

FALL | OCTOBER 2021

# THE MOUNTAINEER

Updates for the parents, guardians & students of Buck Mountain Central School



## MISSION:

At Buck Mountain Central School, we passionately engage our diverse students every day by genuinely connecting and supporting them on their learning journey towards high school completion and life beyond our doors.

## Message from the Principal

It seems like just yesterday we were welcoming students back from their summer break and yet, here we are, almost at the end of quarter 1. At one of our first staff learning days in August we heard Dr. Greg Wells speak about the necessity of slowing down, taking time to take stock, to reflect, and then to act rather than trying to take on too much at once. During this busy time we have consistently reminded one another to slow down, take things day by day, and to focus on what is in our control. As we model these behaviours and this mindset, we hope our students will follow our lead.

A busy start to a school year did not come without some last minute staffing changes, which were detailed in our welcome back newsletter. Since that time we have had a couple more changes. We have welcomed Mrs. Susan Hilstad to our team as an educational assistant, supporting students in the classroom and taking an integral role as part of our school's Success Room, where she helps individuals or small groups with their learning. Miss Torgerson will continue to take the lead in our ELA 7 and ELA 10 classrooms, as well as having taken on some new courses at the end of September as Mr. Meuser has transferred to Wetaskiwin Composite High School for the remainder of Semester 1. We wish him well and look forward to having him back in Semester 2, where he will be back in the shop for Junior Industrial Arts and Senior Construction options, in addition to his other courses. From WRPS's Mental Health Capacity Building team, Natalie Dufva, BMC's Wellness Coach, has been active in our school on Wednesdays. Finally, we welcome Miss Addario, our Family Support Liaison back; she has jumped right back into work and will be at BMC on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday each week, as well as alternating Mondays.

Next week, on October 26th, we are hosting our 2020/2021 School Awards and will live stream our virtual event for anyone who wishes to view the celebration. We have been diligently planning this event and think it will be a meaningful acknowledgement of the academic achievements throughout our previous school year. Reach out to our administrative assistant(s) via email or phone if you have questions about the event.

Parents students are also invited to attend Parent-Teacher conferences, also on October 26th from 4pm-7pm. Please book online here. Also note that Miss Gordon will be unavailable that evening, however, she will be making time available to meet with parents throughout the week. If you wish to set up a meeting with Miss Gordon, please contact the school or Miss Gordon directly. We thank you in advance for your understanding.

## Continued.

We look forward to many more learning celebrations as we complete quarter 1, and begin the second quarter on November 8th. This will look like a change in many students' options. If students have questions about these changes, please come to the office as soon as possible. Any changes to student schedule may result in a change to fees being collected.

## Fall Celebrations

To date this school year, our greatest celebration is that we are back in the classroom working with students, in person, under near-normal circumstances. We value each day we spend teaching and learning with students at BMC. Below are some of the highlights of this year so far:

**Terry Fox Run** - This year we could not have asked for better weather as we made our journey to the Buck Lake Hall and back to the school. All students in attendance on September 23rd readily participated with the promise of fresh burgers and hot dogs, provided by Buck Lake Mercantile and prepared by the Buck Lake Ag Society. Our community showed up to support such a great cause and the school raised over \$800 for the Terry Fox Foundation. We are very proud of our community, students, and staff for supporting and participating in such a great event.

**Week for Truth and Reconciliation (September 27th - October 1st)** - This was truly a powerful week of learning, reflection, and acknowledgement. Check out [TRC Week at BMC](#) on the WRPS for a detailed description and photos of our events. We hope that students shared back with their families some of the activities and discussions they experienced this week.

We continue to celebrate the return of extra-curricular activities. So far, BMC students have had the opportunity to participate in the following:

- **Cross Country** - Mr. Stewart loaded up the BMC van and travelled to the Rod Drebert Memorial Cross Country run in Wetaskiwin on September 22nd. This event is near and dear to our hearts at BMC and we were proud of the performance our runners gave. It was great to have the support of parents and families who also joined to cheer on the team.
- **Cheer** - BMC's cheer team has been hard at work revisiting the fundamentals for individual skills and working up to some stunting. This group has a dedication and commitment that is commendable - it takes a lot of practice, courage, and trust to participate in a sport like cheer. Miss LaBrie continues to lead the way and share her expertise, along with the support of Miss Erickson.
- **Football** - We hope you've had a chance to come join us in cheering on our Mustang's football team at one of our home games. The team started the season strong and is continuing to learn and grow as they face more teams on the field. This program is heavily reliant on the many volunteers who dedicate their time to the many aspects of the game - from moving the chains, to serving up fresh burgers and hot dogs, to the many long hours Mr. Wolney dedicates that we cannot even begin to count. We are grateful to continue to put a strong team on the field, supported by a strong group of active volunteers. Thank you to everyone for their contributions and continued support.
- **SR Volleyball** - Miss Neumann led a large group of strong athletes back onto the court this season. We continue to be impressed by this group's tenacity and perseverance. Even though it is not quite back to normal, with most games not being able to have spectators, the team knows they have a whole community cheering them on.
- **JR Volleyball** - Miss Gordon, in conjunction with a community volunteer Kristin Willows, has taken on the role of team manager and coach to our two junior girls volleyball teams. Not only are we excited about the number of players who are dedicated to these teams and this program, we continue to be impressed by Miss Gordon setting up the girls in two different places at once each week. The players continue to share how excited they are to simply be back on the court and they are not taking one single set, serve, or hit for granted.



# BMC Learning Team Updates

WRPS is a learning organization. As educators, we know one of the greatest positive impacts on student learning is the collective efficacy of the teachers who serve them. Staff at Buck Mountain Central School are committed to the learning and collaborative processes we engage in during Directed Learning and on Professional Learning and Collaboration days. The information to follow is a spotlight on our learning journey so far this school year.

Each staff member is a valued member of at least one of the following learning teams:

- **Literacy** - This team is dedicated to establishing a culture of literacy at Buck Mountain. This looks like students and staff having a shared value of reading, knowing that students who read well will be more prepared to succeed in all subject areas. Currently the learning team has embedded dedicated time for reading and writing (known as the 100 Word Challenge) for all students in grades 7-10 during Directed Learning time. Through regular feedback on this written work and engaging conversations about books, we think students will become passionate about reading and writing. This learning team is also reviewing the data collected from Star Reading tests across these grade levels to ensure students have support and plans in place if they are not reading at their current grade level.
- **Numeracy** - this team is dedicated to aligning current teaching practices among the different grade level teachers to ensure that students are shown the same methods year to year, so that even if they are struggling, the content looks familiar. Another strategy that the numeracy team is working on is to support students in thinking of themselves as problem solvers. This is a big challenge at BMC, many of our math learners are not confident, nor do they believe they are capable of experiencing success in math. The team has also administered a pre-assessment to determine where students in each classroom are at as well as areas of strength and areas for continued growth. A complement to this is the data collected through Math IXL, which students continue to have access to. If parents would like log-on information sent home, please contact your child's teacher.
- **Sense of Belonging** - This team of teachers and support staff plan the activities for Teacher Advisory Group days during Directed Learning. Through these learning activities the goal is for students to feel more connected, increase participation in the classroom and in school-wide events or extracurricular activities, support students in setting and achieving goals, and to teach students how to advocate for themselves and their school. We know that students who have a strong sense of belonging in a school are more likely to experience academic success. We look forward to what this team has planned for us next!

If you're interested in learning more about directed learning, check out [this post](#) on our WRPS website.

## Breakfast Program

The breakfast program at Buck Mountain continues to thrive thanks to funding from the Breakfast Clubs of Canada and President's Choice Kids Eat Well grants. An average of 60 students a day are accessing this program which is fantastic. We believe that access to breakfast is an important part of learning, it helps students to focus and be successful at school. Everyday students have the choice of a breakfast item as well as a fresh fruit, such as apples and oranges. As our program continues to evolve, we are trying to provide more daily fresh fruit options; such as bananas, grapes and watermelon. The breakfast program is attempting to follow somewhat of a schedule, to offer the students some predictability for breakfast.

### MONDAY

*Hot breakfast*

*Breakfast burritos,  
buns or breakfast pizza*

### TUESDAY

*Bagels*

### WEDNESDAY

*Muffins and Cheese biscuits*

### THURSDAY

*Yogurt Parfait*

### FRIDAY

*Hot breakfast*

*French toast, pancake  
bake*

## Inclusion Update

Although the cold weather has started to drift in, the school year has been energetic enough to keep our spirits high. Over the past month, teachers have been meeting in teams to discuss learning needs, and reaching out to our school success team whenever they sought additional supports. This partnership between all staff members ensures that all students get the best possible assistance in every aspect of learning.

Currently, we have formalized all Individualized Program Plans (IPPs) and are in the process of having them sent home for review, signing, and return. These documents, accessible solely by the teachers who instruct the targeted students, discuss learning plans for all students who need accommodations to their learning. Individualized program plans are determined through one or more of the following:

- Historical anecdotal evidence from teachers
- Literacy and numeracy diagnostic tests
- Level B tests
- Testing administered from program specialists (eg. Speech language pathologist, audiologist, etc.)

We are also preparing documentation for Alberta Education for accommodations on the January Diploma exams and Provincial Achievement Tests. These forms allow access to certain test conditions which help students be successful, and have already been sent home for review, signing, and return. Accommodations for exams are determined through one or more of the following:

- Individualized Program Plan (IPP)
- Historical classroom accommodations by teachers
- Adapted Program Plan (APP)

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's learning, or feel that they may need additional supports, please do not hesitate to contact me through the school phone number, or [michael.york@wrps11.ca](mailto:michael.york@wrps11.ca)

Mr. Michael York

## Parent Advisory Update

On October 13th, 2021 the Buck Mountain Central Parent Advisory Committee voted in favour of remaining a parent advisory and fund raising committee as opposed to becoming a school council. This motion was the second of two (the first of which was at the September meeting).

We are fortunate to have volunteers to fill the executive positions, which include: Christine Woods (Chair), Donna Glenn (Vice Chair), Shannon Hancock (Treasurer) and Heidi Plotts (Secretary).

The group continues to run the FundScrip fundraiser, where supporters can purchase gift cards online and a percent of purchases is sent back to the organization. With the holiday season right around the corner, you could be reading this right in time! Please go to follow [this link](#) for further information.

The Parent Advisory Committee is open to all parents, guardians, and staff. Our next meeting will be on November 24th at 7pm, virtually via Google Meet. Please contact the office to receive a personal invitation to your inbox!



# PowerSchool

Did you know that you have access to our Daily School Announcements via the parent/student PowerSchool portal? On the mobile app, simply scroll down to see the information. On the web portal, select the “Daily Bulletin” icon.

Parents and guardians will receive notification the week of November 8th that quarter 1 grades have been submitted for the reporting term. Teachers will give feedback to each student on their achievement in each course as of the end of quarter 1, which can be viewed in the comments section of the grade.

As we have shared previously, BMC will not be printing traditional report cards this year. We will happily support parents in printing an updated report via their PowerSchool Portal. Contact the office to set up a time to come in to print the report (and/or set up your account on the portal).

At any given time, the richest, most informative feedback on how students are doing in their classes is available in PowerSchool. If you need support navigating this application or web portal please reach out to the office.

## Senior Girls Volleyball

In September I jumped into volleyball with enthusiasm and gusto. Back to “normal” was the name of the game! I held a meeting early in September, hoping and praying for enough girls... I had a great turnout of fourteen girls from grades 10 to 12.

We committed to playing in a league that was created for one purpose - to remind ourselves of the power of a team. It had been two years since each player had played volleyball in a formal team setting, and our first practice was, well, for lack of a better word rusty. The team approached the season with a positive attitude and a desire to learn, take risks, and above all (I hope) to have fun. I am not sure what the girls enjoy more, their trips to and from each school, singing and enjoying the socialization, the food we get after the game is over, or the game itself!

All I can say is, I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with each and every young lady on this team. They have grown and learned so much in a short time, the volleyball season is quick and flies by, but the Mustangs have come to practice, worked hard, asked questions, and worked as a team over the past 8 weeks. I am proud of each and every player for putting in their best effort, and making this team great!

Thank you for a great season!

The Sr. Volleyball team for the 2021/2022 School year:

Isabella Narkaus	#1
Chloe Begg	#2
Keira Narkaus	#3
Caidyn Pudy	#4
Jaylah Woods	#5
Emily Davis	#6
Briana Patterson	#7
Addison Patten	#8
Dannica Finkbeiner	#9
Nicole Groeneveld	#11
Hailey Gomolchuk	#12
MacKenzie Cardinal	#13
Gabby Davis	#14
Amanda Neumann	Coach and Cheerleader



# Family School Liasion

Hello everyone.

I am very excited to be back at BMC and am looking forward to working with everyone again. One of the things I am most excited about is being a part of is the student led BMC Gay-Straight Alliance or GSA. The GSA is open to everyone. It is going to provide students with opportunity to develop many important relationships regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. It will also give everyone a supportive place to be themselves in a caring, respectful and safe environment. These gatherings will take place every Tuesday during lunch. If you have any questions please contact the school.

Miss. Lesley

## Success Coach

I have been meeting with Grade 12 students and discussing their paths to graduation. I have been conducting credit checks with each student, to ensure they have enrolled in enough courses to meet graduation requirements. I will be sending an email to each parent/ guardian in the next couple of weeks detailing your child's path. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me. Many students have reached out to me in regards to post secondary institutions and applications. Any students with summer work experience hours please submit them to the office as soon as possible, I would like to have all work experience submitted by the end of November.



## MARK YOUR CALENDERS

### OCTOBER

26 - Virtual Awards (2:00 - 3:00)

26 - Virtual Parent Teacher Interviews (4:00 - 7:00)

29 - Halloween Dress Up Day

### NOVEMBER

1 - PLC Day (No School)

5 - Last day of Quarter 1

8 - Quarter 2 Begins

10 - Remembrance Day Activities

11 & 12 - No School