



VINCENT MASSEY SCHOOL BULLETIN

DECEMBER



Visit us on the Website at: <http://www.vincentmasseyschool.ca/>

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

So what do teachers do on all those professional development Fridays each month?

This year all the schools in the Medicine Hat School District have had one full Friday a month in which students do not attend school so that teachers can partake in collaborative planning and professional development with colleagues as well as attend staff meetings. What have they really been doing? Here is a more detailed description of what teachers at VM have been doing on two of these PLC (Professional Learning Community) days.

September 16 – School Based PLC Day

- Teachers met at 7:30 a.m. for a 1 hour Staff Meeting. The Staff Meeting consisted of reports from various individuals and committees (i.e. Library, A.T.A., Learning Coach, Children of Noble Character, etc.), items for information, and items for dialogue (i.e. Review of Welcome Back Corn Roast, School Start-Up, School Emergency Plan, and Student Supervision).
- Teachers from Southview School joined our teaching staff for a 5 hour workshop on the topic "Effective Literacy Learning in Grades K-6: Avoid the Fourth or Sixth Grade Slump" from Miriam Trehearne. Miriam has been a classroom and resource teacher, an exceptional needs program specialist, a university associate, and specialist in Early Literacy with the Calgary Board of Education. She is now a popular featured speaker at educational conferences, including the International Reading Association. She has authored numerous articles for professional journals and written several professional books on teaching literacy. Among her many honours, she was named a finalist for the Canada Post 2001 Literacy Educator Award.
- Vincent Massey's School Goal #2 this year is "To review our present reading instructional methods/practices at all grade levels to determine if they should be retained, modified, added to or eliminated based on research best practices." Miriam's overall message was for us to consider a researched reading approach called Balanced/Comprehensive Literacy. She provided some initial training on some of the components of Comprehensive Literacy.

October 7 – District Based PLC Day

- In the morning, VM teachers met with grade-like colleagues at designated schools. For example, all Gr. 1 teachers from across the district met at Vincent Massey while other grade levels met at other schools. The focus for all teachers was to address District and School Goal #1: Improving learning through enhanced instruction. Teachers at each school then divided into smaller groups of 3 to 6 members who had indicated a desire to develop Instructional Intelligence methods for a specific subject area. For example a group of Gr. 1 teachers might want to develop Concept Attainment or PWIM (Picture Word Induction Method) instructional strategies for Language Arts or Gr. 6 teachers might want to develop Concept Mapping or Examine Both Sides instructional activities for Social Studies. Teacher could choose from 15 different Instructional Intelligent instruction strategies or tactics to address outcomes in any subject area.
- In the afternoon, teachers from VM met back at Vincent Massey for our monthly Staff Meeting. The Staff Meeting consisted of monthly reports from various individuals and committees and to make decisions on several items (i.e. Lockdown practice dates, Provincial Achievement Test results, and Christmas Concert planning, etc.). Teachers also participated in several Adoptive School activities to make decision around committing to balanced/Comprehensive Literacy and as to which publisher's resources would best support this initiative at each grade level.

Hopefully my description of the above two day helps give you some perspective as to what teachers are doing on these PLC days.

Please note the following six benefits to students and teachers involved in collaborative planning time:

- ✓ Having teacher participate in collaborative planning is a powerful example to students about the importance of learning together.
- ✓ Collaborative planning gives teachers an opportunity to experience a way of learning that they can use with their students.

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE CON'T

- ✓ Working with colleagues on issues focused on student learning builds a sense of trust in a school.
- ✓ Collaborative time together allows teachers the opportunity to share with each other their knowledge and skills.
- ✓ Some of the best learning that teachers can do involves working on researched-based instructional projects together.
- ✓ Even an excellent teacher can benefit from working with other teachers and continue to learn about improving their practice.

As a school, we are committed to using these regular monthly PLC days for professional training and collaborative time to address district/school initiatives and goals to help improve student learning.

CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

This year Vincent Massey will present two Christmas concerts. The Primary students (K-3) will be present "Where Are You Christmas?" on Wednesday, December 14th. The Upper Elementary students (Gr. 4-6) will perform "North Pole Musical" on Thursday, December 15th. Both days there will be dress rehearsals at 1pm and the evening performances at 7pm. Both performances are open to everyone.



We will be accepting non-perishable food items for the Medicine Hat Food Bank and would gratefully accept any donations.

SCHOOL FEES ARE NOW PAST DUE

Sincere thanks to those families who have already paid. These fees go towards purchasing your child's supplies that are provided for them at school.



Payment may be made by cash, cheque, VISA or MasterCard. **Please make cheques payable to Vincent Massey School.** There will be a **\$10.00** fee for all NSF cheques.

PLEASE NOTE: If you anticipate payment problems, please contact the school **immediately** so arrangements can be made. If you feel you may qualify, please contact the office for a fee waiver form. Thank you.



STUDENT/PARENT INFORMATION

It is very important that we have the correct information on file in case a teacher needs to contact you or if an emergency arises.

If you have had **any** changes to your child's information (including medical issues) - new phone/cell numbers, new address, new contact information, etc. please contact us as soon as possible so your child's file can be brought up to date.

Also, **if your child will be late or absent from school, please contact the school on a daily basis.** We want to make sure all our students are safe and accounted for.

Thanks for your cooperation.

IMMUNIZATIONS FOR GRADE 5 STUDENTS

The Public Health Nurse will be here on Thursday, December 1st to administer the second of three Hepatitis B and HPV vaccinations. The vaccinations will start at approximately 8:30am. The last Hepatitis B vaccine is scheduled for May 10th. Should you have any questions about the upcoming vaccinations, please feel free to contact the Health Unit directly.

Student Success!

Staff members of Vincent Massey are very proud of our students and we love hearing about their achievements inside and outside the school setting. If you would like us to acknowledge your child's accomplishments for out-of-school activities, please contact Mrs. Knutson or Mrs. Pahl at 527-3750.

SWEAT AWARD WINNERS

Taylor McLellan
Jordynn Volden
Kyran Friesz
Brandon Dintheer
Hunter Denton
Keeley Schnuth
Adam Klick

Jaxon Hernandez
Brylin Brown
Cailynn Kenny
Landen Fode
Cole Brosnikoff
Anna Heggie
Faith Amancio

FAIR PLAYER AWARD WINNERS

Coen Ryckman	Logan Perry
Karlie Schmaltz	Evan Maxwell
Kyran Friesz	Julia Tweed
Brandon Dintheer	Scarlett Wood-Marr
Keenan Gertner	Ardit Zejnullahu
Seth LaRochele	Victoria Jones
Patience Arndt	

PRIDE & PRAISE STUDENTS

Jasmine Acton	Cole Brosnikoff
Sharli Clarke	Alyssa Ford
Madison Hunt	Allie Pillibeit
Marissa Schmaltz	Josh Thunberg
Isabella Walter	Tyra Wickenheiser
Isaac Handley x2	Anna Heggie x2
Jasper Hodges	Jocelyn Middelhoek x2
Benjamin Milner x2	Jolene Moffat x2
Blayne Penner x2	Nataya Penttila x2
Riley Rutledge x2	Cheyenne Schimpf
Josh Suelzle x2	Keesha Brown
Greyson Eld	Christopher Topping
Davane Beauchamp	Dakota Degenstein
Flavian Fode	Taylor Hanson
Adam Klick	Ivey Russell
Samantha Hunt	Hannah Bonogofsky
Ethan LaRochele	Talia Laubenstein

PRIDE & PRAISE ASSEMBLY – DECEMBER 22nd – 2:00 pm

Our monthly Pride & Praise Assembly will be held on **Friday, December 22nd at 2:00 pm** where we will be recognizing student achievements during the past month. **Parents are always welcome to attend our Pride & Praise Assemblies.**

In addition to the usual happenings, Grade 3-6 students who have achieved **Honors** for this reporting period will be recognized and receive their Honors Certificates.

A+

To achieve Honors a student must receive a minimum of 5 A's and 1 B in the following subjects: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science.



PATROLLER OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to Davane Beauchamp for being awarded best patroller for the month of November. Thanks for your commitment to the program and the safety of the students at Vincent Massey.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

A **huge** thank you goes out to all the families who participated in this very worthwhile project. There were more boxes brought in this year than ever before!! We collected over 70 boxes for needy families overseas. It is wonderful to experience how good it feels to take part in putting a smile on a stranger's face this coming season. Thanks so much and special thanks to **Mrs. Bader** organizing this event and for taking all the boxes for shipping.



THE SPIRIT OF GIVING CONTINUES



A table has been set up outside the main office to collect items for less fortunate families in our community. Some suggestions are non-perishable food items and/or **unwrapped** new toys. These donations can be made **anytime** up to December 15th. Another idea that has come up is donating your **"Canadian Tire" money!** What a great idea! All donations will be picked up from the school on December 15th so they can be distributed before Christmas.

Thanks so much for your generosity and caring for others.

SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

The coupon book fundraiser has finished with fantastic results. The school achieved a profit of \$3058 so a huge thank you to all that participated. The magazine campaign is just wrapping up and final totals are not in as of yet. The participation in the magazine campaign was lower than we would of liked, but we appreciate each and every family that took part as we know it is a busy time of year with many clubs doing fundraising as well. There will be an ice cream sundae party held for the students that participated in the magazine campaign in the near future.

SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS CON'T

Some of the money we raised was spent to sponsor the running club, teaching materials and it was also decided to sponsor in part the movie day that happens prior to Christmas break. This will bring the cost per student down from \$6 to \$5 to enjoy the movie.

The Christmas Carnival idea has been changed into a family story night to be held in January. Stay tuned to this event as it promises to be a fun filled evening with a focus on literacy. The next meeting will be held January 16 and everyone is welcome to attend.

LOST & FOUND BOX

The Lost & Found Box and corner are **OVERFLOWING** with numerous articles of clothing, boots, etc. and we are running out of room. Some of these items are brand new and should go home with students. The contents will be spread out in the hallway for a couple of days and teachers will take students by to view the items and, hopefully, claim what is theirs.

After that time, **the area will be cleaned out and donated to the less fortunate in our community.** Parents are welcome to stop by, at any time, to check for items that are missing from your home.

FNMI CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Our next **First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Advisory meeting** is on **December 14!** We will host a Christmas Bash starting with the Culturally Enhanced Tutoring group at 3:30 and follow with a Pot Luck supper and social event ending at 8:00pm. We will be making Christmas Chocolates and various decorations!

We will also have all workshop materials related to FNMI available for use as a reference. We plan to have a short meeting right after supper and decide on our 2012 schedule.

Children are welcome: we have older students who are willing to look after the little ones, with movies and snacks to keep the



children who are not working on crafts and chocolates occupied.

Drop in to MHHS Legacy Room (600) at any time during the evening if you cannot make it to the whole event.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **EARLY DISMISSAL** – Students will be dismissed at **11:45 a.m.** on Friday, December 23rd for the Christmas break.
- Paying for milk on a monthly basis **DOES NOT include early dismissal days, “no school” days, or Hot Lunch days.**

Grades 1-6

December -	\$11.20
January -	\$11.20
February -	\$10.50
March -	\$14.70
April -	\$9.80
May -	\$14.70
June -	\$11.90



For Kindergarten milk fees, please see teacher.

Please understand that we cannot predict when your child forgets to pick up their milk or misses a day of school. If you require a refund, please contact the office.

CONSULTATIONS ON EDUCATION ACT EXPAND

Next component of Our Children, Our Future: Getting It Right includes online participation.

Edmonton... Albertans are invited to provide written and electronic input as part of consultations on the new Education Act.

“This legislation is the foundation of our education system, so it is important we get it right,” said Education Minister Thomas Lukaszuk. “Hearing the views of students, parents, grandparents, teachers, education and community leaders, and others will help us ensure new legislation reflects Albertans’ vision for their education system and impacts classrooms now and in the future.”

The education.alberta.ca/engage website includes ways for people of all ages to provide input. Elementary school students are invited to mail a letter or drawing to the minister (423 Legislature Building, Edmonton, T5K 2B6) about the changes they would make if they were the education minister for a day. Other students and Albertans are invited to participate in discussion boards about making schools safe and welcoming, making learning relevant, keeping students engaged in learning, and building the skills for future success. Additional opportunities include tweeting using the #abed hashtag, commenting at www.facebook.com/AlbertaEducation, sending an email to engage.education@gov.ab.ca, or sending letters or written submissions to the minister.

DECEMBER HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS

(From Alberta Health Services)

DISTRACTED DRIVING

On Sept. 1, 2011, the distracted Driving Law came into effect making it illegal for drivers to use hand-held cell phones, to text or email, or use electronic devices while driving. Distracted driving is potentially as dangerous as impaired driving and is much more common.

Before you start driving:

- Adjust dashboard and electronic controls
- Turn off your cell phone and tell everyone for safety reasons, you will no longer answer calls or text messages or emails while driving.
- Deal with distractions such as putting on make-up, reading and grooming.



Stay focused while driving:

- If you have to make a phone call, do so at a rest area, when you stop for gas or a bathroom break. Vehicles are not permitted to park on the shoulder of a provincial highway except in an emergency.

Visit: www.saferoads.ca for more information.

WINTER HELMET SAFETY

Skiing and snowboarding are popular Canadian winter sports, but they do carry a level of risk. Head and brain injuries are the most common cause of death among skiers and snowboarders.

Wearing a ski helmet can effectively reduce the risk of head injuries by nearly 50 percent.

It is important to ensure everyone engaging in these activities wears a new, properly fitted and appropriate helmet.

Helmets should be either CSA, ASTM, or Snell approved. If the helmet has been involved in a fall it may need to be replaced, even if there is no visible damage. Check the manufacturer's instructions on when to discard. Do not use helmets designed for other purposes such as bicycle helmets as they are designed to absorb different types of impacts.



For more information on helmet safety access www.thinkfirst.ca or www.safekidscanada.ca.

TIS THE SEASON TO BE HEALTHY

In the holiday season, treats seem to be everywhere. Here are some quick tips to promote a healthy holiday season for your family:

Store treats until snack or meal time. Your child is more likely to nibble throughout the day if treats are left out in the open. Keep them away in a cupboard, refrigerator or out of sight. **Offer regular meals and snacks.** Offer healthy food choices at regular times throughout the day. This will help to satisfy your child's appetite so they do not eat too many holiday treats.

Slow down and taste the food. Encourage your child to fill his/her plate and sit down to enjoy the food. Teach your child to enjoy small amounts of special holiday foods along with regular healthy choices. For more information check out these nutrition pages:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2925.asp>

ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES – NEW CHILDRENS GROUPS

Kids in Control: This is a seven-session anger management and emotional expression training program for children ages 4 to 7 years of age. (Separate groups are held for 4-5 year olds and 6-7 year olds.) We believe that an empathetic, professional facilitator and same-age peers can help children understand anger and find appropriate ways to respond, express it and manage it, instead of lashing out with verbal or physical aggression. Through art, games and activities, children in the group will learn self-calming methods and other constructive ways to express their feelings. In the group, children will have the opportunity to enhance their social skills, feelings of competency and personal effectiveness in the area of anger control while reducing self-defeating behaviors.

Next session begins Jan. 9 (for 4-5 year olds) and Feb. 6 (for 6-7 year olds)

Kids in Between: This is a seven-session program for children aged 6 and 7 years who are experiencing parental separation or divorce. Children who have been affected by parental separation and divorce are often struggling with a variety of unfamiliar and even uncomfortable feelings to which they don't know how to respond. They will sometimes feel that they are the only ones experiencing these feelings and that no one will be able to understand them. It is for this reason that CHADS has established this program, with the understanding that an empathetic, professional facilitator and same-age peers can help these children understand feelings about their parents' separation or divorce, and then appropriately respond to those feelings. Through art, games and activities, children in the group will have the opportunity to express their feelings and have them validated by other members in the group. The children will also learn positive coping strategies to assist them in grieving the loss of their nuclear family and in dealing with divided loyalties.

Next session begins March 5

Bravehearts – Building Courage Through Play:

This is a six-session play therapy group for children ages 3-5 and their parents, who wish to build their child's courage to handle social situations or personal problems. Parents receive a demonstration of how to use play therapy skills to help children manage feelings of fear, sadness and anxiety. Children are provided with a safe environment in which to express themselves, try new things, learn more about themselves, and develop coping skills to manage difficult feelings and problems through play.

Next session begins March 19

Cool Cubs – Learning Limits Through Play: This is a six-session play therapy group for children ages 3-5 and their parents, who would like to build their child's self-control and emotional regulation in social situations. Parents receive a demonstration of how to use play therapy skills to help children channel their energy, assertiveness and aggression in productive and healthy ways. Children are provided with a safe environment in which to express themselves through play and learn self-control over their excited, angry or impulsive feelings.

Next session begins Jan. 23



Please remember that the healthier your child(ren) eat, the healthier your schools fundraising pockets will be!!

For every lunch purchased @ kidsplate.ca, we donate back to your school. Last year, we donated over \$250 dollars to our participating schools and for this year, we've already surpassed that mark and we haven't reached the 1/2 way mark of this School year. Congratulations!

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND ALL THE BEST TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY IN THE NEW YEAR!!

COLD WEATHER GUIDELINES – Sending Students Outside

As much as we all wished we lived in a warmer climate, the forecast calls for a long, cold winter. Therefore, I thought it prudent to share this information with parents. As such, we do not have a policy, but we do have some guidelines that we follow.

1. Students are kept inside during morning recess if the wind chill is around -20C. I say around because we get our temperature on the internet @ The Weather Network, which gets its readings from the Medicine Hat Airport, and

sometimes the wind chill factor is greater at the airport than it is at our playground.

2. If the temperature (with the wind chill) is right on the borderline, then one or both administrators will go outside and check the conditions on our playground. A decision is then made to either send the students outside or keep them inside. This announcement is made over the intercom.

3. All teachers who are outside on supervision are asked to carry a two-way radio. If at any time they feel that is too cold for students to be outside, then they can radio one of the administrators and ask that the bell be rung to bring students inside immediately. The bell is then rang 3 times to bring students in as soon as possible.

We certainly do not want to have any child freezing their extremities, but students can definitely enjoy recess time (even in the colder weather), if dressed appropriately. We very much appreciate when your child comes dressed with a toque, scarf, gloves/mitts and snow pants. It is also important to have all these items labelled with your child's name.

One of the things that educational research has shown is that your child is much more prepared to focus on learning after having a few minutes of fresh air. I hope that the above information will help address any of your concerns.



PLEASE NOTE:
There will be early dismissal at 11:45am on Friday, December 23rd for Christmas Holidays!



The staff of Vincent Massey School would like to extend our sincere good wishes for the holidays. We hope you have an enjoyable time with your family and friends during this special time of year.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE!

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>There will be no Grade 6 Pizza Sale this month. This will be offered again in January.</p>				
				1	2 Hot Dog Day	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 Deadline to get hot lunch money in.	10
11	12	13	14 Primary Christmas Concert 1pm & 7pm	15 Hot Lunch Upper Elementary Concert 1pm & 7pm	16 NO SCHOOL PLC Day for Teachers	17
18	19	20	21	22 Pride & Praise Assembly Honor Students Recognized 2:00	23 School-wide movie in the morning Early Dismissal 11:45	24
25  Merry Christmas!	26 No School	27 No school	28 No School	29 No School	30 No School	31 HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!

School resumes Monday, January 9th, 2012.