

WHISKERS WEEKLY

This week's email contains a lot of information. Please read through it carefully.

Pot of Gold News: School Annual Results Report

Each year, schools are required to write a report on their progress towards achieving the goals and outcomes of the previous year's School Education Plan (SEP). As we developed our Annual School Results Report and analyzed the data from the surveys that were conducted, we came to realize that while we are a good school, there is certainly room for us to grow. We realize that what we have accomplished has not been done in isolation and as we continue to "strive to be a school community in which we feel confident expressing our talents, displaying our differences and celebrating our successes", we will continue to work closely with our School Council and other stakeholders. We will strive to develop meaningful partnerships with other schools in the jurisdiction and with the broader community of Chestermere.

We are confident that by working with the feedback we have been given we will be able to provide a quality education in which all learners will experience success.

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Goal One – Learners are successful.

During the 2015/16 school year, and to align our school with the RVS Literacy Framework, we developed an assessment process to identify and support our 'at risk' readers. The reading intervention strategies we employed included students reading with the same adult at school every day for a minimum of 10 minutes. During this time, students reviewed sight words, practiced decoding and fluency skills and addressed comprehension strategies. For Division One students, the teachers generated lists of sight words for students to practice at home and at school. Teachers also used newsletters and blogs to share literacy building strategies and tips with our parent community.

As a measure of our success with our literacy intervention, students were assessed to collect baseline data and reassessed during the final term. There was considerable growth in Division One student achievement with regard to sight word vocabulary and reading levels.

Professional coaching played a part in our success with developing literacy skills. Our Learning Support Team worked with classroom teachers to strategically implement Daily 5 routines to support literacy in the classroom. Teachers worked to develop their teaching and learning to address the literacy needs of the students in their class. With our Learning Support Team, teachers assessed their delivery of literacy lessons and improved literacy instruction and assessment. We will be continuing with our literacy initiatives as we move into the new school year.

Building numeracy has been brought to the forefront as we learn from the Jump Math system for numeracy instruction. Teachers have attended professional learning about the implementation and strategic use of the Jump Math program. Through our teachers' dedication to implementing numeracy following the instructional lessons of the Jump Math program, students are developing confidence and a deeper understanding of number concepts.

Goal Two – Learners are engaged.

As a school, we had many in-school and off-site learning opportunities for our students. Our kindergarten classes walked to the Taekwondo center a few blocks from our school to participate in Taekwondo lessons. All of our grade fours and fives participated in leadership opportunities to support our school community. One of the most exciting, talked about and engaging activities included our grade three classes participating in the Engineering Cohort supported through Rocky View Schools and the Telus Spark Center. Teachers and students experienced new learning activities that encouraged the use of engineering experts, building skills and real life, authentic design challenges. Our learners (including students and teachers) were supported through Learning Specialists and Telus Spark Center Leaders to design playground areas that met the needs of our youngest students. The imagination and critical thinking skills demonstrated by our learners was a true showcase of engagement focusing on real life challenges.

Goal Three – Learners are supported.

We continually strive to provide optimal learning environments for our students which is evident in the high scores for creating safe, caring, and respectful learning environments. By prioritizing student needs, we strategically placed personnel where they would be most effective in supporting our learners. Our Child Development Advisor worked in classrooms presenting programs to support the social emotional growth of our students and supported families in need by providing access to school resources and community resources. Our Learning Support Team worked closely with classroom teachers to understand the needs of our learners and individualize instruction to help our learners feel successful. Building an inclusionary culture, we provided Enhanced Supports to meet the needs of our complex students. We also utilized our Enhanced Support Team to build teacher capacity in creating and delivering instruction to support the wide variety of needs in their classrooms.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR FUTURE SCHOOL EDUCATION PLANS

Goal One – Learners are successful.

Miriam Webster defines success as “having the correct or desired result”. The cornerstones of a successful elementary school are effective literacy and numeracy practices and at Rainbow

Creek, deepening our understanding of literacy and numeracy instruction will be a priority in future School Education Plans. We will continue to explore how we can use the framework of Daily 5 and the CAFÉ strategies to enhance literacy instruction, and the Jump Math program to support numeracy.

Specifically, with respect to literacy instruction, one of our priorities will be to examine our assessment data and develop a model for intervention that will best meet the needs of all learners in our school. Classroom teachers will work with our Learning Support Team to identify students at risk and to provide them with the necessary supports to be successful. Home reading and a sight word program will ensure the involvement of parents in this process.

Another priority with respect to our literacy instruction will be to ensure that teachers across all grade levels are using consistent language for the strategies that our students are being taught.

In an effort to build 21st century competencies, we will continue to focus on authentic leadership opportunities within our school. Students will be encouraged to examine their personal strengths and select leadership roles that will allow them to develop 21st century competencies in an authentic, age-appropriate way. They will also be encouraged to assume greater ownership for their own learning.

Goal Two – Learners are engaged.

It (education) is about respecting children as human beings, and about supporting, not suppressing, their passion, curiosity and talent. ~ Yong Zhao

At Rainbow Creek, as we think about engagement in learning, we will examine how we support students in pursuing their passions and exploring their talents. Real-world, hands-on learning experiences will be critical in helping students find their voices and take greater ownership for their learning. Ensuring that our staff is equipped with a deep understanding of inquiry and project-based learning will provide a foundation for this work. We will continue to connect our staff with the RVS 21st Century Learning Specialists through design learning cohorts such as the Engineering Challenge and Trailblazers. We will also deepen our understanding of inquiry by exploring professional learning opportunities through organizations such as Telus Spark's SHIFT Lab and other community partners.

Building positive relationships with parents will continue to play a significant role in learner engagement. While survey results suggest that both teachers and parents are satisfied with the parent involvement in the school, there is room for growth in this area. Increased transparency in the communication of assessment data and how that data is used to inform our practice will certainly be a priority. We will accomplish this goal by ensuring that all aspects of Rocky View Schools' Communication of Student Learning are being addressed. We will continue to work with the report card template and ensuring that it clearly demonstrates student learning. We will also focus on the use of digital portfolios and opening the Parent Portal in PowerSchool. A priority for future School Education Plans will be to find ways to support staff in this work.

Goal Three – Learners are supported.

Supporting all learners begins with ensuring that all who enter our learning community feel safe and valued. Survey data suggests to us that this is definitely an area of strength for our school. As our school motto suggests, we value diversity and strive to ensure that all learners feel special.

One of the ways in which we have been able to cultivate a safe and caring environment in our school is through our focus on inclusionary practices and the development of universal learning environments. We will continue to emphasize these practices by encouraging classroom teachers to co-plan and co-teach with our Learning Support Team. To facilitate this, we will provide embedded team-planning time and focus future professional learning opportunities around social/emotional development and a deeper understanding of diverse learning needs. We will also explore the use of both educational and assistive technologies to support different learning needs and styles. To that end, we will need to investigate ways in which we can increase access to appropriate technologies for all our learners.

To read the full report please follow this link: <http://rcreek.rockyview.ab.ca/publications/school-reports>

Hot Lunch

Hot Lunch ordering opened today. Orders must be submitted by December 4th and payment must be made by December 5th. Late orders will not be accepted and unpaid orders will be cancelled. Order online at <http://rainbowcreek.hotlunches.net>. Accounts are not carried over from year to year – if you have not yet set up an account this year you will need code RC2010HL to do so.

Purdys Orders

Orders will be available for pickup on November 30th and December 1st.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Parent-teacher interviews will be held on the evenings of November 30th and December 1st for all grades. Kindergarten will have additional interview times on Friday, November 25th during the day. You can book your own interview time online at <https://rainbowcreek.schoolsoft.ca>. Mrs. Gillard only will be interviewing on November 29th and 30th but not on December 1st.

The Giving Tree

We are aware that this time of year can be difficult for many families. Our school CDA, Kim Smith, is organizing our annual Giving Tree. The Giving Tree is a small tree located in the school office decorated with tags. Each tag has the name of a store and a dollar amount; families who wish can come collect a tag or two and purchase gift cards from the named store in the dollar amount listed. These gift cards are distributed to families in our school who need a little extra help during the holidays. If you prefer to donate cash the funds will be used to purchase remaining tags.

The Giving Tree will be available from November 25, 2016 to December 19, 2016 during regular school hours and during parent/teacher interviews 4pm – 7pm on November 30th and December 1st. All donations need to be handed in at the office on or before December 19, 2016.

If you are a family who could use some assistance this holiday season please contact our CDA, Kim Smith, at kismith@rockyview.ab.ca. All information is kept confidential.

Food Bank in February

In order to help the Chestermere Regional Food Bank replenish their shelves, this year Rainbow Creek will be collecting food for the first two weeks in February. We will let you know the dates that the bin will be here in the New Year.

Holiday Concerts

Please see below the Upcoming Dates for information on the kindergarten/grade 1 and the grade 2/3 holiday concerts.

Upcoming Dates

November 25: Hot lunch ordering opens

November 25: No kindergarten

November 25: Kindergarten parent/teacher interviews 8:15-10:30am

November 29: **Mrs. Gillard only** parent/teacher interviews 4-7pm

November 30: Parent/teacher interviews 4-7pm

December 1: Parent/teacher interviews 4-7pm (minus Mrs. Gillard)

December 4: Hot lunch ordering closes. Late orders not accepted.

December 5: Hot lunch payments due. Unpaid orders will be cancelled.

Follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/rcschool>

Check out our website: <http://rcreek.rockyview.ab.ca>

Holiday Concert Ticket Information:

Rainbow Creek continues to grow, so this year we decided to have two Christmas concerts – one for kindergarten and grade 1, and a second for grade 2 and 3 students. Grade 4 and 5 students will perform in the spring concert.

KINDERGARTEN AND GRADE 1:

The **Kindergarten and Grade 1** students will be performing two concerts this holiday season:

Evening Concert - Wednesday December 14th at 6:30

Morning Concert - Thursday December 15th at 9:30

Due to fire regulations, we have to limit the number of people who attend. Families that reserve tickets will be allowed into the gym first to find seats for the show. Please click on the link below to fill out a form to reserve your tickets.

<http://bit.ly/2fehHZ8>

GRADE 2 AND 3:

The **Grade 2 and 3** Students will also be performing two concerts this holiday season:

- Afternoon Concert - Thursday December 15th at 1:00PM
- Evening Concert - Thursday December 15th at 6:30PM

Due to fire regulations, we have to limit the number of people who attend. Families that reserve tickets will be allowed into the gym first to find seats for the show. Please click on the link below to fill out a form to reserve your tickets.

<http://bit.ly/2fSCdQc>

Please email Mrs. Werner at swerner@rockyview.ab.ca if you have any questions or concerns

Regards,

Heather Leveille

Rainbow Creek Elementary School