

January 3, 2023



Jackson County School District #91 (Butte Falls)

2023: A New Year with New Opportunities

Dear Butte Falls Charter School Parents and Community Members,

We are excited to welcome back our students on Tuesday, January 3, after a two-week winter holiday break. We thank our custodial and maintenance team for the extra cleaning, sanitizing and facility repairs that occurred over the break. Now it's time to get back to school and re-engage in learning.

Friday School on January 6.

Because of the way the calendar landed this school year, classes will meet Tuesday through Friday the first week in January. Our teachers have planned for a full week of school. While we usually do not have school on Fridays, it is important after a long break to have a full week of school. (It also means our students do not have to go to school as late into June.)

Thank you, Ruby and Cecil!

On December 1, we received a special donation from Ruby Edwards and Cecil Bailey. These two community members have been long-time friends of our school. Many former Butte Falls students can recall field trips to their property and ski and swimming lessons that were funded by Ruby and Cecil. They were happy to stop by on a sunny day and present two checks totaling \$48,704. Their request is that we use these funds to support activities that involve students working together in hands-on learning activities and service. We will be careful stewards of this gift to ensure it brings maximum benefit to our students.



Thank you, Ruby and Cecil!

Elementary Winter Program.

This program was scheduled for mid-December but, due to high levels of illness, it was tentatively postponed to Wednesday, January 11. We are hoping that everyone got healthier over the two-week break. We look forward to celebrating the return to school and the spirit of the winter holiday season at this evening event. (And, yes, our students want to share music with our families.) We will confirm this event once classes resume on January 3.

Important January-February Surveys (Please participate).

We are in the process of assessing the needs of our district as we prepare to apply for multiple state grants to support our students. One very important process for that is getting input from students and parents and our community. That occurs in a variety of ways including surveys, feedback at Board meetings, parent meetings, and other community activities.

This month our elementary (Grades 4-7) and secondary (Grades 8-12) students will be completing feedback surveys at school. We will be sending out a survey link to parents for the BFCPS Parent Feedback Survey in the next few weeks. If you are not included in any of these surveys but would like to give the district your feedback, please send your comments to Feedback@buttefalls.k12.or.us. Thank you for making time to give us your helpful feedback. We want to make informed plans.

Welcome to our New Seventh Grade Teacher!

We are thankful to welcome Mr. Bruce Ironheart to our elementary campus. While his first official day as our new seventh grade teacher is Tuesday, January 3, he was gracious to help at both campuses in December. This has allowed him to get to know our staff and students and help with the transition of teachers. Mr. Ironheart grew up in the Rogue Valley. His life adventure has taken him to several communities across the country. He has successfully taught in Virginia, Florida, and Arizona and returned to Medford with his wife and son this past year. He spent time over the Winter Break setting up his classroom and preparing to welcome back our seventh grade students.

Middle School Boys complete Fall Basketball Season

Our Middle School Boys Basketball team demonstrated tremendous growth this year as they competed in the Southern Oregon Middle School Athletic Conference (SOMSAC) season. We appreciate the commitment by Head Coach Billie Jean Myers and Assistant Coach Bonnie Freeman along with the patient support of our players' families. The growth of our middle school athletic programs bodes well for restarting many of our high school programs in the near future. It is also fun to have our community turn out to cheer on our students. Thank you to all who have been supporting our teams this year.



Celebrating our 8th Grade Players

Seniors barely defeat 8th Graders in HS Intramural Winter Hockey Tournament

Grades 8 through 12 faced off at the December 15 Assembly in a multi-round mini-hockey tournament for class points. The final championship game was hard-fought with the seniors winning 2-1. Here are a few highlight photos.



Silver Medalist Grade 8 Team!



Fierce Freshmen vs. Jaunty Juniors.



Sockeye: Hockey with Socks on Sticks!

December Visit by Teachers from Crater Renaissance Academy.

Over the past three years our staff has been learning about Positive Discipline as a guide to helping students develop self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and problem-solving skills. This has been timely learning as it has helped our high school staff respond to many of the unanticipated social and emotional struggles our students have faced during the pandemic and the year of distance-learning that placed great stresses on students and families. The past two years we have benefited from a regional grant that has provided expertise and coaching in Positive Discipline strategies and techniques for our staff. The results of this work have not gone unnoticed by other educators in the region.

On Monday, December 5, our high school hosted 23 teachers and administrators from Crater Renaissance Academy (Crater High School). These educators visited classrooms and observed how we start our day and how we use our 1st Period Career Readiness Class to support activities and learning that help our students be successful in high school and make post-graduation plans. They observed the transition between classes and a portion of the 2nd Period classes. Afterward, we debriefed with them to answer their questions and hear their observations.

The feedback was very encouraging. They observed that our high school is a welcoming place. That starts at the front door when students are personally greeted by one or two staff members as they enter the building. They noticed that we provide our students with breakfast after the bell and that seemed to be important for many of our students. They appreciated how our students made the transition between classes quickly and respectfully. They asked questions about student behavior and learned how we use strategies to help deescalate situations when individual students become distressed or anxious or irritated by something that is going on. They greatly appreciated the team approach our staff takes to understanding and helping students as individuals.

Positive Discipline is not just for schools. Over the past 25 years author Dr. Jane Nelson has written companion guides to help parents of preschoolers, young children, and teenagers. These are available at websites like Amazon or Goodreads. When combined with an understanding of how our brains work when we are stressed, and with some coaching and support through the regional grant project, we have been able to teach (and reteach) our students strategies for figuring out how to work through conflict or frustration and to communicate more effectively with others. This has helped make our school a safer and more productive place for students to learn.

Reusing our Natural Resources: Trees to Lumber. (That's what Loggers do!)

In November we had to remove four large trees from our elementary campus. We were able to retain the large oak tree, but these other trees were starting to drip substantial amounts of sap and periodically drop very large limbs onto the playground. White's Tree Service worked with us to remove the trees on non-school days, cut the logs to specific sizes, transport the logs to our Natural Resource Center, and partner with a local portable saw mill operator to mill the logs into beams and lumber we can use for future projects. While this happened in a relatively short period of time, several of our elementary classes were able to witness the saw mill in operation. The residual tree debris is being reduced to chips which can be used on trails at the NRC. Thank you, White's Tree Service, also for grinding the stumps and making our playground safer.



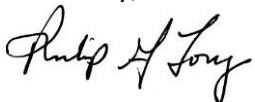
Here are some important upcoming District dates. Please check the District News and Events at our website (www.buttefalls.k12.or.us) for any updates.

- Classes resume Tuesday, January 3.
- School will be in session on Friday, January 6.
- Monthly School Board Meeting – Monday, January 9, at 6:00 p.m.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – No School – Monday, January 16.
- Elementary Winter Program – Tentatively rescheduled for Wednesday evening, January 11.
- MS Girls Basketball games begin January 18 (current schedule is on our District website).
- MS Wrestling Meets begin January 17 (current schedule is on our District website).
- End of Second Grading Period – Thursday, January 26.

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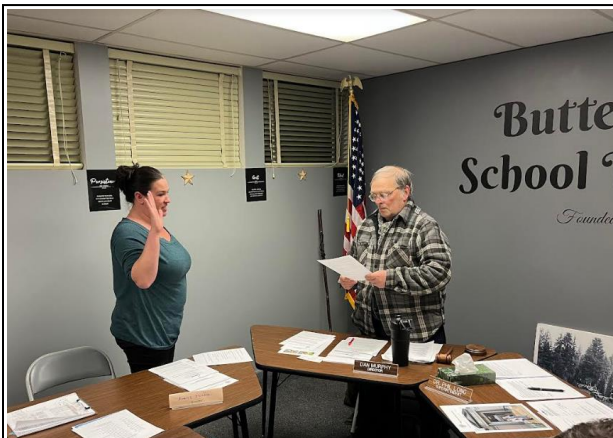
We are committed to finishing the school year strongly and celebrating the accomplishments of our students with them and with you. Thank you for your support and encouragement for our students and staff.

Sincerely,



Dr. Phil Long, Superintendent
From small seeds grow mighty trees!

Some other highlights from December!



Veteran School Board Member Daniel Murphy administers the Oath of Office to Bonnie Freeman as she becomes our newest School Board Member. (12/12/22)



Mr. DeCarlow, 8th Grade Class Advisor, works with students to provide concessions at basketball games. Hot item this year? Nachos? Fresh Popcorn? Pickle dogs?