

Indus School

SPIRIT



Some Pertinent Information Regarding Indus Today
Parent Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue 4

Student Count 232

STUDENT FEE INCREASES FOR 2013/14

To minimize the impact of provincial cuts on student learning and support services, on March 21, 2013, the Board of Trustees raised instructional supplies and materials fees and student transportation fees.

Instructional Supplies Fees

With the province's eradication of the Learning Resources Credit (LRC) Allocation to Boards for 2013/14, RVS Trustees believed they had no other alternative than to increase instructional supplies and materials fees by \$10 for Grade 1 – 12 students, Mar. 21, 2013. Reflecting a loss of \$140,000, the allocation helped offset the cost of classroom resources, such as textbooks, student agendas, computer supplies and copying resources. The Board decision to increase fees will net approximately \$150,000 in additional revenue. As with RVS' Stu-

dent Transportation Fees, the Board has maintained relatively static fees over the last three years, however, voted in favour of increasing fees slightly if it means being able to allocate more resources to instruction.

Student Transportation Fees

Beginning this September parents of Gr. 1 to 12 rural and urban bus students will see transportation fees increase by \$50/child. RVS' Board voted in favour of the increase, Mar. 21, 2013, after learning that its Transportation Department will lose \$1 million in provincial grant funding next year following the province's decision to eliminate its Fuel Contingency Grant. Trustees agreed to raise the fees to partially offset the loss of revenue in favour of reducing services and increasing ride times to

over an hour in some rural routes. Despite considerable growth within the jurisdiction, Trustees have refrained from raising student transportation fees during their term in office. As in previous years, no transportation fees will be charged for Kindergarten students, while families who move out of RVS will continue to be eligible for a partial refund. RVS will seek to offset future increases by exploring co-operative busing with neighbouring boards.

An updated list of 2013/14 fees can be found on RVS' website under Schools/General School Fees, accessible at <http://www.rockyview.ab.ca/registration/schoolfees>.

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OUR MISSION

***THE PURPOSE OF
INDUS SCHOOL IS
TO BUILD IN STU-
DENTS A MULTI-
FACETED PER-
SONAL FOUNDA-
TION TO CARRY
THEM SUCCESS-
FULLY THROUGH
LIFE.***

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ARR! TREASURE MAPS - GRADE 3 SMARTIES

For Math Fair the Grade 3s created treasure maps. We crumpled the paper and dyed it with wet tea bags. What fun! Students used the following skills creating their maps.

- Reading and understanding maps
- Cardinal directions and com-

passes

- Difference between cm and km
- Distances between objects measuring accurately
- Understanding of legends and map keys



GRADE 2 MUSHERS RACE THEIR WAY TO NOME!

The excitement was on high speed this month as the Grade 2 students closely followed the *Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race* of 2013. Students chose and cheered on their favorite musher on the 1500 km trail from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska. Students learned about the sport, the history of the race and the dogs by completing research projects, reading musher blogs and watching insider videos that were uploaded daily from the trail. First place winner of the race went to Mitch Seavey, Mrs.

Potter's musher. Second place went to Grace Silvester's musher, Aliy Zirkle.

Third and fourth place were Miss Mikkelsen's musher, Jeff King, and Cole Robertson's musher, Dallas Seavey. Garrin Gosling's musher was close behind in eighth place.

Please stay tuned in April for our upcoming *Boats and Buoyancy Unit* in Science. Students will be designing, testing and making modifications to their own boats. Please talk with your child over the Easter break about the materials they would like to use to build their boat.



Iditarod winners: Grace Silvester, Mrs. Potter, Cole Robertson and Garrin Gosling

FUN FIELD TRIP FOR GRADES 1, 2 AND 3

The Grades 1, 2 and 3 students will be going to the Glenbow Museum on April 18th. Each class will be going on an adventure at the museum and

then to a session directly related to their Social Studies and Science curriculums. We look forward to this exciting day!

Specific information will be sent home with the students after the break.

THE AMAZING RACE AN ALBERTA ADVENTURE

The Grade 4 class went on an inside adventure during the month of March. To further learn about their home province, all students participated in the *Amazing Race*. In teams of four, the students raced to unearth facts about Alberta. Many famous landmarks and other geographical and historical facts

were included in the questions. Using the Mac laptops, the teams raced across various parts of Alberta discovering information. The teams were very focused as they tried to win each leg of the race. Strategies were used by each team so they would be the successful team. In order to win, the team had to work together.

This Social Studies activity was very challenging for Grade 4. In the end, students learned a lot about their province but also were surprised at how much they already knew, having visited parts of our beautiful province. All teams were competitive and had fun while learning.

PEAK HIGHLIGHT

The PEAK room is proud and happy to welcome Grade 8 students to our classroom. Some Grade 8 students have begun working with the PEAK stu-

dents, supporting reading, vocabulary development and social skills development.

I would like to thank our volunteering Grade 8 students. I know

that they will benefit and learn as much from the PEAK room as they will contribute to the learning of students in the PEAK Room.

INDUS BAND CONCERT - APRIL 11

The Indus Band will be playing in the Indus School Gymnasium on Thursday, April 11th, from 10:30am to 11:15am. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Scheduled for the show will be trumpet, flute, saxophone, clarinet, and even xylophone solo-

ists. In addition, the Indus singers will accompany the senior band with sailing songs. Those



who would like to join the festival with their special talents may do so, by contacting the music director, Mr. Kim, via email: pkim@rockyview.ab.ca. He would be more than pleased to include you in the program.

THANK YOU FROM THE INDUS STAFF



The staff of Indus School would like to thank Indus School Council

and the many parents who contributed to *Staff Appreciation Week*. The gift cards, the many home baked goodies, as well as fruit, crackers, cheese and meat tray, candies, tulips, the special luncheon on Thursday, and the supervision that was provided by

parents so all staff could take part in the luncheon, were all very much appreciated.

We are truly fortunate to have such wonderful parents!

WHAT ARE ALL THOSE TESTS ABOUT?

Recently, our students have participated in several tests and surveys. Each of these has a specific purpose in determining school and individual student needs. In order of appearance, here are the standardized assessments we have used recently.

The *Canadian Cognitive Aptitude Test* (CCAT) was given to students in Grades 4 through 9. The results from this test are particularly useful in that they not only show general reasoning ability, but also break it down into categories. The CCAT measures student's ability to reason using language, numbers, and spatial relations (shapes, graphs, patterns, etc.). As a general rule of thumb, our students tend to demonstrate the greatest aptitude in language and spatial reasoning, and less so with numbers.

The *Alberta Education Accountability Pillar Survey* is an online survey for all students in Grades 4 and 7 and teachers. Parents of students in those grades are mailed surveys and asked to complete and return them to the Ministry of Education. The results of these surveys are used in the *School Annual Results Report* and *Education Plan* where we attempt to address systemic

problems at the school level. Last year's results showed significant growth in the categories: *Safe and Caring School, Learning Opportunities, Preparation for Work/Lifelong Learning/Citizenship*, and *Continuous Improvement*. *Parental Involvement* was maintained at a satisfactory level.

The *Student Orientation to School Questionnaire* (SOS-Q) is a new assessment tool designed to measure students' attitudes toward school in a variety of categories. This information is extremely important as it is a good predictor of future school achievement and likelihood of completing high school. We recently used this survey with our students in Grades 4 through 9. Overall, the results suggested our students have similar attitudes toward school as the majority of Canadian students their age. One area of concern was *Utility of School*, where our students placed a lower than average value on the curricular materials they are learning in class. Additionally, some individual students were identified as being *at-risk*. This is very helpful in knowing who needs which types of support.

The Group Reading Assessment

and *Diagnostic Evaluation* (GRADE) is another test that helps us pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses. It measures various elements of reading comprehension, vocabulary, and listening comprehension. It is with considerable pleasure that I report our student population, in general, being in the high average range for all three categories.

Still to come this year will be the Group Mathematical Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (similar to the GRADE, but in Mathematics), the RVS Accountability Pillar Survey (similar to the Alberta Education Accountability Pillar, but conducted with all parents, staff members and students in Grades 4-12), and the Provincial Achievement Tests.

It seems like we are spending a lot of time on testing and gathering opinions, but the information gathered is as essential to quality schooling as blood tests and x-rays are to a quality health care. Combined with classroom evaluations and observations, they allow us to put our limited resources to the best use for the best results.

M.G. Wyper, Principal

THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

Grade 6 is breathing a sigh of relief after this seemingly endless winter. Thoughts of our upcoming Outdoor School experience are creeping into our minds. We leave for Outdoor School on April 15th to explore Kamp Ki-

wanis. Four blissful technology-free days and three sleepless nights, inclusive of campfires await us! We are looking forward to learning about the night sky, animal tracks, different types and cycles of trees, hiking,

breathing nature and channeling our ecological artist. We will return on the afternoon of April 18th. Keep an eye out for our camp stories next month!

LIBRARY NEWS

Book Fair

Spring Book Fair begins right after the Easter break! Enter our "Story Laboratory" and get a "charge" out of reading! Our Scholastic Book Fair will take place from April 9-11. We will be open late on Wednesday and Thursday evenings (parent/teacher interviews) for your shopping convenience. We always have a great selection of

affordable books for every age group, from preschool through mature teen, as well as adult. Every purchase you make earns our library some free books! More information will be sent home with students this week.

Reading – Give it a Shot! Congratulations to the Grade 4, 5 and 6 students who have done so well in their *Reading – Give it a Shot!* program and earned Cal-

gary Flames/Hitmen/Roughnecks bookmarks. I have extended the end date until April 30 for students to finish earning their bookmarks, so keep reading!

Talk to your child about what they are reading, and tell them what YOU are reading!

Don't forget to read with and to your kids over the Easter break.

GRADE 5, THE ROCKY CANDY SPECIALISTS!

In our current unit on Classroom Chemistry, the Grade 5 students learned how to make edible sugar crystals. To make them, we had to make a sugar solution. How do you know you have a solution, you might ask? When you stir sugar and boiling water together so that you are no longer able to see anything but a clear mixture, you then have a proper solution. We mixed in food colouring and a variety of flavours to make them exquisitely tempting, and it helped us to ensure that we gave them as much attention as possible for maximum crystal growth. The bigger the crystal, the more we get to eat!

Our crystals required special attention. We had to check them daily to check for crystallization

around the outside of the jar, at the top and on the bottom. If there was crystallization, we transferred them from one jar into another and then poured in



the remainder of the mixture. The more often they were checked and exchanged, the more we got to indulge in the crystals that were left over along the sides of the jar. Daily ice picking is what our room

sounded like while we were all teased with small daily portions of sugared treats. We learned that there were several ways to grow bigger crystals:

1. Use small narrow jars
2. Provide them with as much light as possible
3. Transfer them as often as possible.
4. Leave 1 inch of space from the bottom of the jar. If you go too close to the bottom, the crystals will form on the jar instead of on the pipe cleaner or bbq skewer.

Written by the Grade 5 students.

PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Report cards are being sent home with students on Thursday, March 28th, the last day of school before Easter break. Parent-Teacher Interviews will be held **April 10th from 4:00—7:00**

p.m. and April 11th from 5:00—8:00 p.m. Once again, Book Fair will be open during these times.

Please phone the school at 403.936.5855 to schedule a 15

minute interview with your child's teacher(s).

PARENTING SAD AND DEPRESSED CHILDREN AND YOUTH

This free session is presented by the *Community Education Service of the Child and Adolescent Addictions and Mental Health Portfolio* (CAAMHP) of Alberta Health Services on **May 1, 2013, from 7:00 pm — 8:30 pm** (sign-in at 6:45 pm) at Bert Church High School, 2nd floor Library—1010 East Lake Blvd., Airdrie.

Participants are asked to please

register no later than April 24, 2013, by visiting <http://frc.albertahealthservices.ca/ces.php>. Courses with low registration will be cancelled one week prior to the session.

Participants will learn to recognize depression in your child/adolescent and gain an understanding of the warning signs for suicide. Parenting

strategies will also be identified to help your child reduce the effects of depression.

For more information please email ces@albertahealthservices.ca or call 403-955.7420.

GRADE 1 BUILDERS

Grade 1 has continued to be a busy and interesting place to be during the month of March. We are excited to watch as students become more independent in their language, math, and critical thinking skills. This has allowed us to engage in some very interesting and fun projects!

Our *Building Unit* has encouraged students to look at how things are put together and what materials are used when building a variety of things. The students worked hard at building traps to catch our lepre-

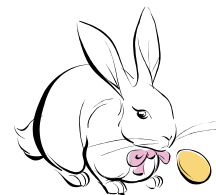
chaun visitors who surprised us just before St. Patrick's Day. Although these were well-constructed traps, the sneaky guys managed to get away for another year.

Our project for the Math Fair was a great blend of our *Building and Geometry Units*. With a partner, students were given toothpicks and marshmallows and instructed to construct 3D objects. They became familiar with the process by building simple basic shapes such as cubes and pyramids. Next, they

built a more complex shape combining various shapes they had learned about previously. Wow! The end results were very impressive!

Thank you once again for the various contributions our parents make to help our class continue to be a happy and productive place!

Happy Easter everyone!



INDUS SCHOOL MATH FAIR

On International Pi day, March 14 (3.14), Indus School celebrated mathematics with its bi-annual Math Fair. Much like they would for a science fair, the students completed projects related to the various fields of mathematics. The extravaganza included games, contests, demonstrations of mathematical principles, 3D models, samples of class work, classification tasks,

and research projects ranging from the history of Pi to analysis of *NHL* statistics.

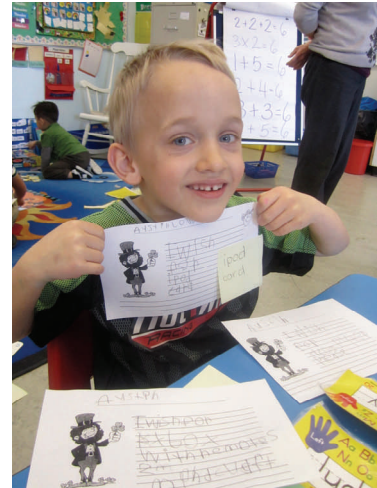


Indus students, Darren and Calvin, explain their analysis of probabilities in "The Game of Math" as they play the game with Austin.

I WISH FOR...

Such excitement surrounding Saint Patrick's Day! The Kindergarten students were both appalled and delighted when confronted by the mess in our classroom along with gold chocolate coins discreetly hidden about. Pandemonium ensued with the realization that a wee trickster had briefly visited our room while everyone was out for recess. A SMART Board message and a mysterious green

box filled with special Leprechaun writing paper were quickly discovered. After deciphering the message, signed by and portraying Liam the Leprechaun, the students were fervent to begin writing at our literacy writing-centre. You see... Wee Liam's note alluded to the possibility of granting wishes to those who used the special writing paper. But is it a trick or stroke of good luck? Only time will tell!



Austin displays his wishes

GRADE 9 NEWS

March usually brings to mind the beginnings of spring, where birds are chirping and the grass is turning green. Unfortunately, this month has been different, as there have been numerous power outages, and snow plows groom the roads almost daily. Usually, one doesn't pay much attention to the road groomers (unless you're stuck behind one on a crowded highway), but there is a lot more to them than meets the eye. They

get paid by the government, one of the things that the Grade 9 class has been learning about in Social Studies over the course of this cold and dreary Canadian month. One of the larger projects this class has been working on is a video presentation entitled, *The Government In Plain English*. The students were to make a video describing how a law is passed through the government using paper cut-outs and other design schemes over a

uniform background to portray a video aspect of the project, rather than just an audio recording. They were to talk about the three branches of the government, as well as what they did and how they affected the law, until the final changes are made and the law is officiated. This has taken the majority of our class time this month in the Grade 9 class.

Written by:
J.C. Ingram

GRADE 7 NON-STOP WRITING

In March, the Grade 7s completed an engaging activity involving non-stop writing. The students had to write for three straight minutes on a randomly

given topic (in this case the topic was sandwiches). After that they picked a part of their writing that stuck out, or a *gem*. That gem was then turned into a poem

using poetic devices such as rhymes and similes. I was impressed by the creativity and use of figurative language that the Grade 7s displayed. Well done!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN APRIL?

Apr. 1-5 Easter Break
Apr. 8 **NO SCHOOL—PL Day**
Apr. 9 **Students return to school**
Apr. 9-11 Book Fair (see article)
Apr. 10-11 Parent-Teacher Interviews

Apr. 11 Band Concert in Gym
Apr. 15-18 Gr. 6 Outdoor School
Apr. 16 Job Safety Presentation for Grs. 7-9
Apr. 18 Grs. 1-3 Glenbow Museum All day