

November News 2023

Our focus this year is on promoting positive perceptions of education and on student success. In order to support these two goals we will be concentrating on the factors of student success and how best to support students and families. Positive and productive communication is key to ensuring that all stakeholders are on the same page about educational importance and elements that are supporting or impeding a student's achievement.

The pillars of success are

- Attendance
- Be On Time and Be Prepared
- Work Hard

Did You Know??

- "Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance."

Please read this article from National Center for Education Statistics

[Every School Day Matters Article Link](#)

[Why Does Attendance Matter?](#)

Every school day counts in a child's academic life...

A missed school day is a lost opportunity for students to learn. In this era of increased accountability for states, districts, and schools, the connection between student attendance and learning is being studied more than ever before. As a result, education agencies are asked with increasing frequency to report attendance data in a standard manner to allow comparisons across organizations and jurisdictions.

The primary rationale for high-quality attendance data is the relationship between student attendance and student achievement. Teacher effectiveness is the strongest school-related determinant of student success,¹ but chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning opportunities. Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance. This relationship between attendance and achievement may appear early in a child's school career. A recent study looking at young children found that absenteeism in kindergarten was associated with negative first grade outcomes such as greater absenteeism in subsequent years and lower achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge.²

Poor attendance has serious implications for later outcomes as well. High school dropouts have been found to exhibit a history of negative behaviors, including high levels of absenteeism throughout their childhood, at higher rates than high school graduates.³ These differences in absentee rates were observed as early as kindergarten, and students who eventually dropped out

of high school missed significantly more days of school in first grade than their peers who graduated from high school. In eighth grade, this pattern was even more apparent and, by ninth grade, attendance was shown to be a key indicator significantly correlated with high school graduation.⁴

The effects of lost school days build up one absence at a time on individual students. Penalties for students who miss school may unintentionally worsen the situation. The disciplinary response to absenteeism too often includes loss of course credits, detention, and suspension. Any absence, whether excused or not, denies students the opportunity to learn in accordance with the school's instructional program, but students who miss school are sometimes further excluded from learning opportunities as a consequence of chronic absenteeism.

¹ Adelman, C. (2006). *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School through College*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

² Romero, M., and Lee, Y. (2007). *A National Portrait of Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Grades*. New York, NY: The National Center for Children in Poverty.

³ Hickman, G.P., Bartholomew, M., and Mathwig, J. (2007). *The Differential Development Trajectories of Rural High School Dropouts and Graduates: Executive Summary*. Phoenix, AZ: The College of Teacher Education and Leadership at the Arizona State University at the West Campus.

⁴ Allensworth, E., and Easton, J.Q. (2005). *The On-Track Indicator as a Predictor of High School Graduation*. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

How can I support my students' attendance???

- Prioritize school!
- Communicate the importance of regular school attendance.
- Have regular evening and homework routines.
- Schedule family events with our school calendar in mind.
- Try to make appointments during non-school hours when possible.
- Reach out to your child's teacher with any questions or concerns about attendance.

We understand your child will be away at times because of illness and other reasons. Our priority is to eliminate unnecessary absences so that your child can learn, connect and succeed in school!

Stay Focused - Stay Healthy

We are on the home stretch to the Christmas break. It is important to promote healthy learning habits for your students and assist them in remaining focused for the coming weeks. Here are some tips:

-Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Sleep is critical in helping students maximize their potential academically, physically and socially. Students should be getting at least 8 hours of sleep a night.

-Each night, talk about things that students did in class, help them review, check Google Classroom for new and old assignments that need to be completed.

- High school students should spend an hour per course doing homework and/or studying material covered.
- Limit online time/TV time: play a board game or teach them a new card game. Yahtzee is great for practicing numeracy skills!
- Keep students home when they are sick. Sleep and fluids will help them heal quicker and keep from spreading to students and staff.

Winter Weather

The winter season has been easing us in. While we do not expect disruptions to the same degree as last year, the safety of students is our primary concern and sometimes this results in cancellation of bus service. During bus cancellations, the school does remain open. Teachers conduct classes (combined if numbers are small), but new material will not be covered. The course outlines for each course describe the expectations for students and availability of teachers on these days. If your student has assignments not completed, whether they are at home or school, these days are a great opportunity to catch up on them (check PowerSchool and GoogleClassroom). Students can also practice literacy skills by reading, and numeracy skills by playing board and card games.

If you do not have a device for your student to access GoogleClassroom on these days, you can contact the office and borrow one to keep at home for the winter months in the event that there is a need. We do not have enough to send one with every student to keep at home, but we do have a number of them if you require. Junior high students will not be attending online classes on these days and there will not be any mandatory work but there may be some review activities, practice or previous work that can be completed. Senior high classes generally have a drop in google meet to clarify concepts or ask questions. Please check the course outlines for more information.

Remembrance Day

We will hold our Remembrance Day ceremony on November 8 @ 9:30 am. All students are encouraged to participate in the Legion Remembrance Day contests! Grades 9-12, if you would like to submit a poster, poem or essay, please see Mrs. Madsen for the guidelines and submission forms!

Diploma Exams

Alberta Education has returned the weighting of the diploma exams for the 2023-2024 school year to 30%. Diploma exam dates are directed and set by the province. These exams will be administered in January 2024 and June 2024 in core 30-level subjects. Exams begin at 9 am. The dates are as follows:

- English Language Arts 30-1 Part A Wednesday January 10, 2024
- English Language Arts 30-2 Part A Wednesday January 10, 2024
- Social Studies 30-1 Part A Thursday January 11, 2024
- Social Studies 30-2 Part A Thursday January 11, 2024
- Mathematics 30-1 Monday January 22, 2024
- Mathematics 30-2 Monday January 22, 2024

English Language Arts 30-1 Part B Tuesday January 23, 2024
English Language Arts 30-2 Part B Tuesday January 23, 2024
Social Studies 30-1 Part B Wednesday January 24, 2024
Social Studies 30-2 Part B Wednesday January 24, 2024
Biology 30 Thursday January 25, 2024
Chemistry 30 Friday January 26, 2024
Physics 30 Monday January 29, 2024
Science 30 Tuesday January 30, 2024

School Council - Parent Advisory Group

We will continue to meet as a parent advisory group for this year. The next meeting will be held Wednesday November 22, 2023 at 7 pm.

Breakfast Club

Each morning students have access to complimentary breakfast items. The menu varies daily and is always nutritious, delicious and served with a smile. We serve about 60 students daily. Thank you to Breakfast Club of Canada, Pembina Pipelines, Pembina West Co-op and the Co-operators for their donations to our program. If you would like to help support the program, juice boxes and cereal are always appreciated.

Grad Photos

Smart Photography will be providing grad photos on December 19, 2023. The sittings and fees are both booked online. See the attachments in this newsletter.

Citadel Trip

The junior and senior high students will have an opportunity to go on a field trip this December 13, 2023 to the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton to see the classic "A Christmas Carol". Forms will be available next week and spots will be delivered on a first come, first paid basis. Students must be in good standing at school to participate on this trip (no recent behavioral concerns, suspensions and all fees paid).

PowerSchool Parent Portal

The parent portal access is the perfect way to keep up-to-date with student assessment and attendance. If you do not have access to the portal for your students please contact the office.

SchoolCash Online

All fees and outstanding items will be listed on SchoolCash. Programs with fees will appear on the account and can be paid for through various means.

Textbooks/Library Books

If your student has any outstanding textbooks/library books, please return them to the office as soon as possible. Outstanding books will be placed on SchoolCash Online accounts in November.

Post-Secondary Information

October 1 marks the opening of post-secondary applications for Fall 2023. Schools begin taking applications from now until generally March 1, 2023. Students have worked on getting accounts for Apply Alberta and taken the early steps in creating their profiles. Any student who requires more assistance can make an appointment to see Mrs. Jager.

Green Certificate Meeting

Any high school students interested in starting the Green Certificate program will need to attend the introduction meeting on November 28, 2023 at 1 pm. This meeting will review the program, program expectations and credit earning potential. In addition, a parent/trainer for each student will need to be present.

International Trip Meeting

Mrs. Lundstrom will be holding a mandatory meeting for all International trip participants and their parents on November 15, 2023 at 5:30 pm. It would be helpful to bring all travel and identification documents that evening.

First Aid

We will be providing students with the opportunity to earn a St. John's Ambulance Standard First Aid w/CPR C level certification throughout the year. Our first offering will be open to grade 12 students who have not previously received certification on December 6 and 7, 2023. The course will be held in the library. If your student is interested in this opportunity, please have them sign up in the office. There are limited spots available but will hope to provide more courses in the coming months.