

NEXT PTO MEETING: Tuesday, 11/10 at 6:30 pm via [Zoom](#)

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



Principal Seidl's Spotlight

Stronger Together in 2020-21

WOW! Just like that, it is the end of first quarter at Van Hise Elementary. We are looking forward to hearing from you and sharing information at our upcoming Parent-Teacher Conferences. There are so many great things happening at our school. Let's review what took place in October and then move on to what we can look forward to in November!



October was a month of focus for our school-based leadership team. This group of teachers and staff from across the school worked in concert with our parent representative to create our school improvement plan. This three-year plan defines who we are, where we want to go, and how we will get there. While we have just begun this work, we are using the district priorities of Relationships, Race and Rigor to inform our work. The work of Van Hise staff this year will be grounded in our equity vision:

At Van Hise We All Belong: We are a welcoming school that lifts student, family, staff and community voices in order to build relationships that support academic excellence for all students.

While similar to our vision from 2019-20, this vision specifically includes excellence for all students. Our school improvement plan celebrates our successes, including blue ribbon status, while also defining our challenges - the prevalent achievement gap for our black and brown students. Taken directly from our plan:

"A challenge for our school has been to celebrate our success while at the same time addressing that that success is not the full story of Van Hise and building a sense of urgency to address the needs of all of our students."

While our school improvement plan will be shared in its entirety on our website upon completion, we spent October defining our three priorities. This is a visual representation of our work:



**Lifting voice & listening,
Using data,
Authentic Feedback**



Relationships →



Engagement →



Rigor

We believe that our work lies in developing solid relationships that support improved engagement permitting us to implement rigorous content. We support this work by lifting voices, listening deeply, using data-driven practices, and providing authentic feedback. Your support of this plan is critical in virtual learning. By partnering with us to foster a relationship with your child, we are able to better understand how to engage them in learning. Doing this work together truly makes us stronger!

In November, this team will continue to work together to develop our plan, identifying action steps to support staff in focusing on sustaining relationships, supporting engagement, and lifting rigor across our school. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or have feedback on our School Improvement Plan. Stay tuned!
-Ms. Seidl

*Above image is Mrs. Robbins First Graders reminding everyone to vote!

Events at a Glance | NOVEMBER

ALL YEAR

Please reach out if your family needs assistance.

Rachael Nachtwey, Social Worker
rlnachtwey@madison.k12.wi.us

NOVEMBER 4

MATERIALS PICKUP

11:00 - 1:00
Waukesha Street

NOVEMBER 6

EARLY RELEASE DAY

11:30 Finish

NOVEMBER 10

PTO MEETING via Zoom

6:30 - 7:30 pm
Zoom link [HERE](#)

NOVEMBER 12

Parent Teacher Conferences

No School All Day

NOVEMBER 20

CLOSING DATE: PTO DIRECT
APPEAL FUNDRAISER

www.vanhisepto.org/direct-appeal-2020-21

NOVEMBER 25-27

Break

PTO Direct Appeal Fundraiser 2020-21



Each year the PTO makes a single fundraising appeal directly to the VHE community for tax-deductible donations for Van Hise classrooms.

THE MISSION THIS YEAR IS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO TEACHERS, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES.

This appeal is especially important this year. The PTO will be limited in its ability to raise money via the usual channels available during a normal year of fundraising.

Contributions will go to initiatives specific to the challenges imposed by the pandemic. These include support for technology-related expenses to enhance teaching and learning, money for our grant program to help fulfill the general needs of our teachers, and direct support for families in crisis during this very challenging time. Decisions around spending funds raised are made at PTO meetings.

As a PTO, we are constantly in awe of the generosity of our community. If you are able to donate this year, we thank you. If you are unable to make a monetary donation this year, we send you our thanks for being a part of our community. Our families, students, teachers, and staff make us who we are. We are, truly, stronger together.

For more information and for ways to donate, visit our Direct Appeal Website at <https://www.vanhisepto.org/direct-appeal-2020-21>

[Direct Appeal Website](https://www.vanhisepto.org/direct-appeal-2020-21)

Quarter 2 changes for Virtual Learning 2.0....



With the beginning of second quarter, there are some slight shifts that were presented by our Superintendent, Dr. Jenkins, when he announced that we would remain virtual through January 22. Many of the parameters that he defined were already in place at Van Hise (e.g., morning academic synchronous learning, consistent lunch period, etc.) There may be the need for some slight changes to individual teacher schedules to accommodate his recommendations; however, we are typically in line with the recommendations. Any changes will be communicated to you in the week ahead.

In addition to schedule shifts, there are changes to our Wednesday expectations.

- There will no longer be asynchronous lesson expectations for Wednesdays.
- Students are to use this day to catch up on any missed work.
- Specials will continue to provide asynchronous lessons for students to access when they are able (this could be Wednesdays or another time that best works for students and their families).
- All families are considered as attending unless they reach out and communicate to the school otherwise (see below for attendance procedure shifts).

Please consider using Wednesdays in the second quarter to catch up on not only

academic tasks but also on self-care for you and your child's mental health. Do what your child needs to refresh and recharge for the remainder of the week. If you have a child that loves being outside, plan activities to get out; if you have a child that enjoys reading, select a good text to dig into and build a pillow fort! Explore what your child loves and do it - preferably without a screen to provide their brain with a break. While not structured, Wednesdays are an important day for learning as well...just in a different way.

There were additional shifts lifted by Superintendent Jenkins specific to tools and resources for teachers that we will look forward to using in the weeks ahead. Thank you for your continued partnership and support in this school year. We are truly stronger together.

-Ms. Seidl



Upcoming conference information and important November dates

November 6th is a day for conference preparation and November 12th is our conference day. Students will have asynchronous learning in Specials on November 6th until 11:30 and then it is an early release day. Students will not have any lessons on November 12th to accommodate conferences.

While there will be slight variations across the grade levels, all conferences will include an opportunity for you to:

- (1) Share how virtual learning is going and what we can do to support you in this partnership.
- (2) Hear and see some data on how our student is performing.
- (3) Set goals for the remainder of the year. Goals are critical as we know that feedback is truly feedback when it is tied to a goal and not merely a judgement on performance quality.

We look forward to sharing with you our 2020-21 virtual conference slide deck! These slides will include our specials showcase, an opportunity for our students to share their learning and growth this year across specials. Slides will also share resources, including what we want students to know and be able to do by the end of the school year for students in their grade level as well as recommendations to support the social-emotional health of your Hedgeie. We are excited to share with you these slides that are a shift from our traditional conferences but one we hope you will find worthwhile.

In addition to conferences, we have a few other upcoming events in November:

- **Wednesday November 4th**, 11:00 to 1:00 Materials Pick Up for Grades 1 through 5. Similar to our October pick up, we ask you to pick up materials curbside on Waukesha. This month there are a few very special, hedgeie "tools" in our materials!
- **Friday, November 6th**, Early Release at 11:30. At Van Hise, this will be a morning for students to work on our VHE Specials Showcase. The showcase features content from art, music and physical education. There will be no synchronous zooms as teachers prepare for conferences.
- **Thursday, November 12th** all day and evening, parent-teacher conferences

and specials showcase release. We are working to provide each and every family with a set of slides to guide our conferences this year. The slides include conference information, specials showcase links, and resources for you as we continue to partner together in virtual learning for Quarter 2. We are working hard to prepare materials for a meaningful conference.

- **Wednesday, November 25-November 27, Break**

Whew! We have a great month ahead of learning and growth together. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

-Ms. Seidl



Materials pick up for Grades 1 through 5:

Wednesday November 4th, 11:00 to 1:00. Similar to our October pick up, we ask you to pick up materials curbside on Waukesha.

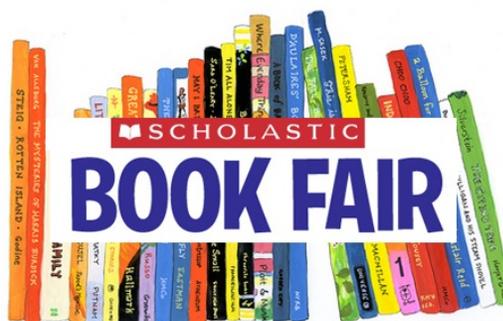
Tuesday, December 2, Materials Pick up, Waukesha 11:00-1:00

Wednesday, January 6, Materials Pick up, Waukesha 11:00-1:00.

Kindergarten teachers have worked with families to coordinate their own materials pick up for their grade level. If you have any questions, please reach out to your kindergarten teacher.

Van Hise Online Book Fair 2020-21

The 2020 VHE Scholastic Online Book Fair will be 11/9-11/22. There is free shipping with book orders of \$25 or more to your home address. Van Hise receives a portion of the sales to use toward buying more books!



Beginning Nov 9, order books from the VHE Scholastic online Book Fair at <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/vanhise>.

Here are video links to some of the books that are available, K-2 and 3-6 (links open now to preview)

- Grades K-3: [Grades K-3 Online Scholastic Book fair video](#)
- Grades 4-6: [Grades 4-6 Online Scholastic Book fair video](#)

Print copies of Book Fair flyers will be available in the next VHE materials pick up on November 4th. Thank you in advance for your purchase and Happy Reading!!!
Questions - please contact me!

Dana Prager, Van Hise Library Media Tech Specialist
drprager@madison.k12.wi.us



LET US KNOW IF WE CAN HELP

We know some families in our community have urgent needs. The PTO has resources to help you. By working through our school Social Worker, family needs are kept

private and confidential. Please be in touch with Ms. Nachtwey if your family needs assistance of any kind during these difficult times.

Rachael Nachtwey, Social Worker
rlnachtwey@madison.k12.wi.us



Box Tops for Education

The Box Tops program helps us earn free money for our school. Clip Box Tops off participating products that you buy at the store or download the app and simply scan your receipts ([Click here](#) to learn more). Place clipped Box Tops in a ziplock baggie labeled with your child's teacher's name (please don't forget to do this!), and either drop them off in the mail slot at 5201 South Hill Road or drop them off at the material distribution days at school. *If you use the app, put a note in your ziplock baggie stating how much you collected this fall, and it will be added to your child's class total.* The class that collects the most will be celebrated during Ms. Seidl's Wednesday announcements.

We are extending the contest through the winter, so you have until February 22, 2021, to collect!



A new, very special little library at Van Hise!

We are excited to welcome a new little library to our school grounds. This “not so little” Little Library is a special one. It represents solidarity and support for our communities of color. It represents the desire to expose our community to literature and illustrations of Black and Brown struggles in history and currently the Black Lives Matter movement, because, as we know, knowledge is power, which is why we parents strive to offer our kids the very best education possible. As our understanding of how people of color and children have historically not been allowed the same rights to education, jobs, housing, and other opportunities as the White population, we understand systemic racism. As we learn of unequal rates of imprisonment, harsher sentences for our community of color, we understand institutional prejudice that often can be fatal.

This library is offered as a beacon of light in the playground with hopes that our little hedgies develop the empathy and courage to make change and become allies to those whose only crime is to want equality and justice.

Peace

Background information:

This library was donated by a parents of Van Hise group called “A is for Anti-racism”. It was formed in outrage and sadness after more names were added to fatalities of black people at the hands of police which left a mark on our souls. We wanted to take some kind of action and books and education came to mind.

The person who started this group is hedgie teacher, Ms. Mileham.

The person who created the library is Zafer Gruel, a father to a Hedgie.

The artist who painted the library is Lilada Gee, who is known for her lifelong

dedication as an advocate for black girls.

The person who placed the post and library at the playground is Joseph Clark, who is also a father to a hedgegie.

The group members all contributed funds, time, effort and talent. We hope and invite others to join us. We will have T-shirts with our logo for sale with all profits going towards charities and foundations that matter to make change.



Our website will be going up soon so you can follow our events and post photos of what you and your hedgegie are doing to make change, even if it's just reading a book from our anti-racist library.

-A is for Anti-racism Group

Attendance Changes for Quarter 2



Wednesdays are shifting to a more flexible day for students. Due to the flexibility in this new approach, your student will be presumed to be present when attendance is taken on Wednesdays.

Please continue to communicate with the school office by calling the attendance line (608-204-4807) or using the online attendance form at <https://webapp1.madison.k12.wi.us/webapp3/absences/>) to provide an excusable reason if your student will not be attending on a Wednesday.

This shift begins on Wednesday, November 4th as we begin Quarter 2.



Welcome to Our New Lead School Secretary

Hi! I am excited to be joining the Van Hise Elementary team as Van Hise's lead secretary! I worked as the lead secretary for the previous 8 school years at Thoreau

Elementary. Even though this virtual learning time has made it difficult to meet Van Hise staff and families in person, I have felt very welcomed by the Van Hise Elementary community.

When not working, I love to spend time with family and friends. I also like to shop, read, drink coffee, visit new places, and watch my kids at their various activities. My husband, Kyle, and I live in Sun Prairie. We have 4 children, 2 that are college aged and 2 in high school. We also recently added a puppy to the mix, and he is almost 9 months old now.



You've reached the end. We hope to see you Tuesday 11/10 at the PTO meeting! Check www.vanhisepto.org for updates.

Van Hise Elementary School
Madison, Wisconsin



VHE SCHOOL WEBSITE * VHE PTO WEBSITE