



Valhalla Community School

Northern Alberta's First Rural Leadership Charter School

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Dear Parents of VCS Students,

By now you have received or will soon receive a survey request from Alberta Education in the mail. Most of us don't get too excited by requests to do surveys. This one however is important. It will provide information to the government about your experience and satisfaction with our school. Its purpose is to tell the school and the government how VCS is doing ... where it is doing a great job of educating your children as well as areas where improvement is needed. To get an accurate picture of how VCS parents feel about the education here, it is very important that as many parents as possible complete and return the survey. If only a small percentage of parents respond, the information from the survey may not be accurate.

By completing this survey, you are giving your school, your school authority and your provincial government important information to gauge the quality of education your child is receiving and make improvements where needed.

We're including with this letter some information about Second Language programs and other programs and services offered by VCS as well as a note about safety at Valhalla Community School. If you're not sure about any survey questions, please call the school ... we'd be happy to give you any relevant background material that might help to inform your thoughts.

Thank you for participating in the survey. It is one of the more important things you can do for your school.

Steve Mumert

Principal

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Did You Know

... *That safety is our primary concern at VCS?*

Safety begins before students even get to school ... with well trained and caring bus drivers, careful monitoring of roads and conditions each day by the transportation director and buses that undergo rigorous maintenance practices.

Students are encouraged at school to be considerate and helpful to each other

Staff care about each student. Teachers and educational assistants take on many responsibilities and give many hours above the "minimum requirement"

Small class sizes means students are closely supported and supervised.

When concerns occur, VCS connects directly with parents to work toward the students' best interests

Did You Know

... *That VCS offers many programs and services?*

Alberta Education program of studies is followed and taught
Second Languages (French) is taught by well qualified bilingual teachers

Art, drama and music experiences are given to all students: through classroom instruction, Christmas concerts and other performances through the year, extra-curricular drama programs, extra-curricular music offerings, Junior High Options

Rural leadership focus teaching and activities: whole school, age appropriate public speaking training and practice, "community values" modelling and teaching, public service encouragement and opportunities

In-class student/teacher support by highly skilled and caring educational assistants

Support for English Language Learners

Extra help for students who require it

one on one pull out with instructors (especially at elementary level)

ability-based placements in elementary in reading program

modified programs and special accommodations when needed

Enhanced Learning Opportunity (ELO) class (30 min/day) for **all junior high students** to help keep ahead of homework and learn study skills

Study, Knowledge, Initiative and Life-long Learning (SKILL) Program in Junior High for enhancing study and life skills and even more help with homework (by teacher placement or parent request)

Gender segregated Physical Education and Health/Leadership classes for junior high students

Extra-curricular sports programs

In school speech therapy services

In school access to Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) counselling and small group support

In school access to Alberta Health Services counselling

Did You Know

...That Second Language is an important part of Valhalla Community School?

While learning a second language may be an “option” or possibly not even taught in some schools, at VCS it is a mandated part of the school Charter. That means that when Alberta Education granted a charter to VCS so we could be a school, the decision was partly conditional on us teaching Second Language.

Our Charter also says we will strive to have our students achieve mastery in the subjects they study ... including Second Language.

While not traditionally considered a “core subject”, Second Language is equally important at VCS. “All Core Honors” can not be achieved at VCS unless honors marks are received in Second Language as well as other core subjects.

A “core” value at VCS is that students (everyone really!) should give their best effort at everything they do!