

Columbia Elementary School Newsletter

November – December 2016



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Administrators' Message

It is hard to believe that 2016 is nearing the end and the winter season is upon us. A friendly reminder to make sure your child is dressing appropriately as the weather gets colder. While we do open the gym when weather is extreme (i.e. it is pouring rain or the temperature really drops), students are expected to remain outside until the bell rings in the morning and at recess and lunch.

We would like to thank our PAC for their active involvement at the school. We are very fortunate to have so many talented and enthusiastic parents who are able to share their time and efforts being involved in and supporting our school.

We had so many special events this fall; Terry Fox, Halloween Parade, Remembrance Day Service, Soccer, Vendor Fair, Poinsettia sales, Cookie dough sales, field trips, schoolwide presentations where staff, students and parents all contributed to make our school better. We have one more event before we turn off the lights on 2016, our Winter Concert will take place December 14th and we cannot wait to see the whole school come together presenting "Santa Goes Green". We hope to see you all there.

Mr. Lloyd Lindsay and Mr. Kent Percevault

**Winter Concert
Wednesday, December 14th
1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.**

Although it is only November, our students have already begun preparing for the winter concert in December! Under the direction of our own Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Read, be sure to join us on Wednesday, December 14th for either our 1:30 p.m. afternoon show, or our evening concert at 5:30 p.m.

All students will be performing at both concerts on December 14th, and the same program will be done twice. We will be hosting this concert in our gym, so to accommodate everyone we are asking that you choose one program to watch, as we will not have room for people to watch both times.



PAC

PAC is asking for your help with making donations for the 'Book and Bake' sale which they will be hosting at each Concert. This will give you a chance to purchase some home-baked goodies and treats – and perhaps a couple of Christmas gifts as well.



5C's Assemblies and Student Recognition

We learn so much from our students, and recently our students gave our staff some valuable feedback regarding our 5 C's assemblies. They suggested that we have a month-long focus on one of the five C's, and then our assembly will recognize students who exemplified this virtue. We will be looking at creative ways to demonstrate what consideration, cooperation, courtesy, commitment to learning and common sense 'look' like and sound like, and how to instill these values in our children, building on the work parents are doing at home. We welcome your feedback too, as we look for different ways to recognize and practice the 5C's (and beyond!).

First Term Report Cards

Students will be receiving their first term report cards on December 9th. Please make sure that you sit down with your child and go through the report card together. Celebrate the success your child has had, and set goals for further growth in the months to come. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss the report in further detail, please contact your child's teacher.



Calendar at Glance

Friday, December 9 th	Report Cards Sent Home
Wednesday, December 14 th	Winter Concert
Friday, December 16 th (last day of school)	Schools close for Winter Vacation
Tuesday, January 3 rd	Schools Reopen

French Immersion Registration for 2017 / 2018 Information Meetings

For Parents of Current Grade 5 Students:

Information sessions for parents of Grade 5 students regarding registration for September 2017 Grade 6 Late French Immersion classes will be held as follows:

Thursday, January 19, 2017, 7:00pm, KVR Middle School

Thursday, January 19, 2017, 7:00pm, Summerland Middle School

A letter, along with an application form, regarding next September's Grade 6 French Immersion classes will be available January 19, 2017 at all elementary school offices, the Okanagan Skaha School District No. 67 Board Office (425 Jermyn Avenue, Penticton) or on the district website at www.sd67.bc.ca.

Deadline for applications is 12:00 Noon
Wednesday, February 1, 2017

The program is available to all students residing in the Okanagan Skaha School District entering Grade 6 in September of 2017. Students outside the district are permitted to enroll on a space-available basis (i.e. after Okanagan Skaha School District students have been accommodated).

Please note: these will be the only information meetings scheduled regarding French Immersion.



FSA Information for Parents of Grade 4 Students (or Grade 7 Students) **Updated November 2016**

The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) is an annual province-wide assessment of British Columbia students' academic skills, and provides a snapshot of how well British Columbia students are learning foundation skills in reading comprehension, writing and numeracy. The main purpose of the assessment is to help the province, school districts, schools and school planning councils to evaluate how well students are achieving basic skills, and make plans to improve student achievement. The FSA is designed and developed by British Columbia educators. The skills tested are linked to the provincial curriculum and provincial performance standards. The assessment is administered each year to Grade 4 and Grade 7 students in public and provincially funded independent schools.

Assessment Administration in Schools

January 9 to February 17, 2017

FSA Requirements

The Student Learning Assessment Order (Ministerial Order 60/94 as amended) (the "Order") requires school boards to ensure that the FSA tests are administered to and completed by students in accordance with the assessment protocols, instructions and invigilation procedures established by the Ministry of Education. In accordance with the School Act, only the Principal has the authority to exclude children from participating in the Foundation Skills Assessment. Principals may excuse a student in the event of a family emergency, a lengthy illness or other extenuating circumstances. In such circumstances, parents must discuss their request with the Principal.

The following is an excerpt from the Ministry's 2016 "Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) Administration Instructions 2016" about participation guidelines:

Who Should Write the Assessment?

All students write FSA including:

- *All students enrolled in Grade 4 or Grade 7 of the English program, French Immersion program or Programme francophone, including students enrolled in a distributed learning program.*
- *All students enrolled in non-graded programs who were born in:*
 - *2006 write Grade 4 level*
 - *2003 write Grade 7 level*
- *English Language Learners (ELL) – formerly known as "English-as-a Second Language (ESL)" students.*
- *Students with special needs who require adaptations, as documented in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).*
- *Students receiving learning assistance services.*

Exceptions include:

- *Students who have previously written the FSA. Students write the FSA for a specific grade once only. If a student is retained, s/he does not write a second time.*
- *Students who have IEPs documenting a disability that significantly impacts their performance in reading, writing, or numeracy and who cannot meaningfully participate in all or part of the assessment, even with adaptations.*
- *Students with IEPs who would need extensive adaptations or who would need such extended periods of time as to create a hardship for the individual student.*

- Those students who are reported and funded as receiving English Language Learning (ELL) support who have not yet reached a level of proficiency sufficient for them to provide meaningful responses to the reading or writing or numeracy sections of the FSA.

Principals identify which students, if any, are excused from one, two or all three components of the FSA. Principals must notify a parent or guardian if they intend to excuse a student from participating in one or more components of the FSA. Such notification should be made prior to the administration date by letter or telephone call.

Principals may excuse a student in the event of a family emergency, a lengthy illness or other extenuating circumstances.

Principals of public schools are to send a list of excused students to their superintendent.

Criminal Record Checks

In order to ensure the safety of our children, all parent volunteers are required to have a criminal record check. These are done online. Below you will see the online link and Access Code you will require to complete the online form. Thank you for volunteering your time and energy at Columbia Elementary School.

Online Link: <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/eCRC/home/htm>
(Select the CRC home page)
(Go to the bottom to sign in)
Access Code: TNJP25P6CL

Field Trip Drivers

With many field trips coming up, we thought it would be timely to remind everyone that if you wish to drive on field trips, your drivers' abstract form needs to be sent to the school on a yearly basis (as well as a photocopy of your drivers' license and car insurance). To obtain your driver's abstract please phone 1-800-950-1498 between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can ask them to e-mail it to the school at columbia@summer.com. Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers.

