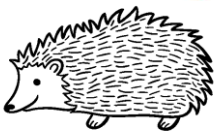


A Note from Our Principal

Dear Families,

In This Issue

- ◆ Principal's Letter
- ◆ Save the Date!
- ◆ School Calendar
- ◆ Meal Pay Plus
- ◆ PTO Notes
- ◆ News from Rooms 110 and 112
- ◆ DIFI – News from MMSD



Welcome to the month of rosy cheeks and cold noses – and lots of learning and fun happening around Van Hise! We have many wonderful things planned this season of celebration. During the week of December 12th, we will be having our first ever whole school “Hope Week”, focused on reading, talking and sharing things related to our hopes and dreams. The “Positive Pals” leadership team is working with Mrs. Tome’ to help organize the week. In fact, some of the Positive Pals are collaborating with Hamilton Middle School students to create a short film clip about “hope”. The video will be played during our whole school Winter Dance held on December 23rd. Our school dance will be held in the afternoon before school is out to celebrate the positive behavior and learning that happens every day at Van Hise!

At Van Hise, families and teachers work together to serve our children well☺ Our Scholastic book fair and REAP fundraisers were very successful! There are two other fundraisers happening this month to support programming for our kids. First, the *Holiday Pottery Spectacular* is happening at Fine Earth Clay Studio at 2207 Regent St. on December 9th and 10th from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. 20% of all profits from the sales will go to our Art program here at VHE☺ We also have our incredible K/1 team sponsoring a “Parents’ Night Out” on December 16th with babysitting available for our little ones (there are limited spaces and they are filling up). The funds raised from this event will pay for new literacy-based play equipment for our youngest students.

Families will also be hearing about some music concerts coming up in the near future☺ Mr. Miller is preparing our 5th graders to perform in a Winter Strings Concert on December 21st. Our wonderful music teacher, Ms. Root, is also working on showcasing some of the musical learning happening across our school. More information will be forthcoming about these musical celebrations.

(Continued)

As a reminder, our Winter Break is from December 26th through January 6th. Our attendance process goes much smoother when you contact us in advance about planned absences. Please remember to inform the office of planned absences and family trips. It is good to inform the teacher but even better to inform the office through our Safe Arrival line, an email, or by filling out a Planned Absence Form.

The old adage, "time flies when you are having fun" sure applies to how I feel about working with such a wonderful community of students, staff and families. Together, let's enjoy taking the time to notice all that is around us; the traditions of our families, the growth and learning of our children, and the warmth we feel from our positive relationships with our friends, family and neighbors.

Warmly,

Peg Keeler, Principal
mkeeler@madison.k12.wi.us



Querida familia,

¡Bienvenidos al mes de mejillas rosadas y narices frías! – y un montón de aprendizaje y diversión pasando alrededor de Van Hise! Tenemos muchas cosas maravillosas planeadas esta temporada de fiesta. Durante la semana del 12 de diciembre, celebraremos nuestra primer "Semana de Esperanza", enfocado en leer, hablar y compartir cosas relacionadas con nuestros sueños y esperanzas. El equipo de liderazgo "Amigos Positivos" está trabajando con la Sra. Tomé para ayudar a organizar la semana. De hecho, algunos de los Amigos Positivos están colaborando con estudiantes de la secundaria de Hamilton para crear un cortometraje sobre "La esperanza". El vídeo se reproducirá durante nuestro baile de invierno celebrado el 23 de diciembre con toda la escuela. ¡Nuestro baile se celebrará por la tarde antes de las vacaciones para celebrar el comportamiento positivo y el aprendizaje que ocurre cada día en Van Hise!

En Van Hise, familias y maestros trabajan juntos para servir bien a nuestros hijos. ¡Nuestra Feria del libro escolar y recaudadores de fondos REAP fueron muy exitosos! Hay dos recaudadores de fondos programado para este mes para mantener programaciones para nuestros niños. Primero, la espectacular fiesta de cerámica está ocurriendo en el estudio de arcilla localizado en 2207 Regent St. el 9 y 10 de diciembre de 10:00 hasta las 5:00. 20% de todas las ganancias de las

ventas irán a nuestro programa de Arte aquí en VHE☺ Nuestro equipo de Kinder y Primer grado patrocinaran una "Noche sin Niños" que se llevara acabo el 16 de diciembre. Las maestras cuidaran a sus hijos dándoles una oportunidad para salir a cenar o ir de compras (espacio es limitado y se esta llenando). Fondos recaudados pagaran nuevo equipos de juego basado en el alfabetismo para nuestros estudiantes.

También recibirán noticias sobre algunos conciertos de música en el cercano futuro que el Sr. Miller está preparando. Los de 5to grado realizaran un concierto de cuerdas el 21 de diciembre. Nuestra maestra de música, la Srta. Root, también sigue trabajando mostrando un poco del aprendizaje musical que pasa a través en nuestra escuela. Recibirá más información próximamente sobre estas celebraciones musicales.

Como recordatorio, nuestras vacaciones de invierno son desde el 26 de diciembre hasta el 6 de enero. Comuníquese con nosotros si su hijo/a va a estar ausente antes o después de estas vacaciones. Por favor llamar a la oficina sobre estas ausencias. Es bueno informarle a su maestro/a pero aún mejor informar a la oficina a través de nuestra línea de llegada segura, un correo electrónico, o rellenando un formulario de ausencia planificada.

El viejo refrán, "el tiempo vuela cuando te estás divirtiendo" se aplica a cómo me siento acerca de trabajar con esta maravillosa comunidad de estudiantes, funcionarios y sus familias. Juntos, vamos a disfrutar tomando el tiempo para notar todo lo que nos rodea; las tradiciones de nuestras familias, el crecimiento y el aprendizaje de nuestros hijos y la calidez que sentimos con nuestros amigos, familiares y vecinos.

Cariñosamente,

Peg Keeler, Directora

Save the Date!



Van Hise Elementary's Winter Dance...**the SNOW BALL!**

Friday, January 20,
6pm-8pm, in the gym.

Watch for a special announcement in your child's take-home folder right after winter break. If you have any questions or would like to get involved, contact Danielle Thai, ddthai5121@gmail.com, 233-2253.

SCHOOL Calendar

www.madison.k12.wi.us

School Telephone: 204-4800
Voice Mail: 204-4801

School Fax Number: 204-0419
To report absences: 204-4807

December

Mon	12	January Newsletter Articles Due
Tues	13	PTO Business Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Art Room
Mon	26	Winter Break Starts

January

Mon	9	School Resumes
Tues	10	PTO Business Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Art Room
Mon	16	No School – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Tues	17	February Newsletter Articles Due
Fri	20	SNOW BALL: Winter Dance, 6:00 p.m.
Fri	27	Early Release, 11:30 a.m., End of 2nd Quarter



Use MealpayPlus to make sure your student gets a hot and healthy meal at school.

- See how much money is in your student's cafeteria account 24/7
- Deposit funds instantly via the web to ensure your student won't lose or forget lunch money
- View student's food purchases to track spending and ensure your child is making healthy choices
- **Set reminders to notify you each time the balance is low** (auto-pay also available)
- Free sign-up:
 - Visit www.MealpayPlus.com
 - Click "Register a Free Account"
 - Follow the simple, onscreen instructions

Don't forget...

**Hedgehog Herald
Newsletter Articles Due**



**January Newsletter
articles due
Friday, December 23**

**Email to Kim Mohoney at
garykimmohoney@att.net**



NOTES FROM THE PTO

*Come and join the fun!
Support your kids and Van Hise Elementary!
Our **next PTO Meeting is Tuesday, January 10th**
at 7:00 p.m. in the Art Room.
Child care will be provided for school-aged children in the gymnasium.*

Teacher Conference Luncheon Success!

A big Thank You to everyone who helped make the Teacher Conference Luncheon such a big success. The Teachers were amazed at how delicious and wonderful the spread was. It is truly amazing what we can put together with our fantastic VHE Families. Special thank you to those who helped and donated: Hannah Renfro, Valencia Bennett, Vanitha Suresh, Hongmei Gu, Lisa Stern, Weijun Shang, Kim Mohoney, Katie Herringa, Sarah Van Riet, Sheryl Nields, Jane Faber, Beth Gunshor, Nimmi Gulati, Kate Deck, Bhavani, Daniela Sponseller, Susan Smetzer-Anderson, Jodi Streicher-Bremer, Maureen Beilke, Stephanie Whitehorse, Carousel Bayrd, Rosemary Barrientos-Irigoyen, Kimanh To, Sara Gordon, Gianna Childs diFranco, and Mattia Sussman. (Many apologies if we missed a volunteer).

1st Ever Noodles Night a HUGE Success!

VHE's 1st ever Noodles and Company Benefit Night (back on October 17th) earned \$734.77! Thank you again to everyone who attended!

DonorsChoose.org: The three projects are: Read-Alouds on the Go (Mileham – K/1), Fitness Fun (Koval) and Art Room Storage (Cantwell). Go to **DonorsChoose.org** and follow the prompts to make a donation to one or all of these wonderful projects.

A NEW WAY TO EARN FREE MONEY FOR VAN HISE

Recycle4fundraising

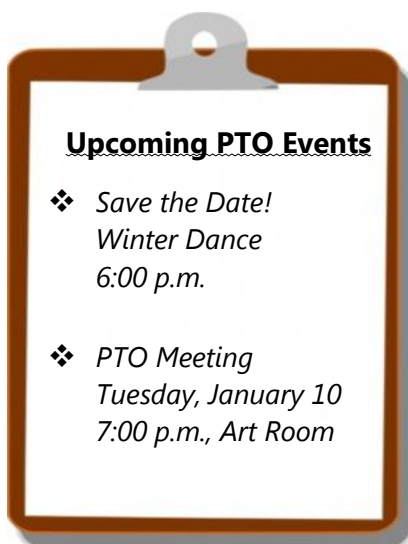
Bring in your used
--ink jet cartridges
--laser printer toner cartridges
--cell phones
--digital cameras
--IPODS
--GPS
--Laptops

...from your home or work to raise money for our school!

A new collection box for these items will be in the hallway just inside the doorway leading to the classrooms next to the TerraCycle collection boxes for glue sticks (or give them to your child's teacher).

Our school will earn money for every piece we recycle.

For more information, go to www.recycle4fundraising.com or ask Sarah Van Riet (svanriet@charter.net or 232-0216) Thanks!



Check out all the great ways you can help Van Hise!

◆ **Amazon.com:** You can shop for books, music, movies, computers, electronics, furniture, pet supplies, toys, clothing, sporting equipment, car parts, and even the kitchen sink on Amazon! Amazon is the perfect location to shop if you are looking for school supplies, birthday gifts, getting an early start on holiday shopping, or just want to avoid lines at the store? Most items over \$25 ship for free. Next time you place an order on Amazon, first go to vanhisepto.org and click on the Amazon School Rewards link, then do your shopping. Note that only new items added to your cart AFTER clicking on the link will apply. Up to 15% of your purchase at Amazon.com will go to Van Hise Elementary. Share the link with friends and family!

◆ **Target REDCard:** Shop at Target? The Take Care of Education program is a credit card program through Target where 1% of every purchase on your Target REDCard is donated to the school you select. If you don't already have a REDCard, please take the time to sign up the next time you visit the store. If you already have a REDCard, please make sure that you have designated Van Hise (code is 108762) as your school of choice. And, if you have already designated Van Hise, thank you and keep shopping.

◆ **Box Tops for Education:** Have you heard about eBoxTops from Box Tops Marketplace? Go to www.boxtops4education.com and register (enter VHE's zip code – 53705, select Van Hise from the list, and complete the registration). Once you have an account, you can earn eBoxTops (www.boxtops4education.com/Marketplace) whenever you shop online at Barnes and Noble, Crate and Barrel, Dell, Disney Store, Eddie Bauer, Hanna Andersson, hotels.com, iTunes, Lands End, Old Navy, Oriental Trading Company, Snapfish, Children's Place, and many more. Select your store of interest from the Box Tops Marketplace list and you will automatically be taken to your shopping destination once you click on that store's icon. All Box Tops earn money for Van Hise "special" programs (Art, Music, PE).

◆ **TerraCycle** is a company that makes affordable, eco-friendly products from non-recycleable waste materials. TerraCycle prevents 1000s of tons of waste from going to the landfill. To do so, they run a free national collection program that pays non-profits and schools to collect various materials, which are then upcycled into products such as totes and shower curtains. Van Hise Elementary can earn 2 cents for every ELMER's glue bottle, ELMER's glue stick, SCOTCH tape dispenser, and plastic (#6) cup. Please save these items and drop them in the collection bin located just inside the doorway leading to the classrooms (or give them to your child's teacher).

◆ **Swiss Valley: Caps for Cash and Kemps: Nickels for Schools:** Mrs. Cantwell collects milk caps for the art program. Each cap collected is worth 5 cents. The caps have a sticker on the top indicating that they are part of the school donation program. Caps can be turned into the art room. Thanks for drinking milk and helping art!

◆ **The Giving Tree:** The PTO has asked all of the teachers at Van Hise for classroom wish lists. The wish lists have been put on a Giving Tree near the Segoe Entrance. Donating an item(s) from these wish lists makes a difference to your child's teacher and in the classroom. Please take a look at the items on the tree. Please contact Shelby Connell (sconnell@tds.net) if you have any questions.

Don't forget to mention Van Hise Elementary when making purchases from Office Depot who will donate a percentage of your sales to our local stores. Earn easy money for Van Hise when you shop...

Please join us and get involved! Together, we can and will do great things!

Thank you VHE Families, Friends and Supporters!

Thank you for making last year's PTO fundraisers such a HUGE success!



NEWS FROM PINTS & QUARTS

Mr. Christopherson's Room, Room 112
AND Mrs. Mahr's, Room 110



Terrace Town Time By Clara, from Mrs. Mahr's room

Mrs. Mahr, Mr. C, Mrs. Zucker, Mrs. Powell, Ms. Cahill and Ms. Ostertag's classrooms are all doing Terrace Town together. Terrace town is a project where different classrooms/ schools build a city with different materials. After it's all done the city will be set up on display at Monona Terrace on February 3rd and 4th. The six classes will work in pairs and each create one third of the city. The three parts will be separated by rivers.

To get started, rooms 110 and 112 had to write down buildings that we would like to have and what we wanted the city to be like. Then we built structures with straws and figured out how many pounds they could hold. The number of pounds ranged from nothing to 22 lbs. The structure that held 22 lbs. had many triangles on it which made it a lot stronger. It hardly had any polygons that had more than four sides. After the straws, we built structures out of rolled up newspaper. We found out that the newspaper was very strong but the ads were stronger. The structures we built with newspaper and ads were much bigger than the ones with straw. Some of these could hold the weight of a child!

To learn more about structures, we had a few guest experts come in. The first person, Ms. Norton, came in and taught us about cantilevers. A cantilever is a part of a building that sticks out, like an awning, and is only supported at one end. We used 50 toothpicks and just a bit of clay and tried to get the clay and toothpicks as far off the desk as possible. One group built a cantilever that went 9 inches off the desk! Ms. Norton also told us about Frank Lloyd Wright's "*Falling Waters*" a house that was built with a river running through it. "*Falling Waters*" has many cantilevers.

The next day, V.H.E. parent Tim Sobota came. He works for Metro Transit. At work, Mr. Sobota does things like plan where busses and bus stops go. He made us think whether or not we wanted a car-free city like Venice, Italy, and what kind of transportation we would have and if the transportation was under, over or on ground level. Material shipping is just as important as human transportation because that's how all of our goods get to us. We also discussed something called Shweeb. Shweeb is an eco-friendly monorail system because you have to use pedal power instead of electricity. It looks like a clear single-person monorail and might be something that will help to transport people around towns in the future.

We also learned about zoning. Zoning is where people plan where different buildings go. For example, you wouldn't want noisy things right next to your house. Emergency vehicles are noisy, but you *would* want them to be able to get to your house quickly.

The highlight of all the speakers was a presentation by architects Arlan Kay and Don Briggs, who work at Architecture Network, Inc. downtown. They taught us about things like tension and compression. Tension is where something is pulling against something else and compression is where something is pushing against something else. Tension and compression work together to hold up various structures such as bridges. Mr. Kay demonstrated many different ways that tension helps to support things such as buildings, bridges and archways. At one point there was a huge arch that connected two desks (big enough for kids to walk under) and a bridge that took up about five feet. As we plan Terrace Town we will have to think a lot about tension and compression so our buildings are strong and don't fall down. Arlan Kay and Don Briggs told us we had to keep three things in mind: function - what the building is needed for, structure - how the building is built and esthetics - how the building looks.

In the words of Arlan the Architect, "There is no greater thrill than walking through a building or a space that you have designed. (There is no greater horror than walking through a space you have designed badly.)" Even though we can't walk through the buildings we will make, we can still make great ones!

District Identified for Improvement (DIFI)

Dear MMSD Families,

Signs of progress

In January 2011 we outlined an array of ambitious strategies for addressing needed improvements to the Madison Metropolitan School District in the State of the District report. Today, ten months later, it is gratifying to watch as our plans for improvement begin to take shape. Deep and systemic change of this kind reveals itself in small but important steps. We are seeing hopeful indicators of progress.

District in need of improvement

Still our challenges are great. We are aware of significant and unacceptable gaps in achievement across groups of students. Because of those gaps, the MMSD, like many districts across the country, has been identified as a “**District in Need of Improvement**” by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, in accordance with federal law. The MMSD received this designation because six of our 49 schools did not meet the law’s measures of Adequate Yearly Progress in certain subjects within specific subgroups of students.

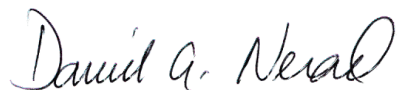
Strategies that work

When our strategies for improvement are in place across all schools, we will be ready to celebrate. Until then we remain hard at work, with a sense of urgency. Research and experience show that the instructional practices we’ve chosen will result in school success for students, but they cannot be implemented quickly or easily.

Please take a few minutes to read more about what we are doing to address the needs of students. We invite you to explore our district improvement plan to learn how these practices provide high-quality education for all students.

Thank you for your continued commitment to education.

Sincerely,



Daniel Nerad, Superintendent of Schools

El Distrito ha sido identificado en necesidad de mejora ***[District Identified for Improvement (DIFI)]***

Estimadas familias del Distrito Escolar Metropolitano de Madison:

Señales de progreso

En enero del 2011, en el informe del Estado del Distrito delineamos una serie de estrategias ambiciosas para encarar la necesidad de mejora del Distrito Escolar Metropolitano de Madison (MMSD por su sigla en inglés). Hoy, diez meses después, es muy gratificante ver que nuestros planes de mejora empiezan a tomar forma. Cambio profundo y sistemático de este tipo se manifiesta en pasos pequeños pero importantes; estamos observando unos indicadores de progreso esperanzadores.

El Distrito en necesidad de mejora

Todavía nuestros desafíos son grandes. Estamos conscientes de las diferencias significativas e inaceptables en cuanto al aprovechamiento a través de grupos de estudiantes. A causa de esas diferencias en logros el MMSD, lo mismo muchos distritos a lo largo y ancho del país, ha sido identificado por el Departamento de Instrucción Pública de Wisconsin, en conformidad con la ley federal, como un Distrito en necesidad de mejora. El MMSD ha recibido esta denominación porque algunos subgrupos de estudiantes no han logrado el progreso anual adecuado en alguno de los cuatro parámetros del área de lectura, durante dos años consecutivos. La ley también mide el progreso de cada escuela en particular; seis de nuestras cuarenta y nueve escuelas no alcanzaron las medidas legales de progreso anual adecuado en ciertas materias dentro de unos subgrupos específicos de estudiantes.

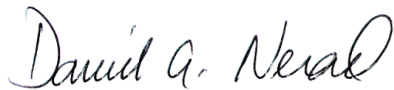
Estrategias que funcionan:

Una vez nuestras estrategias de mejora sean puestas en práctica en todas nuestras escuelas, estaremos listos para celebrar. Hasta entonces, continuaremos trabajando tenazmente con un sentimiento de urgencia. La investigación y la experiencia demuestran que las prácticas pedagógicas que hemos seleccionado darán como resultado el éxito académico para los estudiantes, pero tales no pueden ser implementadas ni rápida ni fácilmente.

Por favor tomen tiempo para informarse más sobre lo que estamos haciendo para encarar las necesidades de los estudiantes. Los invitamos a explorar el plan de mejora del nuestro Distrito para que aprenda como estas prácticas proporcionan una educación de alta calidad para todos los estudiantes.

Les agradezco su compromiso permanente con la educación.

Atentamente,



Daniel Nerad, Superintendente de las escuelas