



VIRTUE
EMPATHY

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From all of us to all of you, wishing you a safe and peaceful Christmas...

The Christmas season is my favorite part of winter. And while Christmas is an exciting time of year for most; such is not the case for all. For some, especially in the COVID era with new restrictions, this time of year is filled with more stress and worry than any other. So have a look around for those in need of support and consider extending a hand out or a hand up.

Pandemic guidelines and the new restrictions announced November 24th, will force us slow down and limit or restrict the number of outings, functions, and festivities that the frenetic pace of December usually brings. It can be difficult to be “still” and enjoy what we **do** have. Our hope for you is exactly that, in wishing all families a safe, calm, and peaceful month of December.

Morning entry...if a student arrives prior to 8:35 am...

All students who arrive to school prior to 8:35am have to wait outdoors until the bell rings, at which time a staff member begins a staggered entry. To date we have not had a morning temperature or wind chill below - 20 degrees, but it is inevitable. We notice some students arriving as early as 8:00 am, which can be a long time if not properly dressed. So if possible, please have students arrive closer to 8:35 am. Thank you.

We have a plan in place for when the morning weather is extreme and it is unsafe to be outdoors.

Whenever the temperature drops to – 25C degrees including wind chill our school will have an ‘inside day’. Anything warmer and children are expected to be outside for both recesses

Have your child dress for the weather including proper winter footwear, headwear and gloves/mittens. And please put your child’s name in their boots!



Christmas Concert, COVID style...

Unfortunately the pandemic protocol does not allow for parents and extended family to attend Christmas concerts in-person as in the past. Our Kindergarten teachers and classroom teachers (on behalf of Mrs. Schmidt) will contact you in the weeks to come with instructions on how you can view Christmas concert performances virtually.

Annual Satisfaction Surveys – message from PHSD

In December, parents will be invited to participate online in the Annual Satisfaction Survey. Like last year, the survey will be digital (online) and no phone calls will be made. The link will be provided to take you directly to the survey.

How long will it take?

- We know it takes time to participate in surveys, and time is precious.
- The questions are brief and use rating scales to make them quicker to answer.
- We estimate that it will take 5 to 10 minutes.

Will I be able to comment?

- There are opportunities for you to provide written feedback at the end of the survey.

How do I participate?

- Click or tap the link in the message you receive. It will take you directly to the survey.
- You can respond to the survey using a desktop computer, laptop or mobile device.

Are my responses anonymous?

- Your email address will be collected and connected to your responses.
- Collecting the address eliminates the chance of duplicate responses and enables us to trace issues that might arise in the completion of the survey.
- Comments are reviewed by administration and considered during the planning process.
- No comments are reported publicly.

I have more than one child in this school. Will I get an email like this for each one?

If you have several children in a single school:

- You *should* just get one message.
 - We have tried to minimize duplicates but given the complexity of families, and because we rely on the information that schools have on file, you **might** get more than one message for this school.
 - IF that happens, you only need to respond one time. We apologize in advance for the extra messages.

How do I respond if I have several children in a single school:

- Please respond to the questions while thinking about the overall experiences of your children in that school.

I have children in another school too. Will I get a survey for that school too?

- If you have children in more than one school, you can respond to a survey for each school.
- Each message has a link to the survey connected to that specific school.
- Please respond to the questions while thinking about the children in that specific school.

What if the survey doesn't have questions related to my concerns?

- If you have comments or wish to discuss something that has not appeared in this survey, please contact your school principal directly.

What if I haven't been contacted to do the survey?

- If you haven't received a message by December 15, you can contact Debbie Westman at debbie.westman@pembinahills.ca

What does Pembina Hills do with the surveys?

- Regional office administrative staff, school administrators, teachers and trustees review the survey data.
 - Comments are read by administration only. No comments will be shared publicly.
- School data is reported in the school's education plan.
- The data from all of the schools is combined to create a division summary that will be reported at a public Board meeting. The compiled data is also recorded in the Division Education Plan.

COVID-19 update

The month of November has been very quiet on the COVID front, just the way we like it! Very few students or staff members have had to miss school because of symptoms or other illness over the past few weeks. With your help we hope this trend continues through until Christmas break and beyond.

On October 28th, immediately following our last positive case, a Public Health Inspector with Alberta Health Services (AHS) conducted a thorough assessment of our school. I'm happy to report that we passed with flying colors! One recommendation from the report however, was to remove the Lost & Found bin from the front corridor because it is in a publicly accessible area. In doing so, we will now post Lost & Found items on our website and Facebook page every few weeks. Unclaimed items will be laundered and donated to Good Will as in the past.

Our world here at WES remains unchanged until early January as a result of the new restrictions announced on November 24th. Planning has already started for learning to continue at-home that first week back in January. You will hear from your classroom teacher in the next few weeks, the details around what that will look like.

Thank you for the continued support and the trust you have in us, as we make in-person learning as safe as possible in these increasingly uncertain times.

