



20451 Westminster Highway,
Richmond, B.C. V6V 1B3
Tel 604-273-2418 Fax -2419
office@choiceschool.org

NEWSLETTER No. 17-06

January 17, 2018

Principal's Message for

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Happy New Year to all! I hope your family holidays were wonderful, and this message finds you enjoying a good beginning to 2018.

We were happy to get back to school last week, and are anticipating a busy, exciting term. This Friday, we start the term with our Passions Expo, during which we celebrate the Passions Projects the students in Classes A through E followed throughout the first term. It promises to be a great opportunity to hear from our resident experts as they share this important aspect of their learning.

Since our beginnings over three decades ago, Passions Projects have provided students a structured context within which they can independently explore areas of intense interest. The topics they select are inspired by curiosity and driven by their important questions. In speaking with Choice graduates, I find they still recall details about their Passions Project from a very young age. I invite parents to read an overview of the new British Columbia curriculum <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/overview> which recognizes the educational value and mandates personalized learning that is based on a child's desire to know.

A second aspect of a robust gifted program is the opportunity for mentorship in which a student studies with an expert in the field. There is a myriad of benefits to a mentorship: a mentor can be a role model, an inspiration and a guide, sharing the voice of experience and knowledge that only a practitioner can have. We are very fortunate to have Ms Teresa Milden with us as our Mentorship Coordinator. Ms Milden was formerly with the Vancouver School Board, and was the founder of the VSB program that involved dozens of students each year in rich and meaningful mentorship experiences. The Choice Middle School mentorship projects are a logical extension of the Passions projects the students completed in their earlier grades, and, not surprisingly, may be in the same area of study.

Our *Nurturing Nature, Growing Minds* project resumes this month with a meeting of the committed team of volunteers to plan the early spring planting and the activities each class will be contributing. We appreciate the help that our volunteers are offering and the expertise they have to share. Please stay tuned to follow out progress!

I know you will be interested to read the article review that follows, written at my urging by Dr. Lori Lenchyshyn (Donham). Many thanks to Lori for her work! She closes with a suggestion that if any other parents would like to volunteer to review a paper, book, counseling program, videos, etc., we would love to hear from them. Parent input into the newsletter aligns well with an idea that arose at several meetings last week (PAC, Education Committee Board): the idea of a regularly scheduled parent participation group.

We look forward to seeing you at our *Passions Expo* this Friday, and also at our *Food for Thought* presentation on Wednesday, January 24th.

All the best,

Lynn

Shoebox Project



Students did such a wonderful job on the shoebox project . The Union Gospel Mission was so thrilled at the lovely donations.

Great Job Guys!!



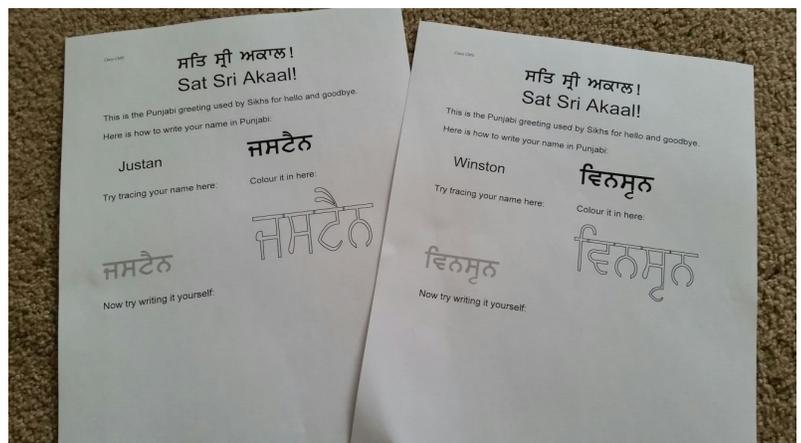
DEAR CHOICES SCHOOL,
THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH FOR THE SHOEBOXES YOU PREPARED FOR OUR GUESTS AT UGM NEW WEST. WE ARE BLESSED BY YOUR GENEROSITY AND OUR GUESTS WILL BE TOUCHED BY IT AS WELL, ESPECIALLY THE LOVELY CARDS THAT ADD AN EXTRA PERSONAL TOUCH. THE SIMPLE GIFT OF A TOILET OR HYGIENE PRODUCT GOES A LONG WAY WITH THE PEOPLE WE HAVE AS GUESTS EVERYDAY. SO THANK YOU AGAIN, MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY NEW YEAR AND GOD BLESS.

SINCERELY,
THE TEAM AT UGM
NEW
WEST.

Visiting the Sukh Sager Sikh Gurdwara



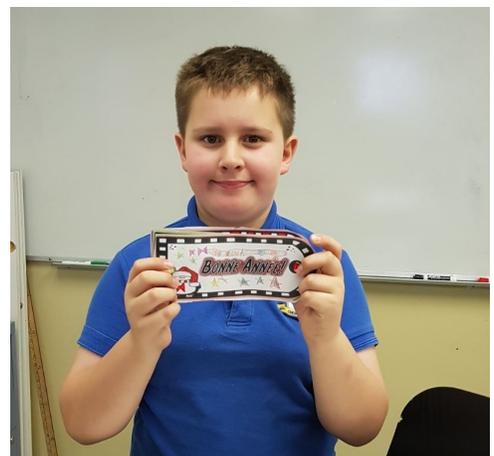
A special thanks to the Gosal Family for arranging for the students to visit the Sukh Sager Sikh Gurdwara. The kids learned so much!



Christmas at The Burnaby Village Museum



Celebrations Around the World



Congratulations!

It's A Boy!



Congratulations Ms. Sueyoshi!

Welcome baby Noah Bridger

Born December 28, 2017

Important Dates

- January 19 Passions Expo 10:50 am-12:15 pm
- January 26- March 9 Friday Afternoons at Choice. Brochure is attached. Please register by Monday January 22, 2018
- January 24 "Food for Thought" Gifted lecture by Picky Eating Vancouver, 6:30 pm-8:00 pm, Please register by January 22, 2018 (See attached invitation)
- January 29 CMS Mentorship Parent Meeting 6:00 pm-8:00 pm
- February 2 Choice Challenge begins
- February 9 Non-Instructional Pro D Day (School not in session for students)
- February 12 BC Family Day (No school)
- February 14 Valentine's Day
- February 21 Jump Rope for Heart
- February 23 Open House 9:00 am-11:00 am
- February 26 Body Science Workshops for students throughout the day/parent information meeting 8:15 am - 8:45 am in the library.
- February 28 Pink Shirt Day & Pink Shirt Day Concert (details to follow)

Important Reminders

Hello Choice Community,

Class E are beginning a project that involves creating a Carnival contraption – a game or ride in miniature version that we can actually play with. We want these to be built from recycled or surplus/junk materials as much as possible, and do not want you to have to purchase anything. Some people have lots of suitable building materials around but others do not, so if you have any of the follow items you could send in to be shared, it would be greatly appreciated.

- bolts, screws, nuts, metal washers (in various sizes)
- empty thread spools
- wheels (from old toy cars)
- dowels
- large buttons
- corks
- pieces of wire
- springs
- hooks
- little light bulbs or working Christmas mini lights sets
- electrical wires and “electrical stuff”
- wooden clothes pegs

If you have any of these or other such items that you can spare, please send them in to school with your child. Please do NOT buy anything and please do not send in all the items from your recycling box, just the ones you think may be useful for building!

We are also looking for a couple of parents with power tools who have access to scrap pieces of plywood and who could make a number of wooden bases for us from plywood (for students who need them). We are looking for rectangular plywood bases approximately 18-20 inches wide x 24-26 inches long (they need to fit on top of a student desk). If you might be able to help with this please let me know.

Thanks for your help!

Tasha King



January Birthdays

Kaden	January 4
Phoenix	January 10
Art	January 18
Jayden	January 21
Dev	January 23

I have volunteered, after some gentle nudging from Ms. Chartres, to look for articles in the gifted children academia that might be of interest to the Choice community. Recently, I came across a paper called: "Don't stress: What do we really know about teaching gifted children to cope with stress and anxiety?" by Steve Haberlin (see full citation below). This paper caught my eye because our entire household struggles with stress and anxiety.



Haberlin begins by observing that the major difference between a general education classroom and an entirely gifted one, is the level of intensity. I think our Choice teachers would agree with that statement. The author then summarizes several factors that might contribute to elevated stress and anxiety in gifted children compared to their peers. These are: perfectionism, heightened sensitivity (often further broken down into psychomotor, sensory, intellectual, imaginal and emotional), social isolation/difficulties, and external stressors (ex. parent's expectations).

The next section of the article was the most interesting for me. It reviews stress-reducing interventions for the gifted. Most suggestions were obvious: bibliotherapy (reading therapeutic books), talking about the source of stress, modifying the environment, changing perspective, engaging in relaxation methods, etc.

Haberlin then makes special mention of a doctoral dissertation by A.H. Gaessar from the University of Connecticut. Gaessar found that EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) worked better than CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) in reducing anxiety in her study of 63 gifted students. This result surprised me since CBT seems to be very widely practised, whereas I had never heard of EFT.

In CBT a therapist helps the child identify negative thoughts (known as cognitions), then challenges the negative thoughts, and finally helps the student replace the negative thoughts with realistic ones. The basic premise is that it is not the situation you're in that determines how you feel, but your perception of the situation. For more information about CBT see www.anxietybc.com.

EFT includes an number of counselling methods that draw on alternative medicine. Specifically, Gaessar employed a technique where the student identifies the "incident/issue/aspect" that they want to address, then formulates a "title" that summarizes the issue and finally repeats the title while tapping on acupuncture points. Honestly, when I delved into Gaessar's work I was surprised to find the use of an alternative medicine technique in a mainstream setting. I suppose I need to work on being more open-minded.

Continued.....

For further information about stress and anxiety, I encourage you to read the original paper by Haberlin. It is short (only 6 pages) and has many interesting references to explore. Also, if any other parents would like to volunteer to review a paper, book, counseling program, videos, etc., we would love to hear from you.

References:

Steve Haberlin (2015) Don't stress: What do we really know about teaching gifted children to cope with stress and anxiety?, *Gifted and Talented International*, 30:1-2, 146-151, DOI: 10.1080/15332276.2015.1137465

Link to the article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15332276.2015.1137465>

Gaesser, A. H. (2014). *Interventions to reduce anxiety for gifted children and adolescents* (Doctoral dissertation). Paper 377. University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

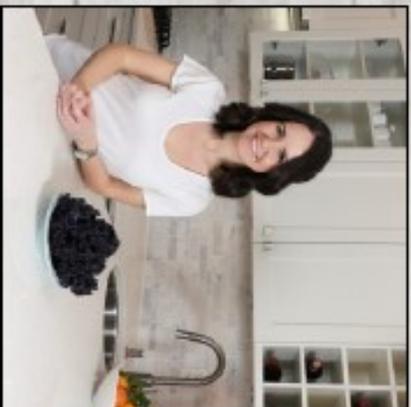
"Food for Thought"

A Presentation by

Picky Eating Vancouver

Learn about:

- ◆ Picky eating and problem feeding
- ◆ How the sensory system contributes to picky eating
- ◆ Nutrition for optimal brain health and learning
- ◆ Tips for lunchtime success at school
- ◆ How to introduce new foods to your picky eater



ELISE FAIREY

Picky Eating Vancouver was founded by Elise Fairey, Registered Dietitian, and Lauren Hershfield, Occupational Therapist. With their unique experience and education, they offer an integrative approach to address all the factors involved in your child's picky eating including nutritional, motor, sensory and environmental. Elise and Lauren aim to restore the joy in family meals; provide parents the education to support healthy eating behaviors, and help your child develop the skills to enjoy a greater variety of foods. Learn more about their services at www.pickyeatingvancouver.com.

Wednesday January 24, 2018 @ 6:30 pm-8:00 pm

**Choice School Gym: 20451 Westminster Hwy North
Richmond, BC, V6V 1B3**

Child care will be provided free of charge for school aged children.

Please register in advance for child care.

**Please RSVP by January 22, 2018 via email: office@choiceschool.org
or call 604-273-2418**

You are cordially invited
to Choice School's

Passions Expo



Friday, January 19, 2018
From 10:50 AM - 12:15 PM
At Choice School for Gifted Children

Projects will be set up in your child's classroom.