Lightning News for February 8th – 12th.

Barnhill does their Best! Better Every Single Time.

The theme for the month of February is “caring.”

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” ~ Aesop ~

**This week is teacher/staff appreciation week!** Due to COVID -19 restrictions food cannot be prepared or served in schools. However, we invite you to reach out to the staff here at Barnhill Memorial School to show how much they are appreciated and what a great job they are doing during these stressful times. We certainly appreciate and thank you for your support.

This last week has been a great start to the *I Care Kits* and we continue to need your help with donations…the kits will include personal items such as combs, toothbrushes, soaps, deodorants, mittens, socks etc. All the class bubbles will be collecting the donated items in their classroom throughout the month of February. At the end of February, just before the March break – we will put these kits together with the donated items and deliver them to the local shelters in the Saint John area. We appreciate and thank you for your generous donations for this caring initiative throughout the month of February.

As we continue to navigate our way through the orange phase of COVID -19, we want to take the opportunity to say thank you for your support in helping your children understand the importance of following the rules and expectations of our Operational plan. The following are some highlights to remember…

* All the signs on the school doors have been updated in accordance with the orange phase.
* No outside agencies are to enter the school. Everyone must either call 658-5393 to make an appointment or buzz at the front door and our administrative assistant will greet you. If you do have business in the school, you must sign in at the office, when you are done, you must sign out. This is for tracing purposes.
* All staff and students are aware of the expectations regarding mask wearing during the orange phase ~ masks must be always worn except for sitting silently at your desk, eating and not talking, in Phys. Ed. class. Physical distancing must be maintained.
* All class bubbles are to have lunch in their classroom. Students are to sit at their own desk while eating. Students may talk to one another after they have completed eating, with their masks on.
* There will be NO face-to-face meetings ~ all meetings will be virtual.
* Everything within the school environment will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the school day.
* We do not have detention or in-school during the orange phase. The disciplinary action for noncompliance will be a phone call home and the student will be sent home.

~ We suggest you take the opportunity to read our Operational plan in its entirety in order to familiar with the rules and protocol.

February is a short month; however, it is also a very busy month filled with academic and activities.

Science Fair projects are due on Wednesday, February 10th. All students are expected to complete this project for their Science class, and they will be presenting their projects in their individual class bubbles.

The month of February is “Suicide Awareness” month. The students will be receiving lessons on awareness of this issue during their Foundations class.

Black History month is also during the month of February. A better understanding of Black history certainly helps students to understand their world today. Black history has shaped modern life in so many ways. Did you know that Charles Drew pioneered blood transfusions? That Lewis Latimer invented early air conditioning? Or that Lisa Gelobter, a tech whizz, helped develop gifs? The students will learn more about Black history in their Foundations class and their Social Studies class. Exploring Black history through the lens of groundbreaking inventions, teaches kids more about the lives they lead today.

**Staffing News:** We have a new French Mentor on staff, Monsieur Andre Blondel will be working with us in our French Immersion program from Wednesday to Friday until May. Monsieur Blondell will be encouraging students to participate in oral communication activities, he will lead some small groups (10 students from the same bubble) in conversation activities in order to complement the curriculum taught by the teacher. He will be motivating students to learn the language and appreciate the culture.

The Province has created 17 Behavioural Mentor positions for middle schools in our District. We have welcomed Ms. Sara Marr to our team, she will be full time with us. Ms. Marr will work primarily at the Tier 2 level and will work with individual students or small groups of students. The following are examples of the type of work Ms. Marr will work on ~ developing SEL skills, building relationships and school connectedness: helping students acquire skills such as self-regulation, conflict resolution, and problem solving; and helping students overcome barriers to school attendance.

We are very happy to have these two new staff members join our team in order to enhance the learning/mental fitness of our students.

Our grade 8 students received their applications for high school on February 4th. This week they are invited to view the virtual open house found on the high school websites. Applications need to be returned to the homeroom class bubble teachers by **February 17th at noon.** Students are reminded that these applications do not guarantee acceptance to the high school of their choice. Education personnel will notify students by mail, no later than April 30, to their home address as to their grade 9 placement and /or placement on a wait list. We need to remind students of the importance of meeting academic, attendance, and behavioural expectations for the remainder of the year.

Every Friday we have hot lunch available for our students. Pizza is sold on Cashless School for $5.00 for two slices. However, do not despair, students may purchase pizza for $2.50 a slice on Friday, however, it is first come first serve.

Breakfast – we do have some nut free, healthy, individually wrapped breakfast items and snacks available in the office to anyone who would like one. Students may come to the office at breaks or lunch to receive a healthy food item.

The PBIS initiative for this month will be the Oscar Award. With all of us having to keep our items in the classroom bubble, we are making every effort to keep the environment clean and this does need to be a group effort. The students have been doing a great job thus far. It will be a tough choice to see who the winners will be at the end of the month.

**On the Horizon:**

**Have a wonderful Valentine’s Day on Sunday, February 14th.**

**Family Day:** Please note there is no school on Monday, February 15th.

**Pink Shirt Day:** Pink Shirt Day is Wednesday, February 24th. The pink shirts are on sale in the office, please note they are going fast. The shirts are only $5.00 each, it will be first come first “serve.” There are different sizes, both students and staff may purchase their pink shirt at break or lunch in the office. SRC also plans to organize some Spirit Week events the week of February 22nd to 26th in order to celebrate the month of February. Details of the different spirit days will be in next week’s Lightning News.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 658-5971 or jill.ferguson@nbed.nb.ca

Thank you.

Ms. Jill Ferguson