

Indus School

SPÍRiT

Some Pertinent Information Regarding Indus Today

Parent Newsletter



Volume 14, Issue 1

Student Count 225

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INFLUENZA

If your child is showing signs of having the flu, we would ask that you please keep them at home to prevent the spreading of germs to others. Symptoms include fever, cough, headache, muscle aches, loss of appetite and feeling tired. For further in-

formation on Influenza, please refer to the Alberta Health Services website at <http://bit.ly/19KazQ1>.

We are taking extra precautions at the school, cleaning from top to bottom on a daily basis, with Virex, a

disinfectant used in 2009 with the initial outbreak of H1N1.

We have also set up, in the library, a display of resources available to teachers regarding germs, colds, viruses, etc.

IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY

Jan. 6–10	Swimming for Grades 1 to 5 students	Jan. 14	Grs. 7-9 Health Presentations
Jan. 10	Girls Basketball Tournament at Bearspaw	Jan. 20	Parent Council General Meeting
Jan. 13	Reading Give It A Shot program begins. Gr. 9 Shots—Nurse	Jan. 24 Jan. 27 Jan. 27-31	Spelling Bee Family Literacy Day Skating Program

STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

With the support of student council and various staff events, we had numerous fun days in December. After Mrs. Graham sang the *Twelve Days of Canadian Christmas* to all the classes, the little porcupine of fame in this story, hid in various places throughout the school. Did you see

him hiding in the Christmas tree? We had two dress-up days –one for red and green colours, a pajama day, and a Who-Hair day on Grinch day. Student Council counted all the students and staff involved. Based on the highest percent of involvement per class, our new monthly Spirit Award goes to Grade 3.

Our Mission

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

GRADE 1 NEWS

December was a fun and busy month in Grade 1! We started our weekly spelling words and we are starting to fill up our Word Wall with all of them. We are also learning to apply these words to the writing that we do every day in class. This month

we will be writing these words in our agendas so we can also review them at home every night. We filled our month with learning about the book, *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*, and did exciting activities with the Grades 2 and 3 classes, too. De-

cember ended with our study of the book, *The Polar Express*, and we had a PJ day and watched the movie on the last day before our break! The Grade 1 class is ready for 2014 to be full of learning and fun!

KINDERGARTEN NEWS

In December, the atmosphere in the kindergarten was one of mounting excitement and growing anticipation as Christmas and our concert performance grew closer. It was a month of creativity as students eagerly fashioned carolers and adorned stained glass bells and festive trees. They transformed popsicle sticks into sparkling snowflakes, wooden clothes pegs into nutcrackers, wrote loving Christmas cards to family and practiced patterning with beaded wreaths and garland. Our creativity was extended to experimenting with jingle bells and the new songs learned in music class. In order to be polished for the concert, we practiced the songs over and over which for young children can be repetitive and mundane, so when at times,

the task seemed overwhelmingly frustrating, we turned our attention toward the people we love most. Our performance would



be our special gift to our parents, one that could not be bought in a store. Through perseverance

and working together toward a common goal, I believe each child experienced not only the tremendous thrill of performing but also

the gift of giving and the rewarding feeling that only comes from hard work and the knowledge that a job is well done. Parents, I hope you enjoyed our gift to you and that your holiday season was filled with love and many special moments with family and friends.

DONATION FROM TALISMAN ENERGY INC.

Indus School would like to acknowledge and thank Talisman Energy Inc. for the very generous donation of \$500.00. These funds are made available through their *Investing in our Communities* program which

recognizes Talisman employees who actively volunteer with organizations in the communities in which they live and work. A very special *thank you* to Elisa Hides for applying for this grant on behalf of Indus School.

We intend to use these funds for the purchase of cameras for student use in the classrooms.

MUSIC NOTES

Happy New Year from the Music Room! I applaud all the musicians, performers, speakers, technical crew, set designers, and stage hands on a successful Christmas Concert. I am proud of the way the Indus students and staff worked together as a team to pull the show together to create a truly festive production.

Did you know that the band

room is open every Tuesday at lunch for students who need extra help, or who wish to do some practicing with friends? It's true! So why suffer listening to honky and squawky music (or the sound of whining because your child doesn't want to practice)? If your child is struggling in band, please encourage him or her to pop by the band room (with instrument in hand!) during lunch or lunch recess for some help.

Actually, do you ever hear your child practicing that instrument you paid for? Band students are expected to practice several times a week in order to keep pace with the class. A copy of the Term 2 Practice Log is posted on our school website under "Band" or "Istchenko", and a print copy was distributed to band students in December.

RVS PRESCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAM (PIP)

PIP is a play-based, developmentally appropriate preschool environment that will support young children 3 to 5 years of age with mild, moderate, or severe special needs.

*Program Unit Funding (PUF) and Mild/Moderate funding is accessed from Alberta Education for those children who fit the funding criteria.

*Small class sizes with low child/adult ratios.

*Certificated Early Childhood Teacher/Special Education Teacher.

*Consistent therapeutic support in the area of occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, physical therapy and psychology are provided as required.

Come to our information session to meet our staff, see our facility and learn more about how we can help your child meet their potential.

**CHILDREN ARE
WELCOME!**

Information Sessions

Wed., Jan. 15, 2014

9:00—11:00 a.m.

R.J. Hawkey School, Airdrie

Thurs., Jan. 16, 2014

9:00—11:00 a.m.

Glenbow Elementary, Cochrane

Fri., Jan. 17, 2014

9:00—11:00 a.m.

Prairie Waters Elementary, Chestermere.

For more information please

contact: Early Intervention@

403.945.4026 or 403.945.4027.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR 2014-15

If you or someone you know has a child who will turn five before February 28, 2015, that child is eligible for Kindergarten for the 2014-2015 school year. Advanced registration is now available at the school between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday to Thursday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Fridays.

Please bring a copy of the child's birth certificate and a \$25.00 registration fee which is non-refundable.

Kindergarten is a full day program that normally runs every Tuesday and Thursday as well as on Fridays, beginning some time in the Spring. There is no transportation charge for Kindergarten students, however, you are still required to

register for bussing prior to July 31st.

The registration form is available on the Rocky View Schools website at www.rockyview.ab.ca if you prefer to fill it out prior to coming to the school for registration.

HOT AND COLD TEMPERATURES IN GRADE 2

The Grade 2 students spent the month of December 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.

In relations to our "I AM CANADA" unit, students have also been studying the temperatures of Indus compared to other Canadian communities. Students were lucky enough to take a tour of the school basement and furnace rooms with

Ms. Preete, in order to learn about methods that are used to control temperature in buildings and how insulation is used to



keep things hot or cold. In class, students designed and constructed a device to keep an ice cube frozen for up to 45 minutes.

Thank you to all parents who made it out to the Christmas

Concert, and donated treats for our class party. Students had a wonderful December studying



and celebrating *The Grinch* and the *Polar Express*. All the best in the New Year!

GRADE 7 AND THE FUR TRADE

In December, the Grade 7s completed a small group activity on phases of the Canadian Fur Trade. They did a fantastic job in

cooperating with each other to complete this project. These projects were completed on the student's computers, and they

included many fun and interesting visual elements. Great work Grade 7!

SKATING PROGRAM

The Grades K-6 students will be skating at the Indus Recreation Centre according to the following schedule:

Monday to Thursday: Jan. 27, 28, 29, 30:
9:30–10:30 am—Grs. 3 and 4
10:30 to 11:30 am—Grs. 5 and 6
1:00–2:00 pm Grs. K, 1 and 2

Friday, Jan. 31:
9:00–9:45 am—Grs. 5 and 6
9:45–10:30 am—Grs. 3 and 4
10:30–11:15 am—Grs. K, 1 and 2
Students will need a CSA approved hockey helmet, skates and a signed consent form to participate in the program. Students in Grades K, 1 and 2 are required to wear snow pants on

the ice. For further details, please refer to the memo that will be sent home on January 13th.



HEY, WE'RE (MOSTLY) NORMAL

In November, the students in Grades 4 through 9 completed surveys regarding how they felt about school. The Student Orientation to School Questionnaire (SOS-Q) identifies student attitudes about the safety of the school, extra-curricular opportunities, the usefulness of school, relationships with peers and for older students, the impact of working part time on their schoolwork. The survey also looked at students' internal and external resilience – the ability to

keep calm and carry on. The results for our Grade 4-6 students were almost identical to national averages; our Jr. High students, however, showed less internal resilience than the Canadian norm, but much higher satisfaction with extra-curricular opportunities and are impacted significantly less by the pressures of balancing part time jobs with school.

Averages, of course, mean that half the students are above that level, and half below. We are

currently working to follow-up with students who identified their self-concept, or connection with school to be significantly lower than average. We are also conducting an analysis of how well this survey predicts success in school, and how that information can be used to improve results and the general school experience for students. We will keep you posted as we explore this fascinating topic.

VASR: FULL STEAM AHEAD

"Our course is set, now full speed ahead!" Those words concluded the principal's message in our Results Report for the 2012-2013 school year. As many of you will recall, we conducted an extensive review of Indus School last year. The results of that *Value Added School Review (VASR)* opened new avenues of support at the division level. An extensive list of how the recommendations had been implemented was included in the October 2013 edition of SPIRIT. It is exciting to provide you with further updates:

1. School Building: A long range plan is being developed to update the school building itself. This will see changes to allow us to use the spaces in our school more efficiently. More immediately, the Grade 3 room (our former computer lab) is scheduled to have an enclosure built around the servers and routers, some computer benches re-

moved, and the windows between it and the library covered over (and sound proofed). We have also been able to get the cracked and chipped countertops in the office and staff room replaced.



Mr. Green organizing the new equipment for our Science Lab.

2. Science: With the addition of Grades 7-9 over the past few years, the limitation of our resources has become a significant challenge. This year, we were able to acquire the equipment

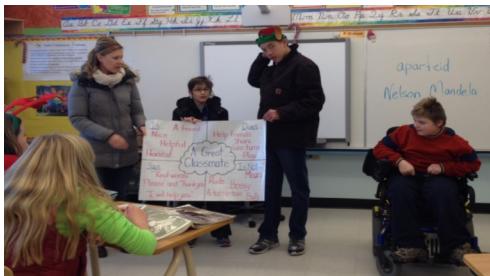
and supplies needed to operate a proper science lab. The former Grade 6 room, just across from the staff room, is now an art studio / science lab. It will be an exciting spring as classes get rolling with experiments.

3. Band: Our band program is growing, and so is our instrument collection. Just yesterday, we received word that our request for an orchestral xylophone, two tubas, a euphonium, some cymbals, two French horns, a Timpani drum, a bass Clarinet and others was approved. We look forward to creating an even sweeter sound in the months to come.

There is more to the VASR report and our journey of school improvement. Keep your hands on the tiller and stay tuned for updates!

CLASSROOM VIRTUES!

Even though the PEAK room had no heat during one of our December cold snaps, we were warmly welcomed into the Grade 6 classroom to share our *A Great Classmate Is...* poster. This year the students in the PEAK room have been brainstorming ideas about what a great classmate is, does, says and is not. Kindness, helpfulness,



and sharing are some of the positive virtues which have shaped our classroom environ-

ment. We were invited into the Grade 6 class to share what we have discovered about the importance of these virtues. It was a great learning experience for PEAK, not only because the students were able to share their learning, but also because they were able to practice their communication skills in a larger group of people.

DIV 3 SCIENCE

In Science 7,8 and 9 recently we have been focusing on investigating concepts through digital media and hands-on activities.

In our Grade 8 class we have delved into the microscopic world of cells. We examined fresh plant cells under the mi-

croscope as well as prepared slides of single celled organisms. Our Grade 7s have recently studied the composition of soils in the lab by examining the water holding capacity of humic matter found in a variety of soil types.

In a different direction, the Grade 9 class has begun the process of understanding the periodic table of elements. This amazing tool is the keystone of chemistry and the first step to developing our knowledge of the atomic world of science.

GRADE 3 NEWS

December flew past in a flurry (literally!). We had tons of fun in Grade 3. We built and tested our creative structures in Science. Look out parents; we've got some pretty innovative architects in our class! We also built stronger relationships through spirit activities such as 'Who Hair Day', viewing "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" with K-6 students. We worked in small mixed grade groups to think up some great acts of kindness to perform for the staff in our school community and worked together to cre-

ate crafts to share in our spirit for the holiday season. During



January we will continue to build on our skills. We are beginning the month with a healthy start: swimming. We are also starting anew, sharing our 'resolutions' and pinning

down our future learning goals. Students will continue to build on their reading skills, and will also begin to write cohesive sequence stories. Our new Math unit, Data Relationships, is allowing us to understand how to read and share information in a new graphing format. Within this unit, we will regularly graph the weather for Indus, Peru, Ukraine, Tunisia and India. Did you know that it was +24 in Lima, Peru on Monday? Just a little warmer than Indus! We will continue to warm up our minds through reading our '50 books'. Many students have read their first 10 and are well on their way to 20 books. Keep up that reading Grade 3!

HOUR OF CODE

Angry Birds, MicroSoft, Face-book, and Drop Box. What do all these have in common? Their developers feel strongly that having a basic understanding of how computer coding works is becoming an essential skill in the 21st Century. Turning their words into action, this esteemed group organized the *Hour of Code* week in December. All of the Indus students from Grades 4 through 9

participated in a fun activity that took about an hour and allowed the students to develop simple JavaScript commands. The event was universally successful and several students enjoyed it so much they went on to try many of the other *Code Academy* activities and tutorials.



Rhys (Gr.6) gives Aidan and Zak (Gr. 4) a hand while they work on the *Hour of Code*.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Indus School Council is still looking for someone to volunteer as the Hot Lunch Coordinator. In

the meantime, the Hot Lunch Program will not be operating. If you are interested in this position,

please call Michelle Alm at 403.936.5340.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

The next General Meeting of School Council will be held on

Monday, January 20th at 6:30 p.m. at the school. We encourage

all parents to attend our General Meetings.

ONLINE PAYMENTS NOW AVAILABLE!

PARENTS PLEASE REGISTER! HERE'S HOW:



Step 1: Go to this website: <https://indus.schoolcashonline.com>

Step 2: Register by selecting "Get Started Today" and following the steps

Step 3: After you receive the confirmation email, please select the 'click here' option, sign in and add each of your children to your household account.

Thank you parents

LIBRARY NEWS

On January 27, 2014, *Family Literacy Day* will celebrate 16 years of learning as a family. The initiative, created by ABC Life Literacy Canada in 1999, has been embraced by literacy organizations, schools and libraries all across Canada. This year, ABC is encouraging families to take time each day to have "15 Minutes of Fun".

Making time each day to learn together with children helps to develop a shared culture of life-long learning. Time spent following a new recipe, playing a game, or reading a story together can focus on learning in a fun way. These teachable moments at home help children learn listening skills and language skills, and develop their imaginations and creativity.

For more great ways to have 15

minutes of fun together, go to www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca and click on HSBC Learning Activity Centre.

Check out these 15 activity ideas to complete with your family to have 15 Minutes of Fun!

1. Write a joke book with your family.
2. Read a bedtime story to the grown-up putting you to bed.
3. Make up a new recipe together and post it online.
4. Tell knock-knock jokes together while doing the dishes.
5. Organize a book swap with your friends.
6. Make up riddles and tell them to your friends.
7. Create a family book club.
8. Build a drum with your family.
9. Surf the Internet and learn about your favourite animal.
10. Make up a song about your day to sing to your family at dinnertime.
11. Write messages to your family on sticky notes and post them around the house.
12. Create a story about what you'll be doing for Family Literacy Day.
13. Play a board game together.
14. Build an acrostic poem using your hero's name.
15. Make an origami boat and see if it will float.

TWELVE READERS OF CHRISTMAS

Twelve Days 'til Christmas Break was a Guest Reader series we held over the month of December. We invited numerous members of our school community to share a Holiday/Christmas picture book with our students. Groups were always multi-aged, a middle school class with an elementary class, listening together. All of the readers were impressed with the students' warmth and shared rapport.

Guest Readers were members of Indus staff who rarely have the opportunity to read with children, our Acting Superintendent of RVS, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, our Local Trustee Bev LaPere, Director of Schools

for RVS, local Langdon firemen, local author and parents. Student Council members met and introduced our guests. The spirit of Christmas was alive and well during all the sessions.

Thanks to everyone involved.



Bev LaPere reading to Kindergarten and Grade 7 students.

GRADE 5 NEWS

To start off a new year, I would like to start by saying thank you to all of the parents who managed to make it in on our last school day of 2013. Students and adults enjoyed spending the morning playing Uno and *Yahtzee*. Students had to keep score by adding whole numbers in *Yahtzee*, and we added a fun twist to scoring in Uno by encouraging everyone to use their adding of decimal knowledge to calculate their scores each hand. Whole numbers were changed to

decimals to link it to our current Math unit on adding and subtracting decimals.



In the last week of December, the Grade 5/6 split was excited to

have the Grade 2 class as an audience to listen to the work they have been doing in

Reader's Theatre. Students were asked to perform using only their voices. This encourages them to fluctuate their tone of voice, to be expressive, fluent and attend closely to punctuation. The group that performed *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* did an exceptional job of making the Grade 2s laugh. Congratulations to Alex, Chasten, Ross, Shinae and Cody on an outstanding performance.

GRADE 4 REALLY HAD CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

December is an exciting time of year for every child. It is a time for decorating, eating special treats, and spending time with family. As much as children in Grade 4 love presents, they also love the holidays because they get more time with their parents and extended family. This time is filled with rituals and your children enjoyed sharing what special activities make up the rituals in your homes.

Of course this time of year brings rituals also at school. The Christmas Concert was a highlight.

Singing Christmas songs to family and friends made each child proud. All subjects this time of year carry the Christmas theme, making learning more fun. Our class party on the last day had students dressed in pajamas with their Christmas hats. Everyone was ready for these magical holidays to begin.

Now that it is January, it is great to see everyone rested and healthy.

