



EXPLORATIONS

Blue Hill Consolidated School

60 High Street • Blue Hill, Maine 04614

October 22, 2015

From the Principal - What's With All the Testing??

Many times throughout my career as an educator parents and students have asked, "What's with all the testing?" Some blame the Maine Learning Results or the Common Core, but the answer isn't complicated (nor political!). There are two reasons that teachers give assessments: to inform and to grade.

Firstly, there are *formative assessments*. These are given for the purpose of informing teachers what students know so that they can design their instruction. Examples of formative assessments are pre-tests, writing prompts, and running records (students read aloud a passage to a teacher and the teacher records errors, etc. to determine areas of strength and weakness). We also have *summative assessments*. These include traditional paper-pencil tests as well as a variety of projects at the end of a unit of study. We give summative assessments to ensure that students have in fact learned the information taught before moving on to the next subject. Trimester report card grades are based on these summative assessments.

There is also required testing that is state-mandated. These include some type of benchmark assessment given three times a year (chosen by our school union) and the state assessment (chosen and distributed at the state level). You've likely heard us talk about AIMSweb Benchmark Assessments. These are quick checks to help us identify students that are not meeting "benchmarks," that is, where most students at that grade level at that time of year should be. This is a type of formative assessment as they give us information that guide our instruction for each individual student. The state assessment has changed several times since I started at BHCS in 2004. We had MEAs, NECAPs and last year MEA for Math and Literacy (AKA: Smarter Balanced Assessment). The Department of Education discontinued the contract with Smarter Balanced last year and have just announced they have awarded the contract to "develop and deliver" the math and ELA testing to Measured Progress. I'm sure I'll have more to tell you all about in the coming months!

Warmly,
Shelly

Kudos

Kudos this week go to Tracy Gandy! Our amazing librarian has put in a huge number of hours preparing and pulling off the Book Fair this week. Even after the entire fair arriving *late* Tracy (and some helpers!) had the library ready to go on Monday!

Eighth Grade Read-a-Thon!

The eighth grade began a Read-a-Thon fundraiser on Monday that will continue for two weeks. Katie Danielson, Nell Herrmann, and Kat Hudson are guiding the class during this exciting event and great reading is happening. Students have completed reading World War I nonfiction choice books as well as multiple independent reading books. They've taken trips to the Blue Hill Public Library to challenge the growth of their reading repertoire and to get them ready for more advanced research and adult content. The class has also presented 3-minute Book Chats to share information and opinions about book selections.

The Roaring 20s Dessert Theater

We have scheduled our Dessert Theater put on by the eighth grade, for Thursday, November 19th! Time TBA. *A Battle of the Jazz Bands* will be included in this swinging event!

PTF Events

On Friday, October 30th in the BHCS cafeteria, we will be hosting a Halloween fun night! Join us for pumpkin decorating and a movie. Bring a pumpkin to decorate starting at 5:30 PM and then the *Pooh's Heffalump Halloween* will start at 6:00 PM. There will also be apples and popcorn (with a surprise)!

Reminders...

All visitors to BHCS must sign in and get a pass. We have new badges and lanyards in the lobby for visitors. Thank you for taking the time to keep our students safe!

Chess Team

On October 30th at 5:00 there will be a parent meeting meeting for parents of 2nd-8th graders who are interested in playing chess. There is chess for everyone: those who want to compete and those who just want to learn the game and play for fun!

School News

The newly-formed Communication Club is a group of 8th graders that meets twice a week and creates articles and displays for school related activities.

Last week the coastal soccer team had a game against MDI and won 2-1. All the players did their best, but only one of our players scored the two goals. That player was Nolan Dickens #11 assisted by Will Larson #10 and Aidan Stearns #6. Also, the goalie, Sam Parrott #2, had diving saves that were amazing.

Dates to Remember...

- Fri., Oct. 23 NO SCHOOL
- Wed., Oct. 28 Grade 6 to Acadia Park
8:00 AM - 2:15 PM
- Fri., Oct. 30 5:00 Parent Meeting for
2nd-8th grade chess
- Fri., Oct. 30 Movie Night and Pumpkin
Decorating, 5:30 PM
- Fri., Oct. 30 Dance in Blue Hill
Gr. 6-8, 6-9 PM
- Fri., Nov. 13 Picture Retake Day
- Thu., Nov 19 Roaring 20s Dessert Theater



On Saturday, October 24th, there is a PMAL BIRTHDAY OPEN HOUSE from 10 to Noon at the PMAL Center. We are turning 7!!! ALL are invited! Please come for crafts and refreshments!!!

A benefit concert for Healthy Peninsula's Magic Food Bus will be held October 24th, 7:00 PM at the First Congregational Church of Blue Hill. This is an inspiring evening of stories, kinship, and songs featuring David Dodson, Dean Stevens, John and Rachel Nicholas, and Dillon Bustin. Suggested donation is \$15.

All are welcome to head to the First Baptist Church of Blue Hill on Pleasant Street on October 31st, from 5-7 PM for *Project 31!* There will be candy, face painting, games, crafts, a bounce house and free coffee, donuts, and hot dogs!

Parker Ridge is welcoming trick-or-treaters in Kindergarten - Fifth Grade on Halloween night from 4-6. They may come to the Inn and into the Main Entrance at the end of the car port. Students must be accompanied by an adult. We hope to see you there!