

Bedford and Forsyth Education Centres



Student Agenda 2023-2024

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear BFEC Students and Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to BFEC! This school year promises to be an exciting year as BFEC continues to grow and support students in meeting graduation requirements. We are very proud of the work that our students are doing to build skills for life. BFEC staff members are supportive and committed to providing high quality instruction.

Whether you are preparing for post-secondary opportunities or to enter the world of work, there are skills, attitudes and behaviours that must be demonstrated to ensure success. Attendance and participation in learning are requirements for all BFEC students. BFEC students also understand that a safe, secure, and healthy environment is essential for learning. As a result, BFEC students and staff have established BFEC Core Values. Further information can be found in this handbook.

The best high school memories are made when personal improvement and investing ourselves in others are of highest priority. This way of thinking requires that every individual student, teacher, staff member and parent see themselves as a necessary part of a larger community of learning. We have opportunities for students and parents to become involved at BFEC. Please contact the school if you would like to become involved.

Best wishes,

Cathy Burton

Cathy Burton

Principal

DAILY SCHEDULE



9:20–9:40am	Students can arrive for Breakfast Program
9:40am	Morning Quarter Class Begins
12:05pm	LUNCH
12:40pm	Lunch Ends
12:45pm	Afternoon Quarter Class Begins
3:10pm	School Day Ends



Building Skills for Life

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council is a committee of 10 people who meet monthly to discuss issues of importance at Bedford Forsyth Education Centres. Equal representation from students, staff, parents, and community members provides the framework by which the council operates. Please watch for our minutes on the school website. We welcome your input and encourage you to rely on your parent, community, and student representatives as a vehicle to improving learning experiences at BFEC.

VALUABLE ITEMS

Students are asked not to bring valuable items to school, such as expensive clothing, jewelry, or large sums of money.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

DAILY ATTENDANCE

If your child is excusably absent, parents/guardians need to call the school attendance line at **902-832-8630** to inform the school. Please do not leave attendance messages for administrators or teachers. Nova Scotia has an Attendance and Student Engagement Policy. This policy can be found on our website under Documents and Policies.

The attendance line is used to enter attendance directly into the school's computer system to inform both subject teachers and administrators of students who will not be attending for that particular day. The attendance line is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for your convenience.

At the end of the day, an automated call will be forwarded to your home telephone to notify of any unexcused absences.

BFEC Attendance Practices

The following school practices were developed using the operational procedures from the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Student Attendance and Engagement Policy as its guiding documents.

What supports are available at BFEC if a student is having attendance issues?

- Staff take the time to know their students
- Teachers at BFEC use Culturally Relevant Practices every day in their classrooms
- We have a daily breakfast program that students can access to support their on-time arrival at school
- School Counsellor at each campus
- A referral can be made to our school social worker
- A referral can be made to our school psychologist
- Reduced Schedules (one course a day)
- Referral to our Health Centre Nurse
- Choices Counsellor at each campus every second Friday
- Attendance Contract
- Attendance Letters
- And other individual supports as required once the school is made aware

Regular attendance at school leads to greater student success and achievement. Students who are having trouble attending school on a regular basis need to contact their campus VP's as soon as possible to discuss how BFEC can support you being in school. Teachers will be using the following codes for attendance:

"AWN" means absent with notification (parent / guardian communicated with school staff through a phone call or email)

"A" means absent without notification

There are NO special circumstances for attendance

Arriving late to class or leaving class early is very disruptive to the learning of your classmates and to your own learning. Teachers will be using the code "L" in Power School to note when a student arrives late to class or an "LE" if the student leaves class early.

What if I am suspended from school?

The code "OSS" will appear and this type of absence counts in your total number of absences per course each quarter.

At 20% missed time each quarter – 11 classes per course at BFEC (this takes into account all appointments, absences with or without notification, how many minutes' late or leaving early students are to a class) can result in a student being removed from that course for that quarter and not being eligible to earn that credit.

It is the responsibility of students, parents and guardians to monitor their Power School accounts to view attendance records.

Each night our automated phone system also calls home indicating if a student has missed a class, has been late to class, or has left class early. If you are concerned about missing these calls, please confirm your phone numbers with your campus school secretary at (902) 832-8630. If you need your Power School account please contact our school registrar, Mrs. Megan Paris, at mparis@hrsbc.ca

The following processes will be followed by BFEC staff to support positive student attendance and to follow the provincial policy:

- 3 missed classes – the classroom teacher will contact both the student and the parents or guardian (of students under the age of 19) to discuss why a student has been missing classes, what is keeping the student from being in school and if there is anything the school can do to help support regular and on time attendance. This contact WILL be logged in PowerSchool once the call/email has been made.
- 6 missed classes – the vice-principal meets with the student and calls the parent or guardian (of students under the age of 19) to discuss why a student has been missing classes and what is keeping the student from being in school. Student will be supported by TST which may include intervention/support from the School Counselor or School Social Work.
- 10 missed classes - the vice-principal will schedule a meeting with the student and parent or guardian (of students under the age of 19) to review expectations for attendance, current interventions in place and to discuss other possible interventions for improving regular and on time attendance. The possibility of credit loss will be shared with both student and parent/guardian. This will be followed up with a letter/email sent to the home outlining the expectation for students to be in school.
- 11 missed classes – the school administration and the School's Teaching Support Team will determine loss of credit for the student. If a student loses credit the student will be removed from the course (even if the student has a passing grade) and will not be eligible to earn this credit at this time or to credit recover this credit.

What incentives does BFEC have in place to recognize students who attend school regularly or are making positive changes to their attendance?

- Breakfast program each day
- Break time in class
- Bus pass support
- Monthly Attendance certificates
- Bi-weekly gift card draws for excellent and improved attendance
- We are able to provide reference letters for students who attend regularly because we know them and can speak to their character and academics.

SCHOOL HOURS

BFEC Campuses open its doors at 9:20am and closes at 3:30pm. Students are not permitted in the building outside of those hours unless they are involved with a supervised extra help session with a teacher.

STUDENT PARKING

BFEC is not responsible for you or your car if you choose to drive. All drivers are to proceed slowly through the school grounds so mishaps do not occur. Failure to drive slowly and carefully will result in drivers not being able to access the parking lot.

STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services Department of BFEC welcomes both new and returning students.

Our Student Services team provides support designed to help students gain a better understanding of themselves and the career and educational opportunities available to them. Our student services team includes school counsellors, social worker, resource teachers, school psychologist and public health nurse.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR SERVICES -

Counseling

Academic, vocational and personal counseling are available through the school counselor. Outside agencies may be accessed through school counselor and social work referrals.

Course Selection

All students will have the opportunity to discuss course selections with a counselor. Please make your course selection carefully.

Information

Post-secondary information and applications are available in the guidance office. Students should pay close attention to deadlines for the institution of their choice.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Each year our guidance office posts scholarship/bursary information for graduating students.

Student Transcripts

Students may request copies of their transcripts.

School Social Worker – Support to highly anxious families, helps students with daily living needs, connects students to community organizations, food and clothing bank.

Resource teacher – Supports the implementation of the Inclusion Policy including helping teachers program for students, monitors student progress and offers support to students.

Health Centre – Do you need a confidential place to go and talk? BFEC's Health Centre is a place where students can **receive confidential health information** and talk to the nurse or social worker privately about their concerns. Joelle, BFEC's school health nurse, is in Bedford and Dartmouth through the week to address any emotional mental, social and sexual health issues. You can drop in to talk to her.

School Psychologist – Accessed through referral. Please speak with your vice-principal.

Nova Scotia Virtual School

The Nova Scotia Virtual School provides an option for online high school courses to students enrolled in public high schools in Nova Scotia. Students must have space in their timetable to take an online course and the online course should only be one of the 2 courses a student takes per quarter. Courses are taught by Nova Scotia certified teachers using both synchronous (when teacher and students are communicating in real-time through video conferencing or echat) and asynchronous (when students can complete activities independently) methods. NSVS teachers have office hours and students can log in to touch base with them individually. They can also instant message or email their online teacher at any time. All tests and final exams must be written at BFEC under the supervision of a BFEC teacher. Arrangements to write tests are made with our guidance counsellors.

NSVS online courses use the Nova Scotia Public School Program (PSP) with curriculum and learning outcomes that are identical to those used in a classroom at school. NSVS courses are reported on in the report card at mid-semester and end of the semester, but are not fully integrated yet with Power School

This means that parents cannot yet look at all the information about a student's achievement in the Parent Portal. However, each student has a record of their marks in the NSVS online gradebook and parents can access that information with their child. If a BFEC student chooses to take a virtual school course, the student and parent are responsible for communicating with the online teacher about progress and course participation. BFEC staff, including guidance and administrators, are not informed about student's progress.

POWERSCHOOL

The Halifax Regional School Board uses the Student Information System called PowerSchool. The system allows students and parents to log on using their own private online account to see grades, track attendance, learn about upcoming assignments, and catch up on school events and announcements.

Information is made available about how to log on to a private account and access real-time information. Students and parents will be able to log on anywhere there is internet access and access information.

10 REASONS WHY IT IS RECOMMENDED TO USE POWERSCHOOL:

1. To check on the accuracy of my attendance and late records to make sure everything is in order to receive my exam exemption
2. To read the daily announcements using the School Bulletin feature so that I don't miss an event or other important information
3. To track my grades so that I know where I stand and see if I have any outstanding assessments
4. To view the Grade History section, and click on my grade percentage to see the breakdown of all assignments and tests and the marks I received for each that has brought me to that grade percentage to date
5. To see courses/credits I have completed to date so that I know what I need to graduate
6. To directly email my teacher from PowerSchool if I have any questions
7. To read comments from my teachers about my areas of strengths and needs in my learning
8. To choose my course requests for the following school year from PowerSchool
9. To be more in charge of my learning and attendance by looking at common patterns (eg. I'm always late for the first class in the morning)
10. To see my attendance and marks before my parents do

For access to your PowerSchool log in information, please email Megan Paris at mparis@hrce.ca

Assessment and Course Question Protocols

If students and / or parents have questions, concerns, or require clarification around classroom activities and assessment items, your first point of contact needs to be with the classroom teacher. Classroom teachers are the best people to answer your questions about what is happening with your child in their classrooms.

All staff email addresses are posted on our website at <https://bfec.hrce.ca/>. Teachers will make every attempt to

return your email within 48 hours of the start of the next school day.

If, after attempting to resolve / clarify something with the classroom teacher, you still find yourself needing to communicate with someone regarding the same issue, your next point of contact is with the department head for that subject. Their email addresses are also on our website.

Finally, if all attempts to resolve your question or concern are not successful, please contact the school's administration.

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Homework assignments are a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when they are geared to the age, health, abilities, and needs of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement but also develop self-discipline and good work habits.

It is important that students complete their assignments on time so that teachers can provide timely feedback. Therefore assignments require due dates. When students miss the due dates for legitimate reasons, the teacher will consult with the student to set an absolute deadline and negotiate a plan for successful completion.

EXAM POLICY

BFEC believes that writing exams:

- Is valuable as an on-going assessment tool

- Prepares students for post-secondary and life experiences
- Encourages and promotes mastery of material beyond a one-time assessment providing opportunities for maturation, connection, synthesis and reflection
- Provides opportunities for students to build comfort level and self-confidence
- Provides a structure for students to further develop skills in organization, time management and self-discipline

Given that exam dates are published well in advance, it is expected that family vacations, or other non-medical absences, will be scheduled around this important assessment time. Absence for any reason other than a documented medical excuse will not be considered an acceptable reason for not writing an exam.

There may be instances when the school is closed during the scheduled exam day due to inclement weather, a power failure or other unforeseen circumstance. **Exams will be moved forward a day when a situation like this happens.** It is important to understand that the student must be present to write the exam on the rescheduled date. Please take this into account when planning and scheduling family vacations.

Where a student misses an examination without an acceptable excuse as defined above, a mark of zero will be given.

Make-up exams may be written at a scheduled time approved by the administration for students who have a documented medical excuse.

The school administration will be responsible for ensuring consistent implementation of this policy. All arrangements are to be referred to school administration; no arrangements will be made between teachers and students.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Academic recognition will occur following each the conclusion of each Quarter and at Graduation in June for Grade 12 students. Certificates will be presented to students who have achieved academic excellence.

Averages will be calculated using all courses the student was enrolled in during each of their grade 10, 11 or 12 year using a straight average.

There will be no minimum number of courses enrolled in to qualify for the mark distinctions. There will be 3 categories of recognition: Honours, High Honours, and Principals List

Public School Program Requirements: The following criteria is used when calculating averages for student recognition:

Honours	High Honours	Principal's List
80%-84.9%	85%- 89.9%	90% or above

CARE OF SCHOOL

It is the responsibility of all staff and students to maintain a clean working environment. As we become more aware of environmental issues, it is obvious that we must all work together to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

SMOKING and VAPING

Smoking and vaping is forbidden on school property, inside or outside any school building, facility, or vehicle.

SCENT AWARE

BFEC is committed to the provision of a healthy and safe environment. Some staff and students are sensitive to perfumes and colognes and become quite ill when exposed to the slightest amount of these products. In consideration of these individuals, please refrain from wearing scented products. You may be asked to change your clothing or leave if wearing scents that cause discomfort to others.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students are **NOT** permitted to have non-BFEC students or friends visit during school hours.

All visitors, regardless of purpose, **MUST** report to the Main Office. Visitors must sign in at main office and will

wear a visitor's pass. Visitors and speakers staying for an extended period for the day will have been cleared through administration in advance.

TELEPHONES & CELLPHONES

The main office phone is not for general student use, but emergency use only. However, students who need to leave school for any reason during the regular day should go to the office and have the Administrative Assistant contact home.

Students will not be interrupted during the class time to receive messages from parents or guardians, except in emergency situations.

Students are allowed to use cell phones during non-instructional times inside the school building when they do not have a scheduled class. At a teacher's discretion, mobile devices may be used in a classroom for curriculum related events.

PARENT-TEACHER/GUARDIAN SESSIONS

There will be two curriculum nights for parents and two parent-teacher sessions per year at BFEC. The dates for the meetings will be communicated to Parents/Guardians and students.

School Cancellations Due to Weather

Student safety is the first priority of the Halifax Regional Center for Education when making school cancellations decisions. HRCE staff begins to gather information from various sources beginning at 4:30 am. Staff consults with Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) staff on road conditions, local weather services, and Stock Transportation. By 5:30 am, staff makes a recommendation to the Superintendent based on the information gathered. If it is safe to have students on the roads and sidewalks, then schools will be open.

If not, all or some schools may be closed depending on the weather and road conditions in different areas of the board.

Parents/ guardians always have the right to keep their child home from school if they believe that the travelling conditions are unsuitable.

For full day closures of all or some schools, the decision will be announced as close to 6:00 am as possible.

Announcements will be:

- Posted on the HRCE website(www.hrce.ca)
- Posted on the HRSB's Twitter account (HRSB_Official); Recorded on the HRCE's School Cancellation Information Line 464-INFO (4636); Shared with subscribers to the board's email and text notification system;

- Communicated to local media outlets

If conditions deteriorate throughout the day, HRCE may close schools early when weather or road conditions are considered to be a threat to the safety of students. In the event of an early school closure, the announcement will be made by 11 am.

On school days when weather conditions exist that it is not safe to open schools at the regularly scheduled time, but it is predicted that conditions will improve, a 2 hour delayed opening may be considered. Delayed openings would be considered when a severe weather event has concluded but snow clearing or other operations require additional time. Delayed opening may also be considered when the physical plant is experiencing an issue (power, water) and additional time is required to prepare the facility for opening.

In the event of a delayed opening the following will apply:

- School opening will be delayed 2 hours. This means BFEC will open at 11:40am.
- Each school will alter morning schedules to best address their timetables.
- Lunch times will not change
- Afternoon class schedule will not change
- Dismissal time will not change.



RESPECT FOR SELF AND OTHERS

At BFEC, we are building skills for life. Learning is an important life skill that should be developed in a positive way. Everyone at BFEC deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

BFEC Equity Team:

BFEC has an Equity Team comprised of teachers and admin. The Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights, Policy of the HRCE will be followed. In addition, BFEC has and will continue to approach teaching and learning with Culturally Relevant Approaches and will provide a supporting educational component:

- At all grade levels teachers will reinforce the need to recognize and educate students around racist, sexist and discriminatory behaviours.
- Counselling will be advocated and provided at student, staff, or parental request.
- A culture of mutual respect will guide all personal interactions within the BFEC community.
- All students at BFEC are respected and treated with equity. Racial, ethnic, cultural or gender intolerance is unacceptable. These types of actions will have serious consequences.
- In keeping with our mandate to prevent discrimination of any kind, BFEC will take punitive action for any types of bullying or harassment based on discrimination. Staff will, to the best of their ability, attempt to stop any form of discrimination if they witness it.





Core Values at BFEC

BFEC is a caring and supportive high school environment with high expectations for student behavior and achievement. As a result, students will build skills for life so they can move on successfully to opportunities such as work, NSCC or University. BFEC core values for staff and students include:



I will always give my best effort and be open to learning new things, including working as part of a team.



I will respect the learning environment which includes the staff and other students.



I will be on time and have regular attendance.



I will ask for help from staff and classmates when unsure about something.



I will show empathy and kindness towards classmates and staff – we are all here to learn.



I will think about my actions before I rush to make a decision that could harm myself or others.



I will make positive choices at school & become involved in school life by finding ways to contribute and help make BFEC a great place to be.

According to Canada's Employment Readiness chart, these are the basic skills needed to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work. *BFEC, Building Skills for Life.*

ACADEMIC FRAUD

Academic fraud occurs when a person uses the intellectual property of another individual such as information or data from books, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, music or educational disks or audio/visual disks without acknowledging the owner in writing.

To avoid academic fraud (plagiarism), document your resources. As Joanne Buckley states in *Checkmate: A Writing Reference for Canadians* describes, "When writing academic research papers, you must acknowledge information and ideas obtained from other sources. This includes information and ideas that you directly quote, summarize, or paraphrase from others' work" (Buckley 363)

The consequences for academic fraud are:

- teachers will address the issue with the student and parents and appropriate actions will be taken

Academic Fraud includes but not limited to the following:

- (a) Plagiarism: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the students own.
- (b) Collusion: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another student, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another student, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.
- (c) *Duplication of work: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and /or assessment requirements.*
- (d) *Any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for any student or that affects the results of another student (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination).*

Homework

The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has established a province wide Homework Policy. This policy establishes standards for homework in all schools. All student and school members in Nova Scotia are required to follow this homework policy, which is governed by the Education Act.

This policy came into effect on September 1, 2015. To view this policy, please visit the About Us section on the BFEC website under Documents and Policies.

Code of Conduct

The Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has established a province wide School Code of Conduct Policy. This policy establishes standards of behavior for all schools. The provincial school code of conduct policy applies to all public schools and boards in the province of Nova Scotia. All student and school members in Nova Scotia are required to follow this provincial school code of conduct

policy, which is governed by the Education Act.

This policy came into effect on September 1, 2015. To view this policy, please visit the About Us section on the BFEC website under Documents and Policy.

Use of Video Surveillance:

Our school uses a video surveillance system as part of our continued efforts to support a safe, positive and effective learning environment. We recognize that the images recorded by this video surveillance system are personal information and, as with all other personal information, we take steps to balance privacy rights with safety and security concerns. The school has the legal authority to collect this personal information under Section 24 of Nova Scotia's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Only designated staff has access to our video surveillance equipment and such access is restricted as required by law. The system is used to enhance school safety and to deter or take action in response to unlawful behaviours.

If you have any questions about video surveillance at our school, please contact Cathy Burton (Principal) at 902-832-8630.

