



The Phoenix Messenger

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November 2011

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Matter of Principal

Provincial Achievement Test Results

In October, we communicated with parents of our Grade 7's students their child's achievement results on the 2011 Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Test in Language Arts (Reading and Writing), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. In a communication sent home with the individual results, parents were reminded that the purpose of the Provincial Achievement-Test Program is threefold.

- To determine if students are learning what they are expected to learn;
- To report to Albertans how well students have achieved provincial standards at given points in their schooling. (Grades 3, 6, and 9 Students write Provincial Achievement Tests, Grade 12 students write Diploma Exams); and,
- To assist schools, school authorities and the province in monitoring and improving student learning.

Students in FFCA typically perform very well on Provincial Achievement Tests. They are, however, only one part of a healthy assessment program; teacher produced tests, student portfolios of work, student performances, and information gathered from other standardized assessment tools (such as the Canadian Achievement Test-3) are other examples of data sources which inform a teacher about how to support learning in the classroom. All parents will recognize this as true as a consequence of learning conversations, report cards, and the wonderful work displayed on bulletin boards and the Climber's Wall of Excellence.

The tables below show SMS student results as well as the results for LA and Math of all Grade 6 students in the province who wrote these tests. As you will see, we have every reason to be proud of the work of our teachers and students. If you have questions about the Provincial Achievement Testing Program, please don't hesitate to be in touch with us.

Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test School Report—2010-2011 School Year		
Reporting Category		
Acceptable Standard	School Percent	Province Percent
• Total Test	98.1	91.4
• Writing	98.1	88.8
• Reading	97.2	91.4

Continued on page 2

Important dates!

- Nov 23-Report Cards
- Nov 24/25-PD days no School
- Nov 28-Dec 2-Collection week for Operation Christmas child items
- Nov 29- School Wide Presentation
- Dec 1-Academic Recognition Assembly 8:40
- Dec 2-Hot Lunch
- Dec 5- School wide Operation Christmas Child Packing
- Dec 15- Winter Concert 6:30pm
- Dec 19-Jan 2 Winter break

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Mission

To provide a safe and caring environment where academic excellence, character development, parental involvement and staff leadership are valued and fostered.

Vision

Excellence in student achievement and character development through distinctive teaching and learning.

Standard of Excellence	School%	Province %
• Total Test	50.5	20.4
• Writing	34.6	12.0
• Reading	63.6	41.3

Grade 6 Mathematics Achievement Test
School Report—2010-2011 School Year

Reporting Category

Acceptable Standard	School%	Province %
• Total Test	93.5	80.7
Standard of Excellence	School%	Province %
• Total Test	40.2	19.4

*A similar article previously ran in the SEE campus newsletter. Thank you to the author, Mrs. Grey, for sharing.

John Picard, Principal Educator

Susan Boyd, Associate Principal

November

November comes
and November
goes,

With the last red
berries and the
first white snows.

With night coming
early, and dawn
coming late,

And ice in the
bucket and frost
by the gate.

The fires burn
and the kettles
sing,

And earth sinks
to rest until next
spring.

Elizabeth Coatsworth

Have you heard the news?

**The bus zone on Ancourt
Road has been extended!**

This will allow our buses to park in a safer manner and provide for greater driver and pedestrian visibility around the buses.

Please be aware of the parking signs around the school.

When dropping off or picking up students please consider parking close to one of our two crosswalks so your child(ren) can safely cross the street.

When parking in front of our neighbors homes please be mindful of their driveways to ensure owners can easily access their homes.



**Students Riding Other
Buses**

We **do not** offer bus passes due to full buses and shared busses with other campuses. If working on a project with a classmate you will need to make alternative arrangements.



Susan Goldsmith
Transportation
Coordinator

Lions Recycle For Sight

Old glasses give new life. Let a child read and learn. Help an adult earn a living. Donate your used eye glasses. For the lions "recycle for Sight" visit. Drop box is located in the school foyer.



**2011-2012 Public Board
Meeting Schedule**

All meetings are held in the Central Office Boardroom* on Wednesday evenings beginning at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise specified**

MONDAY, November 21, 2011**

December 7, 2011
(7:00 p.m. Annual General Meeting)

December 14, 2011

January 18, 2012

February 15, 2012

March 14, 2012

April 18, 2012

May 16, 2012

June 13, 2012

*FFCA Central Office is located at:
#240, 688 Heritage Dr. SE,
Calgary
(go to "Contacts/Central Office" to access map)



UNIFORM CONSIGNMENT SITE 2011-2012

FFCA Families are able to buy and sell gently used uniform items by accessing the Consignment Store within the FFCA website.

To access the site, go to your Campus Home Page, and select the link to “Family Log In”.

- Choose “Consignment Store” for your shopping needs, and “Your Consignment Items” to put an item on the site and manage your account

For any questions of how to use the site, please contact Wanda Olson at wanda.olson@ffca-calgary.com .

Please note: All buying and selling of items is done between the families - no payments or collections are available on the site. To purchase an item, simply email the family posting the item and ask for photos or set up a time for viewing and payment.



ACADEMIC RECONIGNTION

South Middle School has made some changes this year to the criteria of academic recognition. Honours will be 80% or above in all core subjects, electives and specialty classes.

Honours with Distinction will be 90% or above in all core subjects, electives and specialty classes.

The distinct difference will be that each core subject will need to meet the target (80% or 90%), not an average of all four. As well students will be expected to meet these targets in their electives and specialty classes as well.

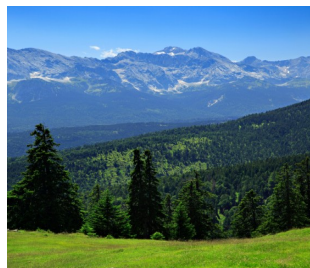
5% improvement will be recognized individually in each of the four core subjects

1st Term Recognition Assembly Thursday Dec 1 8:40-9:35. Watch for upcoming Kids in the Community info request as we look to recognize outside of school achievements as well.

Mountaineering, Next Event:

Monday, November 21, 2011 at lunch recess. We will be

learning about topographical maps and how to read them. Meeting will be in Mrs. Beames classroom. We look forward to seeing you there.



South Middle School Campus – School wide service learning project!

Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Dear Students, Families and Teachers,

Student Representative Council (SRC) has recently decided that our school, FFCA South Middle School, will be participating in **Operation Christmas Child**.

There are many ways of collecting donations for this program. Some of you might know that a few years ago a Southwest Elementary Campus grade one teacher came up with a unique idea. The students brought in as many items as they could to fill *Operation Christmas Child* shoe boxes. No student brought a box home; they just brought donations to school. We believe that this makes it less stressful to parents and families because they do not have to fill an entire box, only send in a few items and the classes will get to work together towards this cause. This also means that students make decisions about what to pack in a box instead of parents. Classes will also need a plan to collect the money to ship the boxes.

We will be collecting inventory items from the 28th of November to the 2nd of December. As well, there will be a school wide packing session on December 5th from the beginning of USR into 4th period – 12:45-1:15 so please mark your calendars. The whole school will fill their classes' boxes at the same time. We think this will be a great way to help Operation Christmas Child.

Staff, please look in your mailboxes for a brochure that has **guidelines as to what can go in shoeboxes**. You will need to decide as a class how to organize yourself to ensure that you bring in enough items and a variety of items to pack the boxes as well as the \$7/box shipping donation fee. You might want to decide ahead of time who the boxes will be packed for, a boy or a girl and the age. Your class can even decide to include a letter with a photo in each box. You can photocopy the brochures that will be going into your mailbox so that you have labels for your boxes.

Of course, no student should feel forced to participate but we are hoping for a school wide effort. If you have any questions, please direct them to Mrs. Boyd and she will answer questions on our behalf.

Thanks for your support,

Daivik -Vice President SRC, Siddharth -President SRC, Student Council Representatives and Alternates and Mrs. Boyd – Associate Principal



Get your pictures in the yearbook!

The Yearbook Staff invites students and parents to submit photos for the yearbook. If you've got great photos of school and community events or you and your friends just having fun, we'd like to see them. Our photographers can't be everywhere. Help us get as many photos as possible to create a terrific book everyone will want to have.

Here is how you can submit photos online:

- Go to: <https://images.jostens.com/login>
- If it does not automatically log you into the site, enter user-name:400113607 and password:sms
- Browse to select the photo(s) you wish to upload.
- Enter information about the photo and provide contact information in case the staff needs additional information.
- Click "Save Details".

It's that easy! Submit your photos today! The last day to submit photos is 6/15/2012.

Thank you, and **Remember that the time you spend taking and uploading pictures can be included in your volunteer hours!**

Sincerely,
Yearbook Adviser and the 2012 Yearbook Staff.

The Yearbook Staff will review all photos and determine final yearbook content. We cannot guarantee that all submissions can be used in the book.



Scrapbook donations still appreciated!

Upcoming Dates:

November 2- Scrapbook

November 15- Cards

November 29- Scrapbook

December 9- Accordion Gift Project



Counselors Corner

Just a reminder to check my Edmodo page as well as our SMS webpage as I post all upcoming workshops and resources on those two sites. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at the school any time.

403-259-3175ext128 or gina.grace@fca-calgary.com

Parking Directions for Parents

88th Avenue SE

Arlington Drive SE (West Side)

Aberdeen Road SE

Please make note of the marked bus zones.

Please pick up and drop off students near crosswalks so that students have a place to cross.

Please do not block residential driveways.

SCHOOL PRESENTATION

On Tuesday November 29 we will have a presentation titled "Impossible Is Just A Word" by Louis Pezzani .It will last about one hour and consists of Mentalism or Magic of the Mind. The show features demonstrations of "mindreading", lightning fast mathematical calculations, and mind over matter demonstrations where metal objects bend, twist and melt. Interwoven between and tied to each of the magic demonstrations are powerful messages dealing with the necessity of developing ones mind.

- The need for reading - throughout life, not just in school.
- Developing an interest in mathematics,
- Self esteem - believing in oneself, ones own abilities and potential, as well as working together as a group.
- And VERY strong message about bullying and discrimination.

This is a fun and amazing presentation which shows kids that using their mind is COOL. There will be 2 presentation times at 9:40 am and 10:50 am. Please feel free to join one of the presentations.



BUS DELAY NOTICES

Go to <https://www.ffca-calgary.com/myhome/familydefault.asp>

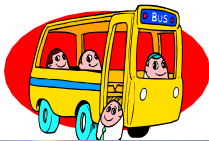
And login with your family user name and password

Once you are logged in you can click on [Bus Subscriptions](#) in the Family Zone Menu and choose the bus route (s) you want delay notifications for. Campuses will also receive the delay messages in the same manner as you – please do not call them to ask about delays as they will have the same information as is available to you. The campuses will not be calling you in the event of a delay.

Bussing Expectations

We would encourage all parents\guardians to review our **Transportation Handbook** that provides information on topics such as bus stops, behavior and passenger information. The document is available at the following link:

<http://www.ffca-calgary.com/FFCA/Parent Info/Bus%20Routes/Transportation%20Handbook%202010-11.pdf>



“ The good news is that the bad news can be turned into good news when you change your attitude.”
Robert H. Schuller

Parent Information:

The *2011/2012 Curriculum Handbooks for Parents, Curriculum Summaries and the Curriculum Express for Parents* are available on the Education website in English at www.education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/



News from the Library

Awesome Book Fair! Thanks to all the students and families that came out to support the Scholastic book fair. It was a great success! We are planning on booking an author to come in to speak with students as well as purchase more books for the library from our profits. Dollars well spent.

Congratulations to Ms. Pelster and his student Felipe who won the **Family Event draw** of \$25 in free books each.

Many thanks to all the student and parent volunteers who helped out with posters, announcements, set-up, cashiers during the fair, and take down.. All your help was greatly appreciated. The fair could not be as successful without your support.



Flu Immunization

Mass Venue Site

Avenida SE

South Calgary Health

Centre SE

Richmond Road Diagnostic Treatment Centre SW

Beddington (Town Square) NE

Brentwood NW

Northgate (old Ikea Mall) NE

October 17 – December 18 , 2011

Monday to Thursday 11:30 am – 7:00 pm

Friday to Sunday 9:30 am – 5:00 pm

Dismissal Doors

At the end of day students should leave the school through the grade level exits. If a student is being picked up by a parent or guardian that is in the school the front door may be used. This should allow us to have a less chaotic front office area during dismissal. Thanks for your cooperation.



CASUAL DAYS: 2011-2012

The CanLearn Centre|Calgary Learning Centre offers a multitude of programs for both students and their parents.

Coping with Test Anxiety
Grades 7-12

When test anxiety is too high, it can get in the way with the ability to learn and remember for a student. Coping with Test Anxiety helps students and their parents learn why we experience anxiety and how to reduce it. This evening program is offered throughout the school year.

Next program begins... **December 7!**

Essay Writing
Grades 7-12

Essay Writing is for students who wish to write a more interesting essay or improve their writing skills. Students and their parents will learn tips to writing paragraphs with strong, appealing sentences. This evening program is offered throughout the school year.

Next program begins... **December 7!**

My Study Plan
Grades 10-12

My Study Plan guides students as they prepare for exams. They will develop appropriate and effective strategies for studying and planning. This after school program is 3 Wednesdays and offered twice a year.

Next program begins... **November 23!**

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to visit us [online](#) or contact Elvira Castañeda, Manager of Programs and Professional Development at 403 686 9300 x 129 or [email](#).

Thank you for your support of the CanLearn Centre|Calgary Learning Centre, I wish you a wonderful day!

CanLearn Centre/Calgary Learning Centre

3930 20 Street SW
 Calgary Alberta T2T 4Z9
 t 403 686 9300 x 131
 tf 1 877 686 9300
 f 403 686 0627

FEBRUARY 24 JERSEY DAY



NOVEMBER 18 PJ DAY



MARCH 23 COSTUME DAY

DECEMBER 16 80'S DAY



JANUARY 20 BACKWARDS DAY

APRIL 27 TWIN DAY



LOGGING YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS

Please remember to log your volunteer hours . You can check and/or enter your hours by going to <http://www.ffca-calgary.com/myhome/> and entering your user name and password. Then choose on the right hand side; "Family Volunteer Hours"

Thank you to all our families for your endless efforts in keeping the South Middle School a great place!

For the first 5 hours you volunteer you are sent an email thank you. For 10 hours you are sent a thank you card in the mail with an Andy's buck for your child. For 15 hours a pen and a carabineer.

Did you know that at the SMS campus we will treat your child to lunch when your family volunteers 20 hours for FFCA.

Kids' Health

To give your child energy and nutrients throughout the day, encourage them to eat a meal or snack every 3-4 hours. Snacks can be very simple to make, and healthy too.

When making a snack, choose foods from at least two of the four food groups from Canada's Food Guide. The four food groups are: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives and Meat and Alternatives.

Some easy snack ideas include:

Berries and yogurt
 Apple and peanut butter
 Whole grain crackers and cheese
 Red and green peppers with hummus
 Half a sandwich and milk
 Fruit salad and almonds

To make a healthy snack the easy choice keep sliced veggies and fruit in the fridge!

Here's a simple recipe:

Yogurt Parfait

¾ cup (175 mL) low fat yogurt
 ½ cup (125 mL) fresh fruit or berries
 ⅓ cup (75 mL) high fibre cereal

Directions: Mix together or layer in a cup

For more information and snack ideas please visit www.albertahealthservices.ca/SchoolsTeachers/if-sch-nfs-healthy-snacking.pdf



Keep their smiles intact

Mouth guards key for kids

Do you and your children have smile protection when playing all sports?

Mouth guards work like shock absorbers. They help prevent painful and costly mouth injuries.

Thousands of people every year suffer from injuries to teeth, lips, tongue and cheeks.

Where can you get a mouth guard?

A mouth guard made for you by your family dentist gives the best protection and comfort.

Sporting Goods stores sell pre-formed mouth guards for you to fit at home.



If your children play sports, be sure to get proper mouth protection for them. Mouth-guards can help prevent painful and costly- mouth injuries.

Dancing and exercise: Natural partners

Here are some dance-related activities that can give you and your friends a workout while having fun...

Start the music and move around the room to the beat. Mirror the movements of a partner.

In a big group, all members of the group can try to follow the movements of one leader.

Each leader can choose how the others will move for 16 beats of music.

Move in a way that works out your heart.

Is your face red?

Are you breathing heavy? Are you having a hard time holding a conversation? These are all signs you are working hard!



“Remember to respect your parents, study and work hard, and the good things in life do not come easily.”

Hale Irwin

Student Articles

Hiking isn't always easy but it is a lot of fun. This is what we experienced. We experienced that there was warm and cool weather when we were hiking. Once we were up to the viewpoint, we a beautiful view. We saw yellow grass, leafless bushes and trees, a beautiful farmhouse, and very snowy mountains. We also did a nature scavenger hunt after lunch in a soggy field. On the way to the end we had to climb up and down lots. We also saw lots of different types of moss and fungus. We had lots of fun and hope to do it again!

Kendra and Vicky



The grade 5's heard the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra at the Jack Singer Concert Hall on October 26th. We were one of 8 schools represented there, filling the concert hall to capacity! Seeing the concert hall and orchestra up close and in person gave more meaning and understanding to our unit on the instrument families of the orchestra.

Learning to appreciate all genres of music is one of the goals of the music curriculum. As we learn more about each instrument in each family, students will be able to identify the different instruments by their sound, which includes pitch and tone colour. Realizing that the background music to most movies, commercials, cartoons have orchestral music behind them feeding our emotions adds relevance to this unit as well. Thanks to all the parent volunteer for joining us on the CPO's tour of Music From Around the World.



DUFFLE BAG THEATRE

On Tuesday, November 8th, the grade 7s and 8s watched a performance by "The Almost Famous DUFFLE BAG THEATRE!" The performance was a reenactment of Romeo and Juliet. The crew picked two members of the audience to play the part of Romeo (Garreth) and Juliet (Alex). Both students are from grade 8. This was an exciting theatrical performance and the students were on the edge of their seats enjoying the very, very funny performance.

By: Kennedy and Laura (7G)



CONGRATULATIONS SMS!!!

We raised \$2928.60 for the Terry Fox Foundation Thank you for your support!



Counselor's Corner

How Well Do You Know Your Pre/Teen

Knowing your pre/teen is essential to helping build a strong relationship with them.

Take this quiz to see how in touch you are with your teen. Answer **yes** or **no**

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. I know where my pre / teen is right now |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. I know my pre / teen's deepest fears. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. I know which subjects in school are my pre /teen's favorites, and which are currently difficult or troubling. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I know my pre / teen's best friend. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. My pre / teen's friends feel welcome in my home. |

How did you do? Less than three is an indicator that you might want to spend more time communication with your pre/ teen. Talking and listening.

Here are
some **Success Tips**
for helping to:

Improve Conversation With Your Kids

Edward Ford and Steven Englund, authors of *For The Love Of Children*, suggest three principles to improve conversation with kids. They're especially helpful with pre/teens.

- 1. Talk about common interests.** Discuss topics you mutually share, such as past experiences, the planning of an upcoming event, or a movie, actor, song or play you both know.
- 2. Stay noncritical.** Judging, criticizing, or offering advice are communication stoppers. Try to exercise patience and be open to hearing your child's ideas.
- 3. Ask questions that elicit more than one-word responses.** Make skillful use of your questions so that your child must respond with more than one-word answers. "What would you have done differently in the game?" "What are your feelings about...?" "What do you think we should do for our family vacation this year?"

Christmas Adopt a Family

I know it's hard to believe that Christmas is coming up so quickly. We will have our Christmas Angel Tree up in the main hallway again this year at the end of November. As we have done in the past, SMS will be adopting some families in the area for Christmas that are having a difficult time. We will offer some support for the families in providing food for a Christmas dinner as well as some Christmas gifts for the family members. Hanging on the tree will be angels with the gender of the family member as well as age, size and Christmas Wish List item.

There will be an Angel sign out book at the front office with Mrs. Conaghan and you or your child can take a Christmas Angel off of the tree and the number on the Angel will be registered in the book with Mrs. Conaghan. When you bring back the unwrapped item from the angel please register that in the Angel book again.

I will also be needing some parent volunteers to help me wrap the gifts. If you have some time would like to help wrap Christmas gifts please let me know. We will wrap them on Monday Dec.12 and Tuesday Dec.13.

Gina Grace

School Counselor gina.grace@ffca-calgary.com

Rake fest

By Preet & Yekta

Rake fest was held on October 12, 13 and 14. All the grade 6 students helped rake the lawns of people who live in the community. The students of 6B raked two lawns and the school by the outdoor classroom. We split into two groups and each group raked one lawn. One of the groups raked a lawn which had more berries than leaves. We worked together and got the job done by assigning roles. Some people raked while others picked up the leaf piles and put them into bags.

It was a great opportunity for students because it taught us how to help others during this service learning project. In the end the homeowners came out to thank us for the work we had done. A big Thank you to all parent volunteers who came out to help us during Rake fest.



Weaselhead

The grade six students at the beginning of October we went to the Weaselhead. We enjoyed activities such as identifying a bear trap, eating the fruits of the forest, and classifying trees in the forest.

The bear trap we saw was pretty awesome because one of our fellow classmates has been in a bear trap and shared her awesome story!

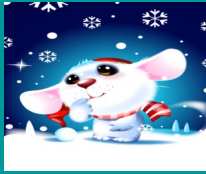
Another way it was quite cool is because it stunk like rotten and dead fish. When the bait was taken it will feel weight and trap the bear inside. Bear traps stink, work uniquely, and people can be in the trap too!

While we were hiking through the thick bush, our guide ,Sarah, started talking about some of the berries you could find and eat. We learned that if you find a wild rose bud, you can eat the outer skin. Be careful if you eat the seeds inside you could have a very itchy backside! Sarah also showed us cranberries; Saskatoon berries, and chokes cherry berries!

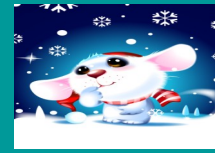
After lunch we got into groups and started to “Tree Classify!” What we did was, we found a tree and examined its type. For example, a pine tree is a coniferous, has single needles and provides cones. Another game we played was “What’s That Tree?” We had a key that had two options, once you chose your answer it would direct you to another question, and eventually end up with the answer. But if you got a question wrong, you end up with the wrong answer!

Participating in the Weaselhead field trip was a new way to learn about our “Trees and Forests” unit is science. Activities such as identifying a bear trap, attempting to find different types of trees, and eating unique types of berries. Our favourite memory is when we got the 6B boys to carry the 6B Girls backpacks up the steep hill. We hope you get a chance to visit the Weaselhead some day!

By Amy and Victoria



December 2011



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Collecting of Operation Christmas Child shoe-boxes items Nov 28-Dec 2			1 Academic Recognition Assembly 8:50	2 Hot Lunch Grade 6E am Interpretive Center	3
4	5 School wide Packing of Christmas operation child Boxes 12:45-1:15	6	7	8 SRC Leadership Lunch	9 Scrap Booking 11:50-12:45 Grade 6B am Interpretive Center	10
11	12	13	14	15 Winter Concert 6:30 pm	16 Casual Day 80's Theme Grade 7 Roller-skating	17
18 Winter Break	19 Winter Break	20 Winter Break	21 Winter Break	22 Winter Break	23 Winter Break	24 Winter Break
25 Winter Break	26 Winter Break	27 Winter Break	28 Winter Break	29 Winter Break	30 Winter Break	31 Winter Break

Campus Contact Information:

Phone: 259-3175 Fax: 259-3008

E-mail: davmail@ffca-calgary.com

Please call all lates or absences in to Mrs. Conaghan or email.