready for a spooktacular evening! This year's Bench Bootacular will take place on **Thursday, October 22nd from 5:30 - 8:00 pm** — and the best part? The next day is a Pro-D Day, so you can enjoy the evening knowing there's no early morning rush the next day!

Please see the **attached poster** for all the details about the event. We've also included a **sign-up link** for parents and families who are able to volunteer and help us make this wonderful dance a fundraising success.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0B4BA9A62DA4FB6-66083288-bench#/>

We truly appreciate everyone who gives their time, energy, and support to help make this event possible. It takes a whole school community to make these events special, and we are so grateful for your help!

Pumpkin Carving/Decorating Competition - Friday, October 30th

Our Pumpkin Carving/Decorating Competition will take place on the **morning of Friday, October 30th in the courtyard.**

We can't wait to see all of the creative, crazy, spooky, and innovative pumpkins our students come up with this year! We know they'll be bringing their imaginations — and hopefully some Halloween magic — to life.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of our school community. We look forward to celebrating Halloween with everyone!

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

If you haven't already, please make your payment for school supplies. We have many outstanding orders. You must log into the Hot Lunch Platform <https://benchpac.hotlunches.net/>

Note: Please ADD school supply order for EVERY student in your family (Note: ADD new students if not already set up). Now that we are settled into this year's class placements you will select this year's teacher when ordering. Full details in attached flyer.

SPIRITWEAR

Show your Bench Spirit, ordering is available all year! You choose the clothing style and color to "rock our Bench "B"!

<https://www.urbanvalleytees.com/bench-elem>

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Our first **PAC Coffee Chat** of the year will take place Friday Oct. 9th at drop off.

PAC Meeting Tuesday Oct. 13th @ 6:30pm in school library, all are welcome! We will be approving this year's PAC budget.

HOT LUNCH

This years program is set and ordering is OPEN!

The first two options are as follows:

Order By Oct. 5th for White Spot hot lunch on Oct. 13th.

Order by Nov. 9th for Subway hot lunch on Nov. 17th

Hot Lunch Platform

<https://benchpac.hotlunches.net/>

Order by:

Hot Lunch:

05-Oct-26	13-Oct-26	WhiteSpot
09-Nov-26	17-Nov-26	Cook & Butcher
04-Dec-26	15-Dec-26	Subway
11-Jan-27	19-Jan-27	WhiteSpot
01-Feb-27	09-Feb-27	Cook & Butcher
19-Feb-27	02-Mar-27	Subway
05-Apr-27	13-Apr-27	WhiteSpot
26-Apr-27	04-May-27	Cook & Butcher
28-May-27	08-Jun-27	Subway

POPCORN

Don't forget about our fun popcorn days! Also available for purchasing via the Hot Lunch Platform.

First few dates are: Oct 16, Nov 6, Dec 4

Thank you for your continues support of your Bench School PAC!

Warm regards from your Bench PAC Executive Team

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

Why read 20mins at home?

Student A

- * 20 minutes of reading a day
- * 3600 minutes per school year
- * 1800000 words per year
- * scores in the top 10% in standardized tests



Student B

- * 5 minutes of reading a day
- * 900 minutes per school year
- * 282000 words per year
- * scores average 50% in standardized tests



Student C

- * 1 minute of reading a day
- * 180 minutes per school year
- * 8000 words per year
- * scores in the bottom 10% in standardized tests



If a child starts reading 20 minutes per night in kindergarten, by the end of year 8, Student A will have read for the equivalent of 60 school days, Student B will have read for 12 school days, and Student C will have read for 3.

Want to be a better reader? GOOD! START READING!!!

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 One hour early dismissal (1:20 pm)	2	3
4	5	6	7 Vision Screening for grades 1, 3, 5, & 7	8	9 PAC coffee chat (AM drop off) Photo Day!	10
11	12 Thanksgiving Day (No School)	13 Hot lunch (White Spot) PAC meeting @ 6:30 pm	14	15	16 Student vote School Run @ 1:30 pm	17
18	19	20	21 Two hour early dismissal (12:20 pm)	22 Halloween Dance 5:30 - 8:30 pm	23 Pro-D day (No School)	24
25	26	27	28	29 X-Country Meet	30 Pumpkin carving contest Costume parade	31 HALLOWEEN!



The Bench Parent Advisory Council Presents: The Great Pumpkin Decorating Contest

Get out those carving tools and your imagination kids and show us what you can do!

Date: FRIDAY October 30th 2026

Place: Bench School, Courtyard

Prizes on each grade table for: 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place,
Best Painted Pumpkin, Most Decorated Pumpkin and Most
Expertly Carved Pumpkin

Please note the following rules:

- * All Pumpkins must be placed on the appropriate grade tables by 8:45am on Friday October 30th in school courtyard
- *Bus Riders Note: If your parents cannot deliver your pumpkins, they must fit into and not exceed the size of a plastic grocery bag (not a garbage bag).
- *All carved/decorated pumpkins will be on display for classes to see during the day Friday the 30th.
- * Pumpkins should return home with students on Friday after school. Any pumpkins remaining after 5pm on Friday the 30th will be composted.
- *Accessories of any kind are allowed and encouraged
- *Every pumpkin must have a completed entry form attached to the back (thumb tack works great) so that judges are NOT able to see it.



PUMPKIN CONTEST ENTRY FORM

Students Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Division: _____

Grade: _____



THE BENCH BOOTACULAR

OCT. 22ND
5:30PM-
8:00PM

FREE ADMISSION

OUR FAMILY FRIENDLY HALLOWEEN DANCE

**TICKETS .50
EACH**

FAMILY FRIENDLY COSTUMES PLEASE!! NO
GRUESOME OR SCARY MASKS/COSTUMES! THE
LITTLE ONES ARE HERE FOR THE FUN TOO!

**PARENTS MUST ACCOMPANY THEIR CHILDREN TO THE
DANCE. THIS IS NOT A STAFF SUPERVISED EVENT!**

TICKETS

GAMES (4)
COOKIE STATION (5)
MEAL DEAL (SLICE OF PIZZA, DRINK
AND CHIPS) (12)
SLICE OF PIZZA (8)
CHIPS (3)
BUBLY (3)
WATER, JUICE BOX (2)
BAKED TREAT (2)

**VOLUNTEER
HERE!**

**[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUP
GENIUS.COM/GO/70A0B
4BA9A62DA4FB6-
66083288-BENCH#/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0B4BA9A62DA4FB6-66083288-BENCH#/)**





Bench Elementary School * School Supplies * 2026 – 2027

We are excited to run the School Supplies Initiative again for September 2026-2027 school year. All students have their school supplies provided to them directly in their classrooms as part of this Community Classroom School Supply initiative. This promotes equality, eliminates any supply shortage issues, and allows for re-use of supplies from year to year.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

1. Log into hot lunch website online at <https://benchpac.hotlunches.net/> (or sign-up if you're a new user).
2. **ADD school supply order for EVERY student in your family please.** You will need to **ADD new students if not already set up.**
3. **If completing in September you must select LAST YEARS Teacher/class (select this year's teacher once classrooms are finalized)**
4. Pay **\$35.00** for each student by one of the following:
 - a) credit card (within the website)
 - b) e- transfer to benchpactreasurer@gmail.com (please note "STUDENT NAME & DIVISION#")
 - c) Cash or Cheque (payable to Bench PAC) - **YOU NEED TO FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL**
5. Contribute and pay an additional \$35.00 if you are in a position to help and sponsor another Bench student.

Please let us know if you are in a financial hardship, and unable to pay the \$35. We will ensure each child gets supplies.

Thank you so much for your continued support of the Bench PAC. If you have any questions and would like more information, please email Sanja at sanja.duggan@hotmail.com

FILL THIS PORTION ONLY IF PAYING BY CHEQUE OR CASH AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL

CONTACT NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

STUDENT NAME: _____

DIVISION #: _____

SPONSOR A SCHOOL SUPPLY KIT FOR A CHILD IN NEED: (circle one) **\$35** **\$70** **\$105** **\$140**

TOTAL PAYMENT (\$35 + sponsor amount circled) = \$ _____