Superintendent’s Memo

For the Week of January 16th – 20th, 2017

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT...

Welcome Back! This is the first Superintendent’s Memo of 2017!
I hope that you all had a great break and are rested and ready to con-
tinue the important work that you all do for our students.

Our BTPS Board of Trustees is an integral part of the team helping us
to realize the BTPS Mission. Each trustee represents an area of BTPS
and most are very well known in their local area. As a part of the first
Sup’s Memo of each month, we are going to provide information on
one of our trustees. This will give you some personal information on
their lives outside of BTPS, information on the Board committees they
are involved in and some insight into their thoughts on being a trustee.
These biographies will also be showcased on the BTPS website under
the “Board” tab.

The first trustee who has agreed to be our “Meet Your Trustee” is
Benita Fossen. So allow me to introduce Trustee Fossen who was
elected into her role in October of 2013.

Benita Fossen - A Little Bit About Me

I was born and raised on our family farm west
of Cadogan. That is where my husband Ron
and I live now, with our daughter Anna-Mae
and our two dogs. We are still carrying on the
tradition of farming.

I went to Cadogan School from Grades 1 to 8,
after that I attended Provost High School
where I graduated. I have taken many courses over the years; Com-
puter, WHIMS, Dangerous Goods, H2S, First Aid/CPR, as well as Forklift
training and have my Class 1A license as I previously worked in the oil-
field industry. I am currently taking the medical assistant course
through Robertson College, which I will complete in February.

Continued on next page

MISSION: Buffalo Trail Public Schools is committed to maximizing student learning,
in a safe and caring environment, supported by a highly effective team.
FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT (FROM PAGE 1)

In my leisure I like to do puzzles, read, play cards and spend time with family. Over the years our family has made many miles on the road to go bowling.

I am currently serving on the following Board Committees:
Policy Committee
Staff Liaison Committee

My Thoughts on Being a School Board Trustee

I decided to run for school board trustee in 2013 so I could learn more about education at the jurisdiction and the provincial level. While there has been a lot to learn, I am happy to serve my local communities of Provost, Amisk and Hughenden. I have also learned more about our Hutterite colonies as I also serve the colony schools of Highland View and Rosewood. I am proud of all the initiatives at my schools and can see these learning opportunities making a difference in the lives of our students. It's been fun being involved with the schools and seeing kids grow and learn things; and how they have come up with some excellent projects in different classes. There's a lot of talent around our schools. I also think it is amazing that students now can take a trade and go into that trade after they have graduated.

"If you follow your dreams in whatever you do, it won't be long till they start coming true."
- Author Unknown

Take care,

HUMAN RESOURCES

What is the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)?
Confidential counselling, advice, and coaching...24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
No cost services to all employees and their family members....by phone, internet, or local in person referrals

1-800-663-1142
www.homewoodhealth.com
Click here for a short video orientation on how EFAP can be of assistance to you and your family.
NEW:
INCEMENT WEATHER REMINDERS:

As we experienced last Wednesday, winter storms can come in without notice. It was the first time in many years that bus drivers actually turned the buses around and headed back to the school/town. The timing of this storm couldn’t have been worse as the bus drivers were already at the school waiting to take students home and students had been dismissed from school. I understand that there was some confusion when some of the bus drivers took the students back to the schools, because they couldn’t see once they headed out due to reduced visibility. When this happens bus drivers will make contact with parents to let them know that students have been brought back to the school, and that they will have to come and get them when it is safe to do so. I know that this probably won’t happen again this year (knock on wood), but we ask parents to make sure they have an alternate plan if a storm or severe weather would prevent them from being able to pick up their children at the school. The schools will remain open, and students are safe, however, we ask parents that they call the school after receiving notice from the bus drivers that their children are at the school as to how long they will be before they or someone else will be able to come and pick up their children. It just gives the school a timeline to be able to make arrangements for the students who are left at the school. We sincerely appreciate the school staff and bus drivers who remained at the school and waited until every student was picked up and who made sure every bus driver got home.

The decision to cancel the buses next day was based on the fact that the graders did not have enough time to clear the roads as they were pulled off early the day of the storm combined with the extremely cold temperatures. BTPS cold weather administrative procedure states that buses will be cancelled by the jurisdiction when the temperature with or without the wind-chill reaches -45°C.

Click this link for more information on jurisdictional based bus cancellations and/or contractor/driver based bus cancellations. Always refer to the BTPS website www.btps.ca for information as to whether particular bus routes are cancelled. You also have the option to subscribe to a particular bus route, so when there is an update on your child’s bus route you will receive a text or email.

We would like to thank everyone for doing their part in making sure students are safe during the extremely cold weather. Whether you are the parent fighting with their teenager to wear their coat or boots, the bus driver doing their pre-trip in the freezing cold to make sure the bus is warm for the students and running properly, the staff on supervision, or the administrative assistants looking for missing students, you all play a part in making sure students arrive safely at school in the morning and returned home in the evening.

ONLINE PAYMENTS NOW AVAILABLE:

The Student Information Services Department has been working hard to bring the convenience of online fee payments for parents. I am excited to say it is now available. If you have outstanding bus fees and you would like to make an online payment, please go to the parent page of your school’s website. You will have already received an email from BTPS with detailed instructions on where to find the online payment option and how to use it.

STUDENT SAFETY IS OUR GOAL!

Chrysti Mannix
Director of Transportation
Buffalo Trail Public Schools

What course will Trustee Fossen have completed in February?

ANSWER HERE
ATTENTION JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS! Do you know about and use the ALIS website? If not, it’s time to CHECK IT OUT!

The ALIS website offers resources to assist a broad range of audiences including:

- MyWorkQuest youth employment site
- OCCinfo: Occupational Profiles and videos (including info about salaries, and in-demand occupational areas)
- ALIS Tips: short articles related to learning, employment and careers
- Publications in print and PDF: wonderful job exploration tools!

The NEW and IMPROVED ALIS website is launching February 1, 2017. The beta version of this site is up and ready for your use now!

Check it out at: https://beta.alis.alberta.ca/

First Nations, Métis and Inuit TEACHER RESOURCES

Image credit — “Northern Lights over New Years Eve” Herb Bradley, Kaszbonika First Nation, Ont.

Language is integral to cultural understanding and appreciation, and there are many, wonderful Cree literacy resources available for you to use with students or for your own learning.

According to creeculture.ca, Cree is the most widely spoken native language in Canada, with Cree speakers forming an unbroken chain of dialects stretching across a vast area from Labrador to western British Columbia. As a member of the family of Algonquian languages, Cree is related to other Algonquian languages such as Ojibwa, Micmac, etc. Most of the Cree spoken in Treaty 6 Territory is Plains Cree, or Y dialect. You can learn more about the different dialects here.

The Cree Literacy Network is resource that supports learning about the Cree language. Here are two stories in both Cree and English:

Wisahkìcâhk and the wîhtikow (th-dialect)
Wisahkìcâhk Goes South: Solomon Ratt (th-dialect, y-dialect with audio)

NOTES:

Wisahkìcâhk stories can sometimes be graphic — please preview prior to sharing with your class. Wisahkìcâhk, a central figure in nîhiyaw (Cree) cosmology, is an important âtayohkan (spiritual) figure that teaches us about adventure, creativity, humor, and about our relatedness to all other life forms […] Since wisahkìcâhk is prone to making mistakes despite his sacred supernatural abilities, he teaches us about humility and balance and reminds nîhiyawak (Cree people) that while we should strive for goodness, we are not burdened with the pressure of being perfect (Napoleon, A., 2014. Key Terms and Concepts for Exploring Nîhiyaw Tāpisinowin the Cree Worldview).

Traditionally, wisahkìcâhk stories could only be told when the ground was covered in snow.
2017 Personal Tax Credit Returns
Federal & Provincial

If you have any changes for the 2017 tax year, please download the forms and return to the attention of payroll. If you have any questions please contact either:

hrsupportstaff@btps.ca
or hrteachers@btps.ca

Links:

TD1-2017
TD1AB-2017
Payroll Changes Effective January 2017
AROUND BTPS

Barry walked into his gift wrapped office - his Grade 12 students at Provost Public did a super job!

Submitted by: Barry Scinski

Below is a great newspaper article from Marwayne Jubilee School

Submitted by: Wayne Lewin

A LESSON IN HELPING OTHERS

Helping Others

In Their Great Time Of Need

BELIEVE • HOPE • LOVE • FAITH

JANUARY
A big congratulations to the BTPS/ Lakeland College Dual Credit Trades Class of 2016! The carpenter and welder classes completed their first period apprenticeship and wrote their provincial AIT exams December 23, 2016! Great work everyone!

If you are a BTPS student interested in a dual credits trade program for the fall of 2017, please email Mabyn.Grinde@btps.ca for more information.

**2016 Dual Credit Welders**
Instructor: Owen Lakusta

**2016 Dual Credit Carpenters**
Instructor: Trevor Provick
The students at Hughenden Public School found a unique way to give back to the community this Christmas. Challenged by the school Leadership Group students competed to see who could bring in the highest number of food bank donations. On the final day cross-grade teams used the donated items to create “castles” in the gym. Prizes were awarded for the team with the highest number of items and for the team with the most creative castle structure. Much fun and school spirit were generated. The real winner is the food bank who received a whopping donation.

Submitted by: Cathy Samson
CONGRATULATIONS VOLLeyBaLL SPOrTSMAnSHIP BuRRNWINdERS!

It was my pleasure to call you all and congratulate you personally on your team's accomplishment. Winning the sportsmanship banner is a true testament to your program teaching and modelling the important values and ideals of sport to your athletes. I hope you get the opportunity to celebrate and honor your athletes not only as a department but also as a school. I was hoping to request that when you present your sportsmanship banner to your team if you could maybe take a moment to take some pictures so that I would be able to include a write up in the next ASAA newsletter. If you are able to get me some pictures (please make sure FOIP is taken care of for your students to be in the newsletter) then I would love to make sure everyone across the province knows of your awesome accomplishment!

While I have your attention ... I would also like to let you know about a new award that is being launched starting in January for ASAA athletes. The ASAA Sportsmanship Athlete of the Month is an opportunity for schools to recognize athletes "that display a measure of sportsmanship above and beyond that required by his/her attitude, demeanor, and treatment of fellow competitors, teammates, coaches and officials.". I am super excited about being to recognize the sportsmanship of athletes throughout the year and not just at provincial championships and hope you will share this information with your officials and spectators to give them an opportunity also to highlight athletes who are deserving!

Congratulations again ... you should be very proud of your teams!

Best Regards,
Heather Bartling
Bonnyville Centralized High School
Teacher, Athletic Director