

CHARLES DICKENS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Website: <http://dickens.vsb.bc.ca>

Principal: Julie Weatherall

Vice Principal: Shelley Sunner

Secretary: Anne Canning

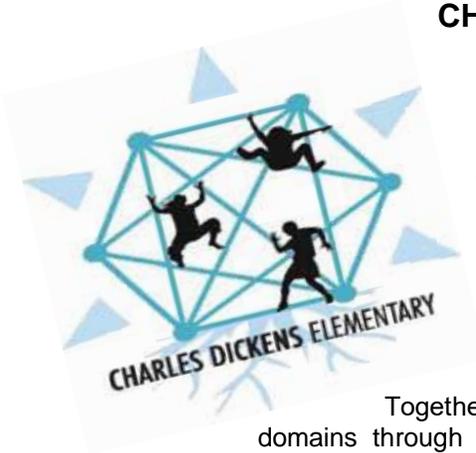
Secretary: Michelle Ventresca

PAC Co-Chairs: Daniela Forde, Sara Getz,

Laura Poree, Tiffany Searchfield

Director of Instruction: Aaron Davis

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.

NOVEMBER 2020

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

IMPORTANT DATES:

Wednesday, December 2nd: Early Dismissal at 1:55 pm (for 2:55 pm dismissal classes) and at 2:00 (for 3:00 pm dismissal classes). Virtual Conferences for Divisions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19.

Friday, December 18th: Last day before Winter Break

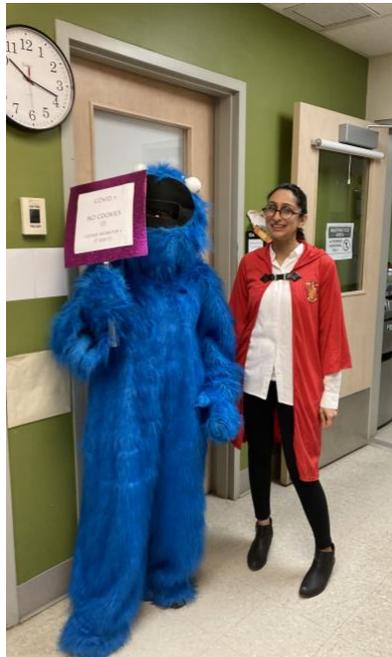
Dear Dickens Community:

A couple of Trick-or-Treaters in the Office. In spite of COVID we had a lot of fun at Dickens on October 30th, with most staff and students in costumes and many classrooms enjoying celebrations.

DR. BONNIE HENRY'S WORDS FROM NOVEMBER 19TH, 2020

Like many of you I'm sure, our office staff listened to Dr. Bonnie Henry when she delivered her speech about the need for increased restrictions to help slow the speed of the spread of COVID and 'bend the curve back down'. She called on us to be 'resilient, flexible and brave'. She said, "I need you to be superheroes." As always, her words were, "We will do it by being kind to each other and that is what will keep us safe."

COVID has affected us all as we stop ourselves from the handshake, the hug, the pat on the shoulder. Even our smiles are hidden behind masks. Yet we, at Dickens, can see the joy your children bring to school regardless of the pandemic. They are learning to self-regulate as they follow COVID protocols. They are back into the new swing of



things as academics mix with handwashing and nature walking. Thank you again for supporting us by

dropping your children off at their pick-up times, by heading home with them at 2:55 or 3:00 pm and not lingering to socialize. Thank you for sending them with a nutritious lunch and all their supplies, as these things help so much in the smooth and stress-free running of classrooms. We appreciate all that you do.

REMEMBRANCE DAY – A VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY



Principal's Words:

Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Columbia and Israel. What do these countries have in common? They are all at war today. In fact 40 countries are at war in 2020. War means that two opposing forces, nations, tribes or countries could not get along and declared 'armed hostile conflict' to try and get what they wanted – land or power or religious control. If those countries were out on our playground today and had a problem, they would fight and hurt others.

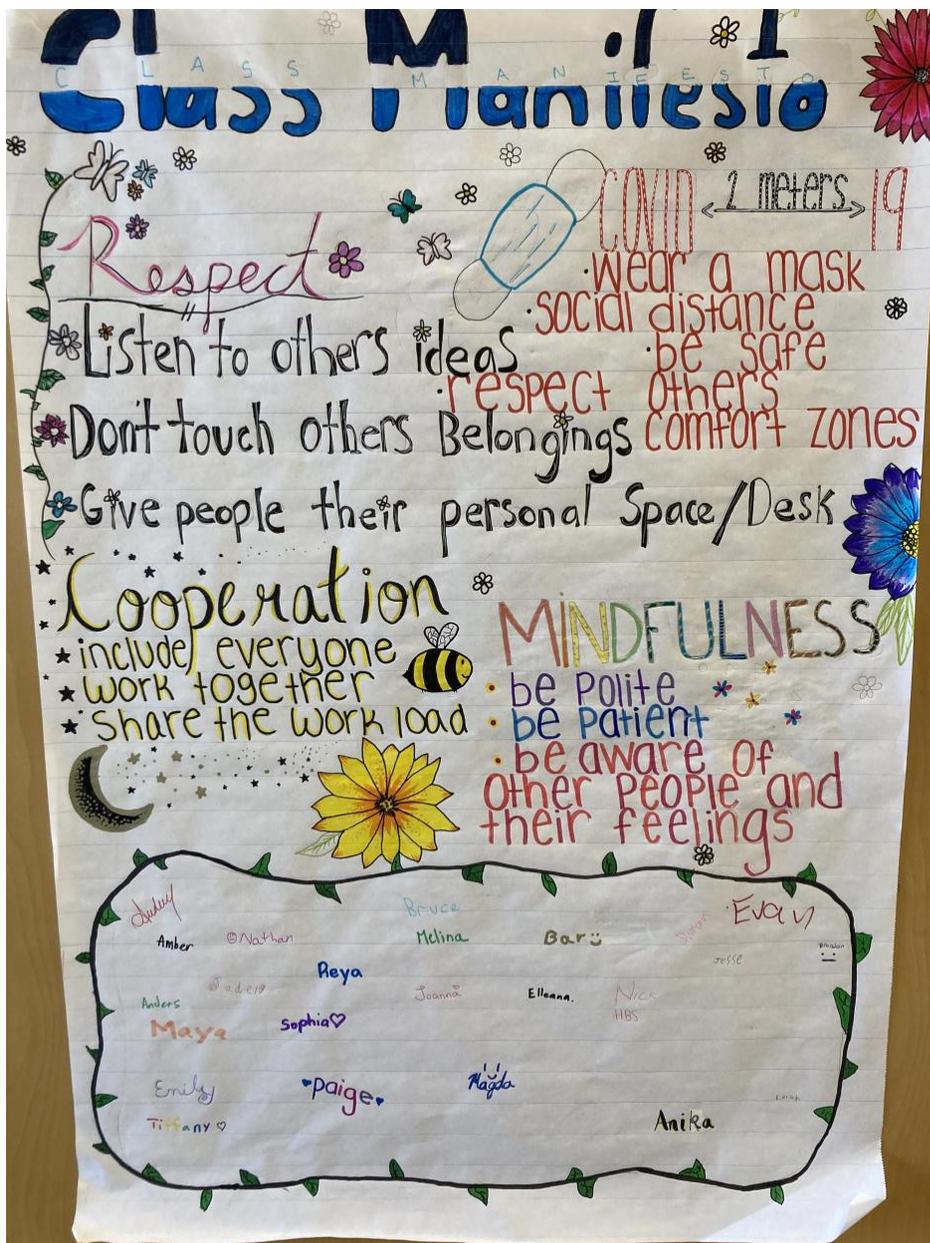
Lester Pearson, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama and Malala. What do these people all have in common? They are all winners of the Nobel Peace Prize. They won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping the poor, for looking after the planet, for making a stand against injustice and for helping to STOP wars and negotiate peace treaties. If those people were out on our playground today, they would be solving problems peacefully and helping others to get along.

On Remembrance Day we remember those who died fighting in the World Wars and all the people who have ever died in wars. On November 10th at 11:00 am Dickens had its first ever Virtual Remembrance Day ceremony. Shelley Sunner, our VP, set up an online presentation which included a recording of O Canada, a Moment of Silence, and Taps and Reveille on the trumpet. Different classes presented art, poetry, historical reports on the Japanese Interment and the White Peace Poppies, and I shared the thoughts above. Shelley created a link to share the assembly with the Dickens community which was sent out afterwards.

This is a perfect time to consider our **Code of Conduct** at Dickens. Teachers have been reviewing it with their classes and I will be sending it home via email for parents to go over with their children. Our Code of Conduct is updated annually. It is a guide to establishing a safe, supportive learning environment. Students at Dickens are encouraged to take care of each other, take care of themselves and to take care of the school. Cooperation, Safety and Respect are the guiding words. The Code of Conduct outlines our school-wide expectations as well as the process for supporting positive behaviour. Dickens staff are here to help students learn strategies to make good choices when they have conflicts on the playground. I have been very impressed with the way students who need some adult help in sorting things out have taken ownership of their role in a situation and can list strategies to do things differently on a future occasion. Thanks for your help with this at home.

I'm sure you are aware of Antiracism in the media of late. All VSB Codes of Conduct have the statement: "Racism will not be tolerated in our school." On November 27th we attended a virtual Indigenous Focus Day titled 'Unmasking Racism Within Schools'. There were excellent keynote speakers Carolyn Roberts from SFU and Joe Truss from California. Our Primary and Intermediate staff had rich and powerful morning and afternoon discussions on TEAMS as we reflected on the presentations. At a time when COVID has taken over most of our school conversations it was refreshing to challenge ourselves to think about our personal biases, to reflect on the effects of colonization, to discuss how we can teach tolerance and empathy, and to honour Indigenous history and ways of learning through authentic sources.

Individual Classes often have their own class agreements which are like mini codes of conduct. Here is Division 16's Class Manifesto.



Poems from Division 10

Peace can be Anything by Lyra – Grade 3 (to Peggy)

Peace can be a rainbow shining in the morning sun
Peace can be you sitting by your favourite tree reading your favourite book
Peace can be a flower waving in the wind
Peace can be a bird flying in the forest
Peace can be a stream rushing into the ocean
Peace can be a pebble that makes a nice splash
Peace can just be something simple like the light of a street lamp glowing in the dark
Peace can be a hug from a close friend
Peace can be a teddy bear
Peace can be you.

My Poem by Sloane

Breathe in trees crashing on buildings in a storm
Breathe out new alive trees.
Breathe in all deaths.
Breathe out unpolluted seas.
Breathe in harmful weapons.
Breathe out warm loving hugs.
Breathe in forest fires spreading miles along the road.
Breathe out in winter hot chocolate in mugs.
Breathe in all of those harmful past wars.
Breathe out to the homeless lots of open doors.
Breathe in all those dark power cuts.
Breathe out homes for all.
Breathe in awful mad friend shouts.
Breathe out free food for everyone.

Breathe in Breathe out by Evani

Breathe in the fear of dying in the war.
Breathe out the kind people that reached out to the soldiers.
Breathe in the sound of a gun firing hitting and breathless soldier's chest.
Breathe out the calm slow sway of a bed of poppies that are there to catch you.
Breathe in the cold scary breeze in the night.
Breathe out the warm beams of the sun shining down onto your face.
Breathe in losing all hope and giving up your life.
Breathe out the clang of a silver shield saving your life.
Breathe in the feeling of ice in your throat.
Breathe out the feeling of hot chocolate drizzling down your throat.



Division 3's Peace Quilt

What is Peace? – Peace Writing from Division 17

Nelson Mandela was known for being the father of South Africa. Mandela was an anti-apartheid activist, which means that he fought for those who had a disadvantage by the system of racial segregation. Mandela became a civil rights leader leading many against the apartheid government. Apartheid was a system of racial inequality which kept all races separated. OL

Peace can mean many different things to many different people. In my opinion, peace is when everyone in the world is calm, kind, and feeling peaceful. Peace could also be when there is no war, no fighting, no noise, no disruptive feelings. When everyone is feeling, acting, and helping others feel peaceful; that is what peace means to me. In my poster about the six activists, the only 2 men are black and then the rest are 4 women. I think that says a lot about the peace in our world. How that's what we need to work on peace-wise. In conclusion, peace isn't always a huge deal; it could even be as little as a hug. AN

Different people have different views/opinions on what peace is. John F. Kennedy said was was this: "Peace is a daily, weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures." Albert Einstein thought peace was this: "Peace cannot be kept a force; it can only be achieved by understanding." But the goal that we all have in common is we all want it. Whatever peace is it is possible to achieve, we just need to do it together. PL

Peace is not just the opposite of war. I believe that the idea of peace can also include people valuing each other and their ideas in order to get along. Peace is also an ongoing process that requires constant attention. This process is where many activists come in as they struggle to achieve their goal. LE

What is peace to you? In this essay I will be writing about 4 peaceful activists that changed the world. All of them have their own story that is inspiring and unique. They all had bumps in their path and some will still have bumps to go over. None of them stopped until they reached their goals and some of them are still trying to get there. A lot of people made it hard for these people but they kept going. KR

COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING – THE NEW REPORT CARD

In BC there are a minimum of 5 communications to parents about student learning required each year:

- 2 written – Report cards – January 29th and June 29th
- 3 informal, ongoing, throughout year – Fall and Spring Conferences
- Plus an additional communication or event such as calls, meetings, demonstrations of learning, interim reports, portfolios, digital communication (i.e., myBlueprint), etc.
- Each communication should include:
 - What is going well (Where am I now?) – i.e STUDENT STRENGTHS
 - What is an area for growth/improvement (Where am I going?) i.e. – AREAS FOR GROWTH
 - What is the plan for supporting that goal (What do I need to get there?) – i.e. – WAYS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Reporting practices are changing to reflect the Redesigned Curriculum. It is focussed on *doing* rather than *knowing* and on *learning* rather than being *achievement based*. The learning process involves teachers creating rich learning tasks based on BC Curricular Competencies and student interests. Students work with teachers to set criteria. Powerful questioning and learning conversations allow for ongoing, timely descriptive feedback to the student. Metacognitive skills are developed through student reflection and self-assessment. Learning can be process, inquiry and project based.

There are no letter grades; instead the statements below are used. In fact, the Redesigned Curriculum is similar to the way Dickens' teachers have always taught and the new report card is similar to the traditional Dickens report cards. This year all VSB schools are using a new reporting tool to write their reports. There will be opening comments, student strengths, and areas for growth as well as ways to support learning. Students will be evaluated as:

- Beginning
 - Developing
 - Applying
 - Extending
- their knowledge in each subject area.

The first report card will be sent home on January 29, 2021. They will report on: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts Education, Core French (grades 5 – 7), and Physical and Health Education. Applied Design, Skills and Technology and Career Education will be reported on for Grade 6 and 7 students this term. Our teachers are already learning how to use the new online reporting tool. We are all life-long learners at Dickens!



Guiding Principles of Assessment



Relational

Quality assessment is built on trusting, respectful relationships between student and teacher that create a culture where learning is the central purpose and shared goal.



Equitable & Inclusive

Quality assessment is equitable and differentiated to meet and include student's diverse needs, interests, and learning goals.



Clear & Transparent

Quality assessment gives direction and sense of purpose to students through providing them with clearly articulated learning intentions and established and/or co-created success criteria that is understood by the students and aligned with essential curricular concepts and content and to the core competencies and learning standards.



Student-Centred



Quality assessment enables students to engage in and advocate for their learning through metacognitive strategies including self- and peer-assessment, self-reflection, personal goal-setting, co-construction of growth/success criteria, student voice and choice in what and how they learn.

Intentional



Quality assessment is planned intentionally and involves a thoughtful and purposeful use of formative and summative assessment approaches over a variety of assessments.

Flexible, Responsive, Reflective



Quality assessment is flexible, with teachers and students gathering and responding to evidence of student learning over time through meaningful questioning and descriptive feedback.

June 2019

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION REMINDER

A reminder that all kindergarten applicants are required to submit an application to their English catchment elementary school. This includes families who wish to apply for District programs (Early French Immersion, Montessori, Indigenous Focus School, Early Mandarin Bilingual, Nootka Fine Arts) and/or a cross boundary placement.

The priority registration period for kindergarten opens on **November 1 and closes at 4 pm on January 29**. Students who submit an application within this priority period will be accommodated before late applicants.

Charles Dickens Elementary School and Charles Dickens Annex share one common catchment area. Students who reside within this catchment area (in-catchment registrants) will receive priority for enrolment at one of the two school sites based upon available space.

When completing a registration form, parents will be asked if they prefer the annex or the main school. The District will attempt to accommodate parental preferences for placement, once available space has been determined.

For more information on kindergarten registration visit: <http://www.vsb.bc.ca/kindergarten>

Julie Weatherall
Principal, Dickens Elementary