



Irvine Elementary

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<http://www.sd43.bc.ca/School/irvine>

Newsletter 1 February 11 2019



Our Mission Statement at Irvine Elementary is, "Working together to create a safe and nurturing environment that challenges and motivates our students and promotes a lifelong joy of learning."

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

February	7-13	Cross Catchment process (online) opens at 9:00am on Feb. 7th and closes at 4:00pm on Feb 13 (online only)
	12	The Maple Man Performances (in the gym) - to be rescheduled
	14	Fruit and Vegetable Program (8:45-9:30) - mixed apples (organic)
	14	Valentine's Day
	15	School not in session (District)
	18	BC Family Day - school not in session
	20	PAC Meeting in the library 6:30-8:00pm
	21	Hot Lunch - Subway
	22	Non Instructional Day (District)
	25	Young Performers Workshop 3:00-4:15 in the library
	27	Pink Shirt day

Principal's Message

Thank you to all our parents, students and staff for a warm welcome to Irvine Elementary. I have had a great week - the first of many!!

As I mentioned in a previous email, I like to put out a newsletter each week (mostly) and as such, I try to highlight things in the current and following week. I also like to add my take on things that I see and ideas that I have and offer a self-reflection piece at the end of my message. I feel that reflection and introspection are important tools that all of us can use to better ourselves.

One of the best holistic models I've seen and learned about with respect to building resiliency in our youth is Dr. Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage. Through the research he has done, Dr. Brokenleg believes that we can build resiliency in our children by offering them experiences in four different areas: Belonging, Independence, Mastery, and Generosity. I will speak to each of these elements in future newsletters. For now, I'd like to talk about resiliency.

Resiliency is the ability to overcome or recover from difficulties. It involves a belief in yourself, and the confidence to know that you can handle different situations or experiences that happen in your life. While I think that as parents we can all agree that we want our children to be resilient, we often make choices (for them) that do the opposite (even when well intentioned). I have three words that I'd like to share with you that can help (more on this later).

How many times has your child come to you with a problem or a challenge and because you've been in a hurry or because it is something that you know you can solve quickly, you do it for them? You do this because you know that, for you, it is a simple thing to fix. The problem is that you have just shown your child, through your actions, that you do not believe she/he can solve the problem for herself/himself (even though that was not your intention). It then becomes easier for your child (or children) to come to you with other problems because they have learned that you can help them by fixing it or solving it for them, and in the mean time they become more and more dependent on you to solve problems for them. Through this process, they learn that others (e.g. adults) can and will solve problems for them without them having to do it themselves. As this becomes a habit, the challenges can get more and more complex, and when you reach that point (different for all of us) when you want them to just attempt to solve a problem for themselves, you get frustrated when they say that they do not know how to or what to do. You may then realize that they may not know how to because they have not had to solve problems in the past for themselves.

I am not saying that, as parents, we should not help our children - far from this. What I am saying is that before you help your child with a challenge, first ask them what they have done or tried in order to fix the problem. You can guide them or ask questions to clarify things so that they think further about what they could do or try. The point is not to immediately solve the problem for them without knowing that they have made an effort. There may be times when three words "figure it out" may be the most important ones you say to them. It may be challenging to do, especially if you are in a hurry, or if a pattern has already been developed, but it will pay big dividends later when they know for themselves that they have the confidence to handle problems that come their way.

Self-reflection: think about your own experiences and times when you looked to others to solve problems for you. Did you have the opportunity to try to solve them yourself or did you learn to rely on others to solve problems for you. What was this like for you? Do you still do it? How, if possible, were you able to overcome it? What was your "A-Ha" moment?

An example I will share is an experience I had in a university math class. We had a math problem at the beginning of every class. I'd start on it and inevitably would say to the teacher, "I don't get it." He'd respond, "What don't you get?" I'd say, "The question." He'd say, "What part of the question?" I think you see where this is going. He was calm and I'd get more and more frustrated. After a couple of weeks of going through this process with him, he said to me, "I can give you the answer, but I will not always be beside you to do this. If you learn it for yourself, you will not need me to answer it for you." In that moment, I realized that for as long as I could remember, I had asked my math teachers the same question(s) and they would give me the answer (especially when I pushed for it). Perhaps I wore them down, or they thought it would just be "easier" to give me the answer. At any rate, it was after that moment that math changed for me and I no longer disliked it as I had in the past.

You can imagine, when students tell me, "I'd don't get it," (to any problem) I will not give them the answer, but instead say, like my university math teacher said to me more than 25 years ago, "What part don't you get?"

School Closure due to Inclement Weather

It seems only natural that I should mention this!

As a general expectation, schools will remain open. If extreme weather conditions cause you to be unsure or if local conditions are unsafe, you may keep your child at home or arrange for an early dismissal. If schools are to be closed before morning classes begin, an announcement will be made on local radio stations (CKWX news 1130; CKNW 980) early in the morning. If schools in the district are closed for the day, you will be able to find out on our district webpage (www.sd43.bc.ca) by 6:30am. If there is an accumulation of snow, please remember to dress students in clothing suitable for playing in the snow, to avoid disappointment and cold fingers. Snow pants and boots are always a great idea and don't forget an extra pair of gloves or mitts. Please be sure that even on those wet days (when schools are not closed) that you make sure that your children are dressed appropriately for the weather as we will be outside. We want students to come to school prepared for the outdoors in much the same way we expect them to be prepared to learn indoors.

While we do our best to make sure that salt is on the ground on colder / icy days, please remind your children to be careful in the mornings as it can be very slippery, especially on wood and leaves, both on the school grounds and in the community. Cement can also be misleading, especially in areas where less sunlight gets through (especially in the early morning hours).

PAC News

PAC meetings are held in the school library and begin at 6:30pm. Our PAC Meeting Schedule is as follows:

February 20, 2019

April 17, 2019 (6:30pm-8:00pm)

May 15, 2019 (6:30pm-8:00pm)

June 19, 2019 (PAC Social 7:00pm-10:00pm)

District / Community News

Please feel free to check out the Publications and Community Listings and links on our district webpage at: <http://www.sd43.bc.ca/Pages/publications.aspx>