



The Paw Print



R.I. Baker Middle School December 2020 Newsletter



Principal's Message

Well, it's been quite the ride so far. Our staff and students have learned online in a total lockdown, learned in school in specific cohorts, they have now been asked to learn again from home, and who knows what is in store for us in the future. RIBMS staff have been consistently flexible and understanding. They have worked endless hours to plan, teach and assess in ways that they've never been asked to before. They have fought to be creative and make sure our students get experiences they can look forward to. Our support staff have found ways to be more efficient during this time, and supported our students regardless of the changes. If I can tip my hat to anyone in particular, I would like to publicly recognize our custodians. Our school is in great hands and they ensure all of our safety is a priority daily.

I would like to share three life lessons I have learned in the past 9 months.

1. Human beings are creative beings. I have never seen more examples of taking problems or challenges and finding answers or solutions. It's easy to let COVID win, but I've rarely seen it. Instead we explore, invent, and create ways to do it better. Where there is a will, there is a way...for real!
2. I have learned to seek to understand, and then to be understood. Everyone has their own level of urgency. What gets me anxious or excited may not excite you. Your worries are not necessarily my worries. But, everyone's feelings are real and need to be heard and respected. We can all be better at this. We all have a story that should be heard.
3. Tough times bring people together. I have seen more genuine relationships formed in this school year than I have in many combined in the past. We expose our fears and anxieties, empathise and relate, and then support. I have seen this over and over in both students, staff and parents. I can only hope that this carries forward into more normal times.

I hope everyone gives these three lessons a glance, and spends some time over the break practicing at least one. Some will find this holiday season to be challenging for many reasons. I can only hope we can find creative ways to enjoy it, empathise and listen to our loved ones, and maximize the time with the ones you can be with.

Mr. Prebs



At Home Learning - Need Internet?

TELUS launches Internet for Good for Students program offering high speed internet from home for only \$9.95 per month to ensure all K-12 students get high speed Internet access to continue learning from the safety of their home.

<https://www.telus.com/en/about/news-and-events/media-releases/telus-launches-internet-for-good-for-students-in-alberta>

At Home Learning - Need to borrow a Chromebook?

RIBMS would like to help support our students who are having to learn at home - whether they are self isolating due to COVID 19 or are in Grades 7 or 8 and learning from home until January 11, 2020.



Please fill out the Chromebook Borrowing Agreement 2020-2021 available through your School Cash Online account, if your family is in need of additional technology during this time.

The number of chromebooks available is limited, so we will do our best to accommodate as many families as possible. Please contact the office if you have any questions at 403-345-3340.

At Home Learning - Attendance Questions

Q: Do I still need to report my child(s) medical appointments/illnesses/absences/lates etc while they are At-Home Learning?

A: YES PLEASE! Attendance is still being taken EACH period by your child's teachers and they will be marked Unexcused unless we know the reason that your child is absent from their online class. Thank you!



Daily School Reminders!

Attendance - School Messenger

Students are only excused for an absence when a parent/guardian has excused them by either contacting the office or using the School Messenger App or automated phone number (1-844-260-7166) to report your student's attendance.



You can download the SchoolMessenger app for free on any mobile device!

***Also, Parents who use the PowerSchool App have the option of enabling Attendance notifications so they can be **notified instantly** when a student is marked absent, late, etc.*

School Fees & Extra Curricular Fees -

SchoolCashOnline
KEVGROUP

School Fees are now due, please access your School Cash Online account to see what your students' fees are for the year.

<https://palliserregional.schoolcashonline.com>

PS Parent/Student Portal

Did you know that you can access your child's report card and attendance, anytime you want, from your device?



To successfully access the Parent Portal you will need to follow these steps:

1. Open an internet browser (Google) on your computer (this first step must be done on a computer, not a phone/handheld device)
2. Type **<https://ps.pallisersd.ab.ca/public>** into the address bar
3. If you haven't already done so, you will need to **Create an Account**. Fill in ALL the blanks under the **Parent Account Details** section. **Please choose/create your own unique Username and Password**. Please remember this information and keep it safe – this is what you will use to log in with at any later date.

****Please call the Office if you have not received your ACCESS ID and ACCESS PASSWORD from your students homeroom teacher.**



RI Baker Middle School would like to extend a huge and heartfelt “Thank You” to the Coaldale Community Wellness Association for their financial support of the purchase of a C-Pen set for the students of RIBMS!



COALDALE
Community Wellness
ASSOCIATION

Important Upcoming Dates

Dec. 4 & 11 - Candy Cane Crush sales (\$2 each)

Dec. 17 - Ugly Sweater Day

Dec 21-31 - NO SCHOOL

Jan 1-3 - NO SCHOOL

Jan 4 - 8 Online Learning for **ALL Grade levels**

Jan 11 - In School Learning resumes for **ALL Grade levels**

Jan 20 - Twin Day

Jan 29 - PD Day NO SCHOOL



A Rundown of Bears Athletics

Our virtual x-country meet was a huge success with 88 participants. A picture of our own Bronwyn Hamer was featured in the Prairie Post on November 16th.

We continue to wait for appropriate time and approval to run athletics safely. If anything changes, communication will be sent out through a school wide email, our athletic’s page, announcements and posters around the school.

Library News



THANK YOU to all that supported our virtual Scholastic Book Fair last month. We realize it wasn't the fair our students were familiar with but were happy to offer a wide selection of books to select from. With the proceeds from the fair we will be able to provide more new books for our school library collection and have some funds remaining to purchase more books from other vendors in the near future. This is a literary event that greatly enhances our library collection and your support is appreciated. Some of the new titles selected from the Book Fair will be showcased to students and available for them to read in the very near future. Your support of reading and literacy is vital to the growth of our students.

We also thank you for your support of the monthly Scholastic Book orders that also benefit our library collection. This year we are unable to send home the monthly paper flyers as we have done in the past however all flyers are available online at [Scholastic.ca](https://www.scholastic.ca) and if you have any questions about ordering please do not hesitate to contact the school librarian.

LEGION POSTER/LITERARY CONTEST

Thank you to students that took the time and effort to either write or draw entries for the annual Canadian Legion Poster/Literary Contest. We are pleased to be able to bring quite a number of great entries to the Lethbridge Branch where they will be judged according to age group. R. I. Baker has always produced several winners in the competition and last year was no exception with one contestant winning in several categories. Seeing our variety of entries this year I am sure we will be successful again. It's encouraging to see our students taking some of their own time to show their appreciation to our Canadian veterans.

AUTHOR VISIT

The school library is thrilled to have been chosen by the Rocky Mountain Book Award Association to host Canadian author **Susin Nielsen** for a visit in the New Year. Details of the visit will be forthcoming as arrangements are made with the author.

Susin won the 2020 award this year for her novel '**No Fixed Address**' and it was a favorite of quite a few of our students as well as several staff. She also won the award a few years ago for her novel '**Word Nerd**'. The library currently has 4 of her novels available for students to borrow.

Each year the librarian promotes the Rocky Mountain Book Award nominees as it exposes students to Canadian authors and literature of both fiction and non-fiction. It is students in grades 4-7 that have the privilege of placing their vote for the book of their choice which is always unique and exciting for them. The 2021 list is full of variety and students have already been exposed to 3 of the titles. The entire list is available on the Rocky Mountain Book Award website. We encourage you to have a look. Mrs. Bueckert highly recommends 'Harvey Comes Home'.

To quote Michael Pollard the Associate Professor of Education at the University of Lethbridge "The Rocky Mountain Book Award Program is an excellent program for developing literacy because it encourages young adults to read a variety of genres by Canadian authors and helps them cultivate and sustain their love of reading."

Family School Liaison Counselling Program

“How to Listen Actively to your children and teens”

(article written by: Alberta Health Services for their Parent Information Series)

KIDS NEED TO FEEL HEARD. Sometimes it may be difficult to hear what they have to say. Other times it may be hard to get them to talk about their thoughts at all. They may think you won't understand. They may be afraid to share their feelings because they think someone may make fun of them. If you practice being open and honest with your children and make it easy for them to talk to you, you will build a stronger relationship with them. This process works in two ways: 1. hearing what your children are saying 2. talking about your own thoughts and feelings with them. It can be tough to talk with your kids. Don't give up! Here are some ideas that may help you.

Four ways to improve communication with your kids:

1. Ask open-ended questions, such as “Tell me about your day” or “What did you do today?”

These allow your child to tell you about events. These questions also require more than a one-word answer.

2. Listen reflectively. You can do this by simply repeating what your children have said or by saying it back to them

in your own words. This will make sure that you truly understand what your children are trying to tell you.

3. Affirm your child's feelings. This makes children feel supported and will make it easier for them to talk to you in the future. An example of this would be: “I understand that it must have been hard for you to come to me about this. I really appreciate your openness.”

4. Summarize what you've heard. This reinforces what your children have said and shows that you have been listening to them. Also, keep in mind that there are non-verbal ways of communicating that can also help with open communication. Making eye contact and nodding your head while they are talking are effective ways of helping someone else feel heard.



Ugly Sweater Day

Thursday December 17th will be our Ugly Sweater Day for students to wear their best, ugliest, more Christmas-y sweaters. Lights, pompoms, garland and fluffiness encouraged!



Christmas Window Decoration Contest

Students will be decorating a window with their homeroom in a Christmas theme. The windows will be completed on Friday, December 4th.

- Parents and community members are asked to vote on their favourite window through the RI Baker Facebook page, on a Google Form.
- There will be a prize for the community top voted window, and the top voted window by our Seniors Panel at the Sunny South Lodge.
- Parents and Coaldale families are encouraged to come and take a walk around the school to see all the Christmas window art the last week of school before Christmas break, or over the holidays!
- What's the prize you ask? Well, students from the winning classroom will create an ugly sweater that Mr. Prebs or Mr. Clifton will wear for ugly sweater day. Supplies will be provided.



Candy Cane Crush

On Friday December 4th, and Friday December 11th students can bring in a toonie (\$2) to buy a candy cane to send to a student or staff in the school.

Students will fill out a form with a pre-written message and indicate who they would like to send it to. Forms will be turned into notes, attached to candy canes and quarantined before being handed out in homerooms during the last week of classes before Christmas break.

For students who are currently online, there is a google form available as well. We can add an option to pay on school cash or when you get back in January. Those candy canes will be delivered in January as well.



If you have any questions, please email megan.leusink@pallisersd.ab.ca

Grade 5 POD

Cohort planned activities will happen at school the Friday before the break.



Language Arts: We've finished up our unit on Complete Sentences, and are moving into a study of short stories. We will examine the structure of stories and the more academic language we use to discuss this structure. We will then use this style to help guide our own writing and reading. In word work, we've been focussing on various homophones. As always, we encourage our students to be reading at least 2 hours outside of school time, each week!

Social 5A/5B: We have been working our way through the Atlantic Region of Canada. We have discussed the landscape, resources, climate, and history. At the beginning of this month students will be working on a project for this region, followed by an exam. Once we have completed the Atlantic region we will be moving on to the Canadian Shield.

Science 5C / 5D: We started our Wetlands unit in November and are learning about the ecosystems and adaptations of plants and animals in these environments. As always, please check the Google Classroom if your child is away to see what we are covering each day. Marks will be put into Powerschool, not in the classroom.

Math 5C / 5D: We started our subtraction and division unit in November. Currently, we are learning about multi digit subtraction and introduction to division. There are Math Antics videos for multi digit subtraction, basic division, as well as long division on the grade 5 Google Classrooms. We watch these videos at the start of a new skill and do practice questions as a class. Please have your child review these and do their own practice questions at home. **As always, please have your child practice memorizing their times tables up to 10 x 10.**

Science 5A/5D: We are continuing to learn about Weather this month and hope to wrap it up before christmas break.

Math 5A/5D: We have continued to work on multiplication strategies and 2 digit by digit multiplication. We will start working on division soon.



Grade 6 POD

Language Arts: This month we will be finishing up our unit on reading comprehension and moving onto our story writing unit. We will be completing our second major project near the middle of December, with a focus on reading comprehension. If you have not yet done so, please ensure that you log into the parent portal, to access grades and comments. Have a wonderful December!



Social: We have finished learning about what democracy looks like in practice, and have begun to learn about the government at the local level. We will be learning about how decisions are made at this level, and why. Students will be completing a social city project, applying their learning to a fictional city of their making.

Science: We have started the Sky Science unit in science class. So far, we've studied objects that emit and reflect light in space, characteristics of different stars, and what constellations are and how they move in our sky. This is a great time to get outdoors with your child and take a look at the night sky. The app "Sky View" is a tool that can help locate stars and constellations in the sky!

Math: We have started our Patterns and Expressions unit in Math. In this unit, students will describe and extend patterns, make tables of values from patterns, and identify relationships in patterns. We will also get our first introduction to algebra as we explore variables, expressions, and solving problems using equations with variables.

Grade 7 POD

Language Arts: We are finishing our core text study of *The Giver* and be completing some small written assignments while doing online learning at home.

Social: We are currently finishing up our learning about the early European settlers in North America. We will then be moving into the Fur Trade, looking at the timeline and economic competition that was spurred on by rival fur trade companies. This will lead us into our next unit on war and the British conquest of North America. All materials and assignments are available to you on Google Classroom.



Science: We are continuing our Heat & Temperature unit in December. Students will be looking at the production, transfer and transformation of heat energy and how that plays a role in meeting human needs. In learning about heat, students will investigate sources and uses of heat energy and consider questions about the nature of heat.

Math: As we transition to online learning, we will be wrapping up Unit 2 which focused mainly on fraction operations including mixed numbers. We will then move into Unit 3, which explores integers and integer operations. Students will focus on adding and subtracting integer numbers concretely, pictorially and symbolically.

Grade 8 POD

Language Arts:

Mrs. McDougall - We will be wrapping up our “Deep Study of Character” unit this month as we head online for instruction! We’ve explored how setting affects character, and now we will shift our focus to identifying motif and theme in text through characterization. Many students have read several novels through the course of this unit; check in with your child. What have they read? Thanks for your continued support at home and I look forward to connecting with you all online prior to Winter Break. Keep them reading! :)



Mrs. Netzel - Students continue to read, analyze, and focus on short stories this month. There will be a few writing assignments that will require some focused attention. Students will work on paragraph structure, grammatical writing skills, as well as adding specific detail to their writing. One-on-one help will be available during this process. Thank you for the ongoing encouragement to your children to complete their work to the best of their abilities. As we shift to a few weeks of online learning heading into the Christmas break, it is important to note that parent support is so greatly appreciated. We’ve got this, grade 8s!

Social: Students are completing their understanding of the impact of knowledge and science during the Renaissance. We are quickly approaching the end of our Renaissance unit. Our goal is to be done the Renaissance within the first couple of weeks of January. Our social Midterm will follow the completion of this unit. A study review guide will be provided 2 weeks ahead of time.

Science: During the time of online learning, students will be learning about Fresh and Saltwater Systems. We started the cells unit late in November and will put that unit on pause until we are back in class.

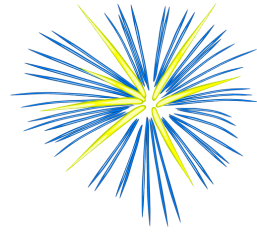
Math: We will be spending the majority of December completing Chapter 3: Integer Operations - online. This includes a review of addition and subtraction of integers (completed in Math 7). Then, we will introduce multiplication of integers, followed by division of integers. Then, we will look to solve order of operation problems involving integers. Lastly, as with every chapter, there will be a problem solving component too! The goal is to make this as smooth of a transition as possible - by continuing to present notes in the same manner with the same check and assignments along the way.

December 2020



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1	2	3	4 Candy Crush Grams on Sale \$2
7	8	9	10	11 Candy Crush Grams on Sale \$2
14	15	16	17 UGLY SWEATER DAY	18
21 No School Christmas Holidays	22 No School Christmas Holidays	23 No School Christmas Holidays	24 No School Christmas Holidays	25 No School Christmas Holidays
28 No School Christmas Holidays	29 No School Christmas Holidays	30 No School Christmas Holidays	31 No School Christmas Holidays	***** Back to School January 4, 2020 *****

January



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 Happy New Year! NO SCHOOL
4 Online Learning for ALL Grade levels	5 Online Learning for ALL Grade levels	6 Online Learning for ALL Grade levels	7 Online Learning for ALL Grade levels	8 Online Learning for ALL Grade levels
11 First Day Back to School for In Person Learning!	12	13	14	15
18	19	20 Twin Day!	21	22
25	26	27	28	29 NO SCHOOL PD DAY