

In an effort to improve communication between school and home, VCS is continuing a curriculum update program. We will be sending home class updates monthly, to help parents be better informed about what their children are currently studying and working on in their core courses (including Second Language courses). It is a short summary. If parents need or desire more detailed information than they are receiving, we encourage them to contact classroom teachers directly.

### **Kindergarten Class Update – Mrs. Stockman**

I hope everyone had a relaxing break. We are back in full swing into our routines. January will be a busy month for us in Kindergarten. Swimming lessons are going to make it fly by!

We are learning about Winter and our 5 senses this month. We will be doing lots of fun activities and crafts exploring these areas. We continue to work hard on our Alphabet. We are up to the letter O. Reading Mastery and Language for Learning have been moving along quite nicely. The kids are doing so well learning to read.

There will be a special family craft going home this month that is always LOTS of fun. Watch for that to come home after swim lessons are over.

### **Grade 1/2 Class Update**

#### **Language Arts – Mrs Mumert**

The grade 1/2 class have all chosen their poems for the speech competition. They are memorizing them during swimming wait time. I was very impressed with how polite and quiet they have been at the pool and in the halls while going and returning from swimming; such great ambassadors for Valhalla School!

Their reading is continuing to impress me. All groups are ready to move to a new reader in the Reading Mastery Signature Series! All students passed their recent Language tests, and the average was 90%! Great attitudes make great students...

#### **Math – Mrs. Lowen**

The Grade One's are working on a short unit called Measurement this month and the Grade Two's will be wrapping up their number sense unit. Basic math and number concepts set the foundation for learning more advanced math concepts. Include counting with your child in your nightly homework routine. This will build confidence and ensure their continued success in math.

**Science – Mr. Heikel**

We have completed our unit on colours and have moved on to a unit on animals. The students will be writing a short report which will be a paragraph on their favorite animal. They will be required to share their writing with the class. This will include how the animals' needs are met where it lives and a brief description.

**Social Studies – Mr. Heikel**

We have moved on to the new text book called Places. So far we are examining three different communities across Canada. There has been emphasis on geography directions and the provinces. Students will be getting familiar with a map of Canada. Last week we built pictorial travel brochures about the communities of Nunavut Meteghan and Saskatoon.

**French – Mrs. Mumert**

In French we have been learning about snowmen and what they wear. We will be talking about the Bonhomme Carnaval, and what he does at the festival in Quebec in février. We are learning the months of the year in French, and how to spell the numbers 1-10.

**Grade 3/4 Class Update****Language Arts – Mrs. Lowen****Reading Mastery**

In Reading Mastery the Grade Three's are finishing up a story about inventions. The Grade Four's are reading short stories and poems and are currently working on a story called Journey to Dawson.

**Language Arts**

Students in Grade Three and Four have started working on their speeches. Most of the students have chosen topics already. In the coming weeks, students will be learning how to research their topics and how to write speeches. The students are very enthusiastic and have done a lot of writing already! Good copies of the speeches will be written on cue cards, which will be provided. Then, we will begin fine tuning and practicing reading our speeches out loud to the class. This week, I will send home information regarding the speech competition, including writing tips.

**Math – Mrs. Lowen**

For the month of January we are working on multiplication. We are currently doing activities used to strengthen counting skills. We are practicing skip counting by 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 25 and 100. Basic math and number concepts set the foundation for learning more advanced math concepts. Include counting with your child in their nightly homework routine. This will build confidence and ensure their continued success in math.

**Social Studies – Ms. Fowler**

SS 3/4 We are looking at the Parkland region and comparing the landscape, natural resources and climate of the region to the previous regions. Students are comparing the area of Edmonton to Calgary. We are discussing why provincial capital cities are called “capitals”.

**Science – Mrs. Lowen**

We are currently working on our Rocks and Minerals unit. I wanted to say a big thank you to parents for allowing your child to bring in their rock collections to share with the class! We are learning about volcanoes and the Earth’s layers this week. We will be learning the differences between Sedimentary, Metamorphic and Igneous rocks and what makes each type of rock unique in the coming weeks. We will also be performing some simple experiments and learning about Mohs Hardness Scale.

**French 3/4 – Mademoiselle Lewis**

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If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email ([ttorielewis@gmail.com](mailto:ttorielewis@gmail.com)) or by phone (250-306-9077).

Merci Beaucoup!

Mademoiselle Lewis

## **PE – Ms Fowler**

This month is basketball. We are working on the skills of passing, dribbling and shooting. Students will be working on defensive and offensive play of the game

## **Grade 5/6 Class Update**

### **Language Arts Grade 5 – Ms. Fowler**

Reading Mastery will be completing and being tested on lessons 51- 60 this week and moving on to the next book soon! We are soon half way through the curriculum which will give us time to do a novel study in June! Please keep reviewing the glossary words( in the student Reading Mastery text book) and their spelling words( located in the back of the spelling work book.)

### **Language Arts Grade 6 – Ms. Fowler**

LA 6 have begun a novel Silverwing by Kenneth Oppel. Students are enjoying this exciting novel about a colony of bats! The novel includes questions, summarizing and vocabulary. Please encourage your child to practice vocabulary words (from the novel) and their spelling words (from the back of their workbooks.)

## **Math – Mrs. Flint**

Grade 5/6 – We are currently at lesson 45 in our textbook. I'm very excited for the New Year with this remarkable group of students! Some of the concepts that we have been learning about are:

Grade 5:

- Multiplication facts: Memory Group
- Capacity
- Tenths and Hundredths
- Relating Fractions and Decimals
- Naming Lines and Segments
- Adding/Subtracting Decimal Numbers
- Rounding Numbers to Estimate

Grade 6:

- Classifying Triangles
- Short Division
- Adding /Subtracting Fractions with Common Denominators
- Fractions: Drawing Pictures and Mixed Numbers on Number Lines
- Classifying Quadrilaterals
- Measuring Lengths with an Inch and Metric ruler
- Pattern Recognition

### **Social Studies – Ms. Fowler**

SS 5/6 Looking at the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We will be looking at incidents in the past such as : women's suffrage, Japanese internment camps, Chinese Head tax, Aboriginal voting rights and residential schools. With this knowledge students will be asked to write a speech that reflects the privileges of living in Canada.

### **Science – Mr. Mumert**

The grade 5/6 Science class finished a unit on Chemistry just prior to the Christmas break. Now we've begun a unit called "Electricity and Magnetism". So far (one week in), we've spent time on electrical safety, what makes electricity (moving electrons), what circuits are and why a "short" circuit is not a good thing!

Looking ahead, we'll be studying:

- how electricity and magnetism are related
- magnetic fields
- electrical conductors, insulators, resistors
- understanding kilowatt hours
- drawing and interpreting circuit diagrams including symbols for switches, power sources, resistors, lights and motors

As always, we practice our skills of note-taking and organization as we work through the unit and look for as many opportunities as possible for hands-on learning.

If you have any questions or concerns about our science class, or anything else that I might be able to help with, please feel free to drop in or give me a call.

### **French 5/6 – Mademoiselle Lewis**

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### **Grade 7 Class Update**

#### **Language Arts – Ms. Lewis**

Hello Grade 7 Language Arts parents!

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In Language Arts, we have made some changes to our plans as Public Speaking is fast approaching. For the next month we will be finishing off some creative writing while learning how to incorporate powerful language, and then we will begin our Public Speaking Unit. As public speaking is a charter goal students are required to participate and complete all aspects of this unit. I try to give the students 15-20 minutes daily to silently read a novel as being a good reader is an essential skill. In addition to reading a novel students are required to fill out a Book Report following silent reading time.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email ([ttorielewis@gmail.com](mailto:ttorielewis@gmail.com)) or by phone (250-306-9077).

Thank you for your support and time!

Miss. V. Lewis

### **Math – Mrs. Flint**

Grade 7/8/9 – We are at lesson 45 in the textbook. I am looking forward to the New Year in Math. I have communicated with students that these next few months will be an important time to keep up with math lesson assignments, lesson corrections and to continue to put forth a consistent effort into their school work. Be responsible and accountable to your individual success! Some of the concepts that we have been learning about are:

Grade 7:

- Adding/Subtracting Mixed Numbers and Renaming Fractions
- Adding/Subtracting/Multiplying Decimal Numbers
- Circle Graphs
- Finding Percent of a Number
- Squares and Square roots
- Simplifying and Comparing Decimal Numbers
- Collecting, organizing, displaying and Interpreting Data

### **Social Studies – Mr. Heikel**

We have been focusing on the interplay between French and English in Canadian history. We have been exploring the battles and leaders of both sides during the French and Indian war. There will be a test on characters and events after we complete notes on the conquest of Quebec.

### **Science – Mr. Heikel**

We have started a topic regarding the reproductive strategies of plants. So far we have compared vegetative reproduction in strawberries and potatoes with plants that reproduce via flowers and seeds. Angiosperms and gymnosperms have also been compared. Discussions have also revolved around how in agriculture natural selection and artificial selection are utilized to improve plant strains.

### **French – Mademoiselle Mumert**

For the first week back after Noël we celebrated Epiphany, the day we remember that the Three Kings visited Jesus. We ate the Galette des Rois and watched Frozen in French. Two students found the fêve in their piece of cake; Jade and Henry were Queen and King for the day! We are reviewing Basics 2 in Duolingo; there will be a quiz on Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. Please practise!

## **French – Mademoiselle Lewis**

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We have not been using our very cool Duolingo App as much as I have liked but as we develop a better routine, I am going to try to implement it much more as it reinforces vocabulary use, sentence structure, and oral practice.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by email ([ttorielewis@gmail.com](mailto:ttorielewis@gmail.com)) or by phone (250-306-9077).

Merci Beaucoup!

Mademoiselle Lewis

## **PE – Ms. Lewis**

Hello Grade 7/8/9 P.E. parents!

First off I would like to introduce myself to you and start with a quick update to pass along some information. My name is Victoria (Torie) Lewis and I am your son or daughter's new teacher. It has been a very busy time for us in class as transitions with a new teacher can sometimes be tricky; however, they have all been very forgiving and understanding of the process! Overall the students and I have had a decent first month together as they get used to my expectations and rules, teaching style, and lesson assignment procedures. I try to make my classroom as structured



as possible and I expect students to be respectful, cooperative, and always give their best efforts in class. I am looking forward to a great year working with them and also getting to know them much better.

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For the last month, in the Grade 7/8/9 Boys P.E. class, we have worked on our Volleyball and Fitness units. Currently we are working on our Floor Hockey unit, which may take us to the end of November when we will begin Dance or different ball games.

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Thank you for your support and time!

Miss. V. Lewis

## **Grade 8/9 Class Update**

### **LA8/9 – Ms. Fowler**

LA8/9 students are working on speeches and impromptu speaking. Students are encouraged to write a persuasive speech. Next unit will be the novel *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie. If you have a game of Clue we would love to borrow it for an introduction to the novel. Please let the school know or drop it off at the office.

### **Math – Mrs. Flint**

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Grade 8/9:

- Multiplying/Dividing Integers and Algebraic Terms
- Area and Circumference of Circles
- Functions
- Volume
- Surface Area of Rectangular Prisms

- Solving Proportions using Cross Products
- Slope of a Line
- Ratio Problems Involving Totals

### **Science – Mr. Heikel**

We currently are journeying through the chemistry unit. Students have received a periodic table of elements. We will be learning how to identify molecular and ionic compounds. Emphasis will be placed on balancing equations and identifying chemical reactions. We also will be conducting a pig dissection as review from the grade 8 curriculum in the coming weeks.

### **Social Studies – Mr. Heikel**

The topic we are currently exploring is rights and freedoms in Canada.

First we examined what our rights and freedoms' are in Canada and how they differ from other countries. After gaining knowledge of our current political climate we turned our focus to how the Canadian government has restricted the rights of its citizens. Students are currently composing an essay regarding how we as citizens and as a nation should respond to the legacies of this past.

### **French – Mademoiselle Mumert**

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For the next while we are going to be doing a Basketball Unit in P.E. As it lines up perfectly with our extra-curricular Basketball season, students will be having lots of time playing and practicing. After we will be moving into different ball games (may change), and then Skating (dates to be arranged), near the end of February.

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Thank you for your support and time!

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## **Upcoming Important Dates:**

**January 11-14, 18-21 – Swimming Lessons Grade K-2**

**January 14 – School Spirit Day – Nerd Day**

**January 26 – School Spirit Day – Solid Colour Day**

**January 28 – Viking Mardi Gras**

**January 29 – PD Day, No School**

**February 5 – Public Speaking Competition**

**February 12 – CSW, No School**

**February 15 – Family Day, No School**

## **Information Items:**

### **Accountability Pillar Surveys**

Every year Alberta Education seeks information from students, teachers and parents about how their education experience is going. This is done through surveys. Students and teachers participate in on-line surveys at school.

The parent survey is scheduled to be fielded in January. These surveys are mailed from Alberta Education and returned directly to Alberta Education. The parent survey in small schools (fewer than 120 students in grades 4-12) includes parents of all students in grades 4 and above.

The more parents who participate in the survey, the more accurate the information is, so we encourage parents to complete and return the surveys as soon as possible once they've been received.

If you are not certain about some of the questions on the survey please contact the school and we can help inform you what we are doing here at the school. More documentation will be attached to this update to help out as well.

### **Speech Competitions Coming!**

Students in all grades are beginning to prepare for the VCS annual speech competition. The competition will be held on February 5, 2016. Preliminary competition will be held during school hours in class. Winners in each competition level will advance to a finals speak-off which will be held on the evening of February 5. We will be looking for volunteers to help with organizing and judging the speech competition. All students will do an age appropriate public speaking activity in class. The best of these will present their efforts at the Feb.5 evening event. While students will be given time in school to work on their written and impromptu speeches, they will need to spend some time at home working on them as well to achieve their best effort.

### **School Council Meeting Student Attendance**

The February School Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 2 @ 7:00pm. Please note this month the Term 2 Student Council class is attending with a parent to do their meeting observation assignment. The meeting schedule is as follows;

February, 2016 – Term 2 Student Council

March, 2016 – Grade 4

April, 2016 – Grade 6

May, 2016 – Term 3 Student Council

### **School Spirit Days**

Our Next School Spirit Days are;

January 14 – Nerd Day

January 26 – Solid Colour Day

February 9 – 80's Day

February 25 - Favorite Disney Character Day

Dress up and show your school spirit. Every time a student participates in a school spirit day their name is entered to win a grand prize of gift cards movie passes and candy valued at \$100 . The winner is announced at our year end assembly.

### **School Council Update**

One thing new to School Council this year is we have had a different group of students attend a regular meeting each month. We enjoy having the students and appreciate their enthusiasm and feedback. Thank you to all the parents for helping and making sure their children can attend.

We had our annual Christmas concert and silent auction on December 15, 2015. We had a great show of support from our parents and community. We would like to thank everyone that helped out and made this very successful raising a total of \$4421.00. THANK YOU!

We have decided to offer our healthy snack program this year again. We would like to thank Advantage Oil and Gas and Beaverlodge IGA for their generous donations, making this program possible.

Hot lunch has been organized differently this year. At registration each family signs up for a month to help out with our hot dog days. Thank you to all of the parents that have helped out so far. If you are unsure of what month you signed up for please contact Anna at the school office.

### **Missoula Children's Theatre**

Missoula Children's Theatre is coming to VCS! They will be here from April 11th to 15th, 2016 all the way from Missoula Montana. Students from Grades K to 9 will participate in an Aladdin themed play. We will have an afternoon and evening performance on Friday, April 15th. The school is going to begin fundraising to help fund this opportunity for our students. If anyone is interested in helping supporting this program please contact the school. We hope family, friends and community members can come and enjoy. Mark your calendars.

## Annual Alberta Education Accountability Pillar Surveys

### Information for parents:

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 are 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 February, Alberta Education will be conducting the annual Accountability Pillar Survey. In January, parents of students in grades 4 and above (in charter schools) will receive a survey from Alberta Education. In February, students in grades 4 and above (in charter schools) 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, Tagalog and Urdu.

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 2016, and will be reported publicly as part of their 3-Year Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports.

# Did You Know....

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

Alberta Education program of studies is followed and taught  
Second Language (French) is taught by well qualified 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 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 Child Support Services (FCSS)

- counselling and small group support

In school access to Alberta Health Services counselling

## 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 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!**



If you have any questions about information on this letter please contact me anytime at the office, I would be happy to help. Please contact your teachers directly for any questions about your child.

Have a great day ☺

Anna Odd

780-356-2370 office

[aodd@valhallaschool.ca](mailto:aodd@valhallaschool.ca)

#### Teacher Emails

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Steve Mumert	sjmumert@gmail.com