

WELCOME BACK

DECEMBER NEWS



Winter Celebrations

Did you know there are lots of winter celebrations all around the world other than Christmas. Here is just a short list of some of them: Winter Solstice (Worldwide), Kwanzaa, Hannukah, Lunar New Year, Three Kings Day (Spain, Latin American and the Carribean) , Feast of the Seven Fishes (Italian and Italian American) , and Saint Nicholas Day (Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Eastern Europe, Austria and France).

You might recognize the names of some of them, but others might be new to you. One that many might already have heard of is Lunar New Year.

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Winter Solstice

For Indigenous people's Winter Solstice was always for celebration, ritual and tradition. Though many now also celebrate Christmas, a Christian celebration, others do still celebrate the Solstice. Cultures around the world celebrate the Solstice with different festivals and traditions.

Why is the Solstice important?

Winter Solstice normally falls on either the 21st or 22nd of December. It is the shortest day, and the longest night of the year. It was part of the way that days were measured, following the moons instead of the Gregorian calendar, and was part of the teachings about nature slowing down and reflecting over the winter months.

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STUDENT ARTICLES

Winter Celebrations Continued from pg 1

Lunar New Year is celebrated in East and Southeast Asia in countries like China, South Korea, and Vietnam. This year, Lunar New Year will fall on February 17, 2026. It changes every year based on the lunar calendar.

It is celebrated with lion dances, parades adorned with importance put on the color's gold and red, and fireworks. There are visits with friends and family, giving and receiving red envelopes containing money. Lunar New Year is to celebrate the New Year and the coming spring.

Another winter holiday celebrated is Hannukah. Hannukah, the festival of lights, is a Jewish holiday celebrated all around the world. It takes place from December 14th - December 22nd, 2025. It remembers a miracle when only 1 vial of oil lit the temple lights for 8 days instead of one. This is why Hannukah lasts for 8 days. Each night another candle is lit on the menorah. It is celebrated to remember the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian Greek army.

Hannukah foods include deep fried foods symbolizing the oil from the menorah used in the temple. These foods include latkes (potato pancakes) and jelly donuts. Other favourites include Bimuelos and applesauce as a latke topping. Chocolate gelt is another popular treat.

Kwanzaa is an American Holiday that celebrates Black American culture. It is celebrated from Dec 26th through January 1st each year since 1966. It is a time for Black Americans to come together, regardless of their faith to honour African heritage. The holiday is based off of African traditions.

Over the 7 days of Kwanzaa, each day has a theme and a candle in the Kinara is lit each day to highlight that theme. Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), Imani (Faith). On that last day a feast is held.

As you celebrate this season, take a moment to think about your neighbours and their holiday traditions and how they might be the same, or different, than yours.

Winter Solstice Continued from pg 1

The story "Mouse Celebrates the Winter Solstice," by Terri Mack, is about strength and sharing, and is a great story to share with children and adults alike.

Winter Solstice is the beginning of the long winter days which traditionally meant eating food preserved in other seasons and gathering to share that food and feast with family and friends. The Blackfoot saw the Solstice marking the return of the sun, with each day getting a little bit longer. If you have the chance, watch this video clip of a Cree Elder explaining the significance of the Solstice. <https://youtu.be/dX5F9zRYfQQ?si=jXi45GbDVrNI2mbc>

Though celebrating the Winter Solstice has changed over time, it remains culturally significant for people all over the world. If you're interested in finding out about a BC celebration, Vancouver hosts a Winter Solstice Lantern festival each year for the last 32 years.

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

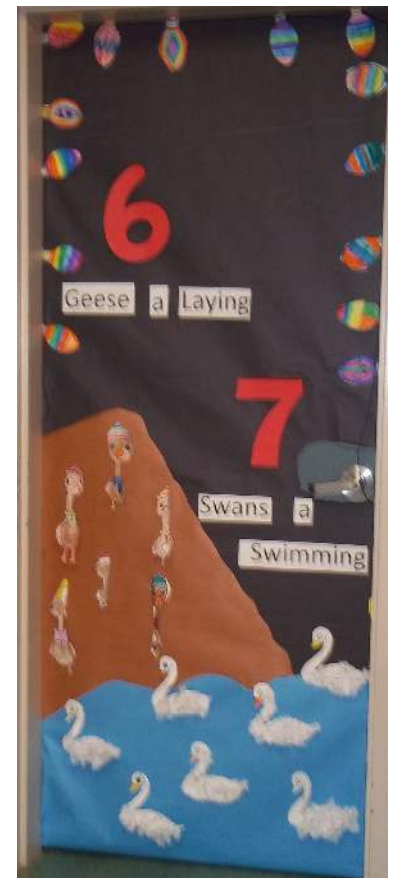
Winter Concert

Ms. Cooper - The Aspen Winter concert is just around the corner! It took place on Tuesday, December 16th at 1pm and 6pm in the gym. Students showcased many different musical styles with lots of different instruments including recorders, tone chimes, xylophones, marimbas, and drums. All our divisions worked hard to learn their parts and were very excited to showcase their excitement and joy during the winter season. Thank you all for coming and cheering us on!



Ms. Cudmore's Class

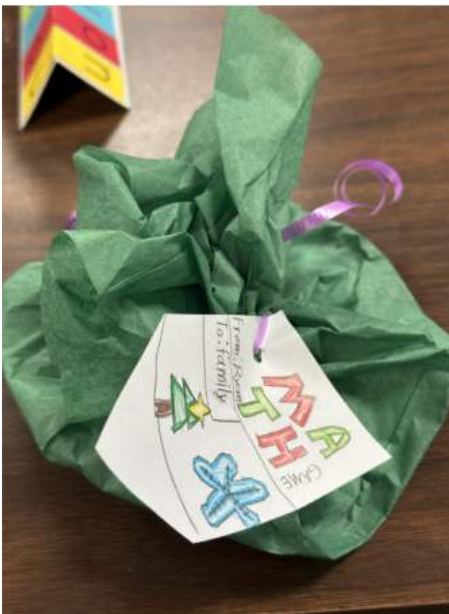
Ms. Cudmore's class door, for the Christmas door decorating competition organized by Agents of Change, was 6 geese a laying and seven swans a swimming from the 12 days of Christmas. Her class put tons of effort into the door, and I thought it was pretty cool how they incorporated the song into their door. All classes put a lot of effort into their doors good job guys!!!



CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Ms. Shelly's Class

Ms. Shelly's class often plays math games. One day they got into a discussion about how great it would be if their families could see the games and play with them. They decided why not make games as Christmas gifts for their families, and so they did!



Journalism Club

In January, Journalism Club Group One will work with Group 2 to show them how our club works, and work together to put out our next issue. In February Group 2 will take over for the remainder of the year.

Group 1 students, if you would like to continue through the second half of the year talk to Ms. Mathew

Agents of Change

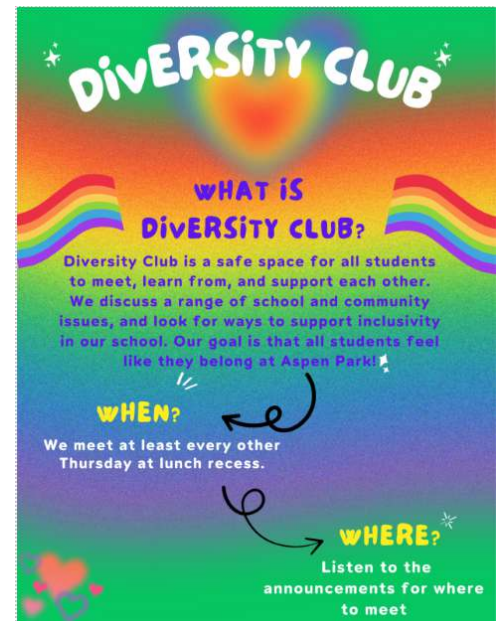
What is Agents of Change?
It's a group that meets every Wednesday at lunchtime recess and usually goes on till 12:45. You have to be in grades 6-7, but some grade 5's are included. We are a group that wants to make a change in how people treat each other and want everyone to feel like they belong.

What we do:

We meet up usually in the multipurpose room or art room. During that time, we come up with ideas for ways people can feel belonged and cared about. For December we are organizing a door decorating competition, spirit week, holiday announcements, etc... We also always love new ideas and every week we love hearing what people have come up with for school! We can't wait for the school to experience the events we've been working on and the events we organize in the future. Remember, no matter how little your action is, if you're kind you can change someone's life!! Always be kind.

Volleyball

The grade sixes won their second to last game, and their last game they lost, but it was very close. The grade sevens had a big tournament recently.



Chess Club

Chess Club meets every Monday and Wednesday for grades 4-7 organized by Ms. Roberts. You have to know how to play chess to join.

Things we do:

We play chess! We are a safe space to come to during lunch recess where you can have fun playing with your friends. Ms. Roberts has talked about possibly competing against other schools in chess competitions. The Chess club can help you learn new tricks and skills from us in the future.