



Elmer Elson ELEMENTARY

Elmer Elson Elementary
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NEWSLETTER - February 2021

ADMIN TEAM MESSAGE

We would like to welcome Mrs. Angela Quinell to our staff. She will be working in Mrs. French's kindergarten class, as Mrs. Wild is on maternity leave. We are excited to announce she had a beautiful baby girl on January 31st.

We are happy to welcome Cynthia Zerb in kindergarten to our school family.

STUDENT ONLINE REPORTS

Student reporting information is now done through PowerSchool. Information about your child(ren) can be accessed regularly. You should have received log in information and a password. Teachers are updating and adding new assessment information often.

Please be sure to check in and see what is new.

VALENTINE'S DAY ACTIVITIES



February has arrived making Valentine's Day just around the corner.

We will be able to exchange valentines with a few Covid friendly adjustments. Valentines for grade one to six classes must be brought to school by **February 9th** to allow them to go untouched before **February 12th** which is the day they will receive them. Kindergarten students will be unpacking their valentines on **February 16th** which requires them to be sent to school by **February 11th**. At this time we are only allowed to exchange valentine cards and not additional candy or treats.

STAY CONNECTED



Access student schedules, attendance, and grades online at any time with PowerSchool. Please contact us to receive your individual username and password if you have not yet created an account or have misplaced the information.



Like our Facebook page
Elmer Elson Elementary



Pay school fees, school activities and more at
<https://schoolcashonline.com>

PINK SHIRT DAY

On February 24th, Elmer Elson Elementary School is participating in our fifth annual Pink Shirt Day!

The theme this year is "Lifting Each Other Up".

The decision to change the shirts from pink to white was not an easy decision for the Pink Shirt Day organizers. They felt that a white t-shirt maybe wouldn't be worn just one day a year, but could be worn again and again.

The shirt may not be pink, but the message is the same:
BE KIND and treat everyone with respect and dignity.



Enter (557)316-2959
Text @eeesch

Contact us directly at:

780-786-2268 or
nolan.andriuk@ngps.ca
leanna.feser@ngps.ca

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Our second session of Parent Teacher Conferences will be on the telephone
from 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

on
March 17th & 18th.

You may call the office to book an appointment starting on March 8th.

SCHOOL COUNCIL REPORT

We had a lot on our agenda to talk about at our recent Council meeting. I always learn so much from attending the council meetings and enjoy the opportunity to give feedback as a parent and share my thoughts.

Please join us at the next meeting via Google Meets on **Monday, February 22nd at 6:30 p.m.** Please call the office to be added to our invite list.

Trista Bell
School Council Chairperson

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTERS

If you would like to receive your newsletter electronically, please e-mail Mrs. LeClerc at the following email address:

carolyn.leclercq@ngps.ca

Please include your current e-mail address for our records.

EARTH RANGERS PRESENTATION

On January 15th, our school participated in the virtual, interactive Earth Rangers show. Special thanks to Pembina Pipeline for making this presentation happen.

Earth Rangers is the kids' conservation organization, committed to instilling environmental knowledge, positivity and the confidence to take action in every child in Canada.

This show was an excellent reminder that it's not too late to help our planet and the things we do today will matter tomorrow.

You can download the free Earth Rangers App and sign up to become a member today.



I READ CANADIAN DAY

On Wednesday, February 17th.

EEE will be celebrating
"I Read Canadian Day"

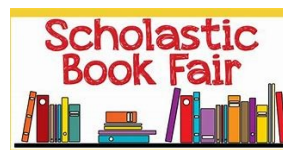
This is a national day of celebration of Canadian books for young people dedicated to "Reading Canadian". The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of Canadian books while celebrating the richness, diversity and breadth of Canadian literature.

Please take a moment to ask your child(ren) about this important literary day.



BOOK FAIR RETURNS TO EEE!

We are anticipating the return of our Scholastic Book Fair the week of March 1st - 5th.



There will be some adjustments to the normal operation of our book fair to reflect the current protocols. Further details will be sent home once they are finalized.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Our school was overwhelmed with a huge donation from the Mayerthorpe Lite Up Committee's Naughty and Nice fundraiser. They gave \$5730.10 to go towards our school breakfast club and other programs. A special thanks to Joe from Vandenberg Collison for contributing \$2500.00 towards this fundraiser. We are so grateful for the support and thoughtfulness.

My Heroes of COVID-19

“Even as we grieved, we grew. Even as we hurt, we hoped. Even as we tire, we try.”

~ Amanda Gorman

I recently heard a radio story of a first grade teacher who was teaching her students virtually when she accidentally released gas, making a loud noise. The response of the children was priceless. I laughed so hard at their joy, innocence and delight that tears ran down my face. Soon those tears turned to ones of sadness. Listening to the purity in the precious giggles of each child, on a computer in their home, connecting with their teacher and classmates, yet physically alone, struck me as terribly heartbreaking. ***These small children are my heroes.***

I know a seven year old boy who lives and breathes all things hockey. School, not so much! With ADHD he nearly climbs the walls and his single, working mama is nearly pulling out her hair! With the cancellation of his sport, this little guy is suffering through a loss so great, it is like a death to him. It was a lifeline not only for him but his exhausted mother. ***The kids who have lost their sports, music, drama productions and extra curricular activities are my heroes.***

Another child I know is supposed to graduate high school in June. Such a milestone to celebrate and a year that is meant to be full of memories, relationships and excitement. It is her last year at school and possibly at home, yet is filled with many disappointments and losses. Thankfully she is focused on exams, college applications and part time jobs or she, like many graduates, would sink into an abyss of desolation. Through tears, she sobbed, “it is not fair! This is not how my last year is supposed to go!” ***The graduating class of 2021 are my heroes.***

I was curious as to what others felt were the most difficult and what, if anything, has been positive about COVID. In conversing with other children, the predominant responses were: I miss my friends, I miss my cousins and grandparents, masks are annoying, I miss the freedom of sitting and playing with who I want. I miss my sports, my lessons, my practices, normal life.

An overwhelming response was: ***“There is nothing good about COVID.”***

On a personal level, I felt bittersweet sorrow observing my teenager build a snowman with her brother. Watching her giggle and be silly opened the floodgates for me. You see, this child has suffered through the deepest, darkest pit of depression I have ever seen. COVID seemed to slam the door on all hope, light and comfort. She retreated so far into herself I did not know if I would ever be able to reach her. But together, with the help of professionals, family and teachers, she battled hard, pushed through and celebrated the moments when the sun shone. Watching her now, I can cautiously say there are more good days than bad. I know the depression would have still been there, but COVID certainly accentuated the symptoms ten fold. ***The kids who are fighting through mental illness are my heroes.***

These stories are far from unique. COVID-19 seems to have brought a despondency and heaviness to our children unlike anything else. As parents, we cannot pull our children out of their despair by ourselves. We absolutely must ***reach out to friends, family and professionals.*** We must focus, point out and grasp onto the brief moments of ***normalcy, joy and delight*** like our lives depend on it. Maybe that is the secret to ours and our children's survival: ***to seek out the silver lining.***

My message to the students in Northern Gateway Public Schools and beyond is this:

I am so sorry that everything is the way it is and wish I could tell you that everything will go back to the way it was before. I know it is not easy and you hate so many parts of COVID. I know your hearts are breaking and no one can stop the pain.

But I know that the adults in your life: parents, teachers, doctors, counsellors, grandparents, aunts and uncles are all so proud of you. We will continue to love you, stand by you, get you mental health help when you need it, rejoice with you in all you are succeeding at and all you are overcoming.

I am sorry that you are missing out on so much, but please do not overlook the strength and resilience that is growing inside of you. Just like precious diamonds are created by tremendous pressure, great beauty and strength is being created in you. You are learning to think and act for yourself. You are learning to question everything you read and hear.

You are learning that the **most valuable things in life are not things** but people, relationships and connection. I know this because that is what you are telling me.

As I reflect on the past 10 months, I believe that the real heroes are the children. May we all continue to savor in their resilience, adaptability and tenacity. Please, tell a young person today how very proud you are of them. Please tell them that **they are your hero**.

[For Mental Health Support](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/page16759.aspx) go to www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/page16759.aspx

Call Helpline 1-877-303-2642 or Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

“Perhaps the butterfly is proof that you can go through a great deal of darkness yet still become something beautiful”

~Beau Taplin

This article was submitted by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She is a support for schools, students, parents and caregivers to promote success in school. Tammy advocates for students and families, providing a link to the community programs. Tammy has been a registered social worker for more than 20 years and is a mother to 4 teenagers.