

December 2019

Elk Island Public Schools

# THE WESTBORO REPORT



## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



As we start preparing for the holidays with Christmas concerts and other festive activities, there is a lot of excitement in the air. The students, parents, and teachers at Westboro have been hard at work over the last three months and I am very happy to see the progress

we have made. Our literacy and numeracy programs have continued to work on small group instruction. This has helped our teachers get to know each students' learning needs and provide them with more individualized instruction. Students have continued using our All About Me digital learning portfolio. Students are able to use this program to share evidence of their learning, set goals and look at ideas for future careers. Our teachers are excited and working hard on preparing for the new Alberta curriculum that we are anticipating will be released soon.

Our focus this year continues to be about creating a school environment where all of our students are safe and respectful to everyone. We want all of our students to have Warrior Pride. Our trip to watch the Crusaders hockey game was an excellent opportunity to celebrate all the ways our students have been kind and helpful to each other.

Thank you to all parents for your continued support and help as we work together to educate the students at Westboro Elementary. Please continue your efforts to read with your children every night as this truly has a lasting impact on their success. We wish every family a very happy and safe Christmas break and look forward to working with you all in the New Year.

From our School family to yours,  
Mike Lastiwka



## DECEMBER

- 6 Newsletter
- 10 Christmas Concert  
6:30 p.m.
- 13 Hot Lunch
- 13 Ugly Sweater Day
- 20 PJ & Pancake  
Breakfast
- 21 - 5 Christmas Break

## JANUARY

- 6 Welcome Back!
- 8 Early Dismissal
- 10 Newsletter
- 14 Logos Meeting 7p.m.  
at Westboro

**PRINCIPAL**  
**Mike Lastiwka**

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**  
**Chantel Werner**

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@WBOelementary

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

### Concert Reminders!

- ♪ Christmas concert is almost here! Remember that Westboro's concert is Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Park Church, located at 1 Brower Dr. Sherwood Park. **Doors to the Park Church will open at 6:00 p.m.** Please ensure that all students are at the church no later than 6:15 p.m. We will be starting the concert promptly at 6:30 p.m. We hope that all students will join us for the evening performance to celebrate the season together.
- ♪ Please look for the notice that has gone home with your child for additional details on parking, as well as where to go and what to do once you arrive.
- ♪ Dress Rehearsal will be in the afternoon on Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Park Church. We are aiming for the rehearsal to start between 12:30 and 12:45. **Families are invited to attend to view the practice if they'd like. This is also an excellent opportunity for grandparents or other extended family members to view the concert.**
  - Field trip forms for the dress rehearsal went home December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please ensure these are returned to your child's teacher if you have not already done so.
- ♪ We will be passing a donations basket 10 minutes before both the concert and dress rehearsal begin to help with the cost of renting the church. There is no obligation, but we thank you in advance for any amount you might be willing to give.

## PATROLLERS OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to our AMA Safety Patrollers of the Month:

**Kennedy ( 5R) & Rien Rae (4R)**

Many thanks to our dedicated team of School Safety Patrollers who are outside monitoring our crosswalks in the morning and after school. Well done! Keep up the great work!



## SCHOOL NEWS

### HOT LUNCH NEWS

Well I can't believe it is almost Christmas already! This first part of the year has flown by. Once again, the Hot Lunch committee would like to thank all the parents who have been so accommodating with the changes in the payment system that we've had to manage for the first 2 ordering periods this year. We appreciate all of your cooperation!

We have Swiss Chalet coming on December 13 and we are looking forward to it!

Please keep an eye on your emails as we will open up ordering for January and February after the Christmas break and will hopefully have our new payment system up and running at that time. Thank you to all of the volunteers who help out during hot lunch days by delivering to the kids classrooms, we couldn't do it all without you.

Merry Christmas!

Heidi and Janel

### LOGOS SOCIETY NEWS

Nitza's Pizza fundraiser is happening this month! Thank you to all families who are ordering, we hope you enjoy your pizza! Please ask if you have questions about this fundraiser.

Hope your Christmas is blessed in all the best ways and the New Year brings lots of reasons for joy!

"Because of Bethlehem, love is born, hope is here." - Max Lucado

Theresa Mackenzie - [westbororep@elkislandlogos.ca](mailto:westbororep@elkislandlogos.ca)



## PARENT COUNCIL NEWS

December is such a busy month!

We will be hosting our annual Pancake Breakfast again this year on December 20th. Westboro Parents Group will be providing pancakes, a piece of fruit and sausage for everyone. We ask that each child please bring \$3 to help cover the costs and we invite anyone who would like to help cook or serve pancakes to join us. It is one of my favorite events, as we always have such an incredible turnout. Often, we have more people than jobs, but I love to see parents talking. We have a truly incredible community at Westboro and I think the pancake breakfast is one of our best events.

I am also excited about our Christmas concert on December 10th, which I am sure Mrs. Richard has out done herself putting together.

I hope that each of you have a wonderful holiday season filled with warmth, family, friends and relaxation.

Thank you

Krystal Gibson

## COUNSELLOR'S CORNER

The month of December brings many events. It is not uncommon for many to find the month of December more stressful than other months for various reasons: preparations for the holidays, absence of family members, limited finances, or the ability to avoid stressful situations. During this time, it is important to remember to take some time for self-care. Yes, you are entitled to think about yourself. Here are some tips to make the holidays festive:

- ✓ Know your spending limit. Lack of money is one of the biggest causes of stress during the holiday season. This year, set a budget. It's OK to tell your child that a certain toy costs too much.
- ✓ Turn your holiday meal into a pot-luck occasion rather than relying on one person to prepare everything. Dismiss the expectation to be everything to everybody.
- ✓ Take some time to care for yourself: eat right, get plenty of sleep, read a good book, watch a funny movie, or go for a walk/ snowshoeing, skiing, sledding, ice fishing, or whatever activity you enjoy.



## COUNSELLOR'S CORNER CONTINUED

- ✓ Exercise (as little as 20 minutes per day) will enhance your feeling of well-being.
- ✓ Make plans to spend time with people you enjoy.
- ✓ If you are alone for the holidays, take this time to call a friend, plan an outing, pamper yourself, or help others through volunteerism.
- ✓ Ask for help and companionship when you want it or need it.
- ✓ Learn to say “NO”. This will give you more time to say “yes” to events that you do want to attend.
- ✓ Allow yourself to grieve; many people remember losses over the holidays. Holidays can sometimes trigger depression when dealing with the death of a loved one or the breakup of a relationship. You may feel embarrassed to ask for help, or you may think that you’ll get over “the blues” on your own. It is ok to seek treatment to get better. Talk with your doctor about counselling or a treatment plan for depression.
- ✓ If things aren’t going well at home, give yourself permission to run an errand or have some time to yourself. “Alone” time will help you regain your perspective.
- ✓ Limit the amount of television you watch or video gaming as this will leave you feeling lethargic.

### **Coping with Grief during the Holiday Season** (taken from <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca>):

For some, the holidays are a time of joy and reconnection with friends and family. But if you’ve suffered a loss, the holiday season can bring up extra feelings of sadness and yearning for your loved one, an object, or a way of life you have lost.

One way that you can cope with your sadness and yearning is to talk about how you feel. Sharing your sadness with people who care about you helps lift the heaviness that sadness often brings.

Other steps you can take to cope with your feelings of sadness and yearning include:

- Look at photos, watch videos or exchange stories with other people about your loss.
- Take part in activities that acknowledge and mark the loss, such as funeral or memorial services after a death. This time of year, some funeral homes and religious institutions offer services to help people grieve, too.
- Surround yourself with people who make you feel safe and support you during your time of grief.
- Actively participate in normal day-to-day activities. Being active and taking part in daily activities keeps you focused in the present.

## COUNSELLOR'S CORNER CONTINUED

- Do something for yourself. Often we are so busy taking care of others we forget to focus on ourselves. Take time for yourself this season by doing something you enjoy, go for a walk, or try a new hobby such as yoga or meditation.
- Make healthy decisions. Get enough sleep, eat healthy food regularly and if you drink alcohol, limit your intake. The more you take care of yourself, the better you'll be able to get through each day.
- Practice gratitude. Focus on the goodness around you. Thank those who have been caring and kind to you. Send thank-you notes to someone special or record things you are thankful for in a journal.
- Get help if you need it. Holidays can be especially hard if you are already dealing with the death of a beloved family member or pet, or the breakup of a relationship or end of a job. Talk with your family physician or call the Mental Health Helpline at 1-877-303-2642.

Although it may seem that your feelings of sadness and yearning will last forever, remind yourself that these feelings will lessen as time goes by.

### **Reacting to others**

If you find yourself being overly sensitive and easily offended by what other people say and do, you can:

- \* Pause for a moment before responding to what you consider to be an insensitive comment or action. Keep yourself from becoming preoccupied with thoughts about an insensitive comment. Instead, concentrate on your breathing, count to 10, or recite a short prayer or poem that calms you.
- \* Remind yourself that you are under stress and not acting as you normally would.
- \* Ask people around you to allow you some time to adjust to your new life situation.

Wishing everyone a well-rested and safe holiday.

*Dianna Graziano*, M.Ed., R.Psych.

School Counsellor

## PEP Talk

In partnership with EIPS Committee of School Councils



2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 501 Festival Avenue Sherwood Park, AB T8A 4X3  
[www.pepsociety.ca](http://www.pepsociety.ca)

### A PARENT'S STORY – You are not alone!

My kid started smoking quite young and then proceeded to marijuana (cannabis/pot) because weed is the new "beer". Over the next few years, the drugs escalated to cocaine, heroin and fentanyl. We learned the term "poly user" at a PEP meeting; when your child uses multiple drugs depending on what is available or even affordable. Our teenager was brought home at all hours by loyal and maybe misguided friends and sometimes the police. The personality was altered into irrational, moody, abusive and self-destructive. We set "no drugs" boundaries that were broken regularly; lying, stealing and property damage became a regular occurrence. This all soon led to failing school and lost friends. A number of times we called the police in an attempt to arrest or protect our kid. This is the uncertainty of substance abuse and/or addiction. It steals, kills and destroys our dreams for our kids. We started attending PEP meetings and calling the PEP support line after being referred by a parent who had a "similar" story. The support from the group was instant! We learned a tonne; how to set effective boundaries, the 3 C's and how to better navigate the burdened/broken healthcare and legal systems. The expert facilitators and fellow parents/extended family members provide insight and support as we navigate through the chaos of addiction. We have come a long way from arriving as "mad dad and sad mom". There are tears shared and surprisingly laughter too. Our adult child is now in recovery and so are we... there is hope!

### You are not alone!

Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Society was founded over 15 years ago in Strathcona County. We provide free innovative programs for parents/extended family and youth/young adults. Our groups are professionally facilitated and drop in - no registration required. For more information please visit our web-site [www.pepsociety.ca](http://www.pepsociety.ca) or call our Support Line Days/Evenings Weekends 780.293.0737

## DIVISION NEWS

### HOLIDAYS MESSAGE

#### Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Board of Trustees

For many, including myself, December is a time for reflection and gratitude. As we wind down 2019 and head into the winter break, I want to extend warm holiday wishes to all our students, staff and families on behalf of the Elk Island Public Schools Board of Trustees. I also want to sincerely thank of each you for the contributions you bring to the Division on an ongoing basis. You are our partners in education. And, because of that, we're making a difference in the learning experiences and opportunities of all students within EIPS.

We hope all of you enjoy this special time of year and have a chance to attend some of the many school concerts and special events taking place Divisionwide. To all of you, have a wonderful holiday season and a new year filled with joy.

We look forward to seeing everyone back at school on Monday, Jan. 6, 2019.

Merry Christmas and happy holidays,

Trina Boymook  
EIPS Board Chair

### ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS - HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURE

#### Enjoy the Winter Break

**Westboro Elementary School** will close for the winter break at the end of the day on Dec. 20, 2019 and will reopen on Jan. 6, 2020. During this time, if you have any school-related questions or concerns, contact the Central Administration office at Elk Island Public Schools.

#### EIPS Central Administration Office Winter Break Hours

Closed: December 25 - January 1

Open: January 2 - 3 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

\*for location and contact information visit [www.eips.ca](http://www.eips.ca).

From everyone at Elk Island Public Schools, we wish all of you a happy holiday season and a wonderful New Year.



## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION 2019 - 2020

### Kindergarten Registration Starts Soon!

Is your child turning five on or before Dec. 31, 2020? If so, it's almost time to register for Kindergarten.

Kindergarten registration opens for the 2020 - 21 school year on **Feb. 1, 2020**.

To help families prepare, Elk Island Public Schools has put together an online toolkit, available at [www.eips.ca/kindergarten](http://www.eips.ca/kindergarten), to make the transition as smooth as possible. The kit includes information on registration, important dates, programming options, what to expect, eligibility, how to find your designated school, transportation and more.

Additional information regarding kindergarten can be found on our school website at [Westboro Elementary Kindergarten](#).



## RETURNING STUDENT REGISTRATION 2020-21

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) will once again conduct an online returning student registration process to confirm student registrations for the 2020-21 school year. Families of all returning students must complete the process to confirm the school their child plans to attend in the 2020-21 school year. Additionally, students who want to attend a non-designated school need to make that request through the returning student registration process - acceptance is based on available space. The 2020-21 returning student registration takes place between Feb. 1-29, 2020.

Access to the Returning Student Registration Form is provided through the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#). If you don't have a PowerSchool Parent Portal account, you need to set one up before Feb. 1, 2020.

[Create a PowerSchool Parent Portal account](#)

For more information contact the school directly.