



BLACKIE BARK

January 8, 2024

CONTACT US



403-601-1752



Blackie@fsd38.ab.ca



201 John St, Blackie, AB

Dear Blackie Families,

Happy New Year! I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health and high spirits. As we welcome the start of a new year, I want to take a moment to celebrate the first half of the school year.

The 2024 has been filled with achievements and milestones for our school community. From academic successes to extracurricular triumphs, our students have demonstrated resilience, creativity, and a commitment to excellence. I am incredibly proud of their hard work and dedication, and I am equally grateful for the unwavering support from our families and staff.

As we embark on this new year, we have many exciting plans and initiatives in store. Our focus will continue to be on providing a safe, inclusive, and stimulating learning environment where every student can thrive. We are committed to fostering a culture of kindness, respect, and collaboration, and academic successes.

I encourage you to stay engaged and involved in your child's education. Your partnership is invaluable, and together, we can create a nurturing and empowering community for our students. Please feel free to reach out to me or any member of our staff with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in our school. I look forward to another year of growth, learning, and success for all our students.

Wishing you and your family a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2025.

It truly is my joy and pleasure to be principal of this amazing school. Should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out.

Yours in Learning

Faye Holt

Upcoming News and Events

Key January Events for all

- January 14 - Grade 5-8 are at the Mental Health Oilers Game
- January 17 - Bulldog Buffet
- Jan 21 – **Parent School Council Meeting at 3pm.** Babysitting is available, please contact the school to book. Everyone is welcome! Trauma Informed Workshop right after. Please stay and learn!
- January 27 - Literacy Day
- Jan 29 - Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten Information and Registration Night at 6pm. Spread the word as we are trying to re-open our JK classroom for Fall 2025!

School Calendars

School Calendars can be found on our website here:

<https://www.foothillsschooldivision.ca/blackie/page/15611/calendars-2024-2025>

Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten Information and Registration Night

Do you have a child aged 3 or 4? Or do you know a child that age? Is their birthday prior to December 31, 2024? Then please come to our JK & Kindergarten registration night! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, January 29th at 6pm Please spread the word as we are trying to re-open our JK classroom for 2025-2026!

THANK YOU

The Market + Bake Sale made \$1016.50 in profit this year!!! Thank you to our current and past Fundraising Association members, and all our grade 7/8 students who baked and wrapped and made this happen for our grade 7/8 camp.

Be sure to follow us on our Instagram account! Stories, posts and reels can be found there for all the fun and amazing things happening day to day. [@BlackieSchool](#)

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Parent Questions and Wonders

Each month I will share some information about common questions that come our way.

Question: What is BLT and how might it be helping my child?

Answer: In any class, readers develop at different rates and in different ways. Sometimes, learning to read seems “click”: the lightbulb goes off and a reluctant reader is all of a sudden devouring books. For some, reading is like magic, and they just seem to absorb the world of reading without any effort. However, for many, reading takes work and practice and learning how to crack the code of words, letters and letter combinations. English is known as one of the hardest languages to learn to read as there seem to be as many exceptions as there are rules!! Add in a worldwide pandemic where students and parents were asked to learn at and from home, and the explicit teaching of reading became increasingly difficult.

This is why we have focused so much on literacy instruction in the past year and a half. We have found that many students are struggling to read and unlock the codes that make reading accessible and easy. When students can read and understand what they read, it opens up a whole new world. Math word problems become easier, Social Studies textbooks are understood, and anyone can travel all over the world through reading a novel. Research has also shown that children who read storybooks develop a stronger sense of empathy!

In order to build strong readers throughout the whole school, our entire staff has been working to break down and teach the building blocks of reading. This is what happens during BLT (Blackie Literacy Time). Students are grouped at the reading instruction level they need, and work with teachers, Mrs. Holt, Mrs. Elliot, and our Educational Assistants to receive instruction in small groups. Groups are working through letter sounds, phonemes, graphemes, diphthongs and digraphs to build words. Students are also working on taking what they know about reading decoding and using it to improve spelling. Teachers are reading with and to students to improve not only reading fluency, but also comprehension and building skills that allow them to understand what they read - and how to tackle things if they don't!

You may hear your child talk about decodable words and books, and heart words or sounds. This is language from the program UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Intervention). If you would like to learn more and/or support this learning at home, please visit <https://ufli.education.ufl.edu/foundations/home/>

At any time during the year, if you have questions or concerns about your child's learning journey, please reach out to their teacher.

If you have a burning question, please send it to holtf@fsd38.ab.ca