



EXPLORATIONS

Blue Hill Consolidated School

60 High Street • Blue Hill, Maine 04614

January 7, 2016

From the Principal - Budget Season

Happy New Year! I hope that you were able to enjoy time with your families and friends over the holidays. It was great to have a bit of downtime with my own children and family.

Following the Holiday Season comes a very special time of year for school administrators and school boards... Budget Season! This will be the first time that I will have a big part in the budget process, so I'm learning as I go, but I thought that I'd share what I know about it.

Budgeting for the next school year actually starts in late November or early December for us. It is always a bit strange to be thinking about what will be needed for the following September after only just beginning the school year! At this time, teachers fill out a form with information for textbooks, subscriptions, furniture, field trips, etc. that I then compile and come up with numbers for the first draft of the budget. We are also looking at what building and grounds improvements need to be made at this time. These tend to be the most expensive things, so before the public even sees the first draft, we have cut things out to save for another year.

By early January, the business manager, the superintendent, and I have put together a first draft to present at a special board meeting. For the next two months the budget is discussed, questioned, cut, and defended at special board meetings and regular board meetings. At some point the Selectmen will come to discuss the budget with us, and at another meeting the town Budget Committee will come to give their input as well. Hopefully we have all come to an agreement by the end of February (or sooner!). The final step is to present the budget at the Town Meeting on April 2, right here in the BHCS gymnasium. There is usually a great turnout and a lot of support for our school budget. Hopefully, this year will be the same!

Tonight will be a first reading of the first draft of the budget. While our budget (even in its first draft form) is up less than 4%, I know more whittling down will happen. The biggest increase will be in secondary education where the increase is up around \$150,000 due to the number of students and increased tuition. Stay tuned for more Budget Season updates!

Warmly,
Shelly

Kudos

Kudos this week go to Mary Tobey. Mary is new to us at BHCS this year. She teaches Special Education in the middle school and is doing a fantastic job! Recently she applied for a BEEM grant for a reading program called Read Naturally Live that she used successfully at MDES. She was awarded the grant and has begun implementing it with students. We can't wait to learn about the results! Great job, Mary!

Thank you from the Astbury Family

It's hard to find words to express our gratitude for all the things the whole community has done to help us through this hard time.

Your thoughts, prayers and well wishes have given us strength to face the future.

Travis, Corina, Gage, William Evan, and Thomas

Communications Update

As part of our ongoing effort to improve communications within the BHCS community, this week we are starting to use our new mass-notification broadcast system to distribute general emails, starting with today's edition of the Explorations newsletter. Before now we had been using Google Groups for sending out news emails, but by consolidating our communications information under one system we are making the process of communicating school news more efficient and reliable.

Like any new system, there are bound to be some tweaks to make and things to learn (for starters, we learned last time that perhaps we should have let people know *ahead of time* that we were testing the phone call feature of the new system—or at least Loretta!) If you have any questions or comments about the new system, please let us know, and thanks for your patience and understanding as we continue to learn how to best use the new system.

PTF News

This month, we will be having a nighttime PTF meeting on January 21. Stay tuned for more details.

Our next Movie night will be January 22.

A huge thank-you to all the volunteers who are sponsoring the winter clubs: Liz Conlon, Rebecca Conable, Chrissy Allen, Matt Jurick, Cate Reuter, Heather Nelson, Libby Edwardson, and Meredith Amado. We have over 70 students participating in everything from Minecraft to doll making. A special thank-you to Loretta for fielding all the phone calls and questions as we organize these activities. It is wonderful to see the students trying new activities.

School News from the Communication Club

Reminder for all students with MLTI laptops:

Please make sure your laptop does **not** stay overnight in a vehicle in freezing temperatures. This could cause damage to the laptop.

Basketball this year is so much fun! The teams are doing so great this year and I can't wait to see how they all do next year when I'm in high school. The girls team has improved very much since we started which I am very proud of.

Dates to Remember...

Fri., Jan. 8	Dance in Blue Hill Gr. 6-8, 6-9 PM
Sun., Jan. 10	Chess Team to John Bapst
Tue., Jan. 12	Chess Team to Ellsworth Middle School
Wed., Jan. 13	School Board Meeting 5 PM, BHCS Library
Fri., Jan. 15	No School - Teacher Inservice
Mon., Jan 18	No School - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Thu., Jan 21	PTF Meeting - time and location TBD
Fri., Jan 22	Movie Night



New Registration for Peninsula Youth Chorus

Singers who wish to join the children's chorus should plan to meet at the new Bagaduce Music Lending Library, 49 State Street in Blue Hill on Tuesday, January 12th between 3:00-4:30 PM. The music director, Deborah Reinke, will be present to answer questions and distribute forms for registration. The Winter Term begins on Tuesday, January 19th for elementary age students. Rehearsals go from 3:15-4:30 PM every Tuesday except during school vacations. For more information: www.peninsulayouthchorus.com or 374-5545.

Four Cellos in Concert!

Students under 18 are admitted free to this exciting and unusual ensemble event at the Blue Hill Congregational Church on Sunday, January 17 at 3:00 PM. Adult tickets are \$30 at the door. For more information, go to www.bluehillconcertassociation.org

The Transgender, Family and Friends Group (TGFF) provides support for families, friends and transgender people of all ages. TGFF meets Thursday January 7 & 21, 7:30 pm, at First Congregational Church, Blue Hill. For details, contact Susan Yaruta-Young, (207) 460.6155 or email: syyoung@myfairpoint.net. In case of stormy or icy weather, please contact Susan to find out if the session is on.

GSA Events for Prospective Students

Students in 8th grade are invited to GSA Wed., Jan. 13 and Wed., Jan. 27 for Pizza and Boys' Basketball. The JV game starts at 5:30, pizza will be served at 6:00 in the cafeteria, and the Varsity game starts at 7:00. Admission is free for 8th grade students on these two special evenings.