



“Get the Scoop”

On Whitecourt Central School

DECEMBER 2017

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Tidbits

Eagles of the Month

Important Reminders

Parents Invited!

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Principal’s Message

Congratulations to all of our students on the hard work and determination put forth in Term #1. The staff are very proud of our students’ accomplishments!

2017 is quickly coming to a close and we are busy getting ready for the Christmas Season. Christmas concert songs and performances are being organized and props are beginning to be made. The excitement for the holiday season can be felt throughout the school.

Whitecourt Central School wants to ensure that everyone has a wonderful holiday season so we are supporting both the Whitecourt Christmas Hamper and the Food Bank. A letter has gone home requesting that our Grade 3 and 5 students contribute to the Whitecourt Christmas Hamper and the Grade 4 students to the Food Bank. We will try to collect as many donations as possible to give to these worthy organizations. Our staff contributes to Jeans for Charity each year and that enables staff to wear jeans on Fridays for a contribution to the fund. All funds collected from this staff fundraiser will be donated to the Whitecourt Christmas Hamper Fund.

Students will have the opportunity to do some Christmas shopping at our School Council’s Holiday Gift Shop taking place on December 7 and 8, 2017. This is a time for students to be able to shop for family members with the assistance of Santa’s elves, our parent volunteers.

If anyone would like to wrap presents, sing holiday cheer, or help choose presents, please contact our School Council Chair, Joanne Dixon.

The staff and students of Whitecourt Central School wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

Mrs. T. McKeever
Principal



Ask Dr. Jim.....

Dr. Jim Canniff is our School Psychologist and has been with us at Whitecourt Central for several years. Because Dr. Jim planned the first school Amazing Race, created the Mad Scientist Club, and regularly visits the classrooms, many of our students have built a good relationship with him. Dr. Jim enjoys his work with students and knows the many challenges that we as parents and school staff face as the children grow and mature. Dr. Jim is also the proud father of four adult children. Dr. Jim has a very busy schedule at Central but has offered to be available for parents who may have questions regarding issues such as:

- ◆ A child's physical development
- ◆ Emotions and feelings
- ◆ Behavior choices
- ◆ Problem solving strategies
- ◆ Attention challenges

If you would like to pose questions to Dr. Jim, please contact him at the email address below. Questions will be answered on a timely basis, and may be asked anonymously; however, if there is more than one parent asking the same questions, we may generalize the answer and place it on our website, similar to what we do for our parent questions asked of the school.

Please email Dr. Jim at: wcs.djquestions@ngps.ca



Tidbits:

Treat the parent-teacher relationship as you would any other professional relationship, like that between you and your family doctor, for instance.

- ◆ Learn school and classroom procedures and events
- ◆ Keep the lines of communication open
- ◆ Make contact early in the school year
- ◆ Address issues as they arise
- ◆ Address issues in a positive and constructive way
- ◆ Make an appointment, show up on time, call if you will be late, or need to cancel.
- ◆ Always deal with the teacher first.
- ◆ Know that you and the teacher are working for a common purpose.
- ◆ Know that teachers have many years of training and continuously participate in professional development to ensure they are on top of new strategies and techniques for all situations.

Merry
Christmas

Christmas Concert News

We're very excited to present our 2017 Christmas Concert - "Holiday Windows"
Concert performances will take place on Tuesday, December 19/17 at 10:30 a.m.
and Wednesday, December 20/17 at 1:00 p.m.

Tickets are not required for this year's Christmas Concerts.
Both concerts are the same. We look forward to seeing you there!

Please do not park in the parking lot of the Public Library during our Christmas Concert.
We will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Whitecourt Food Bank
at both performances. Thank you!

CONGRATULATIONS!!

We present our Eagles of the Month for November 2017!

Grade 3

Caleb Soderquist
 Logan Czemerer
 Lincoln Aubin
 David Wall
 Bella Craft
 Isabella Kowalski

Grade 4

Evangelina Iggulden
 Eden Osborne
 Romey Rantucci
 Marley Robinson
 Ethan Martin
 Isabella Best

Grade 5

Grace Craft
 Christopher Layton
 Kaleb Johnson
 Mackenzie Boon
 Jake Baker



Eye Glasses:

We have several pairs of prescription eye glasses in our office. If you think they may belong to your child, please stop by and have a look!
 Thank you!



Thank you!

Thank you to the parents who provided supper for our staff on the first Parent Teacher Interview night. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity! We are very thankful that we work with such a wonderful, caring group of parents!



Some Important Reminders:

- * We have been experiencing an increasing amount of garbage and spilled coffee in the gym following our assemblies. This requires students to do extra clean up before classes can use the gym. If you are bringing in snacks and coffee, please take all garbage with you and clean up any messes before leaving the school.
- * We have many students who arrive late and leave early each day. In situations like this, if students are missing assignments, they will need to use their free time to complete any missed school work. Students also miss important instruction from the teacher and student collaboration when they are absent from class. If attendance is impacting a student's performance, it will be reflected in both the academic progress and comments in PowerSchool.

Parents are Invited!!

Box Cars and One Eyed Jacks is coming to Whitecourt Central School on January 31, 2018!

Do you want to learn some new and exciting math games to play with your children at home?

Please join us for a parent workshop on January 31 from 6:00—7:15 p.m.

What: Box Cars and One-Eyed Jacks is a Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 10 consulting company specializing in games and teaching strategies to support numeracy in classrooms and at home.

When: January 31, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Central School

Why: To collaborate with other parents and learn some fun math games you can play at home to support your child's numeracy skills.



Website

**Our school website is a terrific spot to check out important school dates and information. Check it out at Whitecourtcentral.ca
Follow us on Twitter: [@ngpswcs](https://twitter.com/ngpswcs)**



Assembly

Our regular monthly assembly will take place on Friday, December 22/17 at 9:30 a.m. Our Grade 4 Glee Club will perform at this assembly.

Our theme for our December Assembly Day is Red and Green Day. Students are encouraged to dress in festive red and green to celebrate the Season

Buses and Winter Weather:

With the cooler and unpredictable weather of winter, we can anticipate that there will be days when the buses do not run. When this happens, please note the following:



- ◆ If buses do not run in the morning, they will not run in the afternoon and it will be up to individual families to make arrangements for drop off and pick up of their child (ren.)
- ◆ It is also important for drivers not to be double parking along 53 Avenue when picking up students. This will help avoid the potential for an accident to occur.
- ◆ We do ask the By-Law Officer and RCMP to patrol the streets around our school periodically.

It is important for parents to understand that individual schools do not decide as to whether or not buses run. This decision is made by the Director of Transportation between 6:30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. in the morning. Data is gathered from individual contacts across the Division. Weather can change quickly so it is important to check Facebook and the Division/School websites.

In cases such as November 23, 2017 when the buses initially ran, but were then asked to pull over and wait for safe passage to the schools, it is important to note that bus drivers are responsible to make contact with parents through their phone fan out. The bus drivers will be able to let parents know who is on the bus currently and who has not yet been picked up. If your bus drivers is not contacting you in these situations, please contact First Student and ensure that they have your updated contact information.

Contacting our Teachers.....

Teachers may be reached during the following times on school days:

Before school from 8:45—8:55 a.m.
Morning Recess— 10:35—10:45 a.m.
Lunch time— 11:46 a.m.—12:29 p.m.
Afternoon Recess— 2:00—2:10 p.m.
After School— 3:15—3:30 p.m.










Classes will not be interrupted for staff to take phone calls. Messages may be left with our school secretary. If you are emailing teachers, please know that they are not always able to check email throughout their day, as they have supervision, meetings, and other commitments that often take their non-instructional time. Please allow a twenty-four hour response time for teacher messages. Please ensure that your child(ren) know of their after school plans before coming to school each morning. Interrupting class time with student messages is disruptive to the entire classroom.



December 2017



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|---|--|--|------------------------|--|---|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 Term 1 Awards 9:30 a.m.  | 7 Holiday Gift Shop | 8 Holiday Gift Shop | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 Pizza Day  | 13 Soup Day  | 14 | 15 Gum Day for \$1.00 for Relay for Life | 16  |
| 17 | 18 | 19 Pizza Day Christmas Concert 10:30 a.m. | 20 Soup Day Christmas Concert 1:00 p.m. | 21 | 22 Assembly—9:30 a.m. Red/Green Day | 23 First Day of Christmas Vacation  |
| 24 | 25 Merry Christmas  | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 |  | | January 8, 2018 First Day Back to School after Christmas Break | | | |

December

Team for Success

How to Contact the Team for Success:

Project Coordinator:
E-mail: teagan.arnott@ngps.ca or
Call: (780) 262-0466.

Tanya (Pat Hardy):
Call: (780) 778-6266 ask for Tanya

Maren (Whitecourt Central):
Call: (780) 778-2136 ask for Maren

Stacey (Percy Baxter):
Call: (780) 778-3898 ask for Stacey

Staff:

Project Coordinator
Teagan Arnott

Success Coaches

Pat Hardy
Tanya Smithson

Central School
Maren Skipper

Percy Baxter School
Stacey Wright

Programming

The Team for Success is shifting our focus from targeted groups (anxiety and anger management) to universal programming where we will provide programming to ALL students in our schools! At Whitecourt Central we will be giving programs called The Four-Way Test and Zones of Regulation. We also facilitate music/art mental health!

Follow Us!

Follow the Team for Success on Twitter: @Team4SuccessWct or on Facebook for more updates!

How to Beat the Holiday Blues

1. Plan unstructured, low-cost fun holiday activities: window-shop and look at the holiday decorations. Look at people's Christmas lighting on their homes, take a trip to the countryside, etc.--the opportunities are endless.
2. Be reasonable with your schedule. Do not overbook yourself into a state of exhaustion--this makes people cranky, irritable, and depressed.
3. Take a social media fast and instead, connect only in real time and in person.
4. Pop a feel-good DVD in the player and have a popcorn night with your children.
5. Do some chores. Purge your closet of unwanted things and donate a bag of clothes and shoes to the Repeat Boutique or Twice is Nice. Or, de-clutter your home and clear your mind in the process.



TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT TRAGIC EVENTS

As a parent, are you concerned or overwhelmed about major tragedies in the news? Are you worried and anxious about how to discuss these tragedies with your child? Do you try to avoid the conversation and hope your child won't hear about it? Do you brush over the details with vague answers to their questions? Do you speak candidly with your child? The likelihood that your child remains oblivious to the events that are unfolding around them is remote.

When considering how to discuss a tragic event with a child, keep in mind the *age* and *maturity* level of your child. Even if you try to shield your child from the horrors of the news, they can hear about it on the playground or read about it on-line. Just because your child has not talked to an adult in their life about it, does not mean they have not seen or heard details of the tragedy.

Sometimes you need to begin asking *a few questions* to find out what your child already knows. Depending on the age of a child, it is important to *not overwhelm* them with too many details. Do not try to analyze the tragic event, give only the facts that you know, and *decide* what you feel your child can process.

How you discuss the events with your child can impact their beliefs about the world they live in. Will you focus on the horrors or will you focus on the good people who are working at keeping the world safe? To send the message to your child that bad things happen in this world but together, as family, you are strong enough to handle it creates *safety* and *resiliency*.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CREATE SAFETY FOR YOUR CHILD?

- Point out the goodness you see in everyday life, particularly amidst the tragedies: look for the *heroes* and the *helpers*; the *kindness, bravery* and *courage*.
- Point out to your child that most people are *good* and *kind* and have no intention of hurting them.
- As a family, become empowered to show kindness to others, particularly our first responders.
- Write a thank you note or draw a picture for a police officer, fire fighter or paramedic.
- Monitor the exposure to media and social media for yourself and your child. Being inundated with constant violence in the news is not healthy.
- Do not let young children watch negative news.

These tragedies can be especially disturbing for you, as a parent. Take note of how you are feeling and processing the trauma. Do not obsess about the news, videos or social media; your child is watching you. They will follow your lead. *Model calmness*.

Adults may be more affected than children. The focal points where the violence took place may be places you visited, seen on TV, or attended sporting events. *Talk* to someone you trust about how you are feeling. If you cannot handle the big emotions you are feeling, expecting your child to is unrealistic.

Encourage your child to focus on activities that "*ground*" them; keeping them in the *present*, remind them they are *safe* now, and to consider what they have *control* of. Stay busy with activities that are enjoyable, particularly something you can do together. Promote *positive mental, physical and spiritual*

wellness. Connect your child with other trusting adults who care for your child, such as an ***aunt, uncle, grandparents, teacher, coach, Pastor, neighbor or family friend.***

Most importantly, let your child know that you are ***always available*** to them, to ***talk*** to and to ***answer*** their questions. Check in with your child every few days to see what they are thinking about, how they are feeling. If you feel after a couple of weeks they are having difficulty processing the tragedies, it may time to speak to a mental health professional.

This article was submitted by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Division Social Worker. She is a support for schools, students, parents and caregivers to encourage success in school. Tammy advocates for students and provides a link between the student and other supports within the community. Tammy has been a social worker for nearly 20 years and is a mother to 4 children, 3 of which are teenagers.