

Howitt News



2023-2024 Newsletter #1

September 13th, 2023

Welcome to an exciting year of learning! A very special welcome goes out to all the new students and their families as well as to our new staff members.

It has been wonderful to welcome students back to our building and listen to their stories from the summer. We look forward to a fantastic year of learning and growth at John Howitt Elementary.

Staffing Update:

Mrs. I. Sanders our Nuu-chah-nulth Education Worker continues to work each Tuesday and Thursday.

Ms. E. Venn will be our Elementary Counselor and will be working with us on Mondays and Thursdays.

New Staff Members:

We would like to welcome Mrs. D. Bouchard (Grade 4&5), Ms. S. Falconer (Grade 5&6, and Learning Support), Miss M. Chase (Music K to 6, and Grade 5&6), Mrs. Fedirchuk (Grade 1), Mrs. M. Swalwell (Education Assistant), Mrs. M. Havard (Education Assistant), and Ms. T. Potter (Custodian) to the Howitt Staff.

Please consider the following start up details as we start our new school year:

- Arrival and Departure protocol: Primary students are encouraged to play by their classroom, or they are welcome to play on the old playground in the morning. Grade 4 to 7 students are welcome to play on the new playground in the morning as well. Our morning supervision starts at 8:20 am. When leaving the school grounds our bus students will be asked to meet in our staging area and will be called to board the bus when we are ready.
- Mask wearing currently is optional and is a choice of families and students. Any student who asks for a mask will be given one. We will ask students to wash their hands or hand sanitize as they transition into class in the morning, after recess, and after lunch play time. Students will be expected to use positive respiratory etiquette and sneeze or cough into their elbow.
- We ask that families complete the daily health check, and please stay home if sick.
- If your child is late, please have them come to the main office to sign in. All students leaving early will need to sign out at the office. We ask all visitors to come to the office to check in.
- Your child brought home a package of important forms last week. Thank you for reading, updating, and returning the forms to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

-Throughout the year, please check the website for information/updates about Howitt <https://www.sd70.bc.ca/jhes>

· Please have your child dress appropriately for the weather. You may want to **send an extra set of clothes** that remain at school for those unpredictable weather days. **Raincoats or waterproof jackets, boots, and an umbrella will come in very handy.**



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES FOR FAMILIES:

Monday September 11th

Lunch Program Starts (for information please call the school)

Wednesday September 13th

First full day for kindergarten students

Friday September 15th

Terry Fox Run @ Howitt- Grade 1 to 7 around the dike from 11 am until 11:50. Kindergarten students will run around the school in the afternoon.

Wednesday September 20th

Howitt Open House from 5:00-6:00 pm- families are encouraged to drop by your child's class to meet our staff and see where your children spend their day.

Thursday September 21st

Parents Advisory Council Meeting at 6:30 pm in the library.

Monday September 25th

School Planning Day: (no school for students)
our first Professional Development Day of the year

**Thursday September 28th and
Friday September 29th**

Wear **Orange in support of National Truth and Reconciliation Day and Every Child Matters**

Saturday September 30th

National Truth and Reconciliation Day

Monday October 1st

No school in honour of National Truth and Reconciliation Day.

OUR STAFF FOR 2022-2023

Principal
Vice Principal/IST
Secretary
Grade 6/7
Grade 6/7
Grade 5/6
Grade 4/5
Grade 4/5

Mr. S. Brown
Mrs. L. Fryer
Mrs. L. Behnke
Miss S. Jeffery
Mrs. N. Mayes
Ms. S. Falconer and Miss Chase
Ms. Dyer
Mrs. Bouchard

Grade 3
Grade 2/3
Grade 1
Kindergarten & Grade 1
Kindergarten
Counsellor
Music and Fine Arts K to 6, & Gr. 5/6
Librarian and Indigenous support
Education Assistant
Education Assistant
Education Assistant
Education Assistant
Education Assistant
Education Assistant
Custodians

Mrs. J. Davidson and Mr. C. Harper
Ms. J. Lenormand
Mrs. J. Fedirchuk
Ms. A. Maschak
Mrs. E. Koszegi
Mrs. E. Venn
Miss. M. Chase
Mr. C. Harper
Ms. C. Schulze
Mrs. M. Havard
Mrs. K. Webb
Mrs. E. Sattar
Mrs. M. Swalwell
Mrs. M. Frost
Mrs. J. McCauley and Ms. T. Potter

JOHN HOWITT- A SCHOOL OF HEROES!

From Kindergarten to Grade 7, our school offers challenges, outstanding academic programs, and leadership initiatives. We strive to improve the learning of each of our students. We recognize that learning is on a continuum and each child brings unique special gifts to our school. We are proud of the way our students learn and play together. Our school grounds include a beautiful supervised forested area where students can learn about nature, build forts, and engage in imaginative play.

Our students learn at a young age how to contribute positively. Our caring staff has built strong relationships with John Howitt families and continues to grow meaningful connections with new students and their families.

All Howitt Heroes are challenged to take responsibility for themselves and their actions by being ***honest, encouraging others, acting respectfully, being on time and ready, empathetic, and always safe.*** A school wide focus will teach the 5 Point Scale. As we guide our students to self-regulate, we help them understand when they are in a calm focused manner ready to learn.

Every day, students and staff learn from and with each other. John Howitt really is a special place to learn.

WHENEVER YOU VISIT THE SCHOOL

To ensure the safety of our students and to minimize the disruption to classes **please check in at the office** whenever you visit the school for whatever reason. Please come to the main office and Mrs. Behnke, Mr. Brown, or Mrs. Fryer will be able to help you. Anything to be delivered to a student can be dropped off at the office and we will deliver it to the classroom. If you are picking up your child for an appointment, please make arrangements ahead of time with your child's classroom teacher. Or if it is needed, please come to the office and we will help connect you to your child. If your child is leaving early for the day, we ask that you come to the office to sign them out.

LUNCH PROGRAM

John Howitt has a limited number of lunches available to students starting Monday September 11th. Students require a parent or guardian to complete and sign a lunch program envelope for each month. Envelopes are available at the office. For more information on the program please contact the school.

STUDENT AGENDAS

The purchase of agendas for Divisions 4 to 10 have been supported by the PAC. The PAC has generously covered the full cost of the agenda books this year. On behalf of the Howitt community, we thank you.

PARENTS HELP HOWITT HUM! Howitt P.A.C.

We have a long tradition of parent involvement at John Howitt Elementary with a wide variety of opportunities available for parent volunteers. For its size, our school community is very rich in resources and opportunities for our students thanks to the committed efforts of our parents over the years as they have worked with staff to make John Howitt a cohesive learning community dedicated to student success.



Please watch for upcoming information about P.A.C. that will be sent out in a future newsletter and on our Facebook page. PAC elections will be held this fall for executive positions. **Our first PAC meeting is Thursday September 21st, 2023 at 6:30 pm in the Howitt Library.**

SIGN IN/OUT:

If your child is late coming to school, please ask them to come to the office to sign in. We will then help to connect them to their class. If your child needs to leave early, please let us know ahead of time and we will work to have them ready. Any student leaving early for the day will need to be signed out by a parent or guardian, or other approved adult.

IMPORTANT SCHEDULES

SCHOOL HOURS

Our school day starts at 8:37am. Dismissal time is 2:20 pm. We ask that you keep your child(ren) home until at least **8:20 am** since that is when the teachers begin their supervision duty.

First recess is at **10:10 am to 10:25 am** (Intermediate classes: Mrs. Mayes, Miss. Jeffery, Ms. Dyer, Ms. Falconer, and Mrs. Bouchard) and we have a second recess from **10:25 am to 10:40 am** (Primary classes: Mrs. Koszegi, Mrs. Davidson, Ms. Maschak, Mrs. Fedirchuk, and Ms. Lenormand). We urge all children to go outside during these breaks for fresh air and a stretch. Children should be prepared with appropriate dress for the changing weather during recess breaks. As you are aware, temperatures and conditions can vary greatly from morning to afternoon here in the valley.

Our lunch hour is from **12:00 noon to 12:35 pm**. Children play outdoors for 35 minutes and then eat their lunch once back in class with their teachers.

Students will be playing outside for recess and lunch every day. Please send waterproof coats or raincoats, umbrellas, boots, and warm clothing. This will be very important this year! We believe in "Being in Nature" and learning outdoors. Physical Activity is part of our curriculum.

HOMEWORK FOR PARENTS: INFO UPDATE

We sent home *Demographic Verifier forms* for all students recently. The 2-sided form shows the information we have on file for your children. Please check it over carefully, make any changes or corrections on the form and sign it in the appropriate area. Please have your child **return the signed form to their teacher even if there are no changes.**



Student Emergency Preparedness Release Form: This form will have very important information for us in the event of an emergency like with whom can we send your child(ren) in the event we cannot reach you or you cannot get to the school.

Comfort Kit: Each class will have a bin stored in the large container on the back field of our school, again, in the event of an emergency. If you have not completed a comfort pack, please send it in ASAP! If you need assistance with the content, please call the school.

Privacy Consent Form: Initial to grant permission as indicated on form.

Indigenous Self-Identification Form: is a form for families to consider for their students. Following the Ministry of Education guidelines, we send this home each year. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Brown, Mrs. Fryer, or Mrs. Sanders at the school.

BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program: Fruits and vegetables are supplied **free for all students** to encourage healthy eating. Please fill in the form if your child has an allergy, we need to be aware of, or if you do not want your child to participate.

KEEPING OUR STUDENTS SAFE

STUDENT SAFETY

Safety has been and continues to be a number one priority at John Howitt. Over the last few years, the safety committee worked on a safe drop-off and pick-up procedure, before and after school. Please note the following directions and follow the traffic flow patterns.

SCHOOL DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:

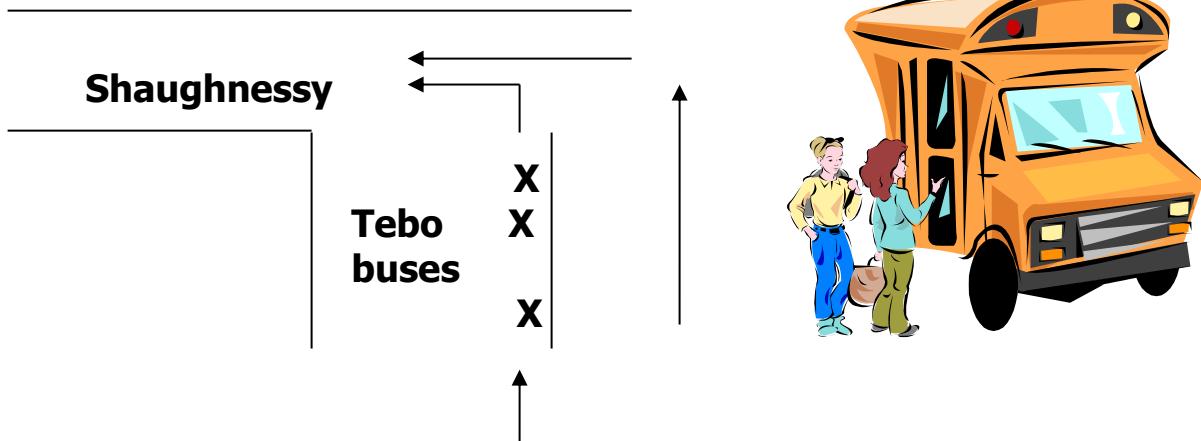
To ensure that all our students are safe at the beginning and end of the school day, we are asking you to respect the **BUS LOOP ZONE** at the paved west end of the school. **The only vehicles that have access to this area besides buses and day-care vans.**



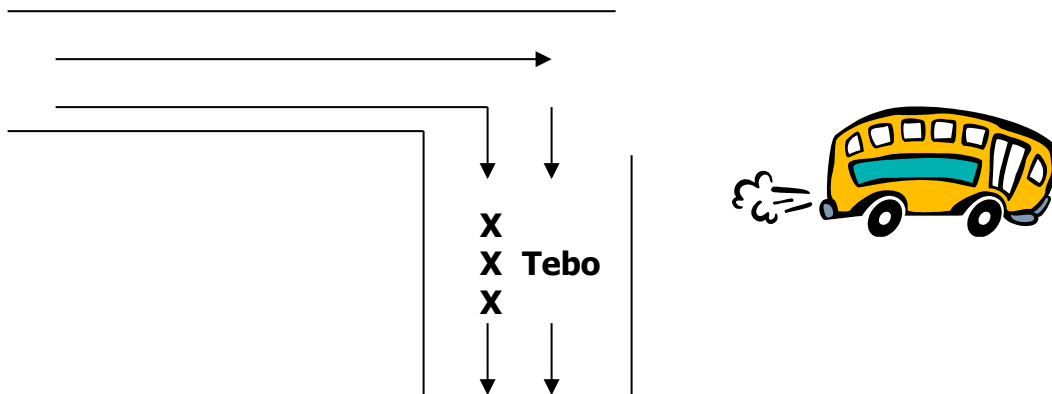
To ensure student safety at the beginning and end of the day, we ask that those of you who are approaching the school from the South on Tebo continue along Shaughnessy after you have dropped off or picked up your child. Similarly, if you are approaching the school from Shaughnessy, we ask that you continue along Tebo for a block before turning for your return home. These plans avoid the need

for turning around at the end of Tebo, a practice that has caused congestion in the past and threatened the safety of our children. **Simply put - PLEASE, NO 'U' TURNS near the school.**

Parents follow the route our buses take, Tebo – Shaughnessy, preventing the second trip through the crossing area.



Parents parked on the opposite side of the street, please approach via Shaughnessy.



This prevents turning at the end and doubling back through the crossing.

In addition: Kindergarten parents are asked to back into the kindergarten parking spaces prior to dismissal time so that you can leave facing front to allow you maximum visibility of arriving and departing older students.

Similarly, we ask that any parent using the main staff parking lot to also **back in** to maximize visibility and safety of students.

We thank you for your cooperation and understanding in this matter as we all work together for the safety of our students.



REMINDER FROM THE RCMP

The RCMP will be enforcing all motor vehicle infractions within school zones and would like to remind drivers of the following common concerns.

- Vehicle speed is 30 km/hr. within all school zones. The school zone speed limit on Tebo changed last year and was expanded so please watch for the location of the school zone sign.
- Vehicles **cannot** park within 6 meters of any traffic control device, cross walk or stop sign.
- Reminder to come to a complete stop at all stop signs.



REPORTING A STUDENT ABSENT OR LATE

If your child will be absent or late, please contact our school at (250) 723-7521. You may also email either lbehnke@sd70.bc.ca, or your child's teacher, to report an absence. Reminder to complete the daily health check if you are not feeling well and stay home if you are sick. You can find the BC government COVID 19 assessment at [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/diseases/communicable/covid-19/self-assessment-tool)



PACIFIC RIM SCHOOLS AND JOHN HOWITT ELEMENTARY APP FOR SMARTPHONES AND TABLETS:



Now you can download the Pacific Rim School app to your iPhone, iPad, or android device. Search Pacific Rim Schools in the app store. Very easy to set up, and you can select multiple SD70 schools. So, if you have students at Howitt and ADSS you can set up the app to receive information from both schools. You will be able to see the school calendar, news items, and more. **Having the app will be the best place to stay updated on the events at Howitt.**

2023-2024 Important Dates

To assist you in your long-term planning the following days are listed as important events and days that will not be in session for students at John Howitt Elementary:

September 11 th	Lunch program starts.
September 13 th	First full day for kindergarten students
September 15 th	Terry Fox Run (morning start, please arrive on time to school, Students in Gr 1 to 7)
September 20 th	Howitt Open House: 5:00-6:00 pm
September 21 st	First PAC meeting of the year 6:30 pm in the library
September 25 th	School Planning Day (professional development day, no school for students)
September 29 th	Orange Shirt Day & Truth and Reconciliation assembly (wear orange please)
September 30 th	National Truth and Reconciliation Day
October 1 st	No school to mark National Truth and Reconciliation Day
October 9 th	Statutory Holiday: Thanksgiving
October 13 th	Individual Student Photos
October 21 st	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
October 25 th & 26 th	Student Learning Conferences (early dismissal at noon)
October 31 st	Halloween @ Howitt (Tuesday)
November 10 th	Remembrance Day at Howitt
November 11 th	Statutory Holiday: Remembrance Day (Saturday)
November 13 th	No school to mark Remembrance Day (Monday)
November 16 th	Photo Retakes (9:30 AM start)
November 20 th	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
December 20 th	Student progress reports sent home
December 22 nd	Last Day of School before winter break
Dec 25 th to Jan 5 th	Winter Break
January 8 th	School Re-Opens (Monday)
January 22 nd	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
February 16 th	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
February 19 th	Statutory Holiday: Family Day
March 15 th	Last Day before Spring Break
March 18 th – 28 th	Spring Break (two weeks)
March 29 th	Statutory Holiday: Good Friday
April 1 st	Statutory Holiday: Easter Monday
April 2 nd	School Re-Opens after spring break and easter
April 19 th	School Based Pro-D Day (no school for students)
May 13 th	School Based Pro-D Day (no school for students)
May 20 th	Statutory Holiday: Victoria Day
June 21 st	National Aboriginal Day (school in session)
June 27 ^h	Last Day of School for students



If you have any questions please contact the school, or touch base with your child's Teacher!

Sincerely,

Mr. S. Brown
Principal

Sincerely,

Mrs. L. Fryer
Vice Principal