



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

It was 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 Indigenous Support Worker is now working full-time at Wood Elementary. We thank her for all that she has done to support our students, staff, and school community. We will miss her. We are currently working through the process with the Pacific Rim School District to welcome a new Indigenous Support Worker to the Howitt staff. Once the hiring process is complete, we will share information with our students and families.

New Staff Members:

We would like to welcome Miss S. Jeffery (Grade 6), Ms. D. Freigang (Grade 2&3), Miss. K. O'Donovan (Music K-3, and PE 6), Ms. M. Roberts (Education Assistant), Mr. S. Davis (Education Assistant), and Mrs. R. Kuncio (Education Assistant) 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.
- 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.
- 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 in the first 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.**



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.**

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES FOR FAMILIES:

Friday September 12th

Terry Fox Run @ Howitt- due to work on the Kitsuksis Dyke Trail will cause us to change our usual plan. Details to follow later this week. However, it will be in the Howitt neighbourhood.

Wednesday September 17th

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.

Tuesday September 23rd

Parents Advisory Council Meeting at 5:30 pm in the library.

Thursday September 25th and Friday September 26th **Wear Orange** in support of **National Truth and Reconciliation Day and Every Child Matters**

Monday September 29th

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

Tuesday September 30th

National Truth and Reconciliation Day (no school for students as we observe this day)

OUR STAFF FOR 2025-2026

Principal	Mr. S. Brown
Secretary	Mrs. L. Behnke
Grade 7	Mrs. N. Mayes
Grade 6	Miss. S. Jeffery
Grade 5	Mrs. Bouchard
Grade 4	Ms. Dyer
Grade 3	Mrs. J. Davidson
Grade 2&3	Ms. D. Freigang
Grade 2&3	Ms. J. Lenormand
Grade 1&2	Mrs. J. Fedirchuk
Grade 1&2	Ms. M. Ellison-Miles
Kindergarten & Grade 1	Mrs. S. Organ
Kindergarten & Grade 1	Mrs. E. Koszegi
Music and Fine Arts K to 3, & PE	Miss. K. O'Donovan
Grade 5, Library, and PE 4-7	Mr. C. Harper
Learning Support	Ms. B. Williams
Education Assistant	Ms. C. Schulze
Education Assistant	Ms. J. Moyen
Education Assistant	Mrs. H. Krupek
Education Assistant	Mrs. E. Sattar
Education Assistant	Mrs. M. Swalwell
Education Assistant	Mrs. M. Frost
Education Assistant	Mrs. M. Cherry
Education Assistant	Ms. M. Roberts
Education Assistant	Mr. S. Davis
Education Assistant	Mrs. R. Kuncio
Custodians	Ms. T. Potter and Mr. C. Goode

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 or Mr. Brown will be able to help you. Items needing delivery 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 decide 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

The Pacific Rim School District lunch program through Nourish Cowichan started on September 3rd (last week). If you would like to have your child on the program, please contact the office for more information.

STUDENT AGENDAS

The purchase of agendas for Divisions 6 to 10 has 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 look 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 Tuesday September 23rd, at 5:30 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 8:36 am. 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.

Recess for all is from **10:25 am to 10:40 am**. 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 play time 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 usually eat their lunch between 12:35 pm and 12:55 pm.

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 whom we can 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 or Mrs. Behnke at the school.

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 has 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.

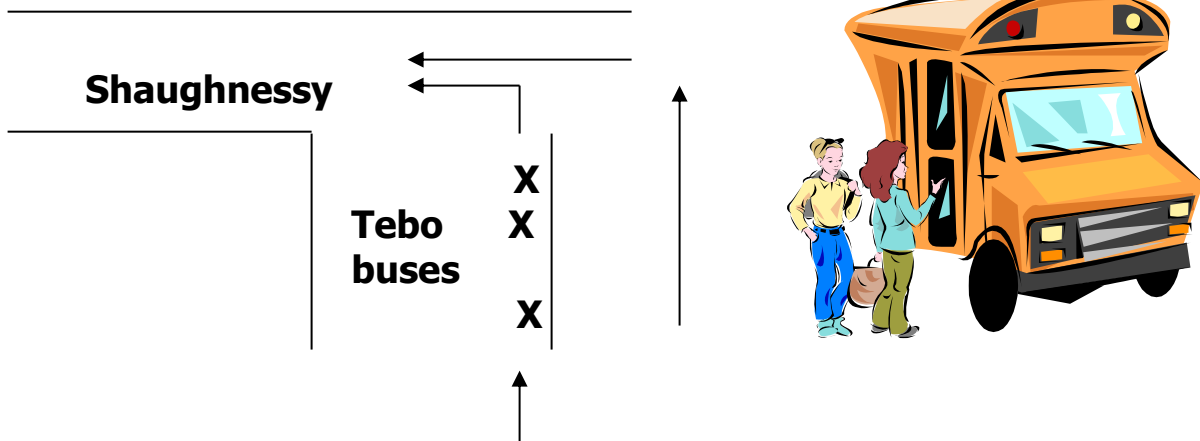


SCHOOL DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:

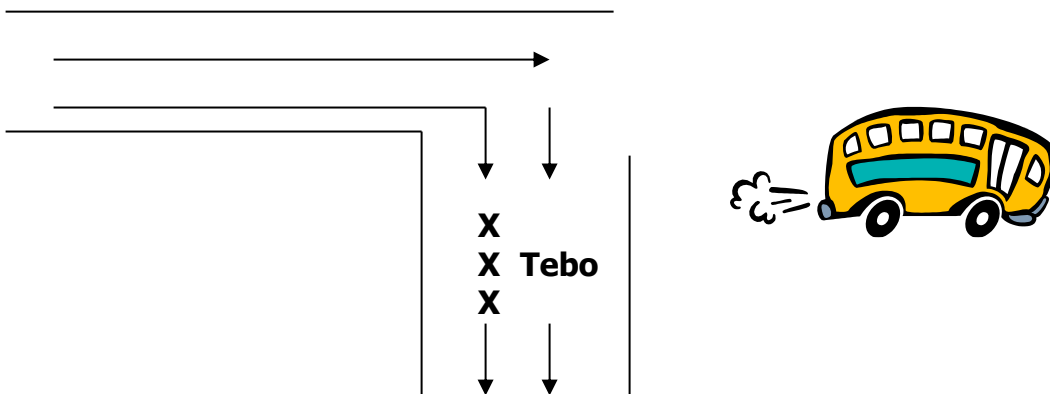
To ensure that all our students are safe at the beginning and end of the school day, we are asking you to respect the **BUS LOOP ZONE** at the paved west end of the school. **The only vehicles that have access to this area besides buses and day-care vans.**

To ensure students' 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 to turn 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, please 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.
- 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 behnke@sd70.bc.ca, or your child's teacher, to report an absence. If your child is sick, please stay home until they are feeling better.

2025-2026 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 12 th	Terry Fox Run: due to work on the Kitsuksis Dyke Trail will cause us to change or usual plan. Details to follow later this week.
September 17 th	Howitt Open House: 5:00-6:00 pm
September 23 rd	First PAC Meeting at 5:30 pm in the library
September 25 th	Orange Shirt Day & Truth and Reconciliation assembly (wear orange please), also wear orange, if possible, on Friday September 26th.
September 29 th	School Planning Day (professional development day, <u>no school for students</u>)
September 30 th	National Truth and Reconciliation Day (no school for students)
October 14 th	Statutory Holiday: Thanksgiving
October 21 st	PAC Meeting 5:30 pm in the library.
October 23 rd	Individual Student Photos
October 24 th	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
Oct 29 and 30 th	<u>Early Dismissal for Student Learning Conferences (dismissal at Noon)</u>
October 31 st	Halloween @ Howitt (Friday)
November 7 th	Remembrance Day at Howitt
November 10 th	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
November 11 th	Statutory Holiday: Remembrance Day (Tuesday, no school)

November 12 th	Re-takes for Individual Student Photos
November 27 th	PAC meeting 5:30 pm in the library
December 18 th	Student Learning Update #1 reports sent home
December 19 th	Last Day of School before winter break
Dec 22 nd to Jan 2 nd	Winter Break (2 weeks)
January 5 th	School Re-Opens (Monday)
January 19 th	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
January 27 th	PAC Meeting at 5:30 pm in the library
January 27 th	Family Literacy Day
February 13 th	Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
February 16 th	Statutory Holiday: Family Day (no school for students)
February 26 th	PAC Meeting 5:30 pm in the library
March 4 th	Student Learning Update #2 reports sent home
March 5 th	Last Day before Spring Break
March 9 th to 20 th	Spring Break (two weeks)
March 23 rd	First day back from spring break
March 24 th	PAC Meeting 5:30 pm in the library
April 3 rd	Statutory Holiday: Good Friday (no school for students)
April 6 th	Easter Monday (no school for students)
April 17 th	Spring Individual Student Photos and Class Photos (Friday)
April 21 st	PAC Meeting 5:30 pm in the Library
April 22 nd & 23 rd	<u>Early dismissal for Student Learning Conferences (dismissal at Noon)</u>
April 24 th	School Based Pro-D Day (no school for students)
May 11 th	Pro-D Day (no school for students)
May 19 th	Statutory Holiday: Victoria Day
May 26 th	PAC meeting in the library at 5:30 pm
June 21 st	National Indigenous Day
June 25 th	Last Day of School for students
June 27 th	Admin Day (school closed)



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

Sincerely,

Mr. S. Brown