



EXPLORATIONS

Blue Hill Consolidated School

60 High Street • Blue Hill, Maine 04614

June 14, 2013

An Observation from the Outside

A friend who taught 7/8 science at BHCS in the late 90's, who has been teaching in other places in the US and now in Thailand for the last several years, was visiting BHCS yesterday with her newly adopted Thai daughter. They joined us for field day. At the end of the day she had several observations to make of our present overall school climate. According to Kat, days like this don't happen in every school, and if they do, they don't look like what she saw yesterday. At most field days she's seen there is usually a great deal of structure and management, perhaps as many as 15 different stations that kids visit for exactly 7.5 minutes each. The kids are tightly organized into competitive teams struggling to win the events of the day. There is caution by adults to not let things get silly or playful. And there is the expectation that if they do get too playful then there will be the turmoil of aggression or dangerous roughhousing. Kat was amazed that this was not the scene on the BHCS playground yesterday. Starting with the great picnic that the cooks prepared for us, the laid back lines for getting food, and the "scream" for ice cream that got everyone running as the word was passed, each of these happened fluidly for the kids by adults who were having fun, too. Then, on the field for the non-competitive games, in most schools you would not see the chance to get wet, to slip and slide, or to leap (not always over) a mud pit. All kids got wet and many got muddy. And what Kat observed was a group of adults simply allowing the kids to have fun; they were laughing and hugging them and celebrating this joyous childhood experience.

So, one might ask, in these days of school criticisms, lawsuits, and standards, how on earth does a school allow this much fun to happen? Are we crazy? But, here lies the reason why BHCS is such a great school. We put kids first! Children deserve a childhood of wonder, learning, and joy. They deserve to not worry about getting messy or wet. They get to

do activities that are not aligned with standards all the time, and they get to just be kids. At BHCS we know that we are educating the whole child and that taking away good, old-fashioned fun for a child is like taking away a chunk of the experience that makes them whole. Teaching them to set up a piece of plastic, add water and a bit of soap, is very important so they might entertain themselves at home and be active without a computer or TV screen. Having the gym teacher compliment each and every child for his/her efforts with hurdles and jumps also encourages kids to be active with their bodies. Kat saw all of this and felt like this is a school that puts kids first, a place where she would like to send her new daughter if they move back to the United States.

This atmosphere does not happen by chance, however. All year teachers teach children through positive strategies to be kind, responsible, and respectful; and because of that frontloading of essential social skills we are able to hold these days for the kids safely. Our teachers' hard work and efforts pay off in so many ways. Our staff is exceptional, and with them kids always come first.

And, then there are the parents who share our vision of what contributes to a great childhood. Thank you, Rena Flores and Melissa Emerton, and the other parents who planned and carried out this outstanding day for us. It was a relief to have it ready a day early, too, due to expected inclement weather. We all got wet...it was inevitable...but it is, after all, time for summer and that's part of it.

Thank you everyone...teachers, parents, and kids, for another terrific school year. Have an exciting summer and come back to us in the fall ready to dive into learning again – learning about how life is good!

Best Always,
~Della

And, More Good News From the Nurse

After completing this year's screenings of all BHCS students, Debbie Candage has reported to me that approximately 80% of students in our

school fall in the healthy weight category for their ages. The school attitudes that I have mentioned above help contribute to this trend, I'm sure. We can thank parents of our community who are knowledgeable about good nutrition and exercise, and our cooks are strict about their nutritional guidelines and focus on whole foods, good protein, fruits and vegetables, limited sugar, and portion sizes. The school's policies reflect no competition with the school lunch program; we do not offer vending machines with anything but water, and we have water readily available in the cafeteria, classrooms, and hallways. Our 5-2-1-0 commitments have had a good impact on our kids. We focus on limited screen time and more physical activity. Mr. McCormick's PACER program is recognized through UMO as an excellent model of fitness. Overall, we can say BRAVO to the kids at BHCS who defy the national statistics related to childhood obesity. Stay active, kids!

Report Cards This Term and Class Lists

Later next week, you will receive by mail the 3rd trimester report card for your child. It is the newly designed report card, an outcome of this pilot year. The report card is more organized into appropriate subject areas, and we hope it is much more user-friendly for parents. Because it is organized differently from the previous two this year, you may not see the grades of T1 or T2, and not all the standards that you saw before will be listed. We have grouped standards that belong together, and used some of our own wording to express the Common Core standards. Teachers gather a great deal of information about what they teach and how students have done, but not all will be separately displayed. Let me know this summer what you think of the new format. I'll be in the office, so you can call or email me.

Class lists will be finalized and sent out mid-August along with the back-to-school letter. As in the past, we cannot accept requests because teachers need to be able to create balanced lists that address the diverse needs of all the students.

Lost black baseball glove A700. If someone picked it up by mistake, please call 374-2921. Thank you.

Summer Sports Opportunities

Softball Clinic for grades 5-8.

June 20th: fielding fundamentals and pitching.
June 21st: hitting and base running along with bunting.

9:00 -11:30 AM at GSA field.

\$10 a day or \$15 for both days.

Please contact Coach Nile @ [207-356-1329](tel:207-356-1329) or coachnile@gmail.com. Please leave a message with contact info.

Summer Track for children from age 5-14 starts June 18th, 5:30-6:30 PM at BHCS.

Practices are on Tuesdays and Wednesdays through the season. Registration: \$5. Contact David Stearns @374-3731 or d.stearns@georgesteve.org

SUMMER SOCCER CAMPS - Grades K-8

Castine Half Day Camp (morning or afternoon) - July 8-12 at Maine Maritime Academy. Cost: \$100.00

Castine Full Day Camp - Grades K-8,

July 8-12 at Maine Maritime Academy - \$175

Contact Travers Evans, Head Soccer Coach, Maine Maritime Academy www.mainemaritime.edu

Hunters Safety Course

A state sponsored hunters safety course will be offered here at BHCS some time this summer. If you or your child are interested in taking this course, please contact Franklin Burke at 266-6865 for more information.

Bikes for Books

66 Steak & Seafood will be raising money for the Freemasons' "Bikes for Books" program at the restaurant's 2nd birthday party this Saturday, June 15 from noon to 5 PM, located at the Blue Hill Town Wharf near the fire department. Tickets are \$10 for adults/\$5 for kids and include food from the BBQ, a soft drink, music, a jump house, dunk tank and face-painting. The fire department will also have an antique engine there for the day.

Students may also have a chance to dunk their teachers, as faculty members have been invited to sit in the tank! Tosses will be \$1 each or 7 tosses for \$5. All profits from these throws (as well as ticket sales) will go to the Freemasons' "Bikes for Books" campaign, a

charity that donates bikes in reading incentive programs. So please come down to 66 this weekend to have fun for a good cause!

The Simmering Pot—A Community Created Supper, provides a free, delicious meal Mondays 2:30 to 6:00 PM at First Congregational Church, Blue Hill. Eat in/take out. No charge, donations accepted. Info - call 374-2891.

HEART OF THE STORM Island Sailing Expeditions in Blue Hill

Live aboard for 9 days, sail to islands, hike, dive for treasure, survival trek over-night, and charcoal drawing. Two 9-day trips are being offered this summer. The program is open to youth aged 12–18. No prior sailing experience is required. Scholarships are available. For more information and dates visit our website at <http://heartofthestorm.org> or email us at christina@heartofthestorm.org. Or you can call Christina Montano at 207-664-8004.

2013 – British Soccer Camps August 19-23

BLUE HILL SOCCER, is offering “British Soccer Camp” sessions for the following groups:
**Mini Soccer - ages 4-6. 9-10:30 AM for \$80
**Half Day - ages 6-16. 9-noon for \$12
**Team Camp – Team players are also welcome to attend and receive a week of focused instruction to prepare them for the fall season. Rates are available from your camp coordinator.

Each camper will receive a FREE soccer camp T-shirt, a FREE soccer ball, a FREE giant soccer poster and a personalized skills performance evaluation. In addition, any child who signs up online at least 45 days prior to camp will receive a genuine British Soccer Replica Jersey (value \$39). Space is limited so parents are encouraged to sign up online in advance to avoid disappointment. Sign up TODAY at www.challengersports.com. For more information please contact Katye Lacasse. (207-374-5813, or katyelacasse@yahoo.com)

*Happy summer from all of us at
Blue Hill Consolidated School,
and thanks for everything!*