



# EXPLORATIONS

## Blue Hill Consolidated School

60 High Street • Blue Hill, Maine 04614

November 19, 2015

### From the Principal - We've Got Your Number!

Starting this year we are using SchoolMessenger, a mass-notification system that allows us to contact all parents and teachers via phone, email, and text message (the text feature is not yet active) at the same time. For every student, we have a primary and a secondary contact, which in most cases is the student's mother and father. For each contact, there is a phone number and an email address. We have three types of notifications which we plan to use the system to deliver: non-school hour emergencies (snow days/school closings, etc.), school-hour emergencies (lockdowns, fires, other emergencies/crises), and general information (Explorations newsletter, etc.). For the two "emergency" types, those messages will go to both phone numbers and both email addresses. For newsletters, it will go to both email addresses.

This morning we tested the system by sending a "non-school hours emergency" broadcast, which is set to deliver to all contacts. There were two parts to the broadcast: an email and a phone call. The way the phone calls work is the system will dial the numbers. If someone picks up the phone, they will be greeted with a pre-recorded message saying, "Hello, this is an important message from the Blue Hill Consolidated School. To hear the message now, press 1 or stay on the line. To put this call on hold, press the pound key." After the greeting, by pressing 1 or staying on the line, you will hear the recorded message from a BHCS staff person stating the message. If you do not pick up the phone, the system will leave the message as a voicemail or on an answering machine.

We are really excited to have this new system in place. It will allow us to update all of our families and staff members in a very quick and convenient way. This morning the system made 593 phone calls and sent out 450 emails in under 10 minutes. I promise not to over-use this! I have heard of places where schools send out multiple announcements a day, this is not our intent! It is intended to improve all school communication, not only in emergencies.

Warmly,  
Shelly

### Kudos

Kudos this week go to Anita Black and Rachel Nightingale for facilitating opportunities for our sixth graders to volunteer. Yesterday, the entire class went to the Holt House to rake leaves for an hour and a half! Today, they are helping to serve our Thanksgiving lunch to the younger students at BHCS. Thank you, Anita, Rachel, and Sixth Graders!

### Turkey Dinner Donations

There is still time to help provide Thanksgiving dinner to BHCS families. Please see the sign up sheet at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094cadaf22a3fa7-thanksgiving> to see what is needed. You can also contact the PTF at [ptf@bhcs.org](mailto:ptf@bhcs.org) if you have any questions.

Thank you so much for your generosity.

**PTF News**

Don't forget to join us at the Holiday Craft Fair this Saturday, November 21, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM. The gym and cafeteria will be filled with area vendors selling wonderful craft items. Festive music will be provided by the BHCS band. There will be a raffle and refreshments to benefit the BHCS Chess Team. Hope to see you there.

The PTF will be sponsoring winter clubs again this year. It is an excellent opportunity for parents and community volunteers to share their talents with students. In the past we have had everything from a LEGO club to a snowshoe club. Clubs run for six weeks from January 4 - February 12. You get to pick the day of the week and what age group would fit with your skills. Please complete the attached form and return by December 4th if you are interested in hosting a club.

The PTF Holiday Workshop for Kids will be Saturday, December 12 from 10:00 - 12:00. This is a great opportunity for students and parents to come by the school to create holiday gifts. There is even a gift wrapping station.

**Library News**

Now that we have settled into our normal checkout routine in the library, overdue notices may start coming home with your students. These are just a reminder of what items a student has checked out and that need to be returned to the library. Students in grades K-1 have their books for two weeks and students in grades 2-8 have them for three weeks. There is no charge for overdue books, but no new books can be checked out until the overdue book is returned. If you have any questions or concerns about the library, please feel free to stop by or contact me at tgandy@bhcs.org.

*Thank you,*

*Mrs. Gandy*

**School News from the Communication Club**

Basketball season is here! Our basketball teams can't wait for their first game, we have started practices to get a little head start before the real games. Mrs. Schildroth even dropped by to give us a few pointers the other day. Everyone is so motivated and enthusiastic, this is going to be a great season!

**Attachments**

Winter club sponsor form

**Dates to Remember...**

Thu., Nov. 19	PTF Meeting, 2:45 PM BHCS Library
Thu., Nov. 19	8th Grade Dessert Theater, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Fri., Nov. 20	Gr. 3 to Abbe Museum
Fri., Nov. 20	Dance in Brooksville, Gr. 6-8, 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Sat., Nov. 21	Craft Fair, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Mon., Nov. 30	Gr. 1 to Abbe Museum
Wed., Dec. 2	Gr. K - 8 to GSA Concert 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM
Sat., Dec. 12	Chess Team to Aurora 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM
Sat., Dec. 12	PTF Holiday Workshop for Kids, 10:00 AM - 12:00PM
Mon., Dec. 14	5-8 Holiday Concert
Tue., Dec. 15	K - 4 Holiday Concert
Thu., Dec. 17	Gr. 7&8 to Penobscot Theater



Christmas Angels Program provides gifts of warm clothing to children in need living on Blue Hill Peninsula and Deer Isle/ Stonington. The program is also collecting books and stuffed animals in 'new' condition. To learn how you can help the program, contact Kim Williamson at peony13@me.com, 374-2092 by December 1. To receive assistance from the program, contact Wendy Ritger, bhcongo@yahoo.com, 374-2891.