

November 2021

NEXT PTO MEETING: Tuesday, November 9th at 6:30 pm via [Zoom](#)

This is a long email! Make sure to expand your email to view the whole message. You'll see a singing hedgehog at the end!



A Message from our PTO Co-Presidents

Dear Families,
On this crisp fall day, it's hard not to be filled with gratitude and hope.

Gratitude...

...that we are safely keeping children learning in school. Who knew the return to the normalcy of the daily routine of school could feel so sweet?

...for educators and staff, who have faced each new challenge with creative perseverance. We are so lucky our children are in the hands of such competent, passionate and skilled staff! Health Office, Special & Behavioral Ed Assistants, Teachers, Custodians, Student Services, Food Services - all have had to continually adapt to the new way we do school over the pandemic.

...for our Interim Principal, Kathy Costello, who put her retirement on hold to serve our school while Principal Seidl is out on family medical leave supporting her family.

...for this community of families, which has taken the health and safety protocols seriously by masking up, getting vaccinated when eligible, and getting tested and/or quarantining when symptomatic or exposed. Although it creates hardship in our family and work lives, following these protocols protects our school community. We are working together to keep our most vulnerable safe and keep our children safely in school.

...and for YOU, for generously helping out when asked, whether it's volunteering for **lunch recess**, serving as a **Classroom Rep**, donating clothing to families in need, or contributing to staff appreciation efforts. However you pitch in, your engagement directly contributes to building a strong and positive learning environment!

We have so much to be grateful for. And also, reason to be hopeful. Now that our school-aged children are authorized for vaccination, the possibility that the second semester may hold fewer restrictions and allow for gathering for the joyful community events that we have been missing seems stronger. Let's continue doing our part to bring those possibilities to life!

Events at a Glance | NOVEMBER

NOV 4

**EVENING
CONFERENCES**

NOV 5

**NO SCHOOL -
CONFERENCES**

NOV 7

Join the **A IS FOR ANTI-
RACISM** Group
for an Outdoor Tie-Dye event
2 - 4:00 PM
118 Merlham Dr.

NOV 9

**PTO MEETING
via ZOOM**
6:30 - 7:30 pm
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

NOV 11

**PARENT ENGAGEMENT
GROUP**
Connecting families with children
experiencing learning difficulties
6:30 pm via Zoom
[Learn More](#)

NOV 15

CHIPOTLE FUNDRAISER
4 - 8:00 PM
4000 University Ave.

NOV 18

**PARENT ENGAGEMENT
GROUP**
Lifting the voices of families with
black and brown children
6:30 pm via Zoom
[Learn More](#)

NOV 24 - 26

NO SCHOOL

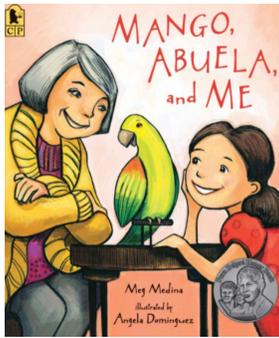


**DIRECT APPEAL
2021-22**

Thank you to all who have had the opportunity and the ability to donate to the direct appeal so far this year. We are, as always, astounded and humbled by the generosity of our community. The Direct Appeal remains open - with our goal of raising the equivalent of \$40 per student - until **November 19th**.

Head to our webpage to learn more about the Direct Appeal and about how funds go directly to the classrooms, teachers, staff students and families of VHE.

DONATE TODAY!



Celebrating Diversity at Van Hise through Our First All-School Read-Aloud

At Van Hise, our brilliant hedgies *love* books and we *love* celebrating who we are! This year Van Hise will underscore some national celebrations of identity by participating in several all-school read-alouds. We deeply appreciate that VHE teachers lift up the identities of students and families every day through meaningful learning that is woven tightly into the fabric of each classroom community. With the inclusion of periodic all-school read-alouds we hope to stitch these various communities together into a stronger Van Hise quilt -- welcoming conversations across various classrooms and, of course, conversations that spill out into your homes as well!

The first of our all-school reads, on October 4th, highlighted Latinx Heritage month (September 15-October 15). We read *Mango, Abuela, and Me* by Meg Medina, a story about a Spanish speaking grandma who comes to live with her granddaughter Mia's family. Mia, who knows very little Spanish, and grandma, who doesn't yet know much English, find the perseverance to bridge the linguistic, cultural, and generational space between them with the shared joy of owning a very special pet. To hear more about the story, ask your young Van Hise expert about how this pet helps Mia and her abuela connect!



Looking ahead, Van Hise plans to celebrate Native American Heritage month (November) with a read-aloud of *When We Were Alone* by David Robertson and Julie Flett during the week of November 9th. Make sure to ask your little hedgie all about it!

Also celebrating Latinx Heritage month, you may have noticed the colorful signs displayed on both the Segoe and Waukesha sides of the school, showing our Latinx pride and sharing noteworthy quotations from some famous Latina leaders. Thank you to Van Hise's A is for Anti-Racism parent group and VHE staff member Tom Schorr for making these signs possible! If you are interested in joining the A is for Anti-racism parent group—a group that scaffolds student learning and activism—reach out to Emily Ruedinger at emily.ruedinger@gmail.com to learn more!

-Van Hise Equity Team

**CHIPOTLE
RESTAURANT NIGHT:
MONDAY, NOV. 15TH**

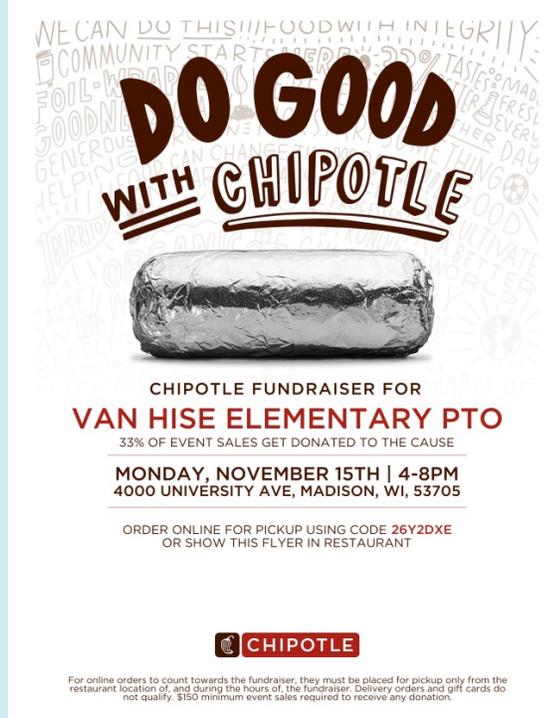
4 - 8:00 PM

Head to Chipotle on University for a delicious meal and to support the PTO!

Order online with
CODE: 26Y2DXE

*Dine in or pick up only;
delivery not eligible.*

*Click on image for a printable version.



WE CAN DO THIS!!! FOOD WITH INTEGRITY
COMMUNITY STARTS HERE
FOOD-WEAR
GOODN
GENEROU
HELPING
TRAINING
TASTE: MAD
EVERY
EVERY
THING DAY
FOOD
ULTIMATE

**DO GOOD
WITH CHIPOTLE**

CHIPOTLE FUNDRAISER FOR
VAN HISE ELEMENTARY PTO
33% OF EVENT SALES GET DONATED TO THE CAUSE

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH | 4-8PM
4000 UNIVERSITY AVE, MADISON, WI, 53705

ORDER ONLINE FOR PICKUP USING CODE **26Y2DXE**
OR SHOW THIS FLYER IN RESTAURANT

 **CHIPOTLE**

For online orders to count towards the fundraiser, they must be placed for pickup only from the restaurant location of, and during the hours of, the fundraiser. Delivery orders and gift cards do not qualify. \$150 minimum event sales required to receive any donation.



MEET MR. LYNCH: VAN HISE'S ART TEACHER

Q: What is your favorite food?

A: I love any and all tacos! Sweet, savory, corn, flour, breakfast, lunch, or dinner. My two favorite taco spots in town are Taco Local on Willy Street and the El Grito taco truck.

Q: What's a fun fact about you that people may not know?

A: I'm an avid record collector. One of my favorite things to do on the weekends is to head to Monroe Street and browse the Strictly Discs basement. I'm currently wanting to expand my Jazz and Soul collection.

Q: In a parallel (and much more boring!) universe, what might you be doing if you weren't teaching art?

A: When I was younger I thought it would be so cool to work as an animator for Pixar. I was so inspired by their movies and still am to this day. I'm really thankful that I do have a job that allows me to inspire kids in a similar way.

Q: What was one of your favorite books as a child?

A: When I was in kindergarten, the first Captain Underpants book came out. My Dad would read them to my brother and I and do all of the voices. That was hands-down my favorite book series and I always admired Dav Pilkey's story as a writer/illustrator. Like Pilkey, when I was in school my teachers often told me not to draw all over everything. His success made me feel like it was worthwhile to spend my time coming up with goofy characters and drawing them in my own comic books.

Q: Where would you like to travel?

A: My wife Lizzy and I are wanting to travel to Italy this summer, specifically Sicily (where my ancestors are from). We recently watched an Italian food series hosted by Stanley Tucci and every bit of Italy looks amazing!

Hamilton Theatre at VHE



There are perks to being part of a combined elementary & middle school campus. Twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring, eighth graders from Mrs. Jenk's theatre class practice their acting skills by coming into our 4th grade classrooms and reading with our students. Our students love working alongside the middle school students!

Community Needs



Our school social worker, Ms. Nachtwey, is looking for extra **water bottles** for days that students forget them at home. She is also accepting donations of **clean, practical winter gear (including pants, long sleeved shirts)** for our elementary students (sizes 5-12). Items may be left in the vestibule, marked *Rachael Nachtwey*.

A Community Resource

*Did you know that those who live in the Van Hise attendance area have full access to services at **MOM**, including their food pantry, clothing center and housing assistance? Learn more by calling MOM at 608-836-7338. As always, feel free to reach out to school social worker, Rachael Nachtwey, if you have questions about area resources.*

MSCR Community Input Survey

Dear MMSD Families,
Madison School & Community Recreation (MSCR), is seeking input to improve our community programs. Please take a few moments to complete this **MSCR Community Input Survey** by November 15, 2021.



The survey link above is in Spanish and English. Here's the survey in **Hmong**. Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey. We value your input.

Best regards,
Janet Dyer, MSCR Executive Director



BUCKY BOOKS

Purchase a Bucky Book **HERE** and \$10 of the sale is donated back to the Van Hise PTO. Plus free shipping to your home!

*Promotion runs until January!



Music NOTES

FROM MS. JENKS -

4th and 5th graders have invented patterns using e minor and D Major chords on the piano, mallet instruments, guitars and in some cases, their string instruments, added some percussion patterns and put together a large group arrangement of the piece, "Lo Yissa Goy." We have talked about how the idea of the song, "Nations shall not lift up sword against nation and will not prepare for war" is still a hope for the world. (They also sound AMAZING singing it

in harmony!)

2nd and 3rd graders have also been exploring harmony (just like skip counting in math, only we use notes!) and have done a beautiful job playing mallet parts and tone chime parts together to create an accompaniment for an old German Folksong, "Oh How Lovely is the Evening".

The K-1 class has been prolifically composing new verses to "Fuzzy Little Caterpillar"--all having to do with how things can start one way, but turn into something else in the future. Here are the original words:

"Fuzzy little caterpillar, crawling, crawling by; Don't you know that someday you will be a butterfly?"

Here are a couple of the several dozen verses invented:

"Tiny little seed, almost too small to see; Don't you know that someday you will grow into a tree?"

"Crying little baby, being held all day; Don't you know that someday you will go outside and play?"

And finally, one of our "questions of the day" had so many great answers that I thought I should share. **The question: "Why sing in a language that isn't English?"** I thought the K-3 group could come up with 3 great answers. Here is a partial list:

- 1) It is a way to care for people in our community. Maybe someone's first language is the one that we are singing in and hearing the language will make them feel loved.
- 2) Singing in different languages gets different sounds in your head and it could be easier to learn another language.
- 3) There are lots of great songs in all languages, so why stick to just one?
- 4) You don't always need to understand every single word to understand music.
- 5) It feels more inclusive. Like we are recognizing that not the whole world speaks English.
- 6) Some songs don't translate very well into the tune and patterns of a song.
- 7) I think we should sing in the language that the song was first invented in.
- 8) We can't go everywhere in the world and travel a lot, but by singing the same music, it is kind of like going somewhere.
- 9) I've heard "walk a mile in someone else's shoes", which just means, try and understand what they are going through. You can't always really do that, but you can sing a song in someone else's words.
- 10) It's fun.

I love to hear all these great thinkers in person.

Thanks for raising such thoughtful, creative people!

-Margaret Jenks, K-5 Music & 8th Grade Theater Teacher



Founded by proud parents of Van Hise Elementary School

All Are Welcome: A is for Anti-Racism Group

All VHE students, parents & caregivers are invited to join the "A is for Anti-Racism" Group. We meet virtually every other Saturday morning from 9-10am. So far, our group has focused on three main goals:

- **Personal growth and learning** - We have explored podcasts, books, videos, and other resources, and shared insights, stories and expertise to expand our

own knowledge.

- **Action** - Projects have included creation and maintenance of the A-is-for-Anti-Racism Little Free Library on the VHE playground, and chalking / signs on Waukesha
- **Raising anti-racist children** - We've spent time discussing our parenting challenges and successes, and organizing activities to involve our littles in anti-racist work.

All are welcome. We are excited to hear your ideas and open to exploring new directions that center anti-racism. Whether you choose to drop in once or for every meeting, your presence is valued. To be added to the A is for Anti-Racism email list for meeting info and other announcements, email Emily Ruedinger at emily.ruedinger@gmail.com.



You've reached the end. We hope to see you Tuesday, 11/9 at the PTO meeting! Check www.vanhisepto.org for updates.

