

# PERCY BAXTER NEWSLETTER



December 2-6, 2024

## Principal's Message:

The Christmas season is upon us, and there's a noticeable shift in the energy around the school. It's like a mix of tired anticipation teachers are ready for a break, but they're pushing through and staying in good spirits, thanks to the fun activities happening.

The culture of the school often reflects its Christmas spirit. Students can sense the pace of academics slowing down while the activity and excitement ramp up. It's a unique time of year, where the focus shifts slightly from the usual rigor to something lighter, more communal, and celebratory.

There was a time when I wasn't the biggest fan of the last two weeks before Christmas—it didn't seem like the most effective or efficient use of instructional time. But as I've grown wiser, I've become more aware of the challenges some students face during this time. For many, the holiday season can be a difficult or uncertain period.

Now, I try my best to lean into the season and be a positive part of the experience for our students and staff. It's a chance to spread a little extra kindness and care, to foster a sense of belonging, and to let my Christmas spirit guide me toward creating moments of joy and connection in the school.

Speaking of Christmas Spirit Mrs. Turcotte and Mrs. Gagnon have arranged a fun-filled, Christmas-themed December to bring some festive cheer to the school. The activities planned are sure to lift spirits and create memorable moments for both students and staff. It's the perfect way to embrace the season, build community, and make the countdown to the holidays an enjoyable and positive experience for everyone.





# Grade 6 Volleyball Tournament



## Important Dates to Note:

- Hot Lunch Pizza on Wednesday
- Term 1 Ends: December 6, 2024
- Term 1 Assembly: December 13, 2024
- School Dance December 13, 2024
- Power School Reports go home: December 19, 2024

## Important Links

- [Facebook Page](#)
- [Google Calendar of Events](#)
- [Website](#)

## Weather Reminders



Hello  
**WINTER**

Reminder to please have your child dress for the weather.  
Students will be outside for recess until we hit -25°C with a windchill

## BUSES: Running or Not

### HOW DO WE DECIDE?

The Director of Transportation makes the decision based on:

- Weather Conditions
- Scouting the Roads
- Highway Cameras
- Communication with Bus Drivers/Contractors

**-40°**


Temperature Readings from Environment Canada & 511 Alberta

### HOW DO WE NOTIFY?

- Social Media
- NGPS.ca
- BusPlanner App

### DECISION IS MADE BETWEEN

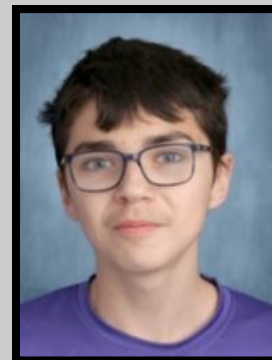
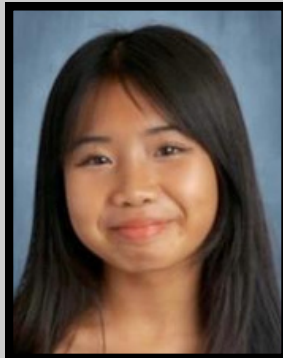
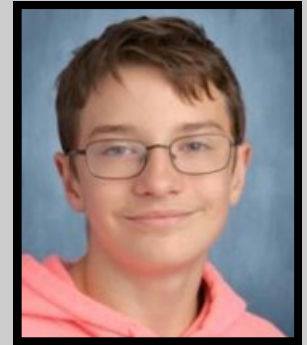
**6:00 AM - 6:30 AM**



**Your Choice**  
It is always your decision whether or not to send your child to school during extreme weather conditions.









Today's assembly showcased the Inuit Dene games and provided some rich conversation around the cultural components and background context of these traditions. Mr. Lentz's involvement brought an extra layer of authenticity, drawing from his time working with Dene People, as a 10 year teacher in the Northwest Territories, combined with his wealth of experience as a kinesiology expert, PE department head.

His passion and dedication brought the games to life and highlighted the incredible contributions he makes as a Percy Baxter staff member. His diligence and commitment resonate not only with our students but also with the many alumni who return just to visit him—a true testament to his success as a teacher.

Thank you, Mr. Lentz, for everything you bring to our school and for inspiring us all with your talents and energy.

For more information here is a video: [Carrying on the Tradition: Inuit Games/Arctic Sports](#)



Here's some info on the Student Success Academy (SSA), a program we're piloting this year at Percy Baxter. This initiative is designed to support and enrich students in unique ways, combining athletic development, academic progress, and social-emotional growth to help them achieve their full potential. The SSA focuses on helping students build the skills, resilience, and confidence they need to navigate the many challenges they may face as they grow. A key component of the program is Social Emotional Learning (SEL), which is integrated into all activities to help students develop self-awareness, manage emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

**Our Philosophy:** At the heart of this program is the belief in a growth mindset—the idea that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort and perseverance. We emphasize the psychology of success, encouraging students to approach every aspect of life—academics, personal challenges, vocational goals, and sports—with confidence and determination.

### **Program Highlights:**

**Athletic Development:** Students receive specialized training in speed, agility, endurance, and physical fitness, while also learning the mental discipline required to excel in sports and life.

**Academic Enrichment:** Hands-on project work in numeracy, literacy, and core subjects like math, science, English, and social studies ensures students stay engaged and build essential skills.

**Social-Emotional Growth:** Through mentorship and SEL practices, students learn to manage stress, build self-esteem, and develop leadership qualities that will serve them throughout their lives.

### **How the Program Works:**

**Time Commitment:** Students may need to adjust their schedules by giving up options like Phys Ed or other electives to participate in this personalized program. **Daily Structure:** The program takes place primarily during the school day, with potential after-school sessions as needed.















### **Expert Leadership:**

- The Student Success Academy is guided by a dedicated team of staff who bring a wealth of expertise and passion to the program:
- Tammy McKeever, Assistant Principal, focuses on the literacy component, ensuring students build strong reading and writing skills.
- Ashlee Jodry, Assistant Principal, leads the numeracy component, helping students strengthen their math abilities and problem-solving skills.
- Shanna Gagnon focuses on enriched math and science, providing advanced opportunities for students to explore and excel in these critical areas.
- Nicole Ryan, a personal trainer completing her master's in counseling psychology, brings expertise in physical training and mental discipline.
- I've also personally committed three of my six daily blocks to this program because I believe in its immense value for our students. My focus is SEL and fitness.

The Student Success Academy is about more than academics or athletics—it's about developing the whole student. By focusing on the mind, body, and emotions, we aim to empower students to become confident, resilient individuals ready to tackle life's challenges and seize opportunities.

Vince Dikaitis, Principal, Percy Baxter

**CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN - PERCY BAXTER STYLE 2024 - Students**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>2</p> 	<p>3</p> <p><b>Hockey Day at Percy Baxter!</b> *Wear anything hockey related!</p> 	<p>4 Jolly Jeans and cozy sweater day!</p> 	<p>5</p> <p>Candy Cane Sales</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>Candy Cane Sales PLUS</p>  <p>"Decked out in Denim" Day!</p>
<p>9</p> <p><b>RAK DAY</b> *Random Acts of Kindness Day - Do something nice for someone else!</p> 	<p>10</p> <p><b>Holiday Headgear and Socks day!</b></p> 	<p>11</p> <p><b>Winter Walk</b> Weather permitting, each class will take a short winter walk and enjoy the crisp fresh air!</p> 	<p>12</p> <p><b>GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST</b></p> 	<p>13</p> <p><b>"Puttin on the Glitz"</b> Otherwise known as Fancy Friday- Come dressed in your New Year's Best!</p> 
<p>16</p> <p><b>Red and Green Day!</b></p> <p>*Show your holiday spirit by wearing red and green!</p>	<p>17</p> <p><b>CHRISTMAS/WINTER SWEATER DAY</b></p> 	<p>18</p> <p><b>Pj's and Pancakes</b></p> <p>*Wear your PJ's and enjoy a tasty breakfast!</p> 	<p>19</p> <p><b>Grinch Day</b></p>  <p>Hand out Candy Canes to Students!</p>	<p>20</p> <p><b>Class Fun!</b></p>  <p>Whatever the class has planned!</p>



## Which Grade will be victorious?

December 2 to 13

\*Food, toys and toiletry items will be collected and points will be awarded.

\*The grade with the most points will WIN!!!!

Points awarded as follows:

Cans or can shaped items = +1 point

Boxes (any packaged items) = -1 point

Special Days:

Dec 4th - baby food/formula = +10 points

Dec 5th - new unwrapped toys = +5 points

Dec 11th - any toiletry item = +2 points

How sneaky are you?

You can add boxed items to other grades boxes to make them lose points BUT you may not remove any items from any boxes. Caught removing items? -50 points



Below is a "wish list" of items for the local Food Bank.

- Cereal
- Canned vegetables
- Hamburger Helper
- Stovetop/Sidekicks
- Canned fruit
- Big soups
- Canned meat
- Pasta sauce
- Toiletries:
  - Deodorant
  - Razors
  - Feminine products
  - Shaving cream
  - Shampoo/Conditioner
  - Toothpaste/toothbrushes
  - Toilet paper



CHRISTMAS 2024



# WHITECOURT

## CHRISTMAS HAMPER



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**52 YEARS**

Providing Christmas for those who need a little help

Application Location  
**WHITECOURT UNITED CHURCH**  
5201 - 50 Street

United Church is independent of the Whitecourt Christmas Hamper and cannot facilitate application questions. Please direct all inquiries to the Whitecourt Christmas Hamper email or Facebook page.

**APPLICATION DATES**

Thursday, November 28, 7 - 9pm  
Saturday, November 30, 12 - 3pm  
Thursday, December 5, 7 - 9pm  
Saturday, December 7, 12 - 3pm

**REQUIREMENTS**

- Eligible to residents of Whitecourt, Blue Ridge, and Woodlands County east, central, and west.
- Alberta Health Care cards required for all adults and dependants.
- Proof of residency required (lease, utility bill, gov't issued ID with address).
- Only one attendee per family during application, with all the family knowledge required.

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**FINANCIAL DONATIONS**

Every dollar is treated with care and stays within the program.

Drop off at RE/MAX Advantage on Main Street.

eTransfer to the Program's Treasurer [mrsgundy@telus.net](mailto:mrsgundy@telus.net)

**DONATE TODAY**

[mrsgundy@telus.net](mailto:mrsgundy@telus.net)

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Accepting **new, unwrapped** toys, stuffies, family games, arts and craft kits, pre-teen & teen novels, hair tools, and local gift cards.

Please no food or toiletries

# GIFT DONATIONS



**DONATION BINS**

Located at participating businesses **mid-November**

whitecourthamper@gmail.com

Percy Baxter Middle School  
Presents

Putting on the  
Glitz

Friday, December 13th  
5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

2024  
GALA

Percy Baxter students only

**\$5 admission - Cash only**

**Formal Attire**

**Canteen: Cotton Candy, Popcorn, slushies, Pizza**

ANCE.



# 2024/2025 Bell Schedule



<b>TIME</b>	<b>BLOCK</b>
<b>8:53</b>	<b>Bell</b>
<b>8:55-9:05</b>	<b>TAGS (Attendance calls generated)</b>
<b>9:05-9:55</b>	<b>BLOCK 1</b>
<b>9:55-10:45</b>	<b>BLOCK 2</b>
<b>10:45-10:50</b>	<b>TRANSITION BREAK TO NEXT CLASS</b>
<b>10:50-11:40</b>	<b>BLOCK 3</b>
<b>11:40-12:10</b>	<b>RECESS BREAK</b>
<b>12:10-12:40</b>	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
<b>12:40-1:30</b>	<b>BLOCK 4 (Attendance calls generated)</b>
<b>1:30-1:35</b>	<b>TRANSITION BREAK TO NEXT CLASS</b>
<b>1:35-2:25</b>	<b>BLOCK 5</b>
<b>2:25-3:15</b>	<b>BLOCK 6 Dismissal</b>



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Harvey and Kathy Lentz



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