



Buffalo Head Prairie School 2025-26 Introductory Parent Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to another school year. It is so exciting to see children and families returning to school. As a staff, we look forward to seeing parents and families at the **Welcome Back Family Breakfast on Friday, September 5**. Please plan to join us from 8:45-10:45 am on this day! Weather permitting, and with our school population continuing to grow, this year's family breakfast will take place outdoors!

New Staff

We welcome several new staff members to BHPS this year:

- *Mrs. Anika van der Walt – Grade One Teacher*
- *Mr. Dean Keefe - Grade One Teacher (PM only)*
- *Mrs. Florine Oosterink – Grade Three Teacher*
- *Mrs. Lisa Janzen - Grade 3 Teacher*
- *Mrs. Esther Wiens- Student Support*

2025-26 Buffalo Head Prairie School Staff

Mr. Benny Dick <i>Head Custodian</i>	Mrs. BettyAnn Dick <i>Custodial Assistant</i>	Mrs. Angie Wolfe <i>Student Support</i>	Mrs. Shakira Giesbrecht <i>Student Support</i>
Mrs. Katharine Neudorf <i>Student Support</i>	Mrs. Lana Halladay <i>Student Support</i>	Miss Susie Dyck <i>Student Support</i>	Mrs. Esther Wiens <i>Student Support</i>
Mrs. Rosanne Paul <i>Student Support</i>	Mrs. Kathy Janzen <i>Librarian</i>	Mrs. Yumiko Hache <i>Assistant Secretary</i>	Miss Margaret Wiebe <i>Secretary</i>
Miss Kalaina Haag <i>J.H. L.A./Science</i>	Mr. Darian Goertzen <i>P.E./J.H. SS/J.H. Science</i>	Mr. Trent Kenyon <i>P.E./J.H. Math</i>	Mrs. Melissa McDonald <i>Grade 6/Inclusive Education/Literacy Coach</i>
Mrs. Shannon Peters <i>Grade 6/Assistant Principal/Numeracy Coach</i>	Mr. Jonathan Hache <i>Grade 5</i>	Mr. Aaron Diver <i>Grade 4</i>	Miss Florine Oosterink <i>Grade 3Oost</i>
Mrs. Lisa Janzen <i>Grade 3J</i>	Mrs. Rachel Magalona <i>Grade 2M</i>	Mrs. Cathy Wiseman <i>Grade 2W</i>	Mrs. Karen Keefe <i>Grade 1K (0.5)</i>
Mr. Dean Keefe <i>Grade 1K (0.5)</i>	Mrs. Anika van der Walt <i>Grade 1V</i>	Mrs. Robyn Carey <i>Kindergarten</i>	Mr. Chris Fehr <i>Principal/ Elementary P.E.</i>



MyFVSD Online Student Re-enrollment

All students need to be re-enrolled, every school year. This requires that their information be reviewed and signed by parents. While in the past this was mostly done on paper copies, parents are now able to re-enroll their child(ren) online. The online re-enrollment form is for students who attended an FVSD school last year and will be attending an FVSD school in the 2025-26 school year.

You can now sign in to MyFVSD at myfvsd.ca to view students you are associated with and review their student profile. There are two ways you can sign into MyFVSD

1. Using a Google (@gmail.com) or Microsoft (@outlook.com) email account.
2. Through text messaging which will require you to enter the Alberta Student Number (ASN) for one of the students you are associated with. A student's ASN can be found at the top of their report card.

If parents have trouble signing in, please contact the school office. Parents unable to use the online re-enrollment form, can still review and sign a paper copy version.

Parents completing the re-enrollment online does save school staff a significant amount of time in the office but if your preference is to review and sign a paper copy these may be requested by phone or picked up in the office during Family Breakfast Friday, September 5.

NEW! Individual Student Photos by FVSD EDGE Photography on September 17-18, 2025



This year, FVSD EDGE Photography will be serving our school communities while providing opportunities to grow the skills of FVSD students instead of using Lifetouch. BHPS individual student photos will take place on Wednesday, September 17 and Thursday, September 18, 2025. We will be provided with a schedule for class pictures, ECS graduation photos, and sports team photos in the spring which will be communicated to parents at that time.

BHPS Day Schedule

Our school day will run from 8:40 am until 3:00 pm Please see this year's bell schedule below:



**8:35- Arrival of Buses at BHPS
8:40- Begin O Canada/Lord's Prayer
8:40-9:15- Period 1
9:15-9:45- Period 2
9:45-10:15- Period 3
10:15-10:45- Period 4
10:45-11:00- Morning Recess
11:00-11:30- Period 5
11:30-12:00- Period 6
12:00-12:30- Period 7
12:30-12:45- Student Lunch
12:45-1:03- Student Lunch Recess
1:03-1:20- School Wide Silent Reading- Period 8
1:20-1:50- Period 9
1:50-2:20- Period 10
2:20-3:00- Period 11
3:00- Dismissal and bus loading for home time*

Parents in School



We value parents in school and welcome them to join us frequently! As a community school, we recognize how important it is to utilize the support and involvement of school volunteers. If parents wish to visit to observe or help in a classroom, giving the classroom teacher or the office some notice ahead of time would be greatly appreciated.

We thank parents in advance for considering ways that they can be involved in their child's school this year. You make BHPS a better place!

Personal Electronic Devices

During a normal instructional day, school staff are only permitted to use personal electronic devices during break times. For this reason, staff communication with parents will take place before school, after school, or during break times. Excellent communication will always be very important to us at BHPS and is a critical component of positive parent/staff relationships.

Student Electronics Policy

All students will be expected to follow the school's electronics policy. This policy was established to prevent distractions to learning and has been highly effective in past years. Essentially, students are not permitted to use non-educational electronic devices from 8:30 am - 3:00 pm. All staff will enforce a non-tolerance policy on this. Should a student be caught with a personal electronic device during these hours, it will be taken and placed in the school safe until a parent picks it up for their child.

Student Extra-Curricular Attendance Policy

1. This policy has been created to ensure that learning in school is the highest priority.
2. Students that are planning to be involved in extra-curricular events **MUST**:
 - a. Be in school the day of the extra-curricular event. An exception will be made for a student where the parent has provided advance notice that their child will be late to school or absent from school for medical or work related reasons. Advance notice by a parent would be required prior to school startup (8:40 am) the day of the extra-curricular activity.
 - i. If a student is absent on a Friday without parent notice as defined above (2a.), participation in weekend extra-curricular activities will not be permitted.
 - b. Demonstrate sincere effort towards their studies in all courses. If a student consistently demonstrates a poor work ethic (determined jointly and agreed upon by teachers teaching that student and school administration) the following will occur:
 - i. Student will receive a verbal warning. This must be date documented by the coach in an email to school administration.
 - ii. If effort does not improve, a phone call home will be made informing parents their child cannot participate in the extra-curricular activity for a duration of two weeks.
 - iii. If effort improves during that time, student may re-join the team. If effort has not improved, the player will be removed from the team for the duration of the season.

Water Bottles

All students will need to have a personal water bottle at school. This allows for fewer distractions during learning time. A good quality water bottle should last all year if students take care of it. Please write your child's name on their water bottle.

Hats, Toques, and Hoods in School

For many years, with support and encouragement from School Council parents, Buffalo Head Prairie School has maintained the expectation that students will not wear hats during class time as a sign of respect for others and for the learning taking place in the classroom. This expectation will include toques and hoods. Hoods, when placed over the head, do not always allow for eye contact or for faces to be seen, which is necessary for proper communication to take place between students and their teachers. Parents are encouraged to discuss this with their child(ren) to remind them of why it is respectful to remove hats, toques, and hoods during learning times.

Bus Arrivals and Departure



Bus arrival time at BHPS is set for 8:35 am. with the goal of having all students in their classrooms by 8:40 am. Students will be dismissed at the end of the school day at 3:00 pm so that buses can leave the parking lot by 3:05 pm.

School Visitors

All school visitors are asked to sign in at the office. This allows us to have a record of visitors and allows us to be aware of who is in the building in case of an emergency.

Junior High Positive Students Incentive

To encourage junior high students to maintain a positive focus this school year, they will have an opportunity to be involved in activities that will promote positive school community and connections. Should students pass all their classes, have one or fewer office referrals for misbehavior, and have three or fewer unexcused absences each reporting term, they will be permitted to take part in junior high positive students incentive events. The necessary information will be tracked by classroom teachers and special events will take place three times throughout the school year, in coordination with report card times.

Parents of junior high students will receive additional information about this program early in the school year. We hope this program will provide additional motivation for junior high students to excel in school.

Sending Children to School When They are Not Well

Please do not send children to school if they present symptoms of illness. Children that come to school sick tend to pass illnesses on to other students, which can cause bigger issues. Thank you for considering others and keeping your children home when they are ill.

If your child comes to school sick or if they become sick at school, they will go to the infirmary, and a call home will be made asking parents to pick their child up.

Indoor/Outdoor Shoes



Please ensure that students have two pairs of shoes to begin the school year: a pair for outdoors and another pair for indoors with non-marking soles. Non-marking soles greatly help our custodians and help to maintain a clean school.

Administration of Medicine to Students



There are several guidelines that need to be followed if parents need to have medications administered to their children while at school. If this is something your child will need, please stop by the school office to complete the required paperwork.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten classes will run daily with two half time Kindergarten student groups. One group will attend Tuesday, Thursday, and alternating Mondays. The other student group will attend Wednesday, Friday, and alternate Mondays. *Due to holidays, alternate Mondays may be disrupted, and parents are asked to view the school calendar and Kindergarten calendar for accurate dates.*



Junior High CTF



For the second consecutive year, junior high students will complete their CTF classes at BHPS this school year, rather than at LCPS in La Crete as has been done in previous years. To provide students with meaningful programming to support the FVSD Collegiate and a focus on careers, students will change into new CTF classes three times this school year.

School Crosswalks



Students, staff, and parents are asked to always use the crosswalks when they are going to or from the parking lot and school. Junior high students are also asked to use a crosswalk when they access or return from the playing field. Parents, please keep this in mind each time you use the visitor parking lot. Thank you for supporting our efforts to keep children safe at school!

Student Attendance



Parents, please notify the school if your child will not be in school. A phone call to the office, email to the teacher, or comment in your child's agenda (for advance notice) would be appreciated. Good school attendance promotes positive student learning, so please try to have children in school as often as possible.

Student Agendas

Elementary students will have agendas to be used as a communication tool between school and home. **IMPORTANT: please ensure that your child's agenda is signed nightly and returned to school again the next day.** Teachers will use the agendas to communicate in a variety of ways so please promote the consistent use of agendas throughout the school year.



Microwaves



Microwaves are available for students' use in grade 4-9 classrooms. Students in K-3 do not have microwaves for safety and time reasons. For students in grade 4-9, please do not send frozen food as this takes significant time to heat up, and others in the class will need to use the microwave before heading outside for recess.

Food Allergies

Buffalo Head Prairie School has several students with food sensitivities. For this reason, we discourage students from sharing food in school.

Student Technology User Agreements

At Buffalo Head Prairie School, students do not have open access to the internet.

Please note that this practice remains the same as last school year. The FVSD technology department sets up student accounts in such a way that BHPS students cannot openly access the internet. Students do, however, have access to computers with teacher supervision. In our lowest grade levels, there is minimal computer use, however by the time students move into grade 3 and progress into older grades, there is a gradual increase in time spent using computers. Alberta teachers are required in the Program of Studies to help students learn computer skills like typing and basic operations. BHPS teachers are aware that most parents do not want to see excessive time on computers, and this will be respected at BHPS.



All students in grades 4-9 must sign a student technology user agreement that their teacher will read through and explain to them. This agreement essentially outlines important items such as using computers with respect, not sharing passwords, and using computers appropriately.

Students in K-3 (with limited use of computers) are required to have parents sign a student technology agreement. If classroom teachers plan to make use of computers in their classes this year, these forms will be sent home for parents to sign and return.

Internet Use Agreement

Although students do not have open access to the internet, they may have access to limited programs to support learning that are closed internet sites. Please note that this practice remains consistent with previous school years. These programs allow students to access a specific internet site, but do not allow any further internet use or exploration. There may be a few programs that students will require access to. If a new program is being considered, it will receive the support of school council before being used in school. As an example, grade 9 students will have access to Exam Bank which helps them prepare for Provincial Achievement Tests.



Home Time Student Messages & Bus Drivers



Please call the school as early as possible if you have a message for your child. Calling the school with questions or concerns prior to 1:00 pm is greatly appreciated due to the many processes that occur at the end of the school day.

We value our bus drivers immensely and are grateful for their efforts to keep students safe going to and from school each day.

Parent Handbooks

Updated parent handbooks highlighting the school's policies and procedures will be sent home with today's newsletter. Please use this handbook as a reference throughout the year should any questions arise. We encourage parents to call at any time with questions or concerns.

School Phone

The telephone number at Buffalo Head Prairie School is 780-928-2282. Parents are always welcome to call the school with questions or concerns.

New School Year - Final Thoughts:

Parents, Buffalo Head Prairie School is a school dedicated to continuous growth and improvement. As a staff, we take our roles very seriously and recognize the incredible responsibility that comes with caring for your children. Thank you for trusting us with the care of your precious children.

Buffalo Head Prairie School continues to be a leader in the FVSD as it pertains to student learning data. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of students, staff, and parents we saw excellent school-wide results in both literacy and numeracy. BHPS was also recognized with the FVSD Connectivity Award, which is handed out to the school that demonstrates highly positive connections and relationships between students, staff, parents, and the greater community. Thank you, parents, for your contributions to positive relationships.

It is extremely important to us that you as parents feel welcome at your child's school. Please stop in at any time to attend the special events taking place or just to say hello. You are always welcome! If you are coming in to help or observe in a classroom, please provide advance notice whenever possible.

We wish each family a wonderful school year. There is a great deal to accomplish, and we are eager to help your children experience success as they walk through the doors each day.

Sincerely,

Mr. C. Fehr

Principal

