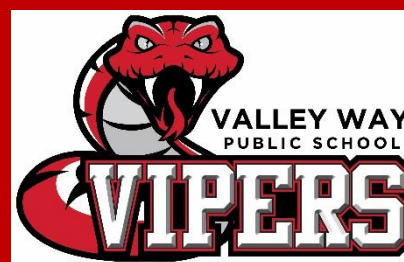


VALLEY WAY VOICE

5315 Valley Way
Niagara Falls, ON
L2E 1X4
905.356.6611

vwv@dsvn.org valleyway.dsvn.org @ValleyWayDSBN



January 2021

#IMATTERATDSBN

#IMHEREVALLEYWAY

#VWPROUD

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome back! We hope that your holiday season was restful and refreshing and you were able to celebrate the season in a safe and healthy way with those in your household.

Elementary students across Ontario will be learning remotely the first week back to school, which is January 4-8, 2021. During this first week, students will be learning online with their teachers. When we return to our Valley Way family in person on January 11, I would like to remind everyone that our protocols that have been in place since September continue to be in place. If you need a refresher, please review our [September newsletter](#).

On behalf of our entire staff, best wishes for a happy and healthy 2021!

PROTOCOL REMINDERS

As we welcome our students and families back, this is a great opportunity to review the protocols that remain in place. We continue to require masks for staff and students in Grades 4-8 and recommend masks for our younger students. We will continue to maintain our physical distancing protocols and handwashing and sanitizing routines. We also need to ensure all families are actively [screening your children](#) and ensuring anyone with symptoms stays home. These protocols are in place to ensure the safety of our school community and we thank you for following these protocols and reminding your child about them as well.

PARENT ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL

One of our goals is to maintain a school environment that minimizes the number of potential contacts for students and staff. For that reason, parents should not enter the school. Pick-up and drop-off of students can only happen outside of the school. Parents will not have access to classrooms and unscheduled visits are not permitted. We thank you for cooperating with our protocols to keep all members of our school community safe.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Welcome Back virtually!..... Jan. 4
- [French Immersion Registration Begins](#) Jan. 4
- [DSBN Academy Online Applications Open](#) Jan. 7
- Welcome Back in person..... Jan. 11
- [Jersey Day](#) Jan. 14
- PA Day..... Jan. 15
- Family Literacy Day Jan. 27
- [PIC Speaker Series](#) Jan. 27
- ['Snowed-In' Day](#)..... Jan, 29

PA DAY

On Friday, January 15 all DSNB schools will be closed for a PA Day in which teachers will be engaged in assessment and evaluation activities.



STUDENT RECOGNITION

During the month of December, Valley Way students were recognized for their work as a learner for their learning skills and/or academics, as an individual for their character traits, and as a community member for contributing to the school and/or classroom. The following students were recognized:

MRS. MIHELIC AND Ms. O'TOOLE Felix, Landen, Bodhi	MRS. PETRYCHANKO Nate, Henry
Ms. SCUDAMORE Phillip, Skye, Makklen	Ms. CARTER Cooper, Ethan, Meadow
MRS. TAYLOR Gabby, Domenic	MR. CLANCY Brianna, Quinn, Daron
MR. OTT Allainna, Keiran	MRS. MEGER Riley, Autumn, Logan
MR. DESANTI Alyssa, Katie, Scotty	MR. SARKISIAN Skye, Zoey, Emily
MME. BOUCHARD (FSL) Landon, Ben, Dannilynn, Joel	
Ms. FITZGERALD (LRT) Jordan, Logan, Chase, Owen	



DREAMBOX LEARNING

DreamBox Learning Math is an online program with educational games that are individualized for your child, adapting the curriculum just for them. It's a fun, effective math learning environment. Unlike other math games that often sacrifice learning for entertainment, DreamBox delivers a rich, tailored learning experience. All of our students have access to a DreamBox account. Please contact your child's teacher for further information.

THROW NO SNOW

The safety of our students is a prime concern at Valley Way. Thus, we have a strict policy that forbids the throwing of snow. (This includes face washing, snow down coats, kicking snow at others, etc.) Students who throw snow will be subject the following sequence of action:

First Offence: Loss of recess and warning from office.

Second Offence: Loss of 2 recesses and letter home.

Third Offence: Loss of all recesses while snow is on the ground and phone call home.

We realize that this is a strict policy with strong consequences, but we want to encourage safe play. We prefer to be pro-active and to prevent injuries on our school yards. Please discuss this policy with your child. Thanks for your cooperation!

PARENT'S ROLE IN KEEPING SCHOOLS SAFE

Everyone has a role to play in keeping families safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19. It is the responsibility of parents and caregivers to assess their children on a daily basis before sending them to school. We ask parents to use this link: [Ontario Ministry of Education Covid-19 School and Childcare Screening Tool](#) to screen their child(ren) daily. The screening tool will provide direction and information to determine if students should attend school, remain home, or seek medical advice. Additionally, parents must have a person available to pick up their child right away, should they become sick during school. We thank our parents for being diligent with following the screening guidelines and being available to pick up your child when needed!

WINTER WEATHER REMINDERS

We remind students to bundle up and dress appropriately for outdoor play this winter. Except in extreme cases, such as when Niagara Public Health issues Extreme Cold Weather Alert, gym classes, recess and lunch breaks will continue outdoors to provide our children a much-needed change of pace and scenery. Niagara Public Health will issue a cold weather alert when the temperatures are -15°C or when weather conditions are severe enough to warrant alerting the community to the risks involved with prolonged exposure to the outdoors, such as a blizzard or wind chill warning. Depending on the wind chill factor, outdoor breaks may be shortened as appropriate.

Students **are not kept in at recess due to illness** as fresh air and exercise are essential to a healthy mind and body. If your child is well enough to be at school, we consider them well enough to be outside. If your child is properly dressed, they will be able to enjoy the colder weather and time outside. We feel very strongly that if the child is too ill to go out for recess, it would be in the child's best interest to remain home for the day. If you believe your child is an exceptional case, please contact Mrs. Worth to discuss the situation.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

There are times in Niagara when weather conditions are so poor that we must cancel student transportation, and/or close schools to preserve the safety of students and staff.

The decision to cancel transportation and/or close schools is not taken lightly; a variety of factors are considered when making this choice. To learn more about how these decisions are made, please go to <https://www.dsbnschools.org/inclementweather>.

Transportation Cancellations:

Information about transportation delays and cancellations are posted to <https://portal.nsts.ca/Cancellations.aspx>. When transportation is cancelled, information is shared before 6:00 am on the day of the cancellation. There are times when transportation is cancelled, but schools remain open. If, on those days you feel it is best for your child to stay home, please report your child's absence <https://dsbn.org/safearrival/> so we can make sure they are safe at home.

School Closures:

When the decision to close schools is made, it refers to all schools: both in-person and virtual schools. School closure information is shared before 6:00 am on the day of the school closure. You will find it on dsbn.org, all school websites, DSBN social media, and local media share the news widely as well.

Student Work on School Closure and Transportation Cancellation Days:

For elementary students - On days where transportation is cancelled and/or schools are closed, please visit our [school website](#) and click on the "Learn From Home" button. There you will find optional asynchronous learning resources.

For secondary students – Students will be able to access online materials for their courses. If it is a culminating activity day, special arrangements will be made and communicated to students centrally.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

Do you know a child who was born in 2017? If so, spread the word that Kindergarten registration is almost here! Our Kindergarten online registration starts January 28. Please visit the [DSBN Kindergarten registration link](#) for more details and to download a copy of DSBN's book, "Barkley's First Day".

DSBN ACADEMY: VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE COMING SOON

Learn about the DSBN Academy at the Virtual Open House on **Monday, February 8, 2021 at 6:00 PM!** Join us to find out:

- How this unique program prepares students to attend, and succeed at, college and university
- What extra opportunities are offered and how your child can benefit
- If the DSBN Academy is a good fit for your child

The DSBN Academy is a Grade 6-12 public school designed to support and empower students to be the first in their family to graduate from college or university. Staff and students are committed to the belief that, with hard work, all students can achieve their dreams.



From January 11-29, Grade 5 and 6 students will participate in a Virtual Roadshow during class time to learn more about the DSBN Academy and everything it has to offer. More information about Registration and the Virtual Open House will be shared in January 2021

Online registration opens on **JANUARY 7, 2021** at **ACADEMY.DSBN.ORG/APPLY**. Registration will close on **FEBRUARY 15, 2021**. Limited spots available.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY TO DSBN ACADEMY?

- Student must live within the Niagara Region
- Student is entering Grade 6, 7 or 8 in September 2021
- Student would be the first in their family to graduate from a college or university program
 - If a sibling has attended post-secondary but the parent(s)/guardian(s) have not, the student is still considered a First Generation Student
- Student is achieving current grade level expectations or just below
- Student has demonstrated the potential for achieving "good" or "excellent" learning skills
- Student is willing to attend a school that may be out of their community with free transportation provided
- Student understands there are mandatory after-school academic supports and *ENCORE* programs
 - After-school *ENCORE* options include: Mixed sports, Board games, Photography, Yoga, Makerspace, Choir, Reading, and many more!
- Families understand that the DSBN Academy is a single track pathway beginning in Grade 9 (academic level only)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT: Derek.Harley@dsbn.org - Elementary Principal

GRADE 1 FRENCH IMMERSION REGISTRATION

The French Immersion program (offered at French Immersion sites) is open to all Year 2 Kindergarten students. If you want your child to develop a high proficiency and fluency in Canada's two official languages, French Immersion has a great deal to offer. [Check out this video about our program!](#)

Registration will open January 4th, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. and will close February 16th, 2021. For more information about French Immersion in the District School Board of Niagara visit www.dsbns.org/fi.

JERSEY DAY – JANUARY 14

On January 14, we will have “Jersey Day”. Wear a sports-themed shirt, hoodie or jersey. It may be supporting your favourite professional sports team, a team you have played with yourself or a homemade shirt representing your favourite sport.

'SNOWED IN' DAY – JANUARY 29

On January 29, we will have 'Snowed In' Day. What do you wear to stay warm on a cold, snowy January day? Wear your most comfortable jogging pants, your favourite warm fuzzy hoodie, sweater or socks or a pair of warm winter pajamas. Wear your most comfortable clothes to stay warm and cozy on a January winter day. Please do not bring blankets or stuffed animals to school.

FAMILY LITERACY DAY THEME: TRAVEL THE WORLD TOGETHER!

Family Literacy Day takes place every January 27th to raise awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities as a family. Since 1999, thousands of schools, libraries, literacy organizations and other community groups have taken part in the initiative. ABC creates free learning and promotional resources for anyone that wants to get involved. Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development, improving a child's literacy skills dramatically, and can help a parent improve their skills as well.

On January 27, we encourage your family to 'Travel the World Together'. Use your imagination to go exploring and travel the world together as a family – you never know what you'll learn! Plan your dream trip, learn about another culture and open your mind to the world.

CONNECT WITH US!

In our busy lives, events can sometimes be overlooked. Technology allows us multiple ways to connect with families. The following is a list of ways we use to connect with families to ensure all families are aware of the many events happening throughout the year.

SCHOOL WEBSITE - <http://valleyway.dsbm.org>

Please take some time to visit the Valley Way Public School website. Our website includes current newsletters, school calendars, code of conduct, school council information, a school year calendar, classroom websites, and bell times. Our website also includes the most recent Facebook posts and Tweets.

SCHOOL MESSENGER

Using the School Messenger program, all families will receive a phone call and email on Sunday afternoon (Monday's on a long weekend) with reminders about events for the upcoming week. If you are not receiving these phone calls and emails, please check your contact information with the office to ensure we have the most current information. We have received many positive comments about this method of communication! In order for School Messenger to be it's most effective, it is imperative that we have up-to-date phone numbers and email addresses. There is also a School Messenger App that you can download on your phone or device. This app can also be used to report student absences as well as receive messages from the school. Parents are encouraged to use this app as it is a quick and easy way to report a child's absence.

FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM

Please follow us on these social media platforms to see updates on exciting events. All posts and tweets will be updated on our school website as well. You can find us on Facebook and Twitter at: @ValleyWayDSBN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

All newsletters will be posted to the school website and sent via School Messenger through email on the first school day of the new month.

PIC VIRTUAL SPEAKER SERIES – PARENTING IN A PANDEMIC

PIC is very excited to welcome Canadian Parenting Author, Ann Douglas in a free, virtual presentation on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 6:30p.m.

Parenting doesn't happen in a bubble. As parents, we can't help but be affected by what's happening in the wider world. Is it any wonder then that so many of us are feeling so anxious, so guilty, and so overwhelmed right now? In this thought-provoking conversation, parenting author Ann Douglas will acknowledge the challenges that we are facing in this moment and share strategies and solutions for parenting through a strange and uncertain time. Expect a conversation that is kind, encouraging, and real and that leaves you feeling anything but alone.

You'll learn:

- why this is such a challenging time to be a parent and a child or teen!
- how to calm yourself and calm your child
- how to parent in a way you can feel good about and that will actually strengthen your relationship with your child
- how to give yourself permission to be a gloriously imperfect parent and to give your child permission to be a gloriously imperfect kid
- how to recognize and celebrate your many strengths as a parent.

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is a regular contributor to CBC Radio and a bestselling parenting book author. Ann is the creator of The Mother of All Book series and the author, most recently, of Happy Parents, Happy Kids and Parenting Through the Storm. A passionate and inspiring speaker, Ann delivers keynote addresses and leads small-group workshops at health, parenting, and education conferences across the country.

A limited number of Ann's book, Happy Parents Happy Kids are available to those who register for her presentation.

Date: Wednesday, January 27, 2020

Time: 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Registration link: <https://www.dsbnsocialworker.org/pic/speakerseries.html>

SOCIAL WORKER SUPPORT

Do you have questions about your child's mental health and well-being, such as anxiety, behaviour or self-harm?

Do you need support in accessing supports in the community?

Do you need advice for setting goals to help with regular school attendance?

Do you have any questions or looking for support regarding a certain aspect of parenting?

If these are some questions that you have, please speak with your child's teacher or Mrs. Worth. Sue Bennett is a DSBN Social Worker that works with families in Niagara Falls schools, including Valley Way, to provide an additional layer of support to help our students and families achieve success. She is an invaluable member of our Valley Way team and is looking forward to connecting with families.