Dear Parents,

It’s been a busy school year and it is hard to believe that the last week of school is upon us. While it is difficult to say good-bye, it is exciting to look ahead to summer vacation and the new school year that is ahead of us.

Thank you for your ongoing support during this difficult last term of school. It certainly has called on us to be flexible. I know each of you have rearranged your lives to adjust to the situation. We are grateful.

All of the students, staff and families who are leaving have contributed a great deal to our Blair community. We wish them well as they head off to other roles and other adventures! We will always consider them to be Blair Dragons!

We wish everyone a safe and happy summer! Mrs. Ludwig & Mr. Dixon

What will September Look Like?

You no doubt have many questions about what September might look like. The Ministry of Education has indicated that they will be providing a message to parents with information about September before the end of June. This will be sent once it arrives. However the Ministry is most likely to issue a formal decision regarding the instructional format for September in the week of August 24. This would be two weeks prior to the first day of school on September 8. The decision will presumably be informed by the public health context at that time.

So we ask for your continued patience and trust that all decisions will be based with health and safety at the forefront.

Summary of Learning/Report Cards

On Wednesday, June 25 Summary of Learning Reports will be uploaded to student e-portfolios and will be available to parents. Division 1/2/9 parents will have paper copies available for pick-up at the school.

*Please contact your classroom teacher for instructions if you need more explanation.
June 21, 2020

On Sunday, June 21 we will mark National Indigenous Peoples Day, an occasion for us all to celebrate the cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. Summer Solstice is the time of year when many Indigenous groups celebrate their culture and heritage. It’s an opportunity to deepen our understanding and awareness of the unique adversities that Indigenous Peoples face and have overcome.

We encourage you to take action at home now to support Indigenous Peoples:

- **Research whose land you are on:** the Whose Land ([https://www.whose.land/en/](https://www.whose.land/en/)) tool will show you which colonized land you are occupying.
- **Attend virtual National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations:** with family, friends and colleagues, check out [summersolsticefestivals.ca](http://summersolsticefestivals.ca) for some great ideas.
- **Research Indigenous Peoples history and cultures:** learn about their unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.
- You can learn more about the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples by reading a digital copy of the books from the #IndigenousReads reading list ([https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1496255894592/1557840487211](https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1496255894592/1557840487211))

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**Thank you PAC!!!**

A big thank you to our school PAC for everything you have done this year. Our school would not be the same without you. We are truly grateful for your time, energy and support. Here is a highlight of their contribution:

- All the events they planned and organized, including: Movie Nights, Chinese New Years Treats, Breakfast with Santa, Parent Welcome Night
- For organizing and distributing our Fruits & Veggies (+Milk) for the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Program.
- Hosting, setting up and running the Scholastic Book Fairs
- Holding fundraising initiatives including the Beef Jerky Sales
- Preparing ongoing Hot Food Days at Blair. The kids love Hot Food Days and the parents who volunteer are amazing!
- For sponsoring our Fine Arts Performances at Blair each year. This year the PAC made Circus School possible for all!
- Upper and lower Fishbowl furniture (which you have not seen yet!) and classroom playground equipment for recess and lunch play.
- and more... these are just some of the highlights.

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Summer is right around the corner! If there are any families who would be interested in helping to water our garden for a week or so over the summer please contact Mrs. Ridley at aridley@sd38.b.ca. Thank you in advance for your support.
Our Grade Seven graduates had their virtual farewell ceremony today. Even though we were all apart it honoured our graduates and we were able to share our messages in different ways - including a special song performed by Mr. Brown, Mr. Weil and Mr. Anderson (go to our website to watch the video!).

**Blair Citizenship Award**

Being safe and responsible, lending a helping hand, being inclusive, and resolving problems peacefully. These are some of the amazing qualities that ALL of our grade 7 students have demonstrated at some point during this year. The Blair staff is so proud of our 2020 Grade 7 Graduating Class.

This year’s recipients of the Blair Citizenship Awards, have not only demonstrated great citizenship in their respective classrooms, but have also spread their genuine kindness to extend to the greater community at large. These students have attended weekly Blair Student Leadership Team meetings, and have planned school and community initiatives. Some school initiatives have included being buddy readers, lunch monitors, outdoor game monitors, and spreading joy during our remote learning experience. Some community initiatives have involved helping support the Richmond Food Bank, Richmond Family Place, and B.C. Children's Hospital.

Most importantly though, our Citizenship award winning students are amazing people, period. On a daily basis, they stand up for what is right, even when it might not be the most popular choice. They are a positive influence on the school and greater community, showing initiative to make the Blair community the best that it can be, demonstrating all of the qualities we aim to foster at Blair School.

This year, we are so fortunate to have Citizenship Award winners from each of our Grade 7 classes.

This year’s recipients are:
**Malakai Kameya, Queenie Lu, Mersara Shi, Stephanie Wu and Ryan Yu. Congratulations!**
Exporting Student Digital e-portfolios:

Any students who are leaving the Richmond School District, from Kindergarten to Gr. 12, are responsible for exporting their digital portfolio. Many students have contributed to building their portfolios and have documented evidence of their learning and reflections; they may want to keep a copy of these contributions. Students who are not returning have until August 7th, 2020 to export their portfolio for their own records. After August 7th, 2020, student portfolios for inactive non-returning students will be deleted and students will lose access to these accounts.

An instruction sheet has been prepared to guide students/parents through this process.

*Please note* - no action is required for students who will be returning to the Richmond School District next year.

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### Social Emotional Learning at Home

**SEL for Parents and Families**

#### Raising Your Kids to Challenge Racism

Through the lens of Social Emotional Learning...

SEL, as a tool, has the potential to help people move from their emotions, to agency and then to action. Tapping into our own social emotional competence of self-awareness and self-management, we identify and process our own difficult emotions at this time; using our social awareness to recognize with empathy and understand what others are going through as we reflect on our own identities and our role in systemic racism; having the relationship skills to listen and communicate with our family, friends and colleagues; and using responsible decision-making to actually understand the impact of our actions and inactions, and commit to the work of challenging racism.

~Karen Neimi, President & CEO - CASEL.org

CASEL hosted a webinar recently that addressed how we, as parents, can have conversations with our children about racism. As we look at what’s going on in the US, the world, and in our own country, we can help our children understand what’s happening and why it’s happening. The following are some guiding principles for talking authentically about racism (~adapted from Dr. B. Barthelus & Dr. D. Rivas-Drake, CASEL):

- **Name it** - racism and racist violence need to be explicitly called out when seen happening. Don’t leave it to others to define how your children view race. Be intentional in giving your children the vocabulary for racism. For example, if your child asks you what is happening. You can reply, “they are protesting because they are challenging anti-black racism,” or “what is happening is racist violence.”

- **Humanize those who are victimized** - think about the human person-say their name, tell your children that they were members of a family and community. Recognize and acknowledge the grief and mourning of this person’s family and friends.

- **Show up and do the work** - build your own understanding of race, privilege and identity. The conversations of race and racism is hard. It takes courage. Model humility and action for your children. This is a process, and it take ongoing learning, self-reflection, and discussion.

- **Talk as a family about your core values** - what will guide your family’s approach and response when racism occurs? How will you commit to making the world better for everyone? Engage and hold each other accountable for follow through.

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### Recommended books to read about Racism

- **For Adults - White Fragility** by DiAngelo
- **For Teens - BCTF recommended list**: [A Kid’s Book about Racism](#) by Jelani Memory
- **For Children - They all saw a Cat** by Brendan Wenzel
They’re not too young to talk about race!

At every stage, you can have age-appropriate conversations with your children about race. Young children notice and think about race. Adults often worry that talking about race will encourage racial bias in children, but the opposite is true. Silence about race reinforces racism by letting children draw their own conclusions based on what they see. Teachers and families can play a powerful role in helping children of all ages develop positive attitudes about race and diversity and skills to promote a more just future—but only if we talk about it!

Follow this link to read about how you can support the conversation with your child in each stage of their young development - http://www.childrenscommunityschool.org/

CONNECTING TO THE NATURAL WORLD - A MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY — SOURCE: DICE STAY AT HOME CLUB

As we look to the natural world for stability and support, this activity helps us find connections in places we may not have seen before. Based on First Peoples’ Principles of Learning and indigenous traditions, the activity focuses on how living spirits reside in all things.

With your child or a friend, go to a park-like setting with at least a few different trees. (If adhering to physical distancing measures, you can do this while being 2 meters apart.) Process -

• Taking turns and using blindfolds, blindfold t-shirts, person 1 leads the blindfolded person 2 to a tree using words, directions and guided steps.
• Once at the tree, person 2 using all of their senses, except sight, tries to acquaint themselves with the tree. They can even give the tree a name. Have person 2 answer these questions:
  > what does the tree feel like, the bark, the roots, the branches?
  > what does the tree smell like?
  > putting their ear up to the tree, what are the sounds or noises heard near the tree or from the tree?
• Once person 2 has gotten to know their tree, person 1 will lead them away. Once away, person 2 can take off their blindfold and using what they learned, person 2 will try to go find their tree.
• Switch: Person 2 will lead person 1 through the process.

After both people have finished, debrief with the following questions:

• What did you notice about your tree?
• What senses did you use to recognize your tree?
• How did you feel in the presence of your tree?
• How do you think the tree felt in your presence?

The last 2 questions reflect reciprocal relationship and the two way connection to our natural world.

The Richmond School District is the best place to learn and lead.