



December 2018

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Mrs. Scott's Scoop

Only 17 more shopping days! This year is certainly flying by.

Have you noticed the beautiful Christmas artwork in our hallways right now? We held "Deck the Halls" on Dec. 3rd where all of our students worked on decorating the Bernard hallways for Christmas. It looks so festive in our school. We also started our Canned Food Drive (see below), and our Christmas carol singing. We are definitely getting into the spirit of Christmas!



Report Cards

Our teachers have been working very hard to complete report cards for all of our families. You will be receiving these on Friday, Dec. 14th. If you have any questions about your child's report card, please contact your the teacher directly. Thank-you.



Inclement Weather

This time of the year can bring weather that we need to be prepared for, especially first thing in the morning. Just a reminder to parents that, in the event that the snow falls in Chilliwack, please check out Bernard's website, or the Bernard Parent Facebook page, or listen to the local radio station (FM98.3) in the morning to see if school has been cancelled due to weather conditions.

Also, students have been reminded that the snow has to stay on the ground while playing outside. While we all like to have fun in the snow, we really don't want to have anyone getting hurt outside. Thanks for playing safe, everyone!

At Bernard, Attendance Matters! ☺

Research indicates that kids who come to school on time, and on a regular basis, do far better academically and socially/emotionally than students who are late, or stay at home on a regular basis. We have been holding draws for students who attend regularly, with some wonderful incentives. Parents, please help us to lower our number of lates and absentees....we don't want any of our students (your children) missing out on the learning that they need! If we can get 20 or fewer lates for 3 days, we will be planning a Spirit Day for the whole school! Also, if a whole class gets to school on time, there is a little present for them. Thank you so much for your support with this! ☺



Bernard's Christmas Turkey Lunch

Our special school lunch is planned for Friday, December 14th. We can't wait to serve our students with a delicious turkey dinner and goodies. What a wonderful way to spread Christmas cheer! We would like to recognize **Canada Safeway**, **Chilliwack Oddfellows**, **Sofina Foods** and **Lehigh Trucking** for their donations. Our community really comes together for our students. What an amazing town we live in!

Bernard's Christmas Tree at the Coast Hotel

Every year, our school decorates a Christmas tree at the Coast Hotel. The theme this year is a "Paper" theme. Go and check it out and remember to bring a non-perishable food item so you can vote. Thank you to the teachers and students who worked so hard to decorate this tree.



Canned Food Drive

We are collecting non-perishables again this year. Please send items that you think families will really be able to use this winter (eg. something that you would serve your own family ☺). The deadline for the canned food drive is the morning of Friday, December 21st. We are having a school competition this year to see if we can beat the number of non-perishable items that we collected last year (693 non-perishable items). If we beat that number, Mrs. Scott will give the students an extra recess for a day. ☺ Thank you for your donations this holiday season.

Free Christmas Movie

Bernard School would like to treat all of our students to a free movie at Cineplex on Friday, Dec. 21st. For the month of November, we were focusing on "respectful behavior" and we made our goal of 500 SPARKS. ☺ Now, we get to have fun at the movies for the morning! Way to go, Broncos! This month, we are focusing on "kind behavior", especially during the Christmas season. All classes have been setting classroom goals in order to celebrate kind behavior in our school.

Christmas Carol Sing-Along

We would like to invite parents and community members to our school for our annual Christmas Carol Along. This will take place on Dec. 21st (our last day of school) starting at 1:45 in the gym. Parents are come and join us....bring your singing voices!



Sing-
invited to

Christmas Concert

Parents will have a choice of 2 concert times again this year. The first one will be taking place on Thursday, Dec. 20th from **1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.**, and the second one will be on the same day from **6:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m.** The dress rehearsal will take place the Wednesday before (Dec. 19th). Come on out and see our talented students ☺!



Lost and Found

We have our Lost and Found items displayed on hooks in the hallway to the right of our computer lab. Please make sure that your son/daughter checks for missing items because we will be collecting anything that has not been picked up before the Christmas holidays and donating these items to a local organization in town. Thank you.



Are your Child's Immunizations Up to date for Kindergarten?

Vaccines are a healthy choice for your child. They provide immunity and prevent

disease. Two vaccines are free for Kindergarten age children starting at age 4:

- Tdap-IPV: protects against tetanus diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and polio
- MMRV: protects against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox)

If Public Health does not have up to date information about your child's immunizations, you will get a letter from your local Public Health Unit.

As soon as possible please complete and return this letter to your local Public Health Unit or school (attention School Nurse).

For an immunization appointment contact your family doctor, local pharmacist (for those 5 years of age and older), or Public Health.

To book an immunization appointment with Public Health:

- Residents of Fraser East (Mission, Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Agassiz and Hope), call **604-702-4906**
- Residents in any other area of Fraser Health, call **604-476-7087**

For more information: www.fraserhealth.ca/immunizations

Volunteer Orientation

If you plan on volunteering at Bernard Elementary in any capacity, I would like to provide a Volunteer Orientation for you. This will be the last call for any parents who would like to be volunteers. I can be reached at deneen.scott@sd33.bc.ca for any requests for an orientation. Thank-you.

Ideas for families:

Wondering how to end school tardiness altogether? Here's one Mom's plan...and it worked! ☺

"Sam is doing great," his teacher told us. We beamed. Our first-ever parent-teacher conference. Our first time perching on tiny chairs for what we thought would be a rave review of our fabulous firstborn. "He's a wonderful boy. But you..." she paused. Us? She was grading *us*? "You people have got to get him here on time."

We shuffled our feet and promised to improve, and a year later found ourselves looking at a kindergarten "report card" that told us that our amazing oldest child was "acceptable" in all areas. I noticed a number at the top of the page: 50. Fifty what? I followed the line over to the left and read it fully. Absences: 2. Tardies: 50.

"They can't know that," my husband, Rob, scoffed. "It's not true. They don't keep track. They're just guessing." I called Sam over. "Do you have to do anything special," I asked, "when you're late for school?" "Oh, yeah!" he said, with enthusiasm. "You go to the office, and they give you a pass. They know me. They say, 'Hi, Sam!'" I would like to say that that was a reforming moment, and it was -- for at least a week. Or maybe a day. Well, I'm pretty sure that the next morning we were probably on time. But we fell, as we always did, back into our old patterns. Two years later, Sam's younger brother, Wyatt, who's 3, believes that music class begins when he arrives. His sister Lily, at 4, is happy to arrive for her soccer game 15 minutes late, wearing her shirt backward and clutching a volleyball. But Sam is 7 now and far less sanguine. "Are we going to be late?" he asks almost every time we leave the house. "We have plenty of time," I tell him, but he goes through the calculations just the same. "What time are we supposed to be there? What time is it? How far is it?" I'm always reassuring. And then, for a variety of reasons -- the dog didn't pee, and I can't put him in his crate until he does, Wyatt did pee, and now he needs new pants -- we are, in fact, late. No matter what he does. It's not that we want to be late, or that we don't feel bad about sending him running across the field to join baseball in progress. It just somehow happens. Because we are late for... everything. This is the way we are; this is the way we have always been -- or, at least, the way I've always been. Friends order without me. I bring dessert to book group, not appetizers (and never, ever the wine). My husband puts it all down to me, but it's worth noting that he was the person who drove Sam to kindergarten at least half the time. He can take a slow cruise down that river in Egypt if he wants, but when it comes to punctuality, we both have a problem -- and, more important, we're *creating* a problem: for Sam, who really, really doesn't like being late anymore. Apparently, I shouldn't be surprised. "By seven, most kids have begun to see themselves in relation to their peers. They don't want to stick out," says Jenn Berman, Psy.D., author of *The A to Z Guide to Raising Happy, Confident Kids* and punctual mother of twins. "When they walk in late, literally all eyes are on them. They feel responsible, but, ultimately, you control everything. He wants to do what's right, and you're letting him down." I don't want to let Sam down. And if that wasn't enough, I'm tired of this myself. I am tired of being stopped for speeding, of having to keep track of which excuses I've made to which friends, of shouting "Run, Sam, run!" when I drop him off instead of kissing him and telling him to have a good day. And this year Sam's new school comes with a new rule: tardy more than twice in a quarter and the parents have to come in for a conference. That may not sound like much of a threat, but I fear there will be shunning. Or that they will make us run the citrus sale. So no kidding around this time. New school year, new start. It's time to change. My goal? Four weeks to a better, more punctual life. Here we go...

Week 1

When "just leave earlier" isn't enough

I start by asking everyone we know how they get out in the morning. I am swamped with advice. Feed the kids breakfast in the car. Make them choose their clothes the night before. Have them sleep in their clothes. It occurs to me that having them sleep in their clothes, in the car, would simplify a lot, but I cannot find anyone who will admit to doing this. I tell my dad that we need professional help. He scoffs. "Just leave earlier," he says. "You don't need an expert to tell you that. Jeez." My mom sends me an e-mail that starts, "Daddy says I should be your time-management expert," and goes on to describe the things she used to do to get out the door on time: making a week's worth of lunches at once, getting herself ready before she woke me up, putting out our clothes and packing up the night before. It all sounds good, and it helps -- up to a point. We start strong, as we always do. But by Friday, we are the last car tearing into the school parking lot, barely slowing down to toss Sam out onto the gravel before we race off, tires squealing, to drop off Lily. We are, technically, on time. But it isn't pretty. The thing is, I have been down this road before, and so has my enabling husband. We have tried all the little tricks and tips, and ended up exactly... here. All of our clocks are set five minutes ahead, and we know it. If we get up early, we happily use the "extra" time to read the paper until it's time to start screaming at the kids to put on their shoes. It isn't just what we do. There is something wrong with the way we think.

Week 2

Embracing the schedule

By now, I think I've spotted some of what's getting in our way. For starters, I apparently have no concept of time. Either I sincerely think I can get somewhere (it should absolutely take no more than eight minutes to travel eight miles) or I just want to think I can get there (planning to get in and out of the grocery store in under five minutes) or it is too late to get there before I've even started (if I don't get up until 7:15, no power on earth will get Sam to school by 8:00). This combination of magical thinking -- everything will go exactly as planned and take less time than ever before -- and lack of discipline is deadly.

Rob's problem is the triumph of optimism over experience. He seems to believe that if he tells the kids to put their shoes and coats on and then goes back into the bedroom to tie his tie, he will emerge and they will be standing there in their shoes and coats. This would be nice, but I'm not willing to bet the farm on it.

Yet recognizing our mistakes has somehow never kept us from repeating them. My dad was wrong. We did need an expert, and Mary Caroline Walker, mom of four, creator of Todaysbalancedmom.com, and author of *Managing Life With Kids*, a manifesto for punctual and organized living, was happy to provide some help. "It's always something" is her mantra, and she takes her cue from the Boy Scouts -- whatever it is, she's ready. She can teach me, but only if I'm ready to be taught. If I will accept that a smooth and pleasant morning is more important than an extra five minutes of sleep -- and remember that before I roll over -- Mary Caroline can help me. She can create a schedule that stops the "magical thinking" by freeing me from the need to think about timing at all and provides ample time for shoe and coat issues. I immediately balk. I have never thought of a schedule as "freeing." I like to relax and wing it. Won't writing down when we're supposed to do everything just mean I have to freak out about sticking to it?

Mary Caroline gently points out that we already need to be places at certain times. I'm not supposed to worry about the schedule, I'm just supposed to follow it. Then, realizing that she's got a real novice on her hands (she may mentally be using another word), she starts to create the schedule. To do that, you write down what time you have to be somewhere, and then reason backward from there, taking into account things like the end-of-playdate meltdown and the inevitable missing sneaker and, most critical, allowing plenty of time to load people and gear into the car. "Never think about what time you have to leave, or what time you need to be there," she declares. "Think about what time you have to *load*." I admit that I have never differentiated between the "leave" time and the "load" time (and sometimes not even between leave time and arrival time -- I tend to expect Scotty to beam us wherever we need to go). "That's why you're always late. Everybody thinks about what time they need to leave the house, but what really matters is when you tell everybody to get in the car." She tells me to allow 15 minutes for this step every time, no matter where we are. "I know," she forestalls my objections, "but it's a cushion. That way, when you realize you have to take the trash to the end of the driveway" (which happened to me last week) "or you lift up your toddler to put him in and suddenly you smell something" (I am beginning to think this woman lives in my garage), "then you have time to deal with it without it being a disaster."

Just leave the house earlier? It's so crazy, it just might work.

Mary Caroline seconds all of my mother's advice about packing up the night before and laying out clothes -- the same prep work, now endorsed by a professional: "Those things help stack the deck in your favor." I should put things like errands and [laundry](#) on my schedule so I won't be tempted to try to squeeze them into the gaps -- and if I account for load times, I'll see that those gaps aren't so big after all.

Week 3

It only works if you do it

Mary Caroline's advice was brilliant. Load time for an 8 a.m. school arrival is 7:35. We set an alarm to announce the end of breakfast and the beginning of getting ready to go, which works for Sam because he knows it will get him to school on time and for Lily because she can't argue with an official bugle. Lunches, piano books, gym shoes, [laptop](#) -- if it has to go in the car in the morning, it goes in the hall the night before. I put my feet on the floor half an hour earlier every morning because it's that or fail, and I don't like to fail. We weren't just on time, we were early, and it was great.

Until the weekend. I spent Friday night watching *Entourage* and eating my share of the popcorn I'd made for Sam and his sleepover guest, Dory. As a result, Saturday morning featured a race around the house in search of soccer gear and a loading and shouting fiasco that resulted in Dory's declaring that she was "glad you're not my mom" (which made two of us). It was Saturday, and I still had to be futzing around with load times and prepacking? I should have felt guilty over my failure to schedule and prep. Instead, what I mostly felt was resentment that I still had to.

All I had to do Sunday was cohost a party at a friend's house for my friend Tanya and her new baby, Ella, at noon. Noon! I could wrap the present and buy a card on my way into town in no time. Anyone could do noon.

Anyone, that is, who doesn't stay in bed with a pillow over her head all morning. Rob got up early. I didn't. By the time I finally put on my Mary Caroline game face and identified my load time, I was already sunk. It wasn't the first time that being late had made me inconsiderate to a friend -- or, to be honest, even to these friends -- but it was the first time since I'd learned to blame my own lack of discipline and "magical," lazy thinking instead of the traffic and the kids.

I managed to pull up to the house, tires shrieking, just 15 minutes late. I rushed madly up the walk and suddenly noticed... nothing. When I opened the door, I found my cohost, Jen, stirring the soup, pleased and slightly surprised to have my help with the final prep for the party, which started at 12:30, not noon. (I'd actually done the invitations, so you'd think I'd have known that.) Instead of making my usual apologies, I could slice bread and put out the gift card for everyone to sign. With Jen, I welcomed Tanya and Ella when they arrived, a few minutes early. Or -- as apparently everyone in the world sees it

except for me -- right on time.

Week 4

Acceptance at last

After Tanya's shower, I vowed that I was done. That drive brought back every frantic dash of the past few years, and I didn't like it. I liked being early. I loved being early. Better late than never, but never late is better.

And so we lived happily ever after, right?

We've definitely improved. We're nearly almost always on time, and life is calmer without all the running and shouting and blaming. Sam has reduced the number of times he asks what time it is as we drive to school to one, or maybe two, and he's had to go to the office for only one late pass so far. Rob sometimes claims he's been trying to get us to set a load time all along, but mostly he just tells the kids to put their shoes on 15 minutes earlier than he used to. For me, stopping the problem before it starts -- as in, at the moment I decide to roll over and go back to sleep, or make a pit stop at the bank -- has worked out a lot better than just trying to drive fast enough to get somewhere before we actually left.

And my shoulders have come down out of my ears.

If you'd asked me a month ago, I would have told you that I was late because I didn't really worry about time, and I would have been wrong. I worried about it constantly, like a person who doesn't wear a watch on vacation and then spends every minute asking strangers what time it is. When I do this -- when we do this, since we've started to involve our older kids in the nighttime prep as well -- we're on time. When we don't -- and sometimes, especially on weekends, I just can't face another scheduled day -- we're not, and that's pretty much all there is to it. Most times, it's worth it. Sometimes, it's not. But people are a lot nicer when you're late only some of the time, and I guess we can live with that.

Dates to Remember:

Dec. 13 th	Skating - Mrs. Gross and Mrs. Saunders' students (10:00 - 11:00)
Dec. 14 th	Christmas lunch for the students
Dec. 14 th	Report cards go home
Dec. 19 th	Dress Rehearsal
Dec. 20 th	Christmas Concert (1:00 and 6:30 p.m.)
Dec. 21 st	End of the Canned Food Drive
Dec. 21 st	Whole school goes to Cineplex (a.m.)
Dec. 21 st	Christmas Sing-Along - 1:45
Jan. 7 th , 2019	(Monday) Schools re-open

Merry
Christmas

We wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!

From the Bernard Staff 😊