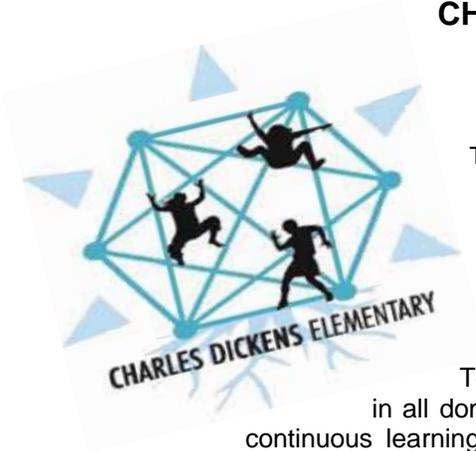


CHARLES DICKENS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Julie Weatherall
Vice Principal: Shelley Sunner
Secretary: Carmelina Spirli
PAC Co-Chairs: Sara Getz,
Jessie Mok, Kate Shapiro
Director of Instruction: Julie Pearce
Trustee: Carmen Cho



MISSION STATEMENT

Together we bring alive our commitment to develop each child's potential in all domains through a long-established philosophy built on mutual respect, continuous learning and opportunities for leadership within a child-centred, multi-aged framework.

December 2021

We acknowledge that we *learn*, work together, and play on the unceded and traditional territory of the x'məθk'əyəm (Musqueam), seɬɬwɪtulh (Tsleil Waututh) and sḵwəxwú7mesh (Squamish Coast Salish) peoples.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Wednesday, December 1st: Conferences in some classes. 2:00 pm dismissal for all students.

Friday, December 17th: Last day before Winter Break

Tuesday, January 4th: School reopens after Winter Break

Dear Dickens Community:



INTERIM DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION, JULIE PEARCE, VISITS EVERY CLASSROOM AT DICKENS ON NOV. 9TH

Julie Pearce is filling in as Dickens' DOI until January when Shannon Burton will begin in her new role. Julie enjoyed being toured around Dickens by two grade 7 students who took her to each classroom as well as showing her all of our amenities, including the rooftop garden and outdoor learning classroom. Designated students in each classroom took her to see the highlights of their room, so that she got to see everything from Kindergarten centers and primary grades busy with early literacy activities, to students playing marimbas in the music room and plants and experiments from the 'Growing Chefs' project in intermediate classrooms. I know she truly enjoyed her time with us and was very impressed with our student leadership, so evident in the mini tours of each classroom. It has been nice to have a few visitors in our school this year as we slowly move towards the bustle of the old normal.

BUTTERFLIES OF HOPE by DIVISION 17
As presented at our Virtual Remembrance Day Assembly



Over the past few weeks, we have been reading about and discussing past Wars and current conflicts happening around the world. We learned about some of the consequences of war and the impact conflict has on people's lives. This has helped us to further appreciate how lucky we are to live in Canada and to be grateful for the things that we have. We have also been learning about the symbols connected to War and Remembrance Day, like the red poppy and the white Peace poppy.

We'd like you to take a moment to look at our art and think about what it means. Our art piece has gold butterflies, a silhouette, as well as colourful butterflies. What do you think they represent?

We'd like to share with you what each symbol represents to us:

The colourful butterflies represent countries currently at war or in conflict. We represented these countries by putting their flag on the butterflies' wings. We chose the butterfly because we wanted to send a message of change and hope. The silhouette of the woman represents the families of people who died at war. She also represents peace, hope, and resiliency. Finally, the gold butterflies are symbolic of wars past and countries that now have peace.

LIBRARY MONITORS



Relatively recently, in a school super, super close...

Episode MMXXI

Return of the School Monitors

Eager volunteers have returned to the Dickens Elementary Library to enroll as Library Monitors in order to do book exchange, shelve materials, organize and tidy as well as help patrons of the library to restore balance to the books... ✨

We are happy to have student helpers in the library this year! We held information and orientation meetings last month. As you can see in our picture, we had a terrific turnout! We have over SIXTY volunteers! Library Monitors will be helping at Intermediate Open Book Exchange times during school hours. Students will gain confidence as well as leadership skills and learning opportunities while working as a team with library materials. They will serve Dickens students and staff. Where possible, we put students together by their choices. There will be 8-week blocks with the Grade 7s starting off the rotations. After their help, they will mentor and train the next group of Grade 6s and then

these students will guide the Grade 5s recruits. We look forward to working with these stellar students! 😊

Jaze & Shelley 📖

CLUBS

While COVID still has our planet in its grasp, many of the restrictions in place last year have started to lift. We are not yet meeting in large groups, but we have been able to start a number of student clubs. In addition to the Singing Club, which was featured in the October newsletter and performed beautifully for our virtual Remembrance Day Assembly, teacher sponsors have started the following clubs:

- **The Diversity Club which meets twice a month with VP, Shelley and Grade 6/7 teacher, Anna.**
- **Dungeons and Dragons Club, sponsored by SSA Kyle which meets weekly in Anna's classroom**
The Dungeons and Dragons club meets every Tuesday and Wednesday (and sometimes Thursday if they need to finish battling a horde of spectres!). Division 18's Leif founded the club and also assumes the role of Dungeon Master. The members of the club make their way through the mystical world Leif has created, using magic and teamwork to defeat their enemies.

"The D&D club is a club that plays Dungeons and Dragons. I am the founder and dungeon master. Me and one other player bring snacks. It's amazing. We are currently in a dungeon I designed myself". Leif

- **Student Council, sponsored by Grade 5/6/7 teacher Cathy and Grade 1/2 teacher Karen, which meets as needed to organize various events and initiatives such as the Food Bank Drive.**

Student Council

Hello. We are going to tell you a bit about the Student Council at Charles Dickens! The Student Council is about building a healthy community at our school. At the Student Council we give students opportunities to take on leadership roles. It is also a way for the whole school to have fun. Speaking of fun, we like to arrange different activities that the whole school can participate in, such as the Halloween candy guessing jar, the Food Bank, spirit days, Friendship Day and much more. That's all about the Student Council. We hope to see you there!

By Student Reps Aubrey and Joanna

Indigenous Focus Day

On November 29th VSB staff took part in an Indigenous Focus Day with a full morning of pre-recorded presentations from representatives of the x^wməθk^wəyəm | Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh | Squamish & səliwəta+ | Tsleil-Waututh Nations; a Panel of Indigenous and non-Indigenous VSB students; and a presentation called Raised Voices by a Canadian Indigenous youth group called Carriers of Hope. Following the full morning of presentations Dickens staff divided into three groups in the afternoon to discuss the following questions. I have listed some of the common answers that the groups came up with independently.

1) What really stood out for me?

- Our interconnectedness to land
- Having culturally safe spaces in schools
- Calls to action from youth
- A vision of what schooling could look like in the future – honouring cultures, languages, and different ways of learning
- The importance of listening

2) What or whom have I learned about?

- Residential schools and Intergenerational trauma
- Unceded land
- Authentic materials and voices – Indigenous Elders and Youth
- The value of oral language traditions
- How do we reimagine our colonial structures?

3) How has this changed the way I think?

- It is our responsibility to teach issues
- Reconciliation is a process; be gentle with yourself
- One act of kindness can change the world – even the little things we do can make a difference
- Metaphor: trees/seeds of knowledge – give the seed, not the whole tree
- Decolonize our practice

TRASHFORMATION BY DIVISION 12

The following excerpt is from the VSB website and features Dickens' students who were winners last year.

In partnership with the Vancouver School District, the City of Vancouver is seeking creative individuals with a passion for the environment to take on [TRASHformation](#) – an upcycled art challenge for students that can transform unwanted trash into recycled treasure.

Designed specifically for Vancouver students, TRASHformation aims to raise awareness on issues such as climate change, water pollution, and waste reduction. The challenge

encourages students in kindergarten to grade 12 to express their views on environmental issues through art and to showcase their work with only recycled materials.

Last year, there were several challenge winners, including three grade 5 students at Dickens Elementary. Daniel, AJ, and Kaleana built an angler fish out of plastic bottles to symbolize the staggering effects that ocean pollution has on unique fish populations.

Learn more about TRASHformation: <https://vancouver.ca/green-van...>



This year grade 4 and 5 students at Dickens have taken on the challenge again. You can see some of their creations in the photo above. Below are some write-ups on their inspiration and process.

Wolf

Our inspiration was that when we heard that the wolf's habitat was being destroyed, we knew we had to do a wolf because we think they are such cool creatures. We also have one question for you: why would people cut down a wolf's habitat for cities and towns? The answer is that some people don't care about the nature around them. We think the more people know the truth about wolf habitat then their numbers will start going back up and they will be with us forever. We think that the more nature around us the better the world will be. Less litter the better. Then wolves won't become extinct. So many people fear them, but they have never hunted a human. And are actually quite misunderstood. Wolves have an amazing language through howls to send a message to the animals of the forest. Ella & Nourah

Turtles on Garbage

We were inspired by the egg carton. We saw it and thought "that looks like a turtle shell." So we cut up two things on the egg carton and we put legs, tails and heads on. Then we got a bit of cardboard and glued a bunch of garbage that we cut up. Then we painted the turtles and put them on the garbage piles.

The Killer Orca

The inspiration for this project was how the Orcinus Orcas are endangered. Last year we did a project and had to research them, so we learned all about how they are endangered. Three reasons why are: noise pollution, not enough Chinook Salmon, and oil spills. A.J., Elle & Kalena

Rock Fish

When we heard the theme was nature, we knew we had to do a Rockfish because Rockfish are endangered and they are harmed by plastic in the ocean. They eat the plastic because they think it is food and they choke on the plastic. It is very bad for them, and tons of Rockfish are getting killed by plastic in the ocean.

Garden Top Farm

We were inspired because both our parents were raised on farms. We started working on one animal and then made more and more - we couldn't stop. We decided that we had to make a farm because we had so many animals. Penny & Olivia

MAKING ANGELS IN DIVISION 16



CLAY ANGEL PROCEDURE – as reported by Division 16 students

1. We started by determining the right shape to form the body of our angels. We decided a cone shape using a semi-circle produced the best size.
2. Next, we divided up the clay evenly between the class, and began to roll it out using two wooden sticks to measure our the right thickness for our project.
3. We carefully formed the body of our angels, while carefully scoring the clay.
4. We attached details to the main body using small amounts of water to help it stick, pressing gently but firmly.

Stay tuned for the next installment of CLAY ANGELS, sponsored by Division 16!

Many Boxes Full



Under the leadership of the Student Council the Dickens community filled 23 boxes chock-a-block! Communities helping communities. 😊

As we head into the last two weeks before Winter Break and our second holiday season in the time of COVID, we look forward to a new year of getting back to normal. Hopefully with fewer restrictions people will be able to enjoy small gatherings and do a little economy-boosting shopping this year. At Dickens we are celebrating the things we are able to do: small music performances for the class's own enjoyment; creating seasonal art, crafts and decorations; bringing food in for the Food Bank and gift cards for the Hampers; making cards for seniors' homes. While the pandemic has changed much in our lives, it has not been able to stop what is most important – learning, creating, connecting (in safe ways) and being kind. Happy Holidays!

Julie Weatherall,
Principal, Dickens Elementary