



Percy Baxter
Middle School

101 Mink Creek Road
Whitecourt, AB T7S1S2
780-778-3898
pbs@ngps.ca
www.percybaxter.ca



ROCK STARS REVIEW

ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE — Mr. Turcotte, Principal

It's hard to believe we have already reached the month of February in the 2021-2022 school year! While we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, the Percy Baxter staff continue to express their appreciation of the support shown by all of those who are part of our amazing school community. Students continue to demonstrate their creativity and passion for learning, through the engaging and meaningful learning opportunities provided by their teachers. It has been absolutely amazing to watch students in action in the classroom whether presenting to their peers, working together to solve problems, or engaging with new learning for the first time!

A number of important dates are quickly approaching including Teachers' Convention which is taking place on February 10 and 11! A reminder that on these two days, students do not have school, as staff will be participating in virtual sessions throughout both school days. Parent-Teacher interviews will also be taking place on February 15 and 16! Teachers will be arranging dates and times with parent(s) and/or caregiver(s) and interviews will be taking place virtually. We look forward to these interviews as it provides an opportunity for parent(s) and/or caregiver(s) to connect with teachers, discussing student academic achievements and areas of growth.

Recently, Northern Gateway announced the release of ngpsTALK, an online platform where parents, students, staff and community members can share their ideas and feedback on a variety of topics affecting the school division. Parent(s) and/or caregiver(s) are encouraged to register for this engagement tool, and participate in the first engagement! Linked to the [NGPS](#) homepage, ngpsTALK is accessible at any time of the day, is easy to use, and will provide us with relevant data pertaining to the things people love about our school, as well as provide an avenue for school community members to provide us with ideas and/or suggestions about things we could improve!

On behalf of the staff of Percy Baxter School, we would also like to wish our PBS families a safe and happy Family Day long weekend!



Northern Gateway
Public Schools

Wanting to stay connected to Percy Baxter school? Look for updates and school news via the PBS Facebook page!



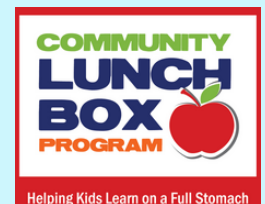
PARENT REMINDERS

- Over 11% of our students currently have no Parent Portal accounts created. There are 30% of our parents who have not been accessing student information. Please be sure to login to see your child's attendance, academic progress and to review and sign IPP's. Progress Reports are no longer being sent home. Please login to PowerSchool from our Percy Baxter webpage and then click on the Parent Portal Login link: or click the following link: <https://ps.ngps.ca/public/>. Please login using the username and password you created. If you have never created an account or you have any difficulties, please contact the school and we will be happy to help you.

Parent Portal Login

SchoolCashOnline

- School fees are now past due - if you have not yet paid your Technology Fees of **\$31.50** or Option Fees please pay via school cash online or contact the office to make arrangements.
- We are using all the emergency breakfast and lunches (approx. 12 per day) provided by The Community Lunchbox Program. If you are able to support this very worthwhile cause please make a donation to the through school cash online or the Community Lunch Box Website.
- Attendance is done daily at 8:55 and 12:55. Attendance calls will be generated to go home for all unexcused absences by 9:15 and 1:15. A call will still go home if they arrive after attendance calls are generated or we have not been notified of an absence in both am and pm. Please call us at 780-778-3898 to notify if your child is away. If your child arrives late please bring them to the main school door.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT.....
STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

BRODEN DAVIO

GRADE
6

VICTORIA LAYTON

GRADE 7



KEVIN JEON

GRADE
8

LET'S TALK

Yesterday I had to ask THE QUESTION. You would think being a social worker, I would be comfortable asking difficult questions but this time was different. I have asked THE QUESTION numerous times, without hesitation or concern how they will react or their perception of me. My only concern was making sure they are safe. But it all changed when I knew I had to ask THE QUESTION to a person who I am very close to, that I care about very much. This person is going through extreme hardships and was giving a few warning signs that worried me enough that I needed to ask THE QUESTION...

Are you thinking of ending your life?

There is such angst in even considering uttering these words... will they think I am weird for asking? Maybe I am overreacting? Am I simply paranoid? They can't really be seriously considering suicide...would they? What if they say yes? What if I make them angry?

Yet, I knew I had to ask THE QUESTION despite all my fears.

You know what? It was okay. After I asked, he sighed a big, heavy sigh, like a weight came off his shoulders and said, "yeah, things have been hard. Nothing is going at all like I planned. I have been really down on myself, but no, it is not so bad that I have thought about killing myself...thank you for checking on me".

Then I did all the things that I knew to do: listened, evaluated the risk, gave support, listened some more, made sure he knew all the resource numbers, and most of all told him how much I cared about him and how important he was to me.

I knew what to say and do, but it was still hard. It made me think about regular people who are worried about a friend, colleague or family member. People like you: parents, teachers, students. What is a regular person to do or say?

An excellent resource is www.bethere.org. It teaches the average person how to break the ice and start the conversation.

The 5 Golden Rules of Being There

1. **Say what you see.** Reach out when you notice something is different. Describe the changes you have noticed and why you are worried. **Stick to the facts, don't judge, don't make assumptions.**
2. **Show you care by building trust.** Support them by being compassionate, helpful, inclusive. Offer practical everyday support like give them a ride, take a few chores off

1. their plate, make a meal or bring their favorite meal.
2. **Hear them out.** Be a good listener by finding the balance between listening, asking questions and wisely sharing your experiences. Remember, **this conversation is about them, not you.**
3. **Know your role** and set boundaries to protect your relationship and your own mental health. You are not their therapist or doctor so don't fix, don't preach, **just be there.**
4. **Connect to help.** Learn how to access professional and community resources. Check out Kids's Help Phone www.kidshelpphone.ca/resources-around-me or call 1-800-668-6868. Other resources in Alberta are the Mental Help Line 1-877-303-2642 or crisis supports in Alberta www.alberta.ca/individual-family-crisis. Keep following up to ensure they are being supported.

Conversations around mental health are becoming more common and so is overcoming the stigma around mental illness. Initiatives like [Bell Let's Talk Day](#) Campaign, on **(January 26/22)** have been excellent in engaging Canadians in open and candid discussions about mental illness. Just talking about it isn't enough though, we all need the confidence and knowledge to step up and be there for one another. Not only for kids but also parents, colleagues and friends. When we are prepared to support someone, we can truly make a difference.

This article was submitted by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She is a support and advocate for schools, students, parents and caregivers to promote success in school. Tammy has been a Registered Social Worker for more than 20 years and is a mother to 3 teenagers and 1 young adult.



PINK
SHIRT DAY
FEBRUARY
23, 2022



January 28, 2022

Parent(s) and/or Caregiver(s),

Happy New Year from The Mink Creek Parent Society!

Even though this year has gotten off to a little bit of a crazy start – we are all settling back into this next part of the school year!

December saw a lot of activity from the Parent Council; we held our first pizza days and despite the crazy weather, were a total success! Huge thanks to Angie Ophus for bringing this idea to our school 😊 Thanks also goes out to all the parents that donated via the fundraiser option on the Google pizza order form – your kindness is very much appreciated! We will continue to hold pizza days most likely two times a month – in order to keep this running smoothly, we are looking for additional volunteers to help out with the packaging and delivery of the pizza to the school. Volunteers entering the school do need proof vaccination or a same day negative covid test from an accredited body of jurisdiction. This commitment only takes an hour once a month and the use of an SUV for transport, please contact our Facebook page: Mink Creek Parent Society if you are interested in helping!

Our Purdy's Chocolate fundraiser was also a success and profited almost \$1300.00! Thanks to everyone for placing their order and for picking up their orders so quickly once they arrived. Pop up Sales continued to be a fun event for the students also held in December.

A big thank you goes out to Shereen Trenchard, Amanda Zierath, and Tanya Callihoo who organized and ran the giveaway of the Eastlink Park Youth Season Pass and Season Rental Passes that were donated by Millar Western. For every \$1 donation made to the Percy Baxter Breakfast Program the student had their name entered into the draw!!! Through these efforts over \$300 was raised – great job!!

Our next Parent Council meeting will be February 16 at 7:00 PM – most likely we will be meeting virtually, please contact Mr. Turcotte if you would like to attend and the link will be sent to you!

As always if you have any questions please reach out either through our Mink Creek Facebook page "Mink Creek Parents' Society or by email at jrdkn@telus.net

Jenny Dickson
Percy Baxter School/Mink Creek Society Chair

February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
				TEACHERS CONVENTION NO SCHOOL		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		VIRTUAL PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEWS 5-8pm				
20	21 FAMILY DAY NO SCHOOL	22	23	24	25	26
						
27	28					



Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are excited to share with you our new engagement platform **ngpsTALK**.

Northern Gateway Public Schools is excited to introduce a new platform, ngpsTalk, where stakeholders (students, staff, parents, community members) will have the opportunity to offer ideas, feedback and stories of their experiences and thoughts regarding schools and education. It allows students, parents, staff, community members to add their voice to support the work of our schools.

In order to access the ngpsTALK platform, you must register and have a login. We are encouraging staff, students, parents, and community members to register and participate in our current and upcoming projects.

The registration process is as follows:

- 1) go to ngpstalk.ca
- 2) click the register now button
- 3) fill in the short registration form
- 4) confirm your registration through an email sent to your inbox

Once confirmation is complete you are able to log in and participate in the active engagements.

Our first engagement is titled *What makes your school community shine?* In the spirit of the new year, we are kicking things off with a "feel good" discussion aimed at celebrating our schools.

If you could only pick one thing, what is the one thing you would say makes your school community shine?

We look forward to sharing your submissions and celebrating each and every one of our school communities!

As part of the registration drive, we are offering prizes to those who sign up.

- 1 'Family Fun Pack' prize per school community (all parent and community registrants names are entered into the draw; not students)
- 2 Grand Prizes which are new touchscreen Chromebooks (all registrants names are entered into the draw including students)

There will be promotional material and a school newsletter article coming out in the next few days regarding this. Please watch social media for more.

Your voice is important! Register today to join the conversation - LET'S TALK!

Northern Gateway Public Schools

Spirit Day

<i>FEBRUARY</i>				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	01	02	03	04 Grade Level Day
07	08	09	Teachers Convention	
14 Steal yo heart Day Red Day	15	16	17	18 Homeroom Wars
Family Day	22 Two's DAY (02-22-2022)	23 Pink Shirt Day	24	25 Teacher Swap Day Renaissance T-Shirts
28				

Feb. 4

- ☐ **Grade Level Day** - Give each grade level a color for a day. (Grade 6: White, Grade 7: Red, Grade 8: Blue) Don't wear another grade's color, or else they get your points!

Feb. 18

- ☐ **Homeroom Wars** - Each homeroom picks a theme to dress for and the one with the most participation wins.

Feb. 25

- ☐ **Renaissance T-Shirt** - On this day, students can wear any Percy attire to show school spirit!
- ☐ **Teacher Swap** - like the reality show 'wife swap' students get a different teacher or team of teachers for the day.

MARCH				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	01	02	03	04 Comfy Clothes Day
07	08	09	10 Teacher-look-alike Day	P.D. Day
14	15	16	17 Green Day	18 Parent Day
21	22	23	24	25 Future Fashion Day
Spring Break				

March 4

- ☐ **Comfy Clothes Day** - Students and teachers get to dress in their comfy clothes...or in other words... “wear what you would wear if you know you aren’t seeing anyone or leaving the house”.

March 10

- ☐ **Teacher Look-alike Day** - Students dress like their favorite teacher for the day!

March 18

- ☐ **Parent Day** - Everyone brings something to “take care of” for the day — whether it is a baby doll, a stuffed animal or even the classic egg.

March 25

- ☐ **Future Fashion Day** - Students come to school dressed like how they think fashion will look when they are 30, 40 or even 90 years old!



Grades 6-12



MillarCentre



allanjeanmillarcentre

Join us for some **FUN PD DAY** programs!
Pre-registration is required.

FREE Program

POUND[®]
GENERATION



**SNACK
ATTACK**

What do you get when you mix movement, music, and fun? Get ready to make some noise with Generation POUND®! Once you work up that appetite, we will head to the classroom to make some healthy and delicious snacks to take home!

DATE:

MONDAY, JANUARY 31

LOCATION:

ALLAN & JEAN MILLAR CENTRE

TIME: 1:30-3:30PM

MIN 4/MAX 12

COURSE ID: 7752



Enjoy a delicious drink while art instructor, Connie, guides you through your strokes on canvas. By the end of the afternoon, you will have some fun wall art to display in your room! All materials will be provided.

DATE:

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10

LOCATION:

ALLAN & JEAN MILLAR CENTRE

TIME: 2:00-3:30PM

MIN 4/MAX 12

COURSE ID: 7754



**GYMNASTICS
★ MINI ★
WARRIOR**
OBSTACLE COURSE FUN

Join us at the Whitecourt Gymnastics Club for an hour of obstacle course and free play fun! You will have the chance to test out your balance, agility, and strength while trying out all the awesome equipment in the Club.

DATE:

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11

LOCATION:

CARLAN COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

TIME: 1:30-2:30PM

MIN 4/MAX 15

COURSE ID: 7753



Register by calling 780-778-3637 or go to <https://rec.whitecourt.ca>

Contact the Allan & Jean Millar Centre at 780-778-3637 for more information.

