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Principal's Message

Welcome back and Happy New Year to all of our families! We hope everyone had a well-deserved restful and enjoyable winter break. The past year has definitely been interesting and has taught us much about resiliency.

It is with great excitement that we welcome in 2021. This past week we held cohort assemblies where we spoke about the different behaviours that help make our school a great place to work, learn and play in the **Green Zone**. We also spoke about how our school is a story of both Firebirds and Pirates. Our students learned a bit about “Mayor Frank J. Ney” and why we have a statue of him dressed as a pirate at the front of our school and in downtown Nanaimo. We will be weaving the pirate and firebird themes into several things we do at the school. We introduced “Pirate Pats” – as in a pat on the back -- which are celebration slips that school staff may give students when they are exceptionally “Respectful & Kind”, “Responsible & Safe” and “Firebird Fabulous”. We look forward to all of our students helping to make 2021 a wonderful year.



We hope everyone has a fantastic finish to January!

Sincerely,
Patrick Young & DJ Thompson

Nut Aware School

Due to staff / student allergies, Frank J. Ney Elementary is a: **Nut Aware** Site. Please help keep our learning environment safe for all by keeping our site free of nuts and items containing nuts!

Important Dates

Following are some of our upcoming important dates. Please check out our [“Year At A Glance”](#) calendar under the “News & Calendar” section of our website. It already lists most of this year’s events/dates and will be updated during the school year.

Family Literacy Day	Wed., Jan. 27
Spirit Day: Dress as Your Favourite Character	Wed., Jan. 27
Report Cards (Electronic)	Wed., February 10
Non-Instructional Day	Thurs, February 11
Non-Instructional Day	Friday, February 12
Valentines Day	Sunday, February 14
FSA Begin	Monday, February 15
BC Family Day (Stat)	Monday, February 15

- PAC meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of the month @ 6 PM (Online during Phase 2.)

Thanks, PAC & PAC Members Needed

A big thank you to our amazing PAC for their recent support in the purchase of keyboards for our music program and for mental health resources to support our students and classrooms.

Our next PAC meeting is Tuesday, February 16. It is during this meeting where Executive Positions for the following year are determined and voted on if necessary. If you are interested in finding out more about the executive positions or how you can help, please email: finpacchair@gmail.com

Thanks to all of our parent volunteers who help to support our school and activities for our amazing Firebirds.

Report Cards



Our first report cards will be going out electronically on Wednesday, February 10. Please look for them in your email's inbox. The format is identical to last year's.

We are very proud of the progress our young Firebirds have made this year. Please set aside some time to review the report card with your child and to set goals for the second half of the school year.

Dog's Onsite

A big thank you to all of our caring dog owners who have quickly followed our recent notice around "No Dogs on School Grounds". We do know while many students love dogs, others may have animal allergies or fear of them.

As shared in that letter to parents, our district's "Animals in School Settings" policy shares that "The Board of Education believes that a safe environment free of animals is desirable for its students and employees." It further clarifies that "Animals, including all pets, should not be kept or brought onto school properties, into schools or district facilities. The presence of animals presents many problems which include safety and liability issues. It is strongly encouraged that any animals found inside a school or district facility or on school grounds be removed immediately. Classrooms projects where animals are included or long-term education-focused exhibits may be excluded at this time, with principal approval."

Family Literacy Day

Family Literacy Day is Wednesday, January 27th. Due to COVID, there will not be an onsite activity. A handout is being sent home that

shares both a website and activities that Families may do to celebrate literacy.

We would love to see pictures of things families do during this day. Please consider taking a photo and sharing it with the school – see the handout for more details.



Please note there is a date typo on the handout. Our dress as your favourite character is on the same day as the Family Literacy Day (not on Friday as listed on the front page)

Spirit: Dress as Your Favourite Character

Book Character Dress Up Day!



In Celebration of Family Literacy Day, we are hosting a "Dress as Your Favourite Character Day" on Wednesday, January 27th. We look forward to seeing different characters roaming the halls of our school.

Every Friday is a school "Colours or Clothing Day" where staff and students are encouraged to wear school colours (Red and Blue)

Valentines Day



Valentines Day is coming up and we know families will have questions about how it looks during COVID times. Students may continue to share cards. Professionally wrapped treats may be shared but home-baked and home-wrapped items cannot be shared. Have a Happy Valentines.

Virtual Family Math Fair

The first UBC Virtual Family Math Fair will be held on Saturday, February 20 from 10:00am - 12:00 noon. It is an opportunity to join UBC Faculty of Education professors, graduate students, teachers, and teacher candidates in hands-on math activities that will inspire curiosity and FUN for the WHOLE FAMILY! All activities will be facilitated through Zoom sessions. Some activities will require use of materials that are typically found around the home (e.g., paper, ruler, string, cardboard, tape, scissors, coloured pencils ...). The event is free but registration is required. (Click on this [Link](#) to register.)

Once registered, UBC will send out: the Family Math Fair program about 2 weeks before the event; a list of materials you'll need for activities; and Zoom links will be sent about 1 week before the event. Registration is limited so please register early.

Inclement Weather



It is that time of year again, when the school district would like to remind parents about school closure procedures. The most common reasons that

schools might be closed are dangerous road conditions due to a heavy snowfall or ice.

If you are wondering if schools are open on a particular day, listen to local radio stations (WAVE 102.3 FM and WOLF 106.9 FM) in the mornings.

As well, notification of school closures may be communicated: (a) on our school district's mobile phone app, (b) on the school district website, www.sd68.bc.ca, and (c) on Twitter and Facebook. If there is no announcement on the website or social media, please be sure to listen to local radio stations.

We would like to remind parents that it is their right to make the final decision as to whether it is safe for their children to travel to school on any given day. While the district strives to make the best decision possible for students across the district, there may be circumstances in your neighbourhood that lead you to decide to keep your children home, even though schools are open.

Bus Information: Snow-related

Two important reminders to our families and students who use the bus:

- Sledding equipment (sleds, toboggans, crazy carpets, etc.) are not allowed on school busses. Students arriving at the bus stop with such items would be required to leave them behind.
- On a snowy or icy day, the bus may not be able to safely access the bus stop at Breonna Dr. and Schooner Way. On these days, students are expected to go to the bus stop at Broadway Road and Parkway Drive for pick-up at 8:14 AM.

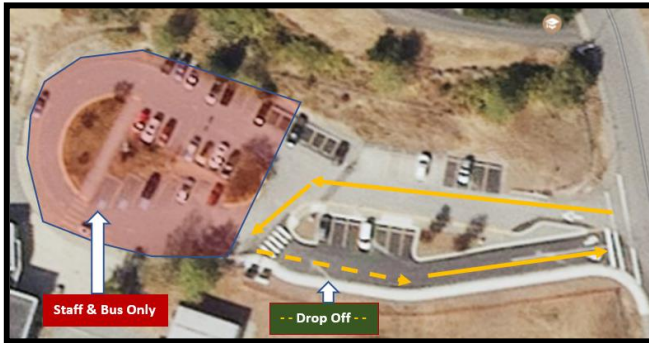
Dressing for the Weather

Our cold weather has arrived. Please send your child to school prepared for the uncertain weather. Layered clothing is always a good choice as students can remove or add clothing as necessary. We do plan to have many outside days. We all know the "one weakness of our mighty Firebirds is wet feet! Being too cold comes a close second."



A reminder that due to COVID protocols, we are asking that students bring their personal items (including clothing) to and from school each day.

Safety in the Parking Lot



Thanks to our parents who have worked on using the designated drop off areas shared in last month's newsletter. Please note that we may be putting up cones to further assist in the directional flow of traffic with a particular focus on keeping cars out of the bus zone.

We have shared the image again below for those who may have missed that information. The Red area of our parking lot is for busses and staff only. For pickup and drop-off please see the "yellow" route on the map below.

Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)

The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) for our grade 4 and 7 students will begin on February 5th.

Kindergarten Registration

The online process to register your child in Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools has begun.

The following information will help determine if this process will apply to you. If your answer is yes to the following question, you will register using the district's online registration form:

- Do you have a child that will be turning five years old on or before December 31, 2021?

Before you begin, you will need the following:

1. A valid email address.
2. Photo or scan showing proof of citizenship (ie. Birth certificate)
3. Photo or scan showing proof of Canadian residency (ie. mortgage or bank statement, utility bill, driver's license, etc.)

Online registration is now open.

For more information please visit the district [website](#) or by emailing ereg@sd68.bc.ca.

Frank J. Ney



Firebirds