

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Dear Families,

I hope that this message continues to find you well during this time; staying safe, practicing physical distancing, and finding ways to connect as a family. The staff continues to miss the smiling faces and the tremendous spirits of all our students. We hope that they are still putting forth their best selves while at home and are continuing to practice the Big Three at home- being kind, being respectful, and using hands for good!

It was terrific to have so many families participate in our first virtual Spirit Day! Thank-you so much for sending in your photos. Those pictures certainly brought joy to the staff. This past Spirit Day and those to come, will always be announced during the Daily Scripture Reading, Prayer, and Announcements video that I create and post to each classroom Brightspace site. Further, teachers will communicate the best way for you to upload a picture within each classroom space. An alternative that some families used last time, is to email the photos directly to the teacher or to me at kchartrand@bhncdsb.ca. We are currently collecting photos that connect to two different themes. The first are those photos that show a students learning from home. The second, are those that depict a student partaking in something that brings them joy. Please consider participating in this if you have not already done so.

As you are aware, the photos collected may be used on our school's Twitter account. This is just a reminder that what you post in Brightspace, is covered by the student consent form, and will be used in accordance with our Board's safe online practices. Some posts may be used as an additional way to share and celebrate the great work happening. This is an opportune time for you to sign-up for Twitter and follow the school if you are not doing so already. Many important reminders are shared here. Further, each classroom teacher will be linking the school's Twitter account to the top of their class homepage within Brightspace.

Please remember that distance learning is not meant to cause you and your family undue stress or anxiety, nor is it meant to replicate what would be typically happening in the classroom face-to-face. Distance learning is meant to provide an opportunity to sustain the connection between school and home (i.e. social connections) and to continue portions of learning at home that mostly relate to skills and concepts that have already been taught. This does not mean that a teacher will never introduce a new concepts or skill to your child, it just means that the majority of what is provided will be considered practice. Please refer to past communications from me which outline the recommended time allotment for each grade level (e.g. Grades K-3 should be approximately 5 hours a week or about

one hour per day) as well as the main subject areas of focus. If at any time, you are feeling that learning at home is not going well, I would advise that you step away, take a break, and go back to it at some point, only if that continuation will be a positive experience for you and your child. If distance learning continues to be challenging for any reason, we want to hear from you to determine how we can best support you. In the end, while learning is certainly important, it is our students' well-being that matters most. Again, a reminder however, if we have not spoken already and it is noticed that student usage for online learning is low, you will be contacted to have a conversation about any supports that might help to improve that level of online participation. Teachers are working diligently to contact you and are often calling from a phone number marked as No Called ID or Unknown Caller.

Many of you are most likely aware that Father Peter from Blessed Sacrament Parish is also trying his best to transition to an online platform for delivery of important church messages. Please find below links to the most recent church bulletin as well as to last Sunday's Second Sunday of Easter Mass.

Bulletin- <http://files.myparishapp.com/bulletins/onham002/Apr-19-2020.pdf>

Mass- <https://youtu.be/pSJqxqL0jWQ>

I wish you continued good health, positive learning experiences from home, and blessings for an optimistic outlook as we continue to navigate these challenging times together.

*Let us pray,
Joy is the presence of God in your life,
not the absence of problems or trials.
Joy is not dependent on your circumstance,
but the result of a heart connected to God.
Be joyful this day. Choose joy. Choose God.
Amen.*

Sincerely,

Mrs. K. Chartrand
Principal

