

Indus School

SPÍRIT

Some Pertinent Information Regarding Indus Today

Parent Newsletter



Volume 13, Issue 2

Student Count 230

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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 suc-
cessfully
through life.**

FEBRUARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Feb. 4 - 7	Skating - Grs. 5 & 6 - 8:45 - 9:45 a.m.
Feb. 4 - 7	Skating - Grs. K, 1, 2 - 2:15 - 3:15 p.m.
Feb. 7	Science Fair - 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Feb. 12	Hot Lunch - Tacos
Feb. 15 - 22	NO SCHOOL: Feb. 15 - PL Day Feb. 18 Family Day Holiday Feb. 19 - 20 Time-in-lieu days Feb. 21 - 22 Teachers' Convention
Feb. 25	Students return to school
Feb. 26	Hot Lunch—Chicken Burgers
Feb. 27	Pink Shirt Day - see article on page 5

COLD AND FLU SEASON

It is great to see kids at school but if your child is ill, we do ask that you keep him or her home until the symptoms and

contagious period have passed. Not only do children who are sick have difficulties learning any material cov-

ered in class, they share their viruses and bacteria, resulting in other students and staff members becoming ill.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

We have recently had an inquiry regarding the availability of child care in the Indus community.

If you, or someone you know, provides before and after school care for children in the Indus

area, please call Myrna at the school office (403.936.5855).

ROBOTICS, DANCING, AND MUCH MUSIC

Have you ever wondered how robots worked? Did you know that some robots can dance, and even play the violin like a virtuoso? In music class, we are learning about a robot named Sam. Sam can reach up high, turn around, keep the music in his

feet to the rhythm of the beat, and even dance like the King of Pop - Michael Jackson. Students sing to the song of Sam the Robot Man, and even learn to do the moonwalk.

If you have dancing abilities and would like to come and teach

some of your skills, please contact Mr. Kim about volunteering. Please contact him at pkim@rockyview.ab.ca. He would be more than pleased to hear from you.

WORKING ON AN IGLOO IN GRADE 2

In Social Studies, the Grade 2 students have started to focus on the community of Iqaluit and the way of the Inuit people. Students are learning many different aspects of the Inuit culture and life in Northern Canada through research, pictures and text. In early January, students spent their time working towards building an igloo out in

our schoolyard. During the month of February and March students will be completing various Inuit art projects and closely following the Iditarod Dog Sled Race starting in March. Please stay tuned for more important information, as your child will be choosing a musher to track and cheer on during the race.

After learning how to write 'star sentences' through the JoAnne Moore writing program, the Grade 2 students are now taking their writing skills further and writing 'paragraphs with punch'. We were also very excited to start reading with the Indus Pre-School kids in January. Please ask your child about their reading buddy.

THE SKY IS THE LIMIT???

The Sky has no limit for Grade 6! Throughout the months of December and January, Grade 6 students were applying their Science knowledge to study the sky. All students chose a planet, star, constellation or any area

that they were interested in, wrote a short report using this research and then recreated their piece of the universe by building a model. If you are in the school, drop on by the Grade 6 room and take a peek. Sadly, our Sky Sci-

ence unit has come to an end. But we're still keeping our eyes on the stars!

NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW CHALLENGES FOR GRADE 4

January was bursting with activity. To get back into shape after holidays, swimming lessons got every part of students' bodies moving again. Ending the month with skating used different muscles with a huge focus on balance. As usual, the Grade 4 class proved how quickly they pick up new skills compared to

their much older teacher. This class enjoys any challenge. Academically, *The Flames Reading Give-it-a Shot Program* inspired everyone to increase daily reading. Keeping track of minutes read also helped students develop personal responsibility. Of course the month of January is also always about preparing for

Science Fair. In Grade 4, it is also the first time that students do their own project. This experience again presents many new challenges. With the Science Fair on February 7, everyone is focused on completing a fabulous project.

SWIMMING UPDATE

Grades 1 through 5 started the new year off with a week of swimming lessons. The students learned invaluable water skills. Bob Bahan instructors did a great job teaching students swimming skills and safety. It was amazing watching the progress students made in just one week! At the beginning of the

week many students were scared to go in the deep end and by the end of the week they were jumping off the diving board.

We would like to thank parent council for paying for the buses.



GRADE 1 NEWS

January was a fun month in Grade 1! We learned a lot when we went swimming, and skating is proving to be equally as excit-

ing for us! February is also going to be jam-packed with the Science Fair, 100th Day of school and Valentine's Day. We will be

sending home more information very soon about all the happenings coming up for our little ones.

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

The Grade 3s have been busy building, writing and creating. We have been testing different types of materials for our building unit. We created different types of houses based on the *Three Little Pigs* story. Using

popsicle sticks, straws and tape, students created a house. We then tested our houses by trying to blow them down. After multiple attempts, students learned how to build a sturdy house where a pig would be safe. To

incorporate writing, the students created their own *Three Little Pigs* story. What great imaginations the Grade 3 Smarties have.

Oink! Oink!

POWER DOORS AT INDUS SCHOOL

In 1951, when the original section of Indus school was built, there was little thought to universal access. As additions have been built onto the school, ramps have accompanied stairs, and wheelchair accessible washrooms were included. Over the Christmas break, power doors were added to the main entrance at Indus School. They are a great example of universal design: although they are officially intended to provide building

access to people in wheelchairs or with mobility challenges, they also offer assistance to people entering the building whose arms are full or to the younger students who may find the doors are too heavy to open.

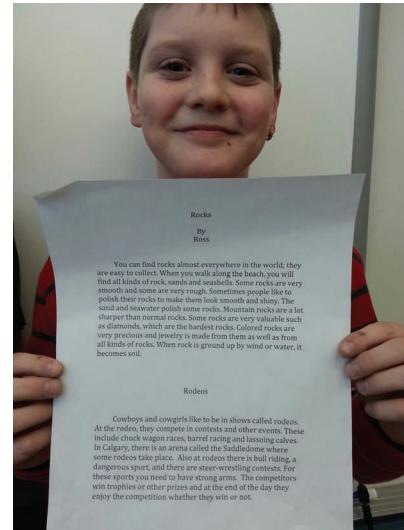


DAZZLING GRADE 5 PARAGRAPHS

The Grade 5 class has been working on collecting information on a variety of topics and learning how to put those facts into their own words to make fantastic paragraphs. Making keyword lists helps them to organize information that can be paraphrased rather than copied, as they are learning that this is plagiarism. When rewriting their paragraphs, they have three things to consider: making their paragraphs enjoyable to capture and keep the reader's attention, trying not to use the same sentence openers, as it can bore the reader, and creating

new sentences that do not change the meaning of the original facts. Using a variety of sentence openers makes our sentences less repetitive. Luckily, they have a list of prepositions, clausals, -ing, -ed and ly words to assist them in creating their interesting sentences. As a result, the Grade 5s are now becoming excellent paragraph writers.

(Paragraph written by the Grade 5 students)



GRADE 7 AUTHORS

In January the Grade 7s have been working on creating original fables or fairy tales. They began this process by studying the elements of theme, setting, plot,

and character in various fables and fairy tales. After that they planned a series of fables or a fairy tale with an original theme, demonstrated by the plot. The

students have taken on this challenge, and it has been great to see them take chances and extend themselves as writers.

STRONG SCHOOL-COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

netWORK with RVS to Create Strong School-Community Connections!

Parents looking to access student volunteer services or share their expertise with schools can now do so with a click of their mouse! Rocky View Schools recently launched netWORK, an online database that promotes two-way volunteerism between schools and communities. Developed by RVS' Superintendent Working Committee – Community Engagement, netWORK makes it easy for schools, community organizations, businesses, and par-

ents to offer or receive volunteer services that support provincial curricular outcomes. The project is currently being piloted within six schools, including Bert Church High School, Crossfield Elementary, Nose Creek Elementary, Prairie Waters Elementary, Springbank Middle School, and Springbank Community High School, and may be launched jurisdictionally in 2013/14. With schools busy populating the databases with service offers and requests, Step 1 for parents is to visit netWORK to "Offer Your Assistance". Parents are encour-

aged to return to the website next month to find out how schools can help them! In late February, schools will be sending students home with a netWORK fact sheet and letter, which parents can share with businesses and community organizations that may be interested in learning more about RVS' new initiative! Help create strong school-community connections by visiting netWORK, accessible on the RVS website under Schools: <http://www.rockyview.ab.ca/schools/netWORK>

LIBRARY NEWS

Looking for something to read? February themes include Groundhog Day (Feb. 2), Chinese New Year (Feb. 10), 100th Day of School (Feb. 11), Valentine's Day (Feb. 14), National Flag of Canada Day (Feb. 15), Family Day (Feb. 18), and the month is Black History Month. Our library has books about all of these subjects, and many more!

Reading – Give it a Shot! is a literacy program offered to Grades 4, 5, and 6 students. It runs from January 14 to March 15, 2013. Students record their reading time - whether it is books, newspapers, magazines, computer programs, or the Internet - on a tracking sheet. The student's parents, guardians or teachers can sign-off on the student's reading. After every 100 minutes read, students are re-

warded with a **Calgary Flames** bookmark. Counting minutes rather than books allow 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!

TRANSITION TO CHESTERMERE HIGH SCHOOL

Tuesday, January 28 marked *half-way through the school year day* in Rocky View Schools. It was also the day that middle and multi-level school administrators in our area met with Mr. Fenton, Assistant Principal from Chestermere High School, to discuss our Grade 9 students' transition to high school.

In addition to school-to-school meetings and transfer of information regarding students and programs, parents will have an opportunity to attend an evening open house at CHS at 7:00 p.m., on February 27, while students will receive guided tours of the

high school on March 20. During these meetings, students and parents will have an opportunity to learn about the prerequisites for entry into Grade 10 courses, and the credit requirements for graduation.

High school is not just about academics. It is the time when students develop their athletic, artistic, and leadership potential. To provide incoming students with a brief understanding of some of the opportunities available to them, band students from CHS will be coming to Indus on March 7 to perform for our entire student body. Following the con-

cert, our Grade 9s will receive a presentation and have an opportunity to ask questions regarding Fine Arts programs. There will also be a sporting demonstration that will showcase a sport from CHS and again providing information and an opportunity for students to ask questions regarding athletics. The date for that event has not yet been set.

Our students are fortunate to be moving on to a school that goes to such great lengths to ensure a smooth transition.

PINK SHIRT DAY— FEBRUARY 27

On February 27th, everyone is encouraged to wear something pink to school to symbolize that we as a society will not tolerate bullying anywhere.

The idea came from two Nova Scotia high school students. The following is a snippet of a *Globe & Mail* article which inspired *Pink Shirt Day*. "David Shepherd,

Travis Price and their teenage friends organized a high school protest to wear pink in sympathy with a Grade 9 boy who was being bullied (for wearing a pink shirt)... (They) took a stand against bullying when they protested against the harassment of a new Grade 9 student by distributing pink T-shirts to all the boys

in their school. As they stood in the foyer handing out the shirts, the bullied boy walked in. His face spoke volumes. 'It looked like a huge weight was lifted off his shoulders. The bullies were never heard from again.'

We can make a difference!

HOCKEY HELMETS - THANK YOU

Thank you to all who responded to our request for hockey hel-

mets. The response was overwhelming. Chestermere High

School has also offered to lend us hockey helmets if we need them.

KINDERGARTEN BUILDING IN 3D!

It turned out to be the perfect winter day for building an ice castle! The chinook winds brought warmer temperatures and the preparation had been done with each child bringing in an ice block and our wonderful volunteers ensuring our blocks were ready for construction. Anticipation escalated throughout the day and the Kindergarten students eagerly headed outside to begin building their ice castle. As with any piece of work, a good plan is essential, so a conventional rectangular design was decided upon and the corner blocks were established. It became apparent that an adhesive material was needed to bond the blocks and after some creative brainstorming, we agreed to use water

and packed snow to adhere the ice blocks together. Every child contributed to the construction process through actively transporting snow and ice, positioning and assembling the



Gerrard contributes a block to our structure.

ice blocks and ensuring all cracks were filled. All the children were delighted with their accomplishment and all the colours of a rainbow were depicted in their ice castle!

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers for making this project possible!

Be sure to visit our Science Fair where more of our 3D structures will be displayed!

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 and 7 will receive a survey from Alberta Education. In February, students in Grades 4 and 7 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 2013, and will be reported publicly as part of their 3-Year Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports.

PEAK HIGHLIGHTS

Although we have been quiet so far this year, we have much to celebrate. In the PEAK room we have been successfully working on helping students from Grades 4 to 8 with math. The Math 10 students are making great pro-

gress and have been instrumental in making the PEAK room the "cool" place to be for many students. The Water Room has become the students' choice of hangout in the North Hall. Most importantly, the PEAK stu-

dents integrated into Band at the beginning of the year and integrated into the Junior High Art option in January.

GRADE 8 UPDATE

In Grade 8, we have been studying how colors represent emotions by writing poems. Red, for instance, normally means anger or love, blue means sad, and the list goes on.

In Social Studies we are currently looking at humanism, the move-

ment that arose during the Renaissance. The humanists believed in the importance of people and in their ability to accomplish anything.

In Science, we are focusing on *Liquid, Flow and Matter*. Students chose a group of three

and picked out a topic. Each group will now do a demonstration to teach the class about their topic. We will presenting this week.

-Lauren & Sadie

GRADE 9 UPDATE

This month in Grade 9 we have developed a new economic system called "My Classroom Economy." The system is based off of a currency called "fehu"; which can be used to purchase items at

monthly auctions, or saved to pay off the monthly rent and electricity bill . Fehu is obtained from the jobs, with varying wages, that the students applied for. This economy reflects the

current unit Grade 9 is doing in Social Studies this year, focusing on the economic system and the money flow within it.

HOMEWORK

We have received a number of questions recently about our homework policy at Indus School; there seems to be some confusion on the topic. Below is a summary of our direction regarding homework and the rationale for the policy and procedures.

Rationale: A significant body of research, summarized by Robert Marzano, et al, in *Classroom Instruction That Works* (ASCD) suggests that homework has a minimal impact on student achievement prior to middle school years. Many elementary aged students participate in a multitude of after-school activities; adding the demand of homework can place significant stress on families and individuals, yet it is shown to have very little academic benefit.

Some students do need extra practice, but often it is those students who need additional instruction to learn a concept, and are thus unable to do the work without support. Many times, students who are able to complete an assignment have already mastered the skill and do not need the practice, while those who need the practice have not mastered the skill and require assistance.

As a school, we have put into place a policy based on research that is in keeping with students' developmental and academic needs. It is, in a nutshell:

Homework can take many forms:

- completing assignments started in class,
- reviewing and preparing for tests,
- assignments specifically developed to be completed at home.

Prior to Grade 6, homework will take the form of home reading.

- On occasion, remedial assignments, designed to address a particular skill (such as basic facts), may be sent home.
- On occasion, specific assignments that are not practical to complete in school may be assigned as homework. Only the elements of the assignment that cannot be completed at school should be given as homework.
- There will be students who do not complete some assignments on time. To address this concern, an assignment completion room operates from 11:50 until 12:15. Teachers sending students to this room ensure students have the materials they need and a clear understanding of the assignment they are to complete.
- Teachers sending students to the homework room notify the teacher supervising the room so attendance can be checked.

In Grade 6, test preparation will be added as homework.

In Grade 7, homework skills will be taught directly as homework begins to be integrated into the students' lives.

Students in Grades 8 & 9 will receive homework on a regular basis.