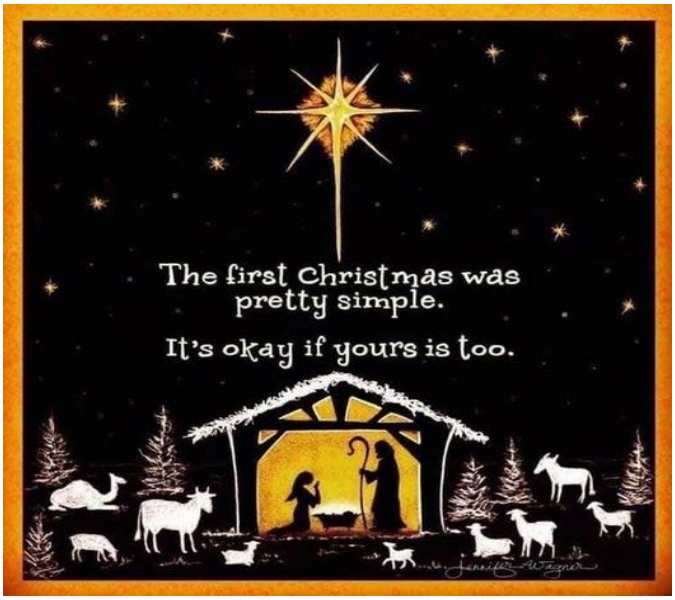

Neerlandia

Eagle Express

Newsletter

December 2, 2020

Ah, 2020. You've raised your mighty fist and tried to defeat us with all of your crazy ways, but we will remain strong for this last month of the year and kick you out the door into the cold on New Year's Eve! It's been quite a year - I don't need to recap all that has happened. We've lived this together. Last week was yet another twist and surprise as the Government of Alberta sent home all of the grade 7-12 students and left us scrambling to get everything in order for the four weeks those students will be online.

With Christmas being so close, I'm sure many are wondering what their holiday season will look like with the rules and restrictions recently put in place and the obscurity of when these will end. For the first time in history, it's illegal to have a friend, neighbour, or family member visit your house. It's not ideal and seems contrary to what we're used to - some are angry and want to fight this, others have already conceded Christmas will be small and unusual this year.

This past weekend, I saw the image above on one of my Aunt's Facebook posts. It really grabbed my attention and made me think - the first Christmas was rather unusual too. God in the flesh (just think of those words), a baby in a feed manger, surrounded by animals, the smell, the lowly shepherds seeing a choir of angels. Out of that extraordinary, unusual, and small gathering, our King and Saviour was born. He came to this world in the most unusual and low-key way. It's beautiful.

2020 has been hard. I appreciate this community and this staff for working together so well through all of the unusual circumstances. I believe that it has still been successful and I know we will do everything to meet the needs of all the students, whether in school or online.

Enjoy your Christmas - yes, it's not going to be a typical Christmas season. That's okay. Hopefully it will help us all appreciate what we maybe got too complacent with. Here's to a strong and encouraging 2021. Merry Christmas everyone!

Brett Seatter

School Wide News:

St. Nick Day – Dec. 4

NPCS **Elementary students** (Gr. 1-6) will be celebrating St. Nick Day on **Fri., Dec.4** afternoon.

St. Nicholas will visit grades 1-3 beginning with Grade 1 (we have 2 this year). He will be reading stories to the classes but will not be able to have students sit on his knee, etc. The teachers will hand out the gifts.

Grade 1 Mrs. Mast: 1:00 – 1:15 pm
Grade 1 Mrs. Rentz: 1:15 – 1:30 pm
Grade 2 Mrs. Strydhorst: 1:30 – 1:45 pm
Grade 3: 1:45 – 2:00 pm

If time permits he will drop in and say "Hi" to the other classes.

Due to Covid regulations, we will **NOT be able to have parents** come into the school this year to bring lunches, etc. so our Parent Council (NCES) has graciously offered to supply pizza for all of the Gr. 1-6 classes. They are asking that **each student bring $2.00** to help cover some of the cost.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE PROJECT

This year we decided that we would support a local charity. We sold sets of Christmas cards made by the students. These were put into bundles of 10 and sent home with the children. The students did a wonderful job of making the cards and we owe a BIG THANK YOU to some parent volunteers that photocopied, folded and sorted into bundles. Thanks to Lindsay Pohl, Jordi Lussier, Nicole Wierenga, Lisa De Vries, Jenell Coutts & Shelley Keay and also to Jill Olthuis & Laura Mast for organizing this project. It was a big job but well worth it for the money we raised.

We were overwhelmed by the orders we received from parents & community members.
We are excited to report that we gave a whopping total of
$1705.00 to the Barrhead FCSS Foodbank

We are sure that this money will help out many needy families at this time of the year (especially this year).

CHRISTMAS CONCERT ONLINE!

- Christmas Concert: every elementary class will video their contribution and we will send out a list of links for each grade so people can watch the concert on YouTube. Jr. High were going to contribute, but with their schooling halted, that won't be possible.
- On Dec. 16 we hope we will be ready to share this celebration online.

Neerlandia Christian Education Society (NCES) News

The NCES board met on November 30 and here are some highlights of the meeting:

- Thank you to the many families, grandparents and community members who have submitted their membership fees. We so greatly appreciate your financial contributions to support the school and enhance student learning. If you would still like to financially support NCES, ***family memberships are $300 and associate memberships are $150.*** Membership fees can be paid by e-transfer to ncesboard@gmail.com or by cheque to "NCES" and dropped off at the school.
- Thank you to everyone who supported our November 17th hot dog lunch, we raised $325.41 to support our school!! A big thanks to our parent volunteers for making this possible: Laura Braucht, Charlene Fleming and Lindsey Cowan. NCES is coordinating the St. Nick's pizza hot lunch on December 4th. Our next fundraiser will be a ***chicken nugget hot lunch on Wednesday, January 20***. Order forms will be sent out in early January when students return to in-school classes.
- If you would like to be added to our ***hot lunch volunteer list***, please contact Charlene Fleming by text at 780-284-1534 or call 780-584-2533. Associate members are more than welcome to help with cooking hot lunches!!
- ***NCES spring fundraiser!*** Due to COVID, we will be hosting an online Facebook auction that will run from Thursday, March 11 to Saturday, March 14, 2021. We would greatly appreciate auction item donations. Some popular ideas include: cakes, cookies, babysitting, sleigh rides, birthday parties, homemade baking, firewood, boat rides, etc. We are ***accepting donations*** anytime from now until early March. Please email a short description of your donation to kympetersphotography@gmail.com
- ***Preschool Sub-committee.*** The NCES board is struggling with our workload to support our K-9 students at NPCS. We need 4 volunteers to form a preschool subcommittee to plan the 2021-22 preschool year. The sub-committee will have the duties of: hiring staff, managing registrations, ensuring Government of Alberta Children's services licensing requirements are met, developing a fee structure and developing a plan to meet AHS COVID guidelines. ***Without these 4 parent volunteers in place by mid-January, our preschool will not run in fall 2021.*** Volunteers will meet monthly from January to October 2021.
- If you are passionate about our Christian Pre-school program and want to volunteer, please contact Kym Peters at kympetersphotography@gmail.com.
- You are welcome to join our next NPCSC and NCES board meeting scheduled for January 25, 2021 at 6:30pm.

PHSD BOARD NEWS

Annual Education Results Report

The Annual Education Results Report provides an analysis of the division's four outcomes defined by the province:

- Alberta students are successful
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in Alberta are successful
- Alberta has excellent teachers, school leaders and school authority leaders
- Alberta's K-12 education system is well governed and managed

Results are measured and given an evaluation of excellent, good, acceptable, issue or concern.
Of the 16 accountability pillar measures, the division had excellent results in providing a safe and caring environment, quality of education, parental involvement, preparing students for work and citizenship.
*****Only one area was identified as an issue - Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams). The numbers are impacted by the population of Vista Virtual students who only access a few courses to support their high school completion. See full details in the 2019-2020 Annual Education Results Report.

No schools considered for closure

The board reviewed the criteria to determine if any schools should be considered for closure for the 2021-22 school year. Schools are assessed annually against the closure criteria, which includes the following factors:

- Are there factors related to the school building?
- Is the school meeting the critical minimum enrolment?
- How many students are we expecting to attend in the future?
- Are fewer than 60 per cent of the students in the attendance area attending the school?
- Does operating the school create excessive costs for the division?

Fort Assiniboine School is the only school that didn't meet the criteria for critical minimum enrolment. However, they would have met the criteria if students who normally attend the school had chosen to continue to attend school in person during the pandemic. Fort Assiniboine School also creates an excessive cost for the division in the amount of $122,127. After careful consideration of the criteria presented, the board decided not to consider any schools for closure in 2021-22.
See details in the 2020-2021 School Viability Report.

Jennifer.Tuininga@pembinahills.ca 780-674-6579 H, 780-284-0971 C

SPORTS

NO AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS AT THIS TIME!

JR. HIGH BASKETBALL

Basketball will not begin until the new year (Jan 2021). We will be listening for an announcement in regards to when we can start practices and hopefully play some games eventually. We will keep you posted.

We will also let everyone know if/when we can start some Elementary (usually gr. 4-6) after-school sports.

LIBRARY NEWS

DECEMBER LIBRARY HOURS

Mon-Thursday
9AM-4:30PM
Wednesday
7:00-9:00PM
Friday, Dec. 4
9:00AM-4:30PM

We will be closed for Christmas Break-December 18-Jan.3.
We will open 1 day during the break on Wednesday, Dec. 30 9:00AM-4:30PM

Note: January 4-7 we will only be open mornings from 9:00AM-1:00PM due to the whole school going online

Thank you to everyone who supported our gift card fundraiser! We made over $600.00. The cards are ready for pick up.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 4, p.m. – St. Nick's Day celebrations for Gr. 1-6
Dec. 10 – Pajama Day (wear your favourite PJs)
Dec. 11 – *Alternate Day*
Dec. 16 - Online Christmas Concert

Dec. 18 – *Alternate Day*

Dec. 18, 2020 – Jan. 3, 2021: Christmas Break

Jan. 4 – 7: Online schooling continues for Gr. 7-9 students and K-Gr. 6 students will be learning at home.

Jan. 8 - *Alternate Day*

Jan. 11, 2021 – Gr. 1-9 students return to school (unless that news changes – we will keep you informed)

*St. Nick celebrations for Jr. High will happen in January (TBA)