

Christina Lake Elementary School

BLOCK LETTER PROGRAM 2008-2009

It is that time of the school year when our intermediate students and their parents are asked to mutually decide on Block Letter goals. The Christina Lake Elementary School Block Letter Program rewards students through the granting of a letter at the end of each school year in recognition of their efforts and successes in all areas of academics, athletics, arts and good citizenship. The criterion for recognition in each of the learning domains is laid out by a point system that is easy to monitor for the student, the parent and me.

Beginning in grade 4, students are able to acquire a school letter of increasing size for having met the requirement for each important domain. For example, the grade 5 letter would be larger than the grade 4 letter, the grade 6 letter larger than grade 5. Letters are blue, except in grade 7 when the awarding of the letters is based on colours so that a student who receives a letter four years running would receive a gold-coloured letter; three years would receive a silver letter; two years, a bronze letter and only the grade 7 year, a school-colours blue.

A student must hand in a signed contract in order to participate in the Block Letter Program, even if the student and parent(s) have agreed to the minimum. Our reasoning for this is the recognition that each child's strengths and weakness are unique and that "one size does not fit all."

Students' pursuits are divided into three separate domains - '*curricular*,' '*extra-curricular*' and '*citizenship*.' All intermediate students must obtain **at least one point in each domain** to be eligible for a Block Letter. As the students progress through the intermediate grades, the number of points needed for eligibility rise. Below is a description of each domain.

CURRICULAR

- MERIT ROLL - One point may be attained by achieving a merit roll standing (GPA of 3.8) using the following grade weights:

A.....	5	C.....	2
B.....	4	C-.....	1
C+.....	3	IP/F.....	0

- FINE ARTS - One point may be achieved by keeping a portfolio of examples that demonstrate appreciation for and developing skills in fine arts, including visual arts, descriptions or evidence of dramatic productions in which the student played an important roll or evidence of musical accomplishments. The number of required pieces in a portfolio are:

Grade 4 - six examples	Grade 6 - eight examples
Grade 5 - six examples	Grade 7 - eight examples

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

- SPORTS - To earn a point in Sports, a student must participate in a sport for the entire season and consistently demonstrate sportsmanship.
- CLUBS - A point may be achieved by actively participate in a school-sanctioned club. (Games, Choir, Yearbook)

CITIZENSHIP

- VOLUNTEER PROGRAM - To earn a point for volunteering, a student must complete one session of voluntary service within the school. (such as Bottle drive, Raffle Ticket Sales, Compost/Recycling duties)
- CITIZENSHIP - To earn a point in Citizenship, a student must demonstrate an appropriate level of respect in all aspects of school life. We hope for students to strive toward being model school citizens showing respect when they deal with adults, younger students, each other *and* the school environment. Classroom behaviour is a consideration of citizenship as it demonstrates the amount of respect a student has for his classmates and teacher.

Each intermediate child will now go through a goal-setting process with his/her parent(s) to set personal bench marks for acquiring a Block Letter (with an understanding of the minimum requirement). The contract sets the criteria that will determine how the student's block letter will be achieved. Grade 4 students must achieve 4 points, grade 5 students 5 points, grade 6 students 6 points and 7 points for grade 7 students. Students and their parents must agree on the exact number of activities for their contract. For example, a student in grade 4 must achieve four points, They must decide on which four things it will be, not choosing 5, 6 or 7 things and hoping to get four. We want students to set a goal and strive to achieve it. The hope is that many students are motivated by the Block Letter Program to make the best of every opportunity offered at CLES and that they will be recognized for doing so while maintaining a high standard for each domain.

Once the child and parent(s) set a standard for achievement, the child will be held to those criteria in the form of a contract. Thus, a child and parent(s) may decide that two merit rolls, a fine arts portfolio, three sports, and a volunteer program session is a viable and appropriate goal for the child to feel successful. Another student and parent(s) will choose a different set of criteria and even a different number of points. The contract is then signed by the parent(s) and student. If the child does not meet the terms of the contract by the end of the school year they will not be eligible for a Block Letter.

For this program to truly work, we hope that you will sit down with your child and discuss and negotiate the terms of fulfillment that you both envision for Block Letter achievement. Please try to be realistic with your expectations, but, as well, design terms that will challenge your child to meet their individual potential. Do not set the terms too high so that your child will really have to struggle to fulfill the contract, but not so low that meeting the terms will be too easy and thus make the awarding of the Block Letter meaningless. Setting appropriate, challenging goals is an important life skill that we must foster in our children. In order for children to be proud of their achievements, their parents ought to be equally proud. Deciding on these terms will become easier as your child moves through the intermediate grades and you become more confident in predicting what sort of marks they are capable of achieving in their school work.

The B.C. Ministry of Education's Personal Planning curriculum from grades 5 to 7 prescribes outcomes for students to go through realistic and relevant goal-setting processes. We want to give life to these outcomes. In high school, students are expected to complete portfolios comprised of personal achievements in various aspects. Further, in the Planning curriculum for grades 10 to 12, students are expected to complete learning plans (educational and personal goal setting) in which the parents are expected to play an important role. The Block Letter Program can be an excellent way to begin this process of discussion, negotiation and educational planning.

The attached form will help lead you through the process of setting the terms of block letter achievement with your child for completion of the contract that you will both sign. Please have your child return the signed form to the office by **Wednesday, December 10, 2008.**

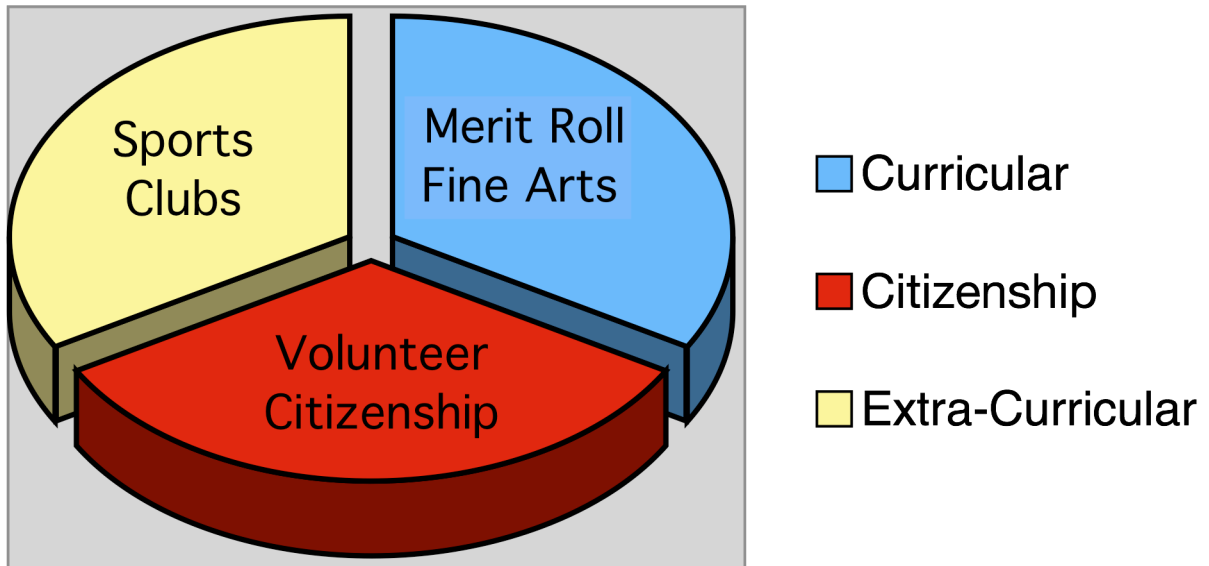
If you have any questions about the Block Letter Program or you are not sure what is required please call me, 447-9423.

Mr. Bob Chapman
Principal

BLOCK LETTER PROGRAM 2008-2009

Dear Parents:

Here is a clear way of envisioning the domain point areas for the Block Letter Program.



MINIMUM REQUIREMENT: One point from each the *Curricular, Extra-Curricular & Citizenship* areas

- Grade 4's..... 4 points
- Grade 5's..... 5 points
- Grade 6's..... 6 points
- Grade 7's..... 7 points

CAUTIONS:

- Grade 4 and 5 students need six pieces of art work for a Fine Arts portfolio; Grade 6 and 7 Students need eight pieces of art. The school cannot guarantee that there will be twelve or sixteen opportunities to complete appropriate works of art for two full Fine Arts portfolios.
- Grade 4 and 5 students have three sports team opportunities which include volleyball, basketball, and track & field, while Grades 6 and 7 have the inclusion of soccer as a fourth opportunity.

BLOCK LETTER PROGRAM CONTRACT

After having read the Block Letter Program requirements and discussed it together, we (student and parent) have decided that _____
(student's name)
needs to meet the following requirements of the Block Letter Program for the 2008-2009 school year. We acknowledge that these are the requirements that he/she **must** attain by the end of the school year or a Block Letter will **not** be received.

Please check the appropriate boxes.

Curricular

Merit Roll

Merit Roll

Merit Roll

Fine Arts

Fine Arts

Extra-Curricular

Sport

Sport

Sport

Sport (Gr. 6/7)

Club

Club

Citizenship

Volunteer

Volunteer

Citizenship

Parent(s) Signature(s)

Student Signature

Please return this contract to the school by Wednesday - December 10, 2008.