

Indus School

SPIRIT



Some Pertinent Information Regarding Indus Today Parent Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 1

Student Count 238

SKATING PROGRAM

The following is the schedule for Skating at the Indus Recreation Centre:

Feb. 6, 7, 8, 9:

10:45—11:45: Grs. 3 and 4
1:45—2:45: K, Grs. 1 and 2

Feb. 13, 14, 15, 16:

10:45—11:45: Grs. 5 and 6

1:45—2:45: K, Grs. 1 and 2

All students will need the signed consent form that was sent home on Jan. 18th, as well as skates, a CSA approved helmet, and gloves or mitts. Skates can only be transported on the bus

in a backpack or sports bag or in something that will not rip and that can be closed.



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Our Mission

The purpose of Indus School is to build in students a multi-faceted personal foundation to carry them successfully through life.

FEBRUARY BREAK

There will be no school for students on February 17th as it is a Profes-

sional Learning Day for staff. Students are off the week of February 20th,

returning to school on Monday, February 27th.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

We want to send a special *thank you* to the parent volunteers who came out to help with

the *set-up* and *take-down* for the Christmas Concert. It is reassuring to know that we can

always count on you, our Indus volunteers.

7 Indus Court, Indus, AB T1X 0H7

www.rockyview.ab.ca 403-936-5855 <http://indus.rockyview.ab.ca>

SMARTIE SENTEOS!

To engage students using technology, the Grade 3 Smarties have been using Smartboard Senteos. These are remote-like devices that each student uses to interact with daily lessons. The great thing about the "clickers" is that they provide instant feedback. As a class, we can answer questions, take quizzes and make decisions instantly. It provides graphs and assess-

ment feedback so that as a class we can go back and find ways to better understand concepts. We love technology!

The other new feature we have for the new year is Social Smarts with Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith comes every Monday to talk about the different smarts we all have. We have been primarily focusing on "social smarts". This is how we react and behave in

different social situations. It has been really helpful in our weekly class meetings!

Lastly, I'd like to thank everyone for all the help with the gingerbread houses. We raised over \$350! Wow! This money is being donated to the Alberta Animal Rescue Crew Society. Ms. Mikkelsen's Grade 2 article has further details.

AWESOME ART 7/8/9

Within the walls of Indus School there are many talented students.

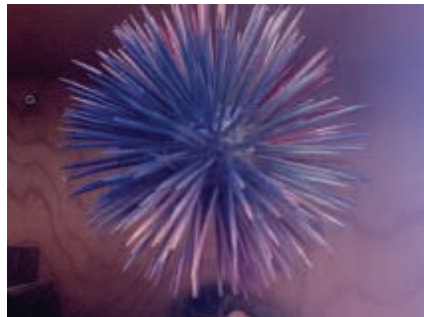
Throughout the school you can see their creative works on walls, bulletin boards and on the

hall and library shelves. Approximately 60 students are enrolled between the two classes, Creative Arts and Tech Arts (as well as a 3-D sculpture class first term). With limited space and maximum enrollment, students



have produced works of pen and ink, multi-medium board projects, plaster masks and hand sculptures, soap projects, claymation videos, CD cover reproductions and many other exciting creations. If you happen to be in the school, please take a

moment to explore and appreciate their exhibits and talents. It is my hope



that we can soon utilize our school plone site to showcase their works more readily.

If you have creative talents you would like to share please let me know. Sharing is always encouraged!

Kim Hart, Art Teacher

GRADE 1 NEWS

January was quite an exciting month in Grade 1! We have been learning about fairy tales from all over the world. The students have been very excited to learn about magic, talking animals, princes and princesses and of course *happily ever afters*. We have started up AR again as well as *Lollipop*

Words in the classroom. Please make sure you are practicing every night!

February is a very important month coming up. Valentine's day lists will be distributed early in the month so that you can get your cards ready for February

14th. Also, do not forget about our upcoming science fair experiments which are due on the 15th. Come by the grade one classroom to see the students demonstrate their egg drop systems!

HOT AND COLD TEMPERATURES IN GRADE 2

The Grade 2 students spent the months of December and January learning about hot and cold temperatures in Science. Students have been learning about thermometers and measured the temperature of different areas of the school, then reasoned why the temperature varied in each area. Students measured their own body temperature and studied the temperatures of freezing and boiling water. Every day, the students have been looking at the temperature of the three Canadian Communities we are studying; Iqaluit, Meteghan and Saskatoon. Students then took a tour of the school basement and furnace rooms in order to learn about methods that are used to control temperature in buildings and



Aidan building his ice cube insulator out of an egg carton, straw, fabric and bubble wrap.

how insulation is used to keep things hot or cold. Students also constructed a device to keep an

ice cube frozen for up to 45 minutes. Students are now exploring magnets and are excited to show our individual projects off at the Science Fair!

Thank you to all parents who supported the Gingerbread House Fundraiser. We have donated the money (\$365.00) to the Alberta Animal Rescue Crew Society. The AARCS is a network of individuals and families concerned about the welfare of abandoned, abused and surrendered animals in Alberta. Volunteers from AARCS plan to visit Indus School to explain the Society's mission and visions and even bring rescued animals to meet the Grades 1, 2 and 3 students.

LEARNING IS FUN IN GRADE 6

The Grade 6 students have been learning tons in the last few months. They just finished learning about planes and engines, inline, V8 (not the drink), radial and rotary. Now we are learning about forensics. If you have a

mystery, the Grade 6 Forensics will solve it! But you don't need to be a forensics expert to solve the questions in math. The students are moving along the curriculum at turbo-charged speed. In Social Studies, they are

becoming more and more democratic, learning about the birth of democracy.

All in all, Mr. Kim's class is doing great!

GRADE 7 EXPLORING HISTORY

In January, the Grade 7s worked on a novel study of a book called *Daniel's Story*. The book focuses on the life of a young Jewish boy during the Holocaust. Students have been com-

pleting journal responses focusing on their feelings regarding events during this important part of history. The Grade 7s have shown an impressive understanding of the events from

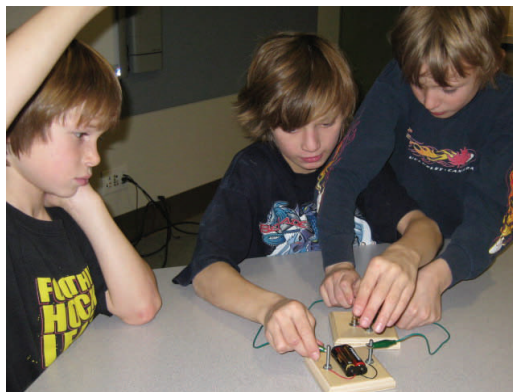
that period in time, and how we can learn from it today.

FROM SLEIGH RIDES TO EXPLORING SCIENCE

Before the Christmas Break, the Grade 5 students had a special month together. Our class organized all the generous donations for *Christmas at the Mustard Seed* and made sure they made it to the Mustard Seed to help out those in need. They also had a unique opportunity to go on a sleigh ride as an end of the year celebration together. The students had a wonderful time caroling and chasing after the sleigh when they fell or jumped off.

This month, we went on an

amazing field trip to the new Telus Spark Science Centre with



the Grade 4 class. Each class

explored the Centre's exhibits in the morning and participated in their own program in the afternoon. The Grade 5 students were challenged to create a variety of different electrical circuits in a program called *Sparkling Circuits*. It was amazing to watch them experiment with electricity and find ways to make things light up, move and turn. Students will begin the Electricity and Magnetism unit in the next few weeks, so this was a great way for them to learn about electricity through trial and error.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSTARD SEED

We had an overwhelming response to our *Christmas at the Mustard Seed* project this past December. The Grade 5 class, as pictured here, filled all of the socks with the many items that you sent to school. There were

so many socks, in fact, that Ms Broxham was unable to get them all in her car for delivery to the Mustard Seed. We ended up having to use a truck!



Thank you so much for your support of this very special event.

ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR SURVEY

As an annual check-up on the education system, the Accountability Pillar provides an opportunity for Alberta Education and school authorities to ensure that we're equipping students for success.

The Accountability Pillar uses a set of 16 indicators consisting of surveys of students, parents and teachers on various aspects of quality; student outcomes such as dropout and high school completion rates; and provincial assessments of student learning. From January to the end of Feb-

ruary, Alberta Education will be conducting the annual Accountability Pillar Survey. In January, parents of students in grades 4, 7 and 10 will receive a survey from Alberta Education. In February, students in grades 4, 7 and 10 and all teachers will be completing their surveys online at school.

All surveys are anonymous and ask questions about experiences with the school. In addition to English and French, the parent survey is available in Chinese, Punjabi, Arabic, Blackfoot, Cree,

Korean, Spanish and Tagalog.

Your participation in the survey helps provide important information on the quality of education your child is receiving, so we encourage you to return your survey promptly.

Survey results will be available to school authorities in May 2012, and will be reported publicly as part of their 3-Year Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports.

LIBRARY NEWS

Looking for something to read? February themes include Groundhog Day (Feb.2), 100th Day of School (Feb. 13), Valentine's Day (Feb. 14), National Flag of Canada Day (Feb. 15), Family Day (Feb. 20), and the month is Black History Month. Our library has books about all of these subjects, and many more!

Book Fair is March 26-29!

Reading – Give it a Shot! is a literacy program offered to Grades 4, 5, and 6 students. It runs from January 16 to March 16, 2012. Students record their reading time - whether it is books, newspapers, magazines, computer programs, or the Internet - on a tracking sheet. The students' parents, guardians or teachers can sign-off on their reading. After every 100 minutes read, students are rewarded with a

Calgary Flames bookmark. Counting minutes rather than books allows all students, regardless of their reading ability, to participate. A total of 24 bookmarks are available for the students to earn. The object for the students is to collect the entire Calgary Flames Set. We have a set for each student in Grades 4, 5, and 6, and many have already been awarded!

SCIENCE CENTRE BROADENS OUR MINDS ABOUT SCIENCE

The Grade 4 visit to the new Science Centre was one of the highlights of the month of January. It may have been cold outside, but there was plenty of energy to heat things up on our field trip with the Grade 5 class. The morning was filled with excitement as we began to explore the many hands-on activities. With so many displays to grab and hold our attention, it was impossible to really see and experience everything that this wonderful learning place had to offer.

The Centre is divided into various rooms based on themes in Science. Many students were amazed at the variety of things that were considered to be under the subject of *Science*. It seemed difficult for many of us to begin to name all of our favourites. One thing that did hold true for everyone is that this was a place to visit again. I am certain some of you have already had requests by your child to visit the Centre as a family.

Even during lunch, various activities kept the students and some

of us adults active. I quickly learned how uncoordinated I was compared to my students.

After lunch the students were challenged to create simple gear machines. Thanks to the fathers who seemed naturally able to assist the students while I stood by, perplexed. Fortunately for us, we returned back to the school just in time to have our gym class.

A great day was had by all.

SCIENCE FAIR

The Indus School Science Fair will be held on Wednesday, February 15th at 12:30 p.m. Parents are welcome to attend.

Information packages were sent home with students before Christmas break.

There will be two categories this year: Competitive and Assignment. All entries in the Competitive category will be previewed for quality by staff on or before February 13th.

Grades 1-3: Class projects

Grades 4-6: Individual projects

Grades 7-9: Participation is optional

Grs. 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9 will present at 12:30 p.m. and K, 1, 2, 4 and 6 will present at 1:20 p.m.

VALUE ADDED SCHOOL REVIEW – YOU ARE INVITED!

Indus School has undergone massive changes over the last seven years. We have doubled in size, have changed from a K-5 school to K-9, and have added diverse programs such as *PEAK*, *Band*, and the *1:1 Computer* program. Additionally, we have started the journey into post-modern, *21st Century Learning*, a fundamental change in the way we think about and conduct teaching.

The question as to how well we have navigated these changes is sometimes difficult to assess. While we, as a staff, do reflect on our practice and the results thereof on a continual basis, it is sometimes difficult to get the

whole picture when one is within the frame.

In an effort to further improve what we are doing here at Indus, we have requested a *Value Added School Review* (VASR). The purpose of which will be to add an external perspective, thus expanding on our self-assessment. The results of the VASR will either confirm or improve on our current analytical processes which will, in turn, contribute to continuous school improvement.

The review will be organized by an external team led by Dr. John Burger (RVS Director of Schools) which will work in con-

cert with an internal team to identify a central research question specific to the needs of our school. They will then gather data through surveys and/or focus groups. Following a thorough analysis of the data, they will report back to the school community and develop an action plan to address the needs identified. These evidence-based recommendations will then drive our annual school improvement initiatives.

For a more thorough explanation of the process, and an opportunity to meet Dr. Burger, **please attend our information session in the Indus School gym at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 13.**

EMERGENT READERS IN KINDERGARTEN

When a child begins to read it is such an exciting time and an amazing process to observe. Confidence grows as a child expands his/her reading vocabulary and finds success in using reading strategies taught in the classroom. In Kindergarten, children learn the letters of the alphabet together with the corresponding sounds. They are taught to hear the smallest parts of sounds called phonemes and knowing the correlation between letters and sounds provides children with the tool to "decode" new words using a blending technique. Some words like *the* can not be sounded out and must be learned and memorized. Repetition at this level is essential to build confidence and to respond

automatically to words and develop fluency. Reading word by word is not effective because reading is not just words; it is meaning. Reading makes sense of words, and makes connections with background knowledge while forming mental images. Rich experiences are important to a child because readers build on background knowledge and will draw on their own experiences to form mental pictures while reading. Good readers think about what they are reading and may need to stop to reread for clarity of meaning if it does not make sense. The most valuable way to support a child's literacy development is by providing a daily reading experience. Don't forget to continue to read to

your child because their listening vocabulary is very important too. When they hear a new word and add it to their own understanding they will already have a reference for that word (meaning and pronunciation) when they read it on their own. Family literacy experiences will make a real difference to your child's ongoing success in learning to read. Praise your child's efforts and accomplishments. Remain loving and supportive. This is your child's first attempt to read and it should be a positive experience. Success is very important to this process, as we want to foster a love for life-long reading. Watch for your child's reading folder to come home this month!

CURLING GRADES 7, 8 AND 9

It has become necessary for the Indus Recreation Centre to cancel our ice time for curling on February 27, 28 and 29. We will

keep you posted.



THOSE TESTS AGAIN?

Over the next few weeks students will be writing two important diagnostic tests, the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation and the Group Math Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation. These

tests are designed to assist the teachers in pinpointing strengths and weaknesses in students' reading and mathematical skills. Because they are not tied directly to our curriculum, the final score on the tests

DATES TO REMEMBER

Feb. 6-9 Skating

Feb. 13-16 Skating

Feb. 13 VASR Meeting at 7:00 pm

Feb. 15 Science Fair

Feb, 17-24 — NO SCHOOL

Feb. 27 Classes resume

will not be the same as your child's mark. What the results will do, however, is tell the teachers where to place additional focus in their lessons for the upcoming months.

Start your morning right!

Breakfast is an important meal of the day.

Eating first thing in the morning helps your child to be more alert during the school day.

In fact, kids who eat breakfast are more likely to do well in school and have healthier weights.

Here are some easy and quick breakfast ideas:

- Whole wheat toast with peanut butter and a banana.
- Oatmeal topped with walnuts and strawberries.
- Mixed cereal – mix several high fibre cereals and add some fruit.

- Poached egg(s) and cheese with a slice of whole wheat toast.
- Smoothie made with fruit, yogurt and milk.
- Whole grain English muffin with an apple and glass of milk.

If you run out of time in the morning encourage your children to take breakfast on the go. Try to find a breakfast that works best for your family and start everyone's day off right.

For more information and breakfast ideas please visit www.albertahealthservices.ca

This month's featured recipe...

Basic French Toast

4 eggs, lightly beaten
2/3 (125 mL) cup low fat milk
8 slices firm whole wheat bread
4-5 tsp (20-25 mL) margarine

Directions:

1. Combine eggs and milk in a pie plate; beat with a fork until well blended.
2. Dip bread slices into the mix to coat each side.
3. Melt 1 tsp (5 mL) butter or margarine in a frying pan over medium heat. Brown each side of bread until it is cooked through. Serve immediately or freeze for later use.

To reheat frozen French toast slices:

Put in the toaster or
Microwave on high for 30 to 45 seconds or
Place in the oven at 400°F for 10 minutes



Watch, discuss, reinforce

Teaching your children to be 'media wise'

By watching advertisements with your child, and engaging in meaningful discussion, you can help your child to recognize important strategies that will teach them to be media wise.

Use these discussion starters as an opportunity to reinforce your family values and show children how to think critically about what they see, hear and read.

Remind them that, in the end, they have the ability to make their own choices.

Following the viewing of an ad that shows beautiful people having fun, ask:

- What did you like best about that ad?
- What did you notice about all of the people?
- Do you think that is the way most people look?
- Do you think that the ad is really showing you



Teaching your children how to be media wise helps them understand the plethora of messages they receive from advertisers and other programming on television.

what it would be like to use their product? Why or why not?
• Why do you think advertisers use beautiful people in their ads?

For more information about this topic, visit www.longlivekids.com.

Seal out tooth decay!

Sealants help to prevent cavities on the chewing surfaces of your child's back teeth. They are made of a clear or tooth-coloured plastic material.

They don't require any drilling or freezing and cost much less than a filling. Ask your dentist or hygienist about sealants.

