
December 6, 2011

Valhalla Community School

Christmas Season Approaching!

It's hard to believe, but the Christmas season is upon us already!

VCS students are already hard at work learning and practicing parts and music for the annual Christmas concert. Only two weeks to go until performance!

A busy schedule of activity is underway. Drama club is continuing weekly practices on Wednesdays after school. They still need to find costuming and props for their production of "The Wizard of Oz". **Teachers are asking parents for help with this.** The concert will run on December 13 at 1:30pm (dress rehearsal) and 7:00pm. Both performances are open to the public. December 14 is a backup date, should the concert have to be postponed due to road or weather conditions on December 13.

The last day of classes for VCS is December 15. **That afternoon Parent Council will be hosting a school community potluck dinner for students, staff and parents. Please join us.** Students will also have a Christmas Sock Hop that same afternoon.

Ministry Seeks Input

Alberta Education is seeking input from teachers, parents and students regarding changes to the Education Act.



Meetings are being held (the closest to us in Peace River on Dec.9) to gather input. The Minister of Education would like us to send 2 teachers, 1 TA, 5 students and 1 parent chaperone.

Please see the attached letter from the Minister. If you are interested in attending please let the school office know.

Provincial Achievement Tests

Advance Notice

It may seem a bit early for an announcement of Achievement Test dates. There will be more discussion on this topic after the Christmas break, but for advance notice, and planning of trips or events, we want to let parents know when achievement tests are scheduled. It is very important that students in achievement test grades (gd. 3,6,9) are at school to participate in testing on the scheduled days.

Test dates run from May 13 to June 27. Please see the attached schedule for details.

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- 2** Announcements

Attachments:

Our Children, Our Future
Something to Say 2011

Why Direct Instruction?
Gary Fjellgaard

PAT Dates

Drop In Volleyball

Drop in Adult Volleyball at VCS on Tuesday evenings from 7-9pm. Come out for an evening of fun!

Dec.13 is last evening for play. Drop-In Vball will resume Jan.3, 2012.

Contact Leah Schuller @ 780 518-
2507

Upcoming Event

Nov. 30 – Dec.8
Leisure Centre, GP
Round 2 Swim Lessons
Grades 1 – 4

Dec.13
1:30pm, 7pm, VCS Gym
VCS Christmas Concert

Dec.14
VCS Christmas Concert Alternate Date

Dec.15, 9am-12noon
VSF Board Meeting

Dec.15
VCS Christmas Celebration
Potluck Dinner, Christmas Dance

Dec.16 – Jan.1
Christmas Holidays!

Jan.2, 2012
School Begins

Swimming Lessons

This year's second round of swimming lessons will be held from November 30 to December 8. This round is for grades 1-4.

Students will leave VCS at 10am. Their swimming lesson runs from 11am-12noon. They will leave GP to return to VCS at 12:15pm and should arrive back at school by 1:15pm.

More About Basketball!

Basketball tryouts have been held!
Basketball is ready to begin.

There will be no practices next week (Dec.12-Dec15), but will begin again the first week back after the Christmas break. The first week boys will only practice on Wed., Jan. 4. Girls will practice Tuesday and Thursday (Jan.3 & 5). Thereafter boys will practice Mondays and Wednesdays; girls will practice Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Players need to be committed to practices in order to participate in games. Please inform the coach if you are not able to attend practices (or games)

Game schedules will be set up after a Grande Prairie meeting this Thursday. Hopefully dates for January/February will be set then.



After School Drama Club! Wednesdays after school

Drama club is seeking any costume items that could be used for our Wizard of Oz production coming up in December. The cast of characters are: Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Lion, Glinda the Good Witch, The Wicked Witch of the West, Toto, Munchkins, and Trees. If you have any items that could be used as costumes, or if you have any interest in helping create props or set pieces to be used in the play, please contact Mrs. LeBlanc at the school.

Bus Drivers' Corner

All students and parents please take note!
Colder weather is coming!

For Safety Concerns: Parents please remember not to park in the bus lanes or along the south fence between the hours of 8 – 9AM and 3 – 4 PM.

Thank You!

To: Interested Members of the Public

As the new Minister of Education, I want to provide you with the opportunity to share your views about education in Alberta. Since the introduction of the proposed Education Act in April 2011, much has changed. Our government has made a renewed commitment to the education system, and it is important to confirm that we are indeed moving in a direction that reflects the desires and wishes of Albertans.

On November 15, I announced the opportunity for public input as we begin to review the proposed Education Act. The first component is a series of seven full-day meetings, called ***Our Children, Our Future: Getting It Right***, scheduled for late November and early December 2011.

The new Education Act must support and sustain learning environments in which students can thrive through flexible, personalized learning. By opening discussion to the public, especially to students, we can ensure this legislation reflects Albertans' vision for their education system and that it has a direct and positive impact on Alberta classrooms now and for years to come.

Many of the ideas emphasized in the earlier draft will likely carry forward because it:

- enables school boards to be more responsive to local needs;
- engages students from Kindergarten to graduation;
- better supports inclusion of learners with differing needs, cultures and abilities; and
- ensures that schools are caring, respectful and safe environments all remain important priorities for this government.

I invite you to attend one of the scheduled meetings identified below. I also ask you to encourage participation among others in your community for whom the meetings would be a new experience by passing along this information.

We have invited community leaders and education authorities to attend the meetings, however, the vast majority of registrations are being held for students, parents, teachers and others who have a broad interest in education – as learners, as taxpayers and as future employers.

The meeting dates are as follows:

Date	Location
Saturday, November 26	Edmonton
Tuesday, November 29	Red Deer
Thursday, December 1	Calgary
Saturday, December 3	Bonnyville
Monday, December 5	Lethbridge
Wednesday, December 7	Fort McMurray
Friday, December 9	Peace River

For more information, and to register, please follow this link: <http://ideas.education.alberta.ca/engage/current-initiatives/education-act-getting-it-right>. Following submission of registration, participants will receive a confirmation. This will include venue information and pre-meeting reading materials.

While space is limited and preregistration is required, those who are unable to participate in a community meeting will also have other channels for submitting their thoughts on the future of education in Alberta. We expect to have online options ready in a little over a week and will ensure Albertans are aware of how to provide us with their input. Of course, I also welcome traditional forms of communication, such as letters and emails.

If you have any questions, please contact the project team by email at Engage.Education@gov.ab.ca or by phone at [780-422-1484](tel:780-422-1484) (dial [310-0000](tel:310-0000) first for toll-free access in Alberta).

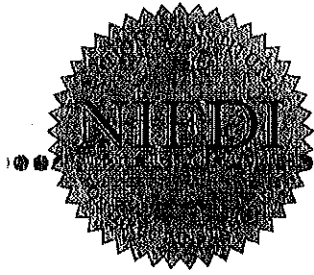
Thank you for your interest as we continue this important work on behalf of education in Alberta. Your input will be considered as we work toward reintroducing the Education Act in spring 2012.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Lukaszuk

Minister of Education

MLA, Edmonton – Castle Downs



DIRECT INSTRUCTION

WHY ARE DI PROGRAMS EFFECTIVE?

Direct Instruction (DI) programs can improve student learning faster and more efficiently than any other program or technique available. These programs are based on over 40 years of research that show they can be used successfully to increase student learning with students of all backgrounds.

Why do these programs work?

Students are placed in instruction at their skill level.

Before students begin the program, each student is placement tested to find out which skills they have already mastered and which ones they need to work on. Based on this skill assessment, students are grouped with other students who have similar skills. These instructional groups are organized by program levels rather than by grade levels.

The program's structure is designed to ensure mastery of the content.

Skills are introduced gradually and systematically, giving children a chance to learn new skills thoroughly. Only 10% of each lesson contains new material. The remaining 90% of each lesson's content is review and application of skills and concepts introduced in earlier lessons. This structure provides a solid foundation for students to learn more advanced skills and concepts over time.

Instruction is modified to accommodate each student's rate of learning.

Students master the material covered in the DI programs at different rates. Some students require additional practice; others don't require as much practice and can advance more quickly. The DI programs are designed to accommodate these different rates of learning. If students need more practice with a specific skill, teachers can provide the additional instruction within the program. If students demonstrate that they already possess the skills covered in a lesson, students can be moved to a more advanced placement. Some programs include a "fast cycle" skip schedule to accommodate faster rates of learning.

Programs are field tested and revised before publication.

DI programs are unique in the way they are tested and revised before publication. All DI programs are field tested with a wide range of students and revised based on feedback from the field before they are ever published. This means that the DI program used with your students has already been proven to work with students similar to yours.

Valhalla Heritage Society

Date: April 21, 2012

Time: 7:30pm

Gary Fjellgaard



Come join us for an evening of fun and music. Gary Fjellgaard will be performing along with Darryl & Saskia!

Tickets are great *Stocking Stuffers!* \$20/each

Tickets available @ the Heritage Café and Valhalla Community Library

Valhalla Viking Center (in Valhalla Community School Gymnasium)

For more info contact Emily Loberg @ 780.356.2403



Achievement Test Administration Schedule: May/June 2012

Note: Achievement tests **must** be administered according to the dates and times indicated in this schedule, unless an alternate schedule has been approved by the Director, Examination Administration (see the *Administration Directives, Guidelines, & Procedures* section).

All students are permitted an additional one-half hour to complete a test.

May 2012

Monday, May 14	9:00 – 11:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Français/French Language Arts Partie A
	9:00 – 11:00 A.M.	Grade 9 English Language Arts Part A
	9:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E English Language Arts Part A
Tuesday, May 15	9:00 – 10:10 A.M.	Grade 3 English Language Arts Part A
Wednesday, May 16	9:00 – 11:00 A.M.	Grade 6 English Language Arts Part A
	9:00 – 11:00 A.M.	Grade 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie A
Thursday, May 17	9:00 – 10:10 A.M.	Grade 3 Français/French Language Arts Partie A

June 2012

Tuesday, June 12	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 3 English Language Arts Partie B
Thursday, June 14	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 3 Mathematics
	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Social Studies
Friday, June 15	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 English Language Arts Part B
Monday, June 18	9:00 – 9:45 A.M.	Grade 3 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 6 Mathematics
Tuesday, June 19	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Science
Wednesday, June 20	9:00 – 10:00 A.M.	Grade 6 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 Français/French Language Arts Partie B
Thursday, June 21	ABORIGINAL DAY	No Tests Scheduled
Friday, June 22	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 Science
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E Science
Monday, June 25	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 Mathematics
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E Mathematics
Tuesday, June 26	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 English Language Arts Part B
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E English Language Arts Part B
Wednesday, June 27	9:00 – 10:20 A.M.	Grade 9 Social Studies
	9:00 – 10:15 A.M.	Grade 9 K&E Social Studies