

# Indus School

# SPiRiT

Some Pertinent Information Regarding Indus Today

## Parent Newsletter

March 2008

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Student Count 152

### Inside this issue:

Grade 3	1
Grade 1	2
Kindergarten	3
Grade 2	4
Grade 4	5
Grades 4/5	5
Grade 6	6

### EARLY LITERACY, BY JUDY HAMEL

Indus School has an Early Literacy program. It is designed to supplement the classroom literacy program while providing additional support to facilitate continued success in reading. The program involves a variety of strategies:

- one-on-one and small-group instruction
- explicit instruction in let-

ter-sound relationships, word identification, phonological awareness and letter and word patterns

- repeated exposure to words to encourage mastery
- explicit instruction to improve reading comprehension including, self-questioning, visual imagery and retelling

- multiple opportunities for repeated reading to develop fluency, for example, paired reading modeling, direct instruction and choral reading

If you have any questions about Early Literacy please don't hesitate to call Mrs. Hamel at the school.

### PLAYGROUND DESIGNERS, GRADE 3 SMARTIES

The Grade 3 Smarties created playgrounds to wrap up our building unit. We even entered them into Science Fair so everyone could enjoy them. The students did an amazing job planning, creating and building their playgrounds. Students included many unique ideas in their playgrounds. There were water slides, animals, barns, ball

rooms, discos and many other interesting equipment pieces built on the playgrounds. Each student created their playground with pillars, beams, arches, stability and materials in mind.

We had the school vote on which playground they would like Indus School to have. Mark Rodehuts Kors won with

his playground titled, *Jasper Park*.

As a reward, the students will be having a playground-hotdog barbeque when it gets a little warmer.

I am so proud of the hard work the students put into their playgrounds. They were all unique, creative and a lot of fun!

### Our Mission

**Indus School provides an environment that inspires and facilitates learning for all in our school community.**

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## BRAIN-BASED TEACHING, BY C. WYPER

While the notion of teaching in such a way as to be compatible with how the brain learns might seem like a “no-brainer,” it has only been in the last decade or so that we have really begun to understand how the brain accumulates knowledge. The most significant finding of all is that understandings are not absorbed, they are constructed. Moving information from sensory input, to short-term, then long-term memory, is an active process that requires the learner to build neural connections in the brain. This process can be best facilitated through the application of seven essential actions in the classroom.

Good teachers have always instinctively used these key elements for complex learning and have paved the way developing strategies, techniques and activities that capitalize on how the brain is able to construct new understandings. The seven absolute requirements are:

1. The learning environment must be physically and emotionally safe. A small amount of stress, causing the release of a bit of adrenalin, is

conducive to learning; a great deal of stress, resulting in the release of a hormone called cortisol, causes the learner to stop learning and focus on the most basic instincts: fight or flight.

2. The student must be motivated to learn. It is natural for a person to learn something only if he or she can see some benefit in doing so.

3. Any new information must be connected in some way to existing knowledge. Knowing that a human brain weighs about the same amount as a cantaloupe is easier for most people to remember than the fact that they are about 1.35 kg.

4. Learners need to explore or manipulate ideas. For this reason teachers often have students reorganize information in some way. Through breaking down, combining, speculating and comparing information, learners are able to better understand the concepts.

5. Learners need specific feedback. Most adults recall such advice as “Try harder” on assignments. Such input does little to improve one’s

understanding. Clear, specific suggestions for improvement will result in higher achievement (this is the motivation behind the entire “Assessment *for* Learning” movement that is at the forefront of educational thought right now).

6. Reflection is vital for learners to put the pieces together. It is during reflective moments that we identify the most important facets of a lesson, see connections, and clarify our understandings.

7. The final element is that which often comes to mind first when one thinks about learning: practice. It is only with repeated practice that neural pathways are made more efficient than strengthened.

By teaching in ways that work with brains’ natural inclinations, teachers can facilitate improved conceptual understandings and help students to develop skills more efficiently. The most important part, however, is that learning is an active process that requires students to engage and persevere. Working efficiently does not preclude working hard.

## BUDDING MATHEMATICIANS IN GRADE ONE

Problems, problems, problems!

The *Star Brights* are learning how to solve math problems. Just to give you a hint of some of the problems we are working on...

- **I have 8 crayons. Some are purple and some are orange.**

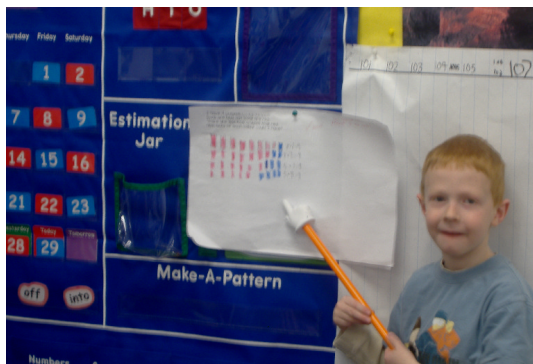
How many of each colour could I have?

Show as many ways as you can.

- **I have 9 crayons. Some are red and some are blue.**

There are less blue crayons than red.

How many crayons of each colour



could I have?

Show all the ways.

- **There are 3 ladybugs in a jar.**

They have 12 spots on them altogether.

How many spots could each ladybug have?

Show as many ways as you can.

- **A basketball player scored 9 points in two games.**

What might her scores in each of the games be?

Show as many ways as you can.

## LOVE IS ... - KINDERGARTEN

On Valentine's Day the kindergarten class created a book titled: Love is... The dictionary definition is: 1. a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person 2. a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection, as for a parent, child, or friend. But when does one feel love? Who do you love? Is it something one can give and receive? How does it feel? What does love look like? Five year olds are so precious and innocent and for them love is so simple.

In the hearts of children,  
Love is...

When my mom makes my hair all curly.

When mom says, "Love you, bye." when I go on the bus.

When my puppy licks me.

When my mom hugs me in the night.

When dad comes and volunteers.

When my mom reads me a story.

When my baby sister says goodbye to me.

When my mommy kisses me when I go to school.

When Adele comes to my house I feel loved.

When mom says bye.

When my dad says goodbye and gives me a hug and kiss when he goes to work.

When I watch Disney.

When mom cuddles with me.

When my little sister comes over and I can share my toys with her. When mom says good bye.

When my daddy gives me a hug when I go on the bus.

When my mom hugs and kisses me.

When Ryan helps me on the monkey bars at his house.

When my brother plays with me.

When my mom gets me a

movie.

When my mom gives me a hug at night.

When my mom and dad go on each side and hug me.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL NURSE, STEPHANIE MCGILL

**Make it HAPPEN** is a family-focused healthy lifestyle program for children and youth (6 to 17 years old) who are at risk of being at an unhealthy weight. The program focuses on:

- H - healthy weights
- A - active living
- P - physically fit
- P - positive self
- E - educated families
- N - nutrition knowledge

You and your child or youth, will meet with other families for educational and activity sessions with program staff once a week, for 12 weeks. Each two-hour session includes learning in a relaxed group classroom setting, as well as fun physical activities

Referrals are not required – however, it is encouraged to discuss the program with your family doctor. To be eligible to participate, children and youth must have a body mass

index greater than the 85th percentile for age and gender. If you are not sure what your child's BMI is, ask your family physician, school nurse, or call the Make it HAPPEN program.

Classes are held at several Calgary locations. Find out more by calling the Make it HAPPEN secretary at (403) 955-7190.

## DID YOU KNOW?

We have known for some time that adequate sleep is essential for learning, but a recent study at John's Hopkins University discovered that children who do not get enough sleep are at significantly

higher risk of being overweight or obese. Children who got the least amount of sleep had a 92% higher chance of being overweight, while adding as little as one extra hour per night can reduce the risk by 9%.

The recommendation is that children under five years of age get at least 11 hours of sleep, with children aged five to ten getting 10 or more hours of sleep, and teenagers at least 9 hours.

## NEWS FROM OUR CDA, MRS. WOOD

### Teaching Children to Practice Good Hygiene

Keeping your body clean is an important part of keeping you healthy and helping you feel good about yourself. Caring about the way you look is important to your self-esteem.

It is not always easy to teach proper hand washing and dental hygiene to young children. If it is a battle to get your children to wash their hands and brush their teeth, follow the tips that may help your children become hygiene professionals.

### Make it fun

Children always respond better to activities that they perceive as fun. Help your child to view hygiene as less of a chore by purchasing hygienic tools with more pizzazz. Brightly coloured toothpaste with

sparkles, yummy flavours or a favourite cartoon or action hero are always a hit with kids. Scents, vivid colors and fun shapes are great for soap. Many companies are now making foaming soaps just for kids. Soaps with toys inside are also available, so you can bet your child is going to want to lather up often to get closer to a treat!

### Enforce routines

Every morning and every night before bed, make sure hygiene routines are followed and are consistent. Before meals, always have children wash their hands, even at restaurants or away from home. For school-age children, think about putting a reminder note in their lunch. If you know your child will not make the trip to the sink at school, include a portable hand sanitizer in the lunchbox.

### Time matters

How often have you seen your child quickly run their hands under the water or neglect to brush all of their teeth? It is important to provide a time frame for your child so that they understand how long is appropriate for washing and brushing. A useful trick is to tell your child to sing a song like "Happy Birthday" twice before they stop washing their hands. For brushing teeth, play a song that lasts about three minutes or purchase a timer (they are inexpensive) so your child is aware of when to stop.

Remind your children how important it is to practice good hygiene. Explain to them that, although they may not see germs, they are present and can make them sick.

(Information provided by: life-span.org and cyh.com)

## FIRST RIDE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS

Once again Rocky View School Division will be offering the First Ride Program free of charge for all families that register before May 1st. The program will be held on **Thursday May 8 at Prairie Waters School** for the whole Chestermere area, including Indus.

"First Ride" will be a positive learning experience for you and your child. This program gives parents and students a basic understanding of safety, rules and procedures on the school bus.



We hope you will be able to take part in the "First Ride Program."

Further information is available on the [rockyview.ab.ca](http://rockyview.ab.ca) website, under Transportation then 1st Ride.

## CLASSROOMS CARE, GRADE 2 SUNSHINES

As the old adage goes: "Time flies when you are having fun" and that is true in Grade Two! We wanted to tell you about an exciting program we have been involved with for the month of February. In our last Scholastic book order, Miss Paul saw an invitation for classes to read so books could be donated to classrooms in need.

We had a month to read 100 books and then 100 books would be do-

"We talked about compassion in our last class meeting ..."

nated to kids who don't have books in their classroom. The initiative is

called *Classrooms Care*. We kept track of the AR books we've been reading.

The exciting news is that we have already reached our goal! We talked about compassion in our last class meeting and we decided that this campaign shows our compassion for others. Reading...giving...making a difference!

## MMM, CHOCOLATE, GRADE 4

Mmm, chocolate. That was the name of the game for February as the Grade 4 class explored the extraordinary world of Willy Wonka in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

This exploration included lessons on gluttony and greed, the joys of chocolate, overindulgence, the joys of chocolate, what makes someone a

good person, and did I mention, the joys of chocolate?



The culminating activity was a chocolate party where all of the students brought in a chocolate recipe which was bound into a recipe book that each student took home for future use. Naturally, the consumption of the chocolate dishes was only slightly less exciting than the novel study itself.

## LIBRARY NEWS, MRS. POTTER

### Book Fair News

The next Book Fair is just around the corner from March 10-13! Our theme this spring is Jurassic Book Fair, so if you have any large toy dinosaurs (plastic or stuffies) and you are willing to lend them for our displays, please send them to school with your child as soon as possible. Put your name on it somewhere so I can be sure to get it back to you. It's almost report card time, and a new book from the Book Fair is a great reward for a job well done. I've also heard that the Easter Bunny likes to shop at Book Fair!

Yes, I'm still looking for more volun-

teers in the library. Call me! If you know your ABCs and have an hour to spare once every couple of weeks, you are perfect!

### Sewing Club

Have you noticed sewing machines in the library lately and wondered what THAT was all about? Our grade six students have the option of learning to sew with me at recess. They eventually make a cushion, in the fabric of their choice, to keep. It takes us about 3 weeks of recesses for a group of 4 students to finish a project.

### AR Carnival

All students enjoyed an hour of fun

and games in the gym on February 28th, using the points they had accumulated in the Accelerated Reader Program. Younger students who are not part of the program, received complimentary points.

Thank you to the wonderful parent volunteers who helped with the Carnival. We could not do it without you.

### New Books

I have been putting out new books every week, for all ages, in all genres. Is there anything more fun than being the very first one to sign out a brand new book? Parents are welcome in the library anytime. Come check us out!

## EXPLORING CHEMISTRY—GR. 4/5

The Grade 4/5 students have been experimenting with chemistry this past month.

Bubbling mixtures and reacting sub-

stances have been exciting to play with. Students practiced their observation skills to determine a "mystery" powder during their first

lab test.

We are looking forward to starting our new unit on electricity.

## ROBOTS IN THE CLASSROOM, BY SCOTT, GRADE 6

When we first heard that we were going to be working with Lego Mindstorms most of us were excited – programming robots sounds pretty fun. But then, reality struck: most of us struggled a lot with the



programming. By working with other students who were getting it, and getting some help from Mr. Wyper, we were able to make our

first programs work.

At first we just programmed it to play music and turn circles, but then after a little while we trained them to do funky things like go forward, hit the wall, go backwards, stop, and play music.

That's all we have done so far with Lego Mindstorms, but there is still a lot more to come.

## BUSSING REMINDER – 2008-2009

Students new to Indus School, and who did not ride during the 2007-08 school year, including kindergarten students for next year, must be registered for school bus transportation prior to July 31, 2008 to ensure bus service in September. Rural applications may be submitted any time after May 1, 2008. An information package and invoice will be mailed to rural families

in late August confirming bus transportation for each child.

After May 1, 2008, once transportation fees have been confirmed, rural applications may be accessed by one of the following means:

1. Electronically submitted via the Transportation website at [www.rockyview.ab.ca](http://www.rockyview.ab.ca)
2. Picked up at the school and sub-

mitted to Rocky View School Division by mail or fax.

3. Picked up directly from Rocky View School Division. They accept cash, cheques, VISA and MasterCard. They do not have a debit machine.

If you have any transportation questions, please call Todd Howerly at 1-403-945-4102.

## SCIENCE FAIR, BY CORA AND TAYLOR, GRADE 6

Indus School held its annual Science Fair on February 14. Congratulations to all of the students, from Kindergarten to Grade 6, who participated. The intermediate students were judged on their projects and the top Grade 5 and 6 projects, along with the project rated highest for the whole school, will move on to the Calgary Youth Science Fair later this month.

The three projects are Liana's *Mixes of Solids and Liquids* for Grade 5, Clayton, with *Bubble Battle*, for Grade 6, and

Cora and Taylor with *Salt and the Melting Plots* for the school's high-



est mark.

Liana was surprised that she won in grade 5 while Clayton is happy and scared at the same time. This is the second time that Clayton is going to the Calgary Youth Science Fair! Cora and Taylor were also very surprised; this is the second time for them as well.

Anyone can attend the Calgary Youth Science Fair held in the Big Four Building on the Stampede Grounds during the public viewing hours from 9:00 a.m – 12:00 noon on March 15.

## PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Parent-Teacher Interviews will be held at the school on **Tuesday, March 11th from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.** This is the same evening that the Book Fair will remain open in the Library until 8:00 p.m.

Fifteen minute interviews will be scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis, at the request of the teacher **or** the parent. Please call the school office at 936-5855 to schedule an interview, if required.

## STUDENT SHOWCASE

**Student Showcase** will be held in each of the classrooms on **Thursday, March 13th from 2:30 to 3:15 p.m.**

Parents are invited to attend their

child's "Showcase," where students will have an opportunity to demonstrate some of their work and various projects they have completed in class.

## COUNCIL CORNER

Spring is in the air and this is the time of year when council gets very busy with upcoming events. In April we will have Staff Appreciation week- keep an eye out for the notice coming home as we need lots of volunteers to make this a success. In May we have our Casino - a huge THANK YOU!!! goes to all those who have filled the volunteer positions - please call Sue LeFebvre at 936-5994 if you would like to help. Another thank you to all the families

who ordered Indus School shirts. What a great way to show your school spirit!

We have a couple of items that we need parent input on, the first is the school calendar for next year. The Board of Trustees is looking for feedback from council, staff and parents by March 11<sup>th</sup>. Just log on to [www.rockyview.ab.ca](http://www.rockyview.ab.ca) and look at the proposed calendar options on the site. There will also be an information meeting held at

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- Mar. 3 Council Executive Meeting
- Mar. 7 Report Cards Home
- Mar. 10-13 Book Fair—9:00—3:30 pm
- Mar. 11 School Nurse—pm
- Mar. 11 Hot Lunch
- Mar. 11 Parent-Teacher Interviews
- Mar. 12-15 Calgary Youth Science Fair
- Mar. 13 Student Showcase 2:30—3:15
- Mar. 13 Girls' Softball—6:30 pm
- Mar. 17 General Council Meeting—7:00
- Mar. 18 Girls' Softball—6:30 pm
- Mar. 21—28—**NO SCHOOL**—Spring Break
- Mar. 31 Classes resume

Chestermere Lake Middle school on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

The second item we need your input on is the possible change in school boundaries due to the Calgary annexation. We are currently brainstorming ideas and we need your help. If you are interested, please call Sue Wood at 936-7857. We would like to have some plans in place for our next General meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

## SCIENCE FAIR

