



September 2020
Principal: Ms. P. Davis

The VES Buzz

Valemount Elementary School
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VES Monthly Message

Welcome back! Thank you for putting your trust in our school. Know that safety is our number one priority for all of our students and staff. We want to acknowledge first and foremost the loss of what we had before and we are full of gratitude that we are able to walk alongside your children through this very difficult time.

Communication will be key this year and as most of you already know information is changing daily, if not hourly. Please keep a watchful eye on our VES website www.sd57.bc.ca/school/vale and your email inbox for updated and timely information related to your child's class or our school. Electronically, information can be disseminated much faster and safer than with paper. If you have any questions, please call the school office directly so that accurate information can be relayed appropriately. Our school is trying to go green and decrease the amount on paper used. If you would prefer paper copies, please ask at the office.

What the coming school days will look like: This is a big question on the minds of not only students right now, but parents as well. Know that we are right alongside you and are approaching this year with the utmost of care and caution. Many of our students have attended the Health and Safety Orientation held last week on Thursday and Friday. If your child was NOT able to attend one of these three sessions, please make arrangements with Ms. Davis for a private after school orientation. Students will need to bring their school supplies this week, along with a mask and water bottle. Their mask and water bottle may go home as needed to be cleaned and sanitized, however, their school supplies may stay at the school.

Dates to Remember:

Sept 14: First day of school;
Gradual entry begins for KF
Sept 24: Terry Fox run
Sept 25: Pro D day; no school
Sept 28: PAC meeting 2:45 PM
Centennial Park
Sept 30: Orange Shirt Day

Important Cohort Information:

Cohort #1: Ms. Iorns,
Mrs. Ramirez, Mrs. Lawless
Cohort #2: Ms. Dorio, Ms. Tegart
Cohort #3: Mr. Winzer, Mr. Coyle

For those students that ordered school supplies through School Start, thank you and know that your supplies have already arrived at our school. We are asking students to please bring their own ear buds this year as the headphones in the computer lab have been removed.

Our school times have changed slightly this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Students should aim to be at school by no earlier than 8:25AM. This is in an effort to stop cohort intermingling. School instruction begins at 8:30AM and dismissal is at 2:12PM. There are no half day Wednesday dismissals this year. We are cautiously beginning to plan extra curricular activities, clubs, and groups. Some information regarding this in on the back page of this newsletter.

Once again, welcome back to our school, we have sure missed all of you. We are looking forward to the school year!

VES has two new teachers this year!

Meet Ms. Olivia Dorio

Yes, it rhymes with Oreos (and those just happen to be her favorite cookies). Ms. Dorio is originally from Burlington, Ontario. She has done some substitute teaching in southern Ontario before moving to Valemount with her partner at the end of this summer. She enjoys hiking and cross country skiing and she is very excited to get out and see the wonderful backcountry of Valemount and surrounding area. Ms. Dorio has an affinity for sewing, knitting and embroidery; she is working on creating a sewing club, more information to come on that.

Meet Ms. May Ghalib

Ms. Ghalib is VES' new gym and prep teacher. She is originally from Mississauga, Ontario. Before teaching, Ms. Ghalib became a certified Alpine Guide and has worked most recently in Canmore, Whistler, and Revelstoke. She enjoys hiking, rock climbing, and mountain biking as well as travelling. Ms. Ghalib has also done some international teaching, mostly in Southeast Asia, feeding her love for travel.

Not saying "Goodbye," just saying "See ya' later!"

Ms. Chelsea Dutkiewich made the difficult decision over the summer to return to Manitoba to be closer to her family. While we fully support her decision, we are very saddened to see her go. She left some mighty big shoes to fill here at VES! So please join us in not saying "goodbye," but in saying "see ya' later." In true Valemount fashion, I am certain she will be back, answering the call of the mountains.



**Wear Orange –
September 30**

September 30th - **Orange Shirt Day** is a day when we honour the Indigenous children who were sent away to residential schools in Canada and learn more about the history of those schools. **Wearing an orange shirt** and promoting the slogan, **Every Child Matters**, is an affirmation of our commitment to raise awareness of the residential school experience and to ensure that **every child matters** as **we** focus on our hope for a better future in which children are empowered to help each other.



Mountain Bike Club

Ms. Tegart and Ms. Ghalib will be leading mountain bike club this year! Intermediate and advanced riders in Grades 5-7 are welcome to participate. Students need a functioning bike with front suspension that they are confident riding uphill and downhill. *Students can expect to ride between 5-10km.* We will meet every **Wednesday** after school at 2:20pm on the pavement outside of Ms. Tegart's room. Students will be dismissed at 4:00pm. Please read the permission form for more details.

Contact Ms. Tegart at mtegart@sd57.bc.ca with any questions or concerns.

Terry Fox Run

The annual Terry Fox Run will be taking place September 30th. Our school will be participating and raising funds this month for cancer research, and we hope to raise over \$200.00 school wide. Please consider having your child make a small donation of \$2 or more at the office. Thank you for your kindness!



Counsellors Corner

In light of the coronavirus pandemic, the new school year has a lot of kids—not to mention parents and teachers—feeling anxious, afraid, angry, confused, and uncertain. As we start this new and unusual school year, I would like to share some tips that we can all use to help support our kids through this transition and into the school year. These skills are part of dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), a type of cognitive behavioural therapy; in general, the skills taught in DBT focus on four key skill modules: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness (aka “people skills”). These tips are taken from Mazza and Mazza’s 2016 book, “DBT Skills for Schools.” The authors also hold live events on “Parenting Through COVID-19” every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 7 am (PST) on Facebook and Instagram.

Tip 1: Use PLEASE skills:

- Physical health
- Limit screen time
- Eat a balanced diet
- Avoid overindulgence
- Sleep
- Exercise daily

Being mindful of these six core directives helps to decrease your vulnerability to emotions. Consider taking care of your body like making daily deposits in the bank. Doing so helps minimize the impact when you have large emotional withdrawals. If you have made regular deposits, the impact of the withdrawals won't be as big on your bank account.

Tip 2: AWARENESS, ACCEPTANCE, ACTION

Radically accepting your current situation helps you move away from thinking about how things could or should be different. “My kids should be going to school this fall,” or “I wish we could travel, see friends,” etc. Acceptance doesn't have to mean you like what is happening! There can still be feelings of grief, anger, and sadness. By practicing awareness and acceptance, you are then able to take effective action—to problem solve and come up with ways to make improvements. Used regularly, these skills can help to diminish problem behaviors and teach kids coping skills for managing difficult emotions for their current situation and for life going forward.

If you have any questions or concerns about supporting your or your children's well-being or you would like to know more about how this kind of work is being incorporated into our Valemount schools, please don't hesitate to contact me, Shirley Giroux, at sgiroux@sd57.bc.ca. Even as we practice physical distancing, we can still stick together; I look forward to connecting or reconnecting with each of you as we move forward together into this unusual year.