



A.R. MacNeill Secondary School

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Assistant Superintendent: Ms. W. Lim

Trustee: Mrs. Grace Tsang

PAC: Ms. Alice Wong

Parent Newsletter – December 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

December is a time for many joyous occasions and events. At MacNeill the holiday season began with our Seniors Breakfast on the first day of December and ends with Breakfast with Santa on the last day before the Winter Break. Family and friends are welcome to join us for breakfast on December 16. You will note in this newsletter the numerous seasonal activities and events that are happening in the month of December, several of which we invite family and friends. The Winter Music Concert is on Tuesday, December 6 from 7:00 pm. The basketball season has started and games take place in our gym almost every other day and even on weekends. Everyone is welcome to come and cheer our teams on. You can also continue to support our Dry Grad 2012 and details of the many ways you can are included in this newsletter. If you ordered poinsettia, cookie dough and gift cards, don't forget that pick-up is Tuesday, December 6 from 3:30-5:30.

Before we know it, the last day before our winter holiday will be here and with such a busy fall at MacNeill everyone will welcome the time away from our school day routines. The last day before the holiday is Friday, December 16 and a reminder to parents that our alternate day has been switched as noted in the calendar.

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE MACNEILL SCHOOL STAFF

We wish everyone in the MacNeill School community a healthy, safe and joyous holiday and all the best in the New Year. We truly do look forward to our work with you to continue to develop a supportive and engaging learning environment for your children in 2012!



REMINDER OF DISMISSAL TIMES

Wednesday, December 14th will be a regular day – Dismissal at 2:59 p.m.

Friday, December 16th will be an alternate day – Dismissal at 2:00 p.m.

TERM 1 REPORT CARDS – STUDENTS TAKE HOME ON DECEMBER 7, 2011

The report cards students take home will have a different look and will not appear complete. As you may have already heard, teachers will not be writing first term report cards due to BCTF job action. The Ministry of Education has indicated that in order to follow the requirements of the School Act, a report card must be sent home to parents. Therefore, you will receive a report card that will include: heading with student information, courses currently taken, teacher name, absences and lates for the course. Information from course teachers such as letter grades, percentages and work habits will not appear. It should be noted that students who have a Principal or Vice-Principal teaching a course will receive marks and where appropriate comments. Teacher continue to assess and keep records of student progress.

Grade 12 students will receive a statement of grades for the courses they are taking. This is to facilitate applications for post-secondary education and scholarship applications. The Grade 12 Statement of Grades will be available for students on Monday, December 12.

GRAD 2012

Our very active grade 12 grad committee is organizing numerous activities and events to help subsidize their grad events this year. They had a movie afternoon, lunch hour sales, chocolate sales and the list continues. Grads signed up for photo sitting appointments. **Photos will be taken on December 12 through 15 from 2:00 to 8:00 p.m. each day.** The photo sitting is free, but students can purchase pictures. All students need to have their photos taken as this picture is used for the school composite wall picture. Photo retake day is February 14 and students who did not have their picture taken in December can sign up for February. The final installment of school fees for grade 12 is due at the end of January. However, the grade 12 Winter Formal takes place on January 27, so all students who plan to attend the Winter Formal must ensure that student fees are submitted no later than January 18, 2012.

DRY GRAD 2012 – SUPPORT OUR GRADE 12S!

The 2012 Dry Grad committee continues to be very busy with plans for the Dry Grad event on June 28th for our 2012 graduates. Thank you to all those families who supported our gift cards, cookie and pie orders, and Poinsettia sales. We are still hard at work fundraising with many events. Below is a list of some current fundraising activities as well as a reminder for pick up of orders.

- 1) **Cookie Dough/Pies/Poinsettia/Gift Card Orders** - Will be available for **pick-up on Tuesday, December 6th between 3:30 & 5:30 p.m.** in the lobby of the school.
- 2) **Movie Passes** - Are you thinking of heading to a movie some time soon? If you are, make sure you think about purchasing a movie pass from the dry grad committee. Passes are \$10 and are good for a regular adult admission. **Passes are on sale on Fridays during our Pizza Sales or are available by contacting Jamieson_L@sd36.bc.ca**
- 3) **Bottle Recycling** - Do you have too many bottles hanging around? Why not consider donating them to the MacNeill Dry Grad. All you have to do is **take your bottles to the Ironwood Recycling Depot**, 11020 Horseshoe Way (just off #5 Road), and tell them you would like to donate the money to MacNeill 2012 Dry Grad. **Our recycling fund number at the depot is #1168.** Every small bit goes a long way.
- 4) **Boston Pizza Fundraiser** - Are you eating out at Boston Pizza any time soon? If you are, look for the MacNeill Dry Grad Box near the front counter. **By simply placing your receipt into the MacNeill Box, Boston Pizza will donate 10% of your bill to our Dry Grad event.** What an easy way to help support our graduates. Boxes are located at the Ironwood and Queensborough locations.

The 2012 Dry Grad Committee welcomes all grad 12 parents to join and be part of the planning. **Our next meeting is Thursday, January 19th at 7:00 p.m. in the school library.** If you have any questions about any part of the dry grad, please e-mail [HYPERLINK "mailto:Jamieson_L@sd36.bc.ca"](mailto:Jamieson_L@sd36.bc.ca)Jamieson_L@sd36.bc.ca__

SENIOR'S BREAKFAST AT MACNEILL

The 6th Annual Senior's Breakfast, held on December 1 in our Lounge, signified that the holiday season has arrived at MacNeill. Our seasonal decorations appeared in the Lounge and around the school. At MacNeill the Seniors Breakfast was planned, organized and hosted by our Leadership 10-12 students. It was a great opportunity for our students to hone their organizational skills, experience marketing, advertising, cooking and serving. At the Brunch the seniors were entertained with piano music by Ariel Tsui and creative dance by our Dance 9 students. All the students did a great job and their efforts were much appreciated. A wonderful time was had by all- our 65 guests and student in the Leadership and Dance class.

WINTER CONCERT

MacNeill Secondary's Music Department will be presenting their annual **Winter Concert - Tuesday, Dec.6 at 7 pm in the Drama Theatre.** This year we will be featuring some of our excellent smaller vocal and instrumental ensembles along with our Grade 8 band, 9-12 choir, and 9-12 Sr. Band. Come and join us in celebrating the achievements of our music students. The concert will include a wide range of repertoire from Classical to Jazz and of course songs of the Christmas Season. Admission is free.

DANCE

Be sure to cheer on and support your local MacNeill Ravens dancers as they prepare themselves for their first competition of the season. **Come to Richmond's Olympic Oval this December 10th (Saturday)** for an awesome dance event that showcases dance and cheer groups from around the lower mainland. The event starts at 10 am and tickets are only \$5 for students with a valid student card and \$8 for adults, cash only.

DRAMA

Did you know cooking could be murder? Get excited folks for MacNeill Theatre's annual production! Last year you saw the zany antics of *The Twits*...this year join us for a totally new experience. Buckle up for some deadly home-style cookin', enhanced by a little dramatic flavoring. ***Cooking Can Be Murder*** by Eddie McPherson is sure to satisfy. Dates to be announced...

STUDENT COUNCIL

Throughout the month of November, Student Council helped raise school spirit by encouraging everyone to dress up for Spirit Week. We kicked off Monday with Toastie Day, followed by Moustache Day, Canucks Day, Twin Day, and Nerd Day. Prizes were handed out at lunch to a few students who really showed school spirit! December is going to be a busy month due to the Christmas season and our activities. Since October, Student Council has been collecting non-perishable food items and money to donate to the food bank and to Free the Children food drive. Our goal is to support as many needy families as possible, and to give back to our community. On the last day of school before the Winter Break, **Friday, December 16, we'll be hosting Breakfast with Santa from 7:45 to 9:15 in the Lounge.** Come and enjoy the planned festivities with a breakfast of coffee/tea/juice, pancakes, eggs and fruit. Tickets will be \$5 and will be sold in the Lounge at nutrition break and lunch. Members of the community and parents are welcome to purchase tickets through the Office. Donations for the food bank are being collected. Hope to see you there!

POWER REPORT

This is MacNeill's third year of involvement with the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) initiative. This school-wide system provides a framework for both creating and teaching clear expectations for positive, safe and responsible behaviour.

MacNeill's PBS framework is POWER. This acronym helps students know what is expected of them in classrooms, around the school and off the school grounds. POWER stands for:

- **Positive attitude**—participating enthusiastically
- **Ownership**—being accountable for our actions
- **We Not Me**—being safe, empathetic and welcoming
- **Excellence**—striving to do our best
- **Respect**—caring for ourselves, each other and our communities

The focus in Grades 8 and 9 is on helping students understand what POWERful behaviour looks like—what we expect them to do and say. By Grades 10-12 the focus shifts to helping students become emPOWERed—to do and say the right thing because they are internally motivated (they want to).

Here is what the students are saying about the impact POWER has had at the school over the past three years:

- “Students are being more responsible”
- “People are becoming more POWERful without knowing”
- “Kids encourage each other”
- “We now know how to act with each other”
- “POWER cards motivate people to be more powerful”
- “It's easier to get to know people now”
- “POWER has given us school spirit”

The staff recognizes these positive behaviours by giving POWER cards which are entered into the Tower of POWER for a weekly prize draw. To date, over 2150 POWER cards have been awarded to students! Such accomplishments are going a long way to making MacNeill a great place to learn and teach!

We would like to thank the PAC for their generous contribution to the POWER initiative. Their support is helping to sustain the momentum by providing funds for the prizes.

Check out our POWER matrix and some of the POWER activities on the MacNeill Ravens' blog: <http://macneillravens.blogspot.com/search/label/POWER%20Initiative>

ANIMAL RESCUE CLUB

Earlier this month, members of MacNeill's Animal Rescue Club joined members of the McRobert's Animal Rescue Club in a visit to the Richmond Cat Sanctuary. The trip allowed students to see first-hand how their fundraising efforts were making a difference to the animals at the Sanctuary. We were able to talk with the staff and find out more about the daily operations of this organization. The students were given a tour of the facility, were able to interact and give treats to the cats and enjoyed hot chocolate and donuts. This is the time of the year where animals are more prone to illness and consequently require medical treatment and costly medication. Our club, through fundraising efforts is able to support the shelters at this time of need and encourage all members of our community to do the same.

The club is pleased to announce that Yvette Labatte, founder of the "Turtle Gardens" dog rescue is coming to MacNeill. Yvette and her husband Dave are responsible for saving and adopting out over 5000 dogs since they first opened. Their shelter located outside of Smithers, B.C. is not government funded and relies on donations and the efforts of the Labatte's, to carry on with their work. Yvette will be talking to us about the daily operations of the shelter and will share some personal experiences with us. **Wednesday Dec. 14th from 12:40-1:40pm is set for this visit.** All students, staff and community members are invited to attend.

AMICA AMPS IT UP

Amica, MacNeill's multicultural friendship club, is bigger and better than ever this year. The club is gearing up for some exciting events. After a successful Halloween-themed bake sale, they are pleased to be holding the **Third Annual Holiday Gift Exchange on December 9th**. Students are encouraged to sign up and bring a wrapped gift suitable for a boy or girl and valued at around ten dollars. Amica will be serving complimentary homemade holiday cookies and hot chocolate. In January, they will help the school celebrate Lunar New Year, and, later, Amica will host its very popular International Pot Luck lunch. Amica meets every Friday at lunch in Ms. Carpenter's room, 221. New members are welcome any time!

YOU OUGHTA BE IN PICTURES

"Life, Camera, Action!" are the words gracing the 2011-2012 yearbook cover. This year, the yearbook staff is focusing on a movie theme with many surveys and quotes about everything movies. The first deadline is fast approaching, and the staff is out capturing all the important moments at MacNeill. Also, student portraits have arrived, and everyone looks fantastic, thanks to Mountain West Studios doing an excellent job this year.

For the first time ever, the yearbook is also fundraising with bubble tea and samosa sales to help pay for extra treatments to make the cover even more exciting.

The yearbook is especially important for graduates, and grad photos are underway in December, so every grade 12 student should get their portrait done to avoid being the "mystery silhouette" in the yearbook! We will be doing a call-out for baby pictures and grad write-ups in the new year, so stay tuned for that.

Remember, all yearbook sales go through the Business Assistant, Ms. Semotiuk, in the office. And since yearbook sales are ongoing throughout the year, it's not too late to purchase the gift of high school memories for someone you love this holiday season!

BUZZ ART CLUB

Want to explore creative avenues, challenge yourself and meet fellow artists?

We still have space available in MacNeill's BUZZ ART CLUB. We meet Tuesdays at 3:00 - 4:00pm in Room 153. This term we've developing images from our primary sources, ourselves. Students took photographs of themselves, both portraits or a scene. Through scaled drawings, focusing on proportion, line and shape, they have begun to develop their portrait. We are in stages of painting at present, using a variety of mediums, focusing on tone and light. Our next project will be looking at form vs. function - taking the 2D design into a 3D sculpture. See Mrs. Walker if you'd like to join.

GRADUATION TRANSITIONS

Grade 12 students are in the process of receiving the details and necessary information they need to successfully complete their Graduation Transition portfolio and presentation. Mrs. Cholevas will be presenting this information to Grade 12 students in Advisory class over the next few weeks. Grade 12 students have until June to successfully complete and present the Graduation Transition portfolio to their Advisory teacher. The successful completion of the Graduation Transition portfolio and presentation is a 4-credit requirement for graduation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to see Mrs. Cholevas in Room 217.

SKI AND SNOWBOARD CLUB 2011/2012

This year the MacNeill Ski and Snowboard Club has planned four nights at Cypress Bowl, the destination of Canada's first 2010 Olympic Gold Medal. Word on the slopes is that this will be a great year for snow! Cypress is currently producing close to two feet of snow per night with their snow-making machines. While there may be an opportunity for a day or two up at Whistler later in the spring, currently we are looking forward **to our Cypress outings on January 11, 18, 25 and February 1st.**

This is a great opportunity to enjoy a lifelong leisure activity with your friends from school and with other schools in Richmond. We will be enjoying our nights at Cypress with students from Cambie and McMath who are running ski programs in sync with ours. We are the only three schools in Richmond that provide ski/snowboard clubs to students. Take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

Should you be interested in becoming a member of the MacNeill Ski/Snowboard Club, see Mr. McDowell ASAP. Spots are limited and filling quickly! See you on the slopes, Mr. D. McDowell, MacNeill Ski and Snowboard Club.

LIBRARY NEWS

Raven Readers Book of the Month. Junior and Senior Raven Readers each met the first week of November to discuss their respective books. The Juniors read *The Summoning* by Kelly Armstrong, and the seniors read *Watchmen* by Alan Moore. Each group spoke highly of their novel. Next meetings will take place first week of December with the seniors currently reading *Enders Game* by Orson Scott Card and the Juniors *The Son of Neptune* by Rick Riordan.

Library Volunteers. A big thank you to our volunteers Anthony Deogracias and Theo Tan for putting together our Halloween and Christmas displays. Also, great job to all the library monitors for doing a great job of shelving books and keeping the library tidy and in order.

Raven Review- Watch for our first issue of the Raven Review coming your way early in the new year. Thanks to the PAC for helping support the school newsmagazine.

MACNEILL PAC

The November 15 PAC meeting began with information regarding the BC Education Plan. The Ministry of Education is planning significant changes to what and how students and learn and how teachers and schools work in British Columbia in order to better prepare our young people for the 21st century. To learn more about the plan and ask questions, educators, parents and students are urged to read the "B.C. Education Plan", watch the video and provide their feedback in an online forum. You can go to the forum through Mr. Laing's blog on the topic on our website. At the PAC meeting, the SPC (School Planning Council) was elected. The SPC members for 2011-2012 school year are: Alice Wong, PAC Chair, and parents Ginette Generoso and Dayanthi Adhithetty. We thank Sarosh Muncherji and Carla Kalalo for their work on the SPC for the last two years and look forward to their experience and support this year. **The next PAC meeting will be on Thursday, January 12, 2012 at 7:00 in the Library.** At the meeting there will be a presentation on school organization and student program planning.

LOOKING FOR HOMESTAY FAMILIES

Richmond School District International Student Program is looking for Homestay Families to open their homes to International Students. Host parents will supply the student with three (3) meals per day and a reasonable use of the house and facilities. The school district will collect and pay to the host family, the first and last month's homestay fee of \$900. All other monthly fees (\$900.00) will be paid to the host family by the student or the student's representative for each month in which the student is present in the home and attending school. If you have any questions or interests in opening your home to an International student please contact:

- Heather Larson, Homestay Coordinator, hlarson@sd38.bc.ca
- Richmond School Board
- 604-295-4303 (cell) 778-835-3822

DECEMBER 2011 CAREER CENTRE NEWS

***Important website for scholarships, post-secondary information sessions, and application information**

<http://public.sd38.bc.ca/~ccnews>

Gr 12 students:

- may now apply to ALL Canadian universities: ~When applying, you must pay your application fee so that your application will be processed. ~Do not forget to print out your application confirmation.
- applications to BC's colleges have been open for some weeks, BC's universities are now accepting applications. Deadlines for some Sept 2012 Institutions begin in January. Check with the schools and programs that are being applied for.
- There will a 'statement of grades' for grade 12's available on Monday Dec. 12.

Gr 10 – 12 students:

- Since more post-secondary schools are looking for students with community involvement, it is a good idea for students to do some volunteering and active participation in extra-curricular activities which will be helpful when applying to post-secondary schools and for scholarships. Don't wait till the last minute!
- scholarships are available for students to apply for on an on-going basis. Please see the above website for details, or come to your career information advisor, Ms. Mayer for details.

DATES TO NOTE:

Dec. 9/11 - RCMP Youth Academy 2012 - Application Deadline. The Richmond School District is now accepting applications for the RCMP Youth Academy 2012. This program is designed for the participation of both male and female high school students aged 16 to 18 (16 as of Dec. 31/11) who indicate an interest in a career in law enforcement/public safety/emergency services. This year's academy will be held from Tuesday April 3 to Friday, April 11, 2012 at the Stillwood Camp & Conference south of Cultis Lake in the Columbia Valley at Lindell Beach, BC. Cost is \$750. Interested students must see their Counsellor for more info.

University Applications Are Now Open - Students apply either directly to the institution or through an application service. Students will need their P.E.N. and a credit card for the on-line payment. Pay close attention to deadlines.

To Apply to B.C. Institutions:

Students may apply either directly to a specific institution or use BC's on-line Post-Secondary Application Service (ApplyBC). This service allows students to apply for admission to any public post-secondary institution in British Columbia. <https://applybc.ca/apply?execution=e2s1>

To Apply to Ont. Institutions: B.C. students must apply on-line through the Ontario Universities Application Website: <http://www.ouac.on.ca/ouac-105/> (It is recommended that students apply early to out of province Universities)

All Other Institutions: See individual websites for instructions.

Post-Secondary Choices Form (PSI) is now open. The Ministry assists each graduating student planning to pursue post-secondary education by sending a copy of his/her transcript data to post-secondary institutions indicated on the PSI Choices Form. Students need to authorize the Ministry to transfer these marks and this is done by filling in the PSI choices form on-line at the Student Secure Website: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/tsw/tsw/student/welcome. Students can either create an account using their Personal Education Number or log in to an existing account.

*Other helpful websites for post-secondary considerations are:

www.educationplanner.bc.ca

or

www.careercruising.com (Come to the career center for the username/password)

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. 2011 – Post-Secondary Education Fair

Free admission * Booth exhibitions, seminars and lucky draw

DATE: December 3rd, 2011 (Saturday)

TIME: 9:30AM–2:30PM

VENUE: S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Social Service Centre, 28 West Pender Street, Vancouver

CONTACT: (604) 408-7260 | www.successbc.ca

SNOW DAYS IN RICHMOND – WHAT TO EXPECT

Snow days cause inconvenience for all of us. Closing schools is a difficult decision for the school district – trying to weigh the safety of all with the repercussions for working families. To assist families, we would like to outline what you can expect from us on a snow day.

The following things will happen:

1. Schools will be **OPEN** unless conditions reach civic emergency proportions.

School closure information will be available through:

- the district's website (www.sd38.bc.ca) as a link along the left navigation bar. This will include updated information regarding school bus schedules on days when weather may affect these schedules
 - the district's website at the top of the page as necessary (i.e. on days which are questionable due to weather)
 - the snow closure hotline, (604) 295-4304, which will provide a recorded message indicating if schools are open or closed
 - Twitter at RichmondSD38
 - Radio announcements will only announce those schools that are **CLOSED**. Most of these will be private schools. Listen to radio CKNW 980AM, NEWS 1130AM, CBC 690AM, 1470AM, CHQM 103.5FM or watch on television CBC, BCTV, City TV and CTV. **Please do not phone the school.** Staff will be too busy planning the day and ensuring students are safe and may not be able to answer the phone.
2. It may not be a regular school day as many students and teachers may be absent. We will ensure that the students that do arrive to school are safe. In some classes, alternate activities may be planned so that students who are absent will not miss any work.
 3. School will remain open until 3:00pm and in the event that we have to close early, students will be instructed to contact their parents.

You have some choices:

1. Students are not required to attend school on a snow day if you feel that their safety or your own safety may be at risk. You may keep them home.
2. Make plans in advance for what you and your family will do on a snow day.
3. You may send students to school knowing that they may be participating in alternate activities for the day.

So, plan that schools will be open in the event of snow. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at the school before the snow begins to fall.

SOME IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE:

Thursday, December 1	Senior's Brunch – 10:00 a.m. - Lounge
Tuesday, December 6	Winter Music Concert, 7:00 p.m.-Theatre
Wednesday, December 7	Term 1 Report Cards distributed
Monday, December 12	Term 1 Grade 12 Statement of Grades available to students
Monday, December 12-15	Grad Photos 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, December 14	Regular Day –Dismissal at 2:59 p.m.
Friday, December 16	Breakfast with Santa.
Friday, December 16	Alternate Day –Dismissal at 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, January 3	School Re-opens
Thursday, January 12	PAC Meeting 7:00 p.m. –Library
Monday, January 16	Registration for 2012-2013 school year in Richmond begins
Thursday, January 19	Grade 9 Immunizations