

LOBSTICK ZONE

Evansview School, Evansburg

December was once again a season for giving and acts of kindness. Our food bank bins and Santa's Anonymous hampers were overflowing before the holiday break began. Students studied the story 'The Grinch that Stole Christmas' while building empathy for those less fortunate during the Christmas season.

Evansview School students and staff are feeling very fortunate and thankful this holiday season! We wrapped up our final days with a family traditional turkey and ham dinner complete with pumpkin pie! Then we boarded the train to the gym where the 'Polar Express' was featured on the big screen. Thank you to our amazing community sponsors and parent volunteers for providing our students and staff with this delicious meal and an opportunity to celebrate the season together.

We have begun 'family' meetings last month. Each week, cross-graded groups of students meet to carry out challenges, enjoy lunches together and play outdoors. This gives students an opportunity to build their leadership and teamwork skills.

Health brains and healthy bodies -we are working to reach this goal in January with a few new activities. In past years we have participated in the Rocks and Rings Program where students have learned about the sport of curling. This January we are excited to begin using our new floor curling equipment during lunch time intramurals! The BOKS Program is also kicking off on January 15th. BOKS is a free before-school program for elementary students aimed at helping kids start their day with physical activity to give their bodies and brains the boost they need to prepare them for a day of learning. BOKS is based on research by Dr. John Ratey, which suggests that exercise is the single most powerful tool we have to optimize the function of our brain. For more information please visit <http://bokskids.ca>.

EVW Events for January

- 15 BOKS Program Kick Off
- 22 PAC Meeting
- 22- Feb 1 Skating at the Arena
- 26 Breakfast Club/ Winter Carnival

Grand Trunk High School (GTHS), Evansburg

The staff and students at Grand Trunk High School wish everyone a happy and prosperous new year. Our students have once again helped bring some happiness to families during the Christmas season with their annual food drive. This year the school collected a little over 1,600 items that were donated to the WEE Food Bank on December 20th. Thank you to all who participated in this event.

Exams start shortly after we return from the winter break with the ELA Diploma Part A scheduled to take place on Thursday, January 11th, with regular mid-terms and final exams slated to begin on January 25th. The senior high and junior high basketball seasons are in full swing with games and tournaments and also start shortly after our return from break.

GTHS Events for January

- 9 Jr. B'ball @ PGMS
- 10 Jr. B'ball @ HRH & Grad Parent Meeting
- 11 ELA 30-1 & 2 Diploma Part A @ 9am
- 12 Sr. B'ball tournament @ Lacombe
- 15 Grade 9 Immunizations (Round 2) @ 9am
- 17 Jr. B'ball @ PCHS/Sr. Boys @ Breton JV
- 18 Jr. B'ball @ Niton
- 23 ELA 30-1 & 2 Diploma Part B @ 9am
- 24 Last Day of Regular Classes for Semester 1
- 25 Math 30-1 & 2 Diploma @ 9am/ Semester 1 Midterms & Final Exams Begin
- 29 Chemistry 30 Diploma @ 9am
- 30 Science 30 Diploma @ 9am



Niton Central School, Niton Junction

December has been jammed packed with Christmas concert practicing, finishing up units, and running around spreading Christmas cheer. With our vice principal and Grade 2/3 teacher, Amanda Nixon, going on maternity leave at the end of the month, we have hired a new teacher to start in the new year - Brooke Sterling will be teaching Grade 2/3 when we return in January. Brooke has been a student of Grande Yellowhead, and did her last practicum at Niton during the previous school year. We are thrilled to have her join our staff!

Last month, one of our educational assistants, Betty Douglas, started a lunch hour group for students to exercise their creative expression, and improve their artistic skills. Many students have created beautiful works, while bonding over their love for art. Betty is an amazing artist and the fact that she is giving up lunch hours to teach painting and help with emotional support is pretty fantastic.

Our Grade 6 class wrapped up their 'Wonder' novel study this month. They were focusing on characterization and comprehension for this novel. They were lucky to wrap up their novel study by going on a field trip to the Nova Theater in Edson to have their own screening of the movie adaptation of 'Wonder'. Joined by their teacher Mr. Meier, and the Grade 4/5 class with Ms. Otway and Mrs. Varty, students were able to compare and contrast the movie from the novel. There were laughs, cheers and of course a little bit of tears!



Wildwood School, Wildwood

Another year seems to have rushed by and now December has even come to the finish. With so many activities happening at the school, everyone who supports us is due for a well deserved Christmas break and WE THANK YOU!

This year's Christmas concert was outstanding! Students from every grade (even playschool) gave adorable performances and the singing was absolutely lovely. Everyone gave their best for the show. Preparation for the Christmas concert practically starts on the first day of school and Mrs. Shannon Kolotyluk put her heart into directing this year's masterpiece. School Council teamed with the Leadership Group to raffle off VIP parking and seating the night of the Christmas concert. Concert goers also supported a raffle for Christmas baskets. We had a food bank and toy drive. Ugly Sweater Day (Lol) and Pajama-Movie-Popcorn Day closed out the last week of school before the holidays.

Mrs. Jonie Gerspacher's K-1's were out of breath by December 22nd. The gingerbread men that they baked ran away and they had to find them! They held them down for decorating and finally got to eat, but only after they finished writing their letters to Santa and walking those up to the Wildwood Post Office. SO...with the letters sent, the cookies baked, the presents wrapped and the songs sung we hope everyone had the chance to REST, PLAY and SHARE JOY this holiday season!



Niton Events for January

- 11 Elementary Superflex Assembly
- 12-13 Hinton B'ball Tournament for Jr. High

EDSON & AREA

École Westhaven School

We are continuing to use the Sunday evening phone out to communicate with our families. This is a phone call that occurs on Sunday and is a brief overview of the week's events. It is an added communication tool for our families and staff. If you would like to be on the call out list please let the school know and we will be happy to add you. We hope this added measure will help keep everyone informed of upcoming activities.

We thank all the families that donated to the Kinette food hampers/Edson food bank. This is a wonderful way to assist the people within our own community and to help demonstrate to the students the importance of helping others. The support shown for this program has been wonderful. Thank you for your support in your child's education.



Westhaven Events for January

- 9 Feather Assembly at 9:30am/ Junior Achievement Program for Gr. 4 & 5
- 10 Junior Achievement Program cont'd.
- 12 Circle of Friends Activity
- 19 Circle of Friends Activity
- 26 No School for Kindergarten

Fulham School

Fulham Events for January

- 10 Parent Council Meeting @ 2pm
- 12 Sports Pride Day
- 17 Hot Lunch
- 19 Mindful Day
- 23 Students Travel to PGMS's Play 'Madagascar'
- 24 Grade 5 immunizations
- 26 No School for Kindergarten
- 31 Hot Lunch

École Pine Grove Middle School (PGMS)

As we begin 2018, we are looking forward to building on the many programs already underway at our school.

Since September, approximately 100 students have been working both onstage and backstage on the musical 'Madagascar Jr'. They are very excited to bring all their hard work to the stage from January 23rd to 26th. This high energy musical will be performed 11 times over four days, allowing over 1,000 people to enjoy the show.

During the spring of 2017, Pine Grove's library underwent a transformation to become our new learning commons. Since the beginning of the current school year, students have been enjoying the open and spacious learning commons with its unique 'café style' décor and comfortable new furniture. The learning commons also includes a 'maker space' area where students can use a variety of materials to explore, problem solve and build creations.

During December, a group of Pine Grove art students spent a day at Grande Yellowhead's Education Services Centre painting Christmas scenes on the front windows. This was an extremely successful activity and the end results looked wonderful! Music students also shared their talents before Christmas taking a program of hand-bell and choir songs to the elementary schools and Parkland Senior Lodge. It's been a busy school year so far and we are looking forward to everything 2018 has to bring!



PGMS Events for January

- 10 **Kinder 8 Buddies @ MBE**
- 18 **Parent Info Session Teens & Mental Health from 6:30-7:30pm**
- 20 **PGMS B'ball Tournament**
- 22-26 **Musical Week**



Mary Bergeron Elementary (MBE) School

The spirit of the holiday season was evident in everything we did at MBE School throughout the month of December. The school was wonderfully decorated to create a festive holiday mood for students, staff and visitors. It all started with the awe inspiring twenty-some foot spruce tree that was set up in the front foyer. The tree was beautifully lit and students made and hung special ornaments and trimmings. The office was transformed into the official 'North Pole Headquarters' with the rest of the school wings decorated along the themes of The Polar Express, Santa's Workshop and we even had a village full of little Who's. Dress-up days continued along the Christmas theme with an Ugly Sweater Day and a fun PJ Day. We even enjoyed a visit from Santa on the day before the holiday break.

Staff and students at Mary Bergeron continue to find ways to be engaged, caring members of the local community. This was evident again in December as classrooms collected items for the Kinette Christmas hampers and toys for children. Such a worthy cause! In addition, many students visited Parkland Senior Lodge to spread good will and cheer with the residents.

Ms. Prince put together a beautiful Christmas concert this year called 'A Christmas Carol'. Students practiced for weeks to prepare for our two productions. The gym was packed with family and friends and a great time was had by all!

Our School Council is working overtime these days to start many programs that greatly enhance our school. A fruit bowl with apples, oranges and bananas has been placed in every classroom to encourage healthy food choices. The milk and hot lunch programs are up and running. A 'Snack Shack' is set up in the parent kitchen to assist if students forget their lunch as home. Raffle gift baskets were put together by parents, students and the school council. The proceeds go towards events and activities for our students that are sponsored by the school council.

MBE Events for January

- 18 **Official School Opening**
- 26 **No School for Kindergarten**

Parkland Composite High School

January means finals, thus studying is a priority. Parkland has compiled the following 10 Exam Study Tips & Techniques to help with this process:

1. Pick a Time and a Place that Works for You - This should be a space that is quiet, comfortable and distraction free.

2. Study A Little Bit Every Day - This allows you to bring the concepts and ideas up in your mind often and allows you to store the information more effectively.

3. Plan Your Study Times - Make a schedule that is reasonable and stick to it.

4. Discover Your Learning Style - If you learn best through listening you can read your notes aloud, talk with others about the subject area or record key points on your personal device and listen to them back. If you learn best through visuals you can color coordinate your notes, draw diagrams, thought webs and timelines to help you remember key concepts. If you learn best by doing you can try such things as role playing or building models.

5. Review and Revise - Have friends or family quiz you. Make study materials that will work for you and your learning styles.

6. Take Breaks - It is important that you take brain breaks to refresh yourself. Step away from your study area and move throughout your break to get yourself ready to work again.

7. Ask for Help - Teachers can help you during your Flex PAT & Flex Diploma courses.

8. Stay Motivated - Continue to work on your studying and do not get discouraged. Keep to your schedule and don't leave things to the last minute.

9. Snack on Brain Food - Snacking on nutritious foods and water while studying can aid with your concentration and memory.

10. Take Care of Yourself - You will perform best on tests and quizzes when you are healthy and well rested. Practicing self-care will also help you to manage during stressful times such as exam week.

Most importantly, remember that you got this! Leave the stressing out to your teachers and just keep swimming... we mean studying!

Grad 2018 meetings continue for students and parents. Updates and information can be found at www.facebook.com/pchsgrad2018.

Parkland Events for January

Practices: Check out our calendar for times of practices @ www.parklandcomposite.ca

- 9 Jr Boys & Girls B'ball Game – PCHS @ NCS
- 10 Sr Boys & Girls B'ball Game – St. Joe's @ PCHS
- 11 ACES Bake Sale
- 12-13 Sr Girls B'ball Game – PCHS @ SPA
Jr Boys & Girls Tournament – PCHS @ Hinton
- 17 Jr Boys & Girls B'ball Game – GT @ PCHS
- 18 ACES Bake Sale/ Jr Boys & Girls B'ball Game – NCS @ PCHS
- 24 Last Day of Semester 1 Classes
- 26 Sr Boys B'ball – PCHS @ HRH
- 30 Jr Boys & Girls B'ball Game – PCHS @ HRH
- 31 Jr Boys & Girls B'ball Game – HCHS @ PCHS



GRANDE CACHE

Grande Cache Community High School, (GCCHS) SonRise Christian Program

During the last few weeks of December, high school students enjoyed many opportunities to participate in some fun activities. A bus load of enthusiastic students travelled to Jasper to go skiing and snow boarding on December 11th. The weather was fantastic and the students all had a great time in the beautiful Rockies! Only one week later, students travelled north to Grande Prairie to see the much anticipated release of the new Star Wars Movie 'The Last Jedi'. GCCHS students got a private screening of the movie in the afternoon with popcorn and a drink. What could be better than watching the new release with a bus load of your high school friends! To conclude the month, on the last Friday before the Christmas holidays, GCCHS teachers organized a fun Flex Day for students. Students signed up for various activities including Christmas crafts and ornaments, learning how to tune ski and snowboards, sports in the gym, swimming and skating at the rec centre, cookie decorating, and enjoying hot dogs and hot chocolate by the fire pit outside the school. It was a terrific way to close out 2017 at GCCHS.

SonRise was very busy doing the final details and practices for their Christmas musical that was held on December 20th. SonRise students performed a play called 'Wrapping All the Way' that was filled with music and the Christmas message that the greatest gift the world has ever received is the gift of Jesus Christ. SonRise walked to Whispering Pines Retirement Home the following day to share a number of songs with the seniors. In December, GCCHS and SonRise hosted the Alberta Snowmobile Association and their presentation called 'Off-Highway Vehicle Safety'. Presenters shared some important information about accidents and the short and long term affects from these accidents. Hearing helpful tips about safety is important for all our students because a majority of them participate in some sort of off-road driving, such as using quads, ATV's and/or snowmobiles.

GCCHS/SR Events for January

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| 8 | SonRise Swimming Lessons (until Feb. 12) th |
| 11 | DE: ELA 30-2 Part A |
| 12 | DE: SS 30-1 Part A |
| 23 | DE: ELA 30-2 Part B |
| 24 | DE: SS 30-1 Part B/Last Day of High School Classes |
| 25-31 | Exam Week |
| 29 | Literacy Week Begins in SonRise |

Sheldon Coates School

Summitview School

As we wrap up the first half of the year at Summitview School we are excited to share some amazing things that have been happening in our school community. First we would like to recognize that our fundraising committee has raised a total of \$65,000 to date for our new playground! During the month of December parent council hosted a winter wonderland dance as well as organized a fresh vegetable fundraiser and we have recently received a generous donation of \$5000 from Jupiter. Forty students from Grades 7-8 and five chaperones travelled to Marmot on December 13th to spend a day on the slopes.

Summitview, con'td.

All students took lessons from Marmot instructors and then spent the day exploring the mountain. It was a good introduction for many as only a few students had been to Marmot before. Seventeen students were first timers and all were at least skiing the lower hill by the end of the day. Summitview will be visiting the hill two more times this year. On March 1-2, students will be participating in an avalanche awareness program hosted by Parks Canada staff. This two day visit will include a night's stay at the Palisades Centre. The program involves in class instruction at the Marmot Learning Centre and at the Palisades, combined with on hill instruction. The learning outcomes include being able to identify potential avalanche slopes, identifying triggers, use of recovery technology, and methodology in the actual recovery process.

We ended off our month here at Summitview by having our 7th Annual Christmas Concert on December 21st. The Grade 4 and 5 students brightened the night with amazing songs and dance routines. While our Grade 6,7, and 8 students worked hard on building their own scripts, playing instruments and acting out skits. In this busy month we also invited our future Grade 4 students from Sheldon Coates to visit our school to build relationships with staff and students. They were greeted by our leadership team at our school where they played games in the gym, made crafts, watched movies and ate popcorn. As a school community we look forward to building further relationships and a sense of responsibility in the new year.

HINTON

Crescent Valley School

École Mountain View School

Harry Collinge High School



JASPER

Jasper Junior/ Senior High School (JJSHS)

The last month of 2017 was very busy at JJSHS. The annual Christmas dance was a huge success with a fun time had by both the staff and students. Other notable events in the month included our annual Activity Day on the last day of school, a Bear's Paw Taste Off contest, a band concert with student caroling, a high school Winter Travel 25 credit course at the Palisades, and field trips to the Chaba theatre for science. In January the school is looking forward to the following events:

- Several Junior High and Senior High Basketball Games
- Hosting Grade 9 and 10 students from Quebec as part of a SEVEC exchange
- Diploma and High School Exams
- Grade 7, 8, and 9 swimming as part of our PE program

Jasper Elementary School (JES)

Congratulations to all the students and teachers for showcasing their talents during our winter concerts. This year we celebrated Canada's 150th anniversary with songs and stories from across the country.

The New Year is a fresh start for staff and students and a time to focus on what is truly important to us. One of the greatest gifts that we can give our children is a love of reading thus the month of January is dedicated to literacy and reading for personal enjoyment.

Research demonstrates that reading for pleasure has extensive benefits. It is linked to emotional development, growth in empathy and compassion, and is associated with numerous academic gains. Including critical thinking and the ability to articulate and express our ideas with confidence. While the greatest reward is reading itself, the students' efforts will be supported with weekly contests and prizes. This year the Jasper Right to Read Society is generously sponsoring draws for two Kobo eReaders. Our goal this month is to instill a love of reading in children and help them discover the pure joy, adventure, and wonder that reading for pleasure can bring. Why not join us and jump in with a good book. It is a great way to begin the new year. Literacy activities this month include:

- Dr. Seuss theme: Oh' the places you'll go!
- Read-in (special guests read their favourite stories)
- Books to movies: The Lorax
- New to you book exchange
- Daily book riddles
- Weekly school-wide writing projects
- Green Eggs and Jam breakfast and reading time
- The Kid in the Lid - dress like a Seuss character
- Thing 1 Thing 2 dress like a twin day



JES Events for January

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|----|-------------------------------------|
| 10 | SAC Meeting @ 7pm |
| 19 | 12:05 Dismissal - PD for Staff |
| 23 | Skating at Jasper Park Lodge |
| 26 | No Kindergarten for Students |
| 28 | JES Staff Host the Community Dinner |
| 31 | Student Led Conferences |



THE LEARNING CONNECTION (TLC)

TLC students have enjoyed a busy year to date with our Try-It Tuesday program where we have created pottery, watercolour cards, outdoor planters, stained glass, Halloween 'Scary Art', fish scale art and 'talking sticks', as well as cooking and eating sushi, wraps, smoothies, quesadillas, bannock and truffles! A highlight of the semester's Tuesday events was our trip to Edmonton to enjoy 'A Christmas Carol' at the Citadel Theater and volunteer at the Edmonton Food Bank warehouse. We are looking forward to the many events planned for the second semester where we will be welcoming a student group from our TLC Jasper school who will be joining us in the new year!

Christmas Fun:

- TLC Hinton hosted their Christmas lunch celebration on December 20th - students and staff thoroughly enjoyed a relaxing and filling afternoon.
- TLC Evansburg also hosted their Christmas celebration on the 20th. Evansburg has been decorated thoroughly for the holiday season with quite a few festive trimmings. Students were delighted to take part in this process, and staff and guests are happy for their assistance.
- The TLC Edson Christmas Lunch was held on December 21st - it was a festive fiesta of fun, food and fellowship!
- The TLC Jasper Christmas event was held on December 21st.
- The TLC Grande Cache shared winter meal will be held in January upon the return to school after our holiday break.

With exams upon us, we remind students to take care of themselves. Get lots of sleep, drink plenty of water, and fuel your brain with nutritious foods that have been proven to aid memory and concentration, such as fish, nuts, seeds, yogurt and blueberries. Relaxation techniques will help reduce anxiety: talk to your TLC teachers if you feel stressed. Finally, approach exams with a positive outlook and making studying part of a routine instead of a cram-session: focus on what you understand, on your preparation and what you can do instead of worrying about what might go wrong. It's best to alleviate stress as much as possible, as test writing is an anxious time for many of us. Students are encouraged to make time to meet with teachers at their respective TLC schools to discuss finals and/or diplomas before the break. Also, check out our staff directory pages on The Learning Connection's website (thelearningconnection.ca) for diploma or finals information, reviews, and resources to support student studying over the holidays. We'll be working hard after the break to prepare for upcoming exams.