

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

As we enter December (already!!), we know that the month is filled with anticipation for many students. They anticipate the warmth of family, of Christmas, and the time away from school. We also know that not every student looks forward to this break. Some families experience the Christmas break as a stressful time for a wide variety of reasons. So, as we enter this month, we want to celebrate with and support all of our students, no matter what their family circumstances. It is our hope that joy, peace, and love will find each one of our students.

Here is a list of some special events of which to take note:

BAND CONCERT

Our Grade 7 and 8 band and art students will present their learning in a concert and powerpoint presentation on Thursday, Dec 5 beginning at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to come and kick off the Christmas season on Thursday.

GRADE 5 CONCERT

Our Grade 5 Christmas Concert will take place on December 18th. We look forward to having ALL our Grade 5 students participating in the concert. It has always been a great celebration, and I am sure it will be that again.

LAST DAY SCHEDULE

On the last day of school before Christmas, our school will celebrate the talents of our students in our 8th Annual Talent Show. The show will take place on December 20 in the morning. In the afternoon, each of our Grade Level Neighbourhoods has planned some activities to do together, and most classes will spend some time with just their own classmates. This is a good day to spend together before we begin the Christmas holiday.



Also in this newsletter you will find:

Vaping information. As we are learning in the news, the number of teens vaping has been increasing dramatically, and that puts these students at risk. Please read the two attached documents, one from Hanover School Division and one from Minister of Education, Kelvin Goertzen.

Settlement Workers in Schools is a partnership program between Eastman Immigration, HSD, and the federal government. If your family has arrived in Canada in the past few years, you are welcome to access this service as a family, and also for your child.

Steinbach Arts Council. Please read the media releases from the Steinbach Arts Council regarding Christmas programming.

Other News:

LOCKDOWN AND HOLD AND SECURE

The Parent Advisory Council asked that I talk a little about the relationship between lockdowns and a hold and secure. Hanover School Division has an excellent web page dedicated to explaining the procedures used when a school has an emergency Emergency Preparedness. There are few things to keep in mind:

1. As hard as it may be, please don't call the school or your child's cell phone.
2. Please do not go to the school to pick up your child unless you are requested to do so. As our last experience with a Hold and Secure demonstrated, we experience major traffic congestion when parents converge on the school. This would make it difficult for emergency vehicles to come to the school, if necessary.
3. Be sure to access official and reliable information - HSD Twitter Account @HanoverSD, local radio stations, and HSD website are all good sources.
4. **And finally, be aware of standard emergency procedures in place for your child's school.**
 - a. Hold and Secure is used when it is necessary to secure a school because there is an emergency situation occurring outside the school. Classes may continue to function normally. The exterior doors are locked and monitored to allow students and staff to enter, but otherwise remain locked. Once inside, no one leaves the building. An active police incident in a neighborhood would trigger a Hold and Secure.

Example: Police incident in area e.g. robbery or any serious criminal offence in close proximity to a school, or where a suspect has been pursued by police near a school. In Hold and Secure status, the school will be locked. You will not be allowed to pick-up your child until after an "all-clear" is given and established student release procedures are in order.

b. **Lockdown** is used to prevent intruders from entering occupied areas of a building or when it is necessary to isolate students and staff from a danger outside, or within the building. Situations include active shooters or dangerous intruders. Staff and students are restricted in their movements to a specific area which is then protected through locking of exterior and classroom doors and covering windows. There may be other areas of the school that are capable of being locked down and these may also be designated as lockdown locations.

Examples: Dangerous Intruder, Active Shooter, Barricaded Suspect. In Lockdown status, the school will be locked with NO arrivals or departures of anyone including staff, students or parents. You will not be allowed to pick-up your child until after an "all-clear" is given and established student release procedures are in order.

c. **Evacuation** is necessary when a building or area becomes unsafe. The most common event requiring evacuation is fire, but other circumstances may also require evacuation. These include floods or a bomb threat within the school.

Examples: Fire, Bomb Threat, Chemical Accident, Explosion or Threat of Explosion. In Evacuation status, students will gather at an evacuation assembly location, predetermined by each school. Students will remain at the assembly location until they are returned to the school, or released to their parent/guardian under established student release procedures.

d. Sheltering in Place is used when personal safety is considered to be in danger if anyone leaves the school. It is usually associated with an environmental hazard where hazardous materials are released into the atmosphere. In the case of environmental hazards, steps may need to be taken to ensure the school is airtight – turning off furnaces, air conditioning, closing fume hoods and exhaust systems, covering and taping windows

Examples: Environmental events (chemical spill), Weather events, or dangerous wild animal. Any situation where evacuation may pose a greater risk than shelter in place. In Sheltering in Place, while everyone may move freely within the school – exterior doors and windows are locked. Students and staff must remain in the building until advised by authorities that outside conditions are safe.

Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) are available to support newcomer students and their families in school and in the community. SWIS workers help to determine the needs of newcomer families, connect students and families to resources, and promote cultural diversity by informing the school of newcomer topics.

You may contact Settlement Workers in Schools by calling or emailing:

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