

SIXTH GRADE BASKETBALL CHAMPS  
 Sixth grade girls' basketball had a great, undefeated regular season!. At tournament time, they lost their first game , however, they came back to win six games and take the championship. This included an amazing feat of winning four games in a row on the last day! Coach Dierenfield said they learned perseverance and never taking a game for granted. They are not only a great team, but a true example of good sportsmanship! Congratulations girls!!



WEST VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1  
 2290 FARM TO MARKET ROAD  
 KALISPELL, MT 59901

west valley  
 school district #1

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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT  
 CAL KETCHUM

Is it just me, or has this been an extremely long winter!? I just got back from a Superintendent's Conference in Helena, and trust me when I say this, we have nothing to complain about after talking with some of the east side superintendents. I will have to say I am looking forward to spring and not just because of the weather, but also because of some of the great things we have going on at West Valley. One of those things is the work we are doing with Ignite Nation and the culture building at West Valley.

This year we have been working with Ignite Nation, which is a team that works with our staff and students on culture and character building. In my 25 years in education, I can honestly say the work we have done with IN has been some of the best and most rewarding work to help build the overall culture of a school. We started back in August working with a leadership team and created what we call our "Shared Beliefs." There are five shared beliefs that the entire WV staff had a hand in establishing. From there we have worked with the students to help create an environment of caring that is spread through everything we do at WV.

Ignite Nation spent two great days training about 60 of our students on becoming Character Ambassadors. The training was fantastic and now we have Character Ambassadors going into classrooms and teaching lessons on various character topics to the entire school. This is truly a transformational experience and one that will be sustainable for many years to come.

We will continue to work with Ignite Nation for the next two years, working towards establishing the school climate and culture that is embraced by staff, students and parents. We are asking staff and students to be their best self and to do their best work every day at West Valley. The lessons that the students will present to each classroom and the culture that will be infused into our days, will be sustained for years to come. Thanks for sharing your kids with us and know that we are working hard every day to give them not only a top notch education, but also helping to create great citizens for our community and the world.

WEST VALLEY MISSION/VISION STATEMENT:

*At West Valley School, we go "Above and Beyond" to attain the highest level of success in everything we do. We do this by providing a supportive, open community, that inspires willing, ready, and active students to become responsible engaged citizens who love to learn and grow throughout their lives.*

## WEST VALLEY LEVY INFORMATION

To the West Valley Community,  
The District would like to provide you with some information for you to consider prior to casting your vote on May 8, 2018, regarding the General Fund Levy:

\*\*The District has not asked for a General Fund Levy since 2007.

\*\*The District has grown from 364 student in the 2006/2007 school year to 625 students as of March 20, 2018.

\*\*The District has grown in employees from 42 in the 2006/2007 school year to 71 in the 2017/2018 school year, 49 certified staff (teachers, counselors, administrators) and 22 classified staff (paraprofessionals, maintenance/custodial, office, food services).

\*\*In the 2006/2007 school year we had two half day sections of Kindergarten (1 a.m. class, 1 p.m. class); three sections of Grade 1; and two sections of Grades 2 through 6; and 7 teachers teaching 7th/8th grade science, social studies, language arts, math, guidance, research, art, music, and p.e. In the 2018/2019 school year we are anticipating four sections each of all day Kindergarten through Grade 2; three sections each of Grade 3 through 5; four sections of Grade 6; and 11 teachers teaching 7th/8th grade science, social studies, language arts, math, guidance, research, art, music, and p.e. This is a growth of 10 sections (classes).

The District has accepted the "highest without a vote" for our General Fund budget and worked within that amount since 2008. It has become apparent that there are areas where we have fallen behind that need to be shored up and they concern technology (i.e. classroom computer carts for each grade level), curriculum (both in paper form and technology), staff professional development, class supplies, and furnishings. The District is also looking to hire another second grade teacher due to the number of students moving from first to second grade, increasing the contract for our elementary guidance counselor from 2.5 days per week to 4 days per week (from .5fte to .8fte), as well as another paraprofessional due to student needs.

The District shared with our community that we may have to ask for a General Fund Levy after we passed the Building Bond in 2013 and we have been fortunate to operate for 4 years by tightening our belts and not asking for a levy. However, the time has come where we need to ask for this operational levy to move forward into the next few years. This levy is for \$149,691.00 which is for staff (as mentioned above we are adding 2.3 more staff members); we will be able to use \$30,000 each year, over 5 years, to take advantage of a \$125,000 Intercap Loan through the Montana Board of Investments for technology; we will be able to furnish the new second grade classroom, as well as ongoing supplies for students/staff; salaries, as well as maintenance and facility upgrades. Passage of the levy will increase the taxes on a home with a market value of \$200,000 by approximately \$42.71 per year based on the August 2017 taxable value of the District.

Thank you very much for your time in considering this very important General Fund Levy. Ballots will be mailed out to all registered voters on April 20, and the ballots will need to be returned to the District Office no later than 8:00 p.m. on May 8th. Should you have any questions, please call the District Office at 755-7239 and Cal Ketchum, Superintendent, or Cindy Foley, Business Manager/District Clerk, will be happy to answer any questions.



## LIBRARY OPEN THIS SUMMER

Combat the summer slide with our summer reading program at the West Valley Library. Take advantage of our open library on Tuesdays from 4:30-6:30 starting June 17 and encourage your child to read something every day. Did you know research shows reading just six books during the summer may keep struggling readers from lapsing? Making reading a priority even during the busy summer months helps to encourage the lifelong reading habit as well as helping kids to maintain their skills. Our librarians can help your family select books to match your child's interest and ability. Reading aloud as a family is a benefit to both children and teens and we have many wonderful books to choose from. Community members who have preschool children or visiting relatives are welcome to come check out books at our library too. See you this summer!



## CROSS COUNTRY

Cross Country season started on Monday, March 19th despite the snow still on the ground! This spring, West Valley has 75 runners in grades Kindergarten through 8th Grade who train on Mondays and Thursdays and race on Tuesdays. West Valley is part of the spring Cross Country program that includes many of the K-8 schools from around the valley. West Valley will host four races this season, using the trail system west of the school ball fields. Runners will also race at Evergreen Jr. High and Rebecca Farm.

As runners work hard to improve their physical fitness and mental toughness, they also learn what it means to be part of a team. And all runners follow the three parts of the West Valley Warrior Cross Country Code: Give 100%, Cheer On Your Team, and Have Fun!!!  
Coach Smith & Coach Ells



MS. ROMAGNUOLO'S 6TH AND 7TH GRADE MATH  
March 14th was Pi Day (3.14), so the 6th and 7th grades math classes learned about pi as a constant that represents the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle. Students measured the circumference and diameters of different sized circles to see if our calculations came close to 3.14 and learned some interesting facts about pi. Some students opted to participate in a friendly challenge to see who could recite the most digits of pi from memory. Marissa (7th) and Ali (6th) tied for first with 34 and Isaac (6th) came in 2nd with 33. We finished the day with round cookies (instead of pie) to celebrate.

### MS RUONAVAARA'S CLASS

In Miss Ruonavaara's first grade class, we have been adding physical activity to our learning! We are part of a pilot program to incorporate 150 minutes of P.E. each week into the classroom, which is 30 minutes daily. We've been moving a lot during math and spelling. We have fun getting active while learning. One example of how we do this is practicing addition facts. We roll dice, add the numbers, and then do that many burpees, jumping jacks, hops, etc. It's great to get kids moving!



### EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS CAMP-IN

An invigorating 16-hour camp-in was held at West Valley School, from the evening of March 16th into the morning hours of March 17th. Our school, under the planning team of Gretchen Brown (parent), Leslie Windauer (K-4 counselor), and Crystal Thurman (5-8 counselor), hosted our 4th annual, overnight, 8th grade girls' leadership retreat.

The evening began at 5:30 p.m. with a taco bar dinner. Following dinner, a panel of women spoke about their careers and what it took for them to get to where they are today. Our event then sponsored breakout sessions on various topics including body image, yoga, finance/budgeting, art decoupage, and high school success. All of these sessions were taught by women from our West Valley community.

Once the more formal education component of the evening was through, our 8th graders enjoyed a trail mix bar, watching/discussing Hidden Figures, a dodgeball game, glow sticks in the dark of the school, and cookies/milk at midnight. By around 2:00 a.m., the girls were required to be in sleeping bags. Sleep didn't overtake most girls until about 5:00 a.m., as they enjoyed several hours of talking and giggling first. By 7:30 a.m. we woke the girls to music and taught them the ice and cake dance which assisted in waking everyone up. Our overnight event culminated with breakfast, a wrap-up time, and cleaning.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the volunteers behind the scenes, the presenters, the chaperones, and those individuals who donated money, supplies, or food. This retreat would not have happened if it weren't for all of you. I'm so impressed by this West Valley community and our greater Flathead Valley community. When it comes to supporting our school, you ROCK!

MS. Thurman, Middle School Guidance

### FIFTH GRADE

Happy Spring!!!! Wow! This year has flown by and we have made many wonderful memories so far this year in 5th grade. Although we are starting to look forward to the joys of summer, we still have much to do and are excited to finish our year strong. Our students will have the opportunity to spend a day at the Forestry Expo in Columbia Falls learning about natural resources and forest management. They will participate in hands-on lessons with professionals from a variety of science backgrounds while learning about the many outdoor activities our state has to offer.

The 5th grade will also take its annual trip to Avalanche Lake in Glacier National Park. We will spend the day hiking and discussing the natural processes responsible for creating the majestic landscape of our home. These trips happen at the perfect time of year, when students will soon be out exploring and making discoveries with family and friends. Please encourage your student to "finish strong" these last few weeks of the year as it will prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead as they transition to 6th grade. We thank you so much for the opportunity to spend each day teaching and learning with your children.



### MIDDLE SCHOOL HISTORY

"Welcome to Ancient China!" is what 6th graders hear when they walk into 6th grade history this time of year. The students are doing an investigation of what everyday life was like for the peoples of China. They are doing a comprehensive study of geography, economy, achievements, government, social class, and religion.

One of the cooler investigations they get to partake in this spring is looking at the Terra Cotta Warriors that were designed to protect Qin Shi Huang (China's first emperor) in the afterlife. The figures lay buried underground for almost 2,000 years before being discovered by a Chinese farmer in 1974. The unit will conclude with the students reporting all of the findings from their arduous investigation.

In 7th grade, the students are wrapping up their unit on the Civil War and talking about rebuilding the country, especially the South, after the war concluded. Shortly after the start of the 4th quarter, they will complete a project that encompasses all of their learning for the year. They will end the year with an introduction to the Pacific Theatre of World War II and read the amazing story of Louis Zamperini in the book *Unbroken*.

The 8th graders are just finishing up a unit on the ghost towns of Montana. They were required to research several ghost towns around the state before choosing one and turning it into a tourist attraction that people from all over would come to see. From replicas of the original towns to amusement parks featuring characters from the town's former glory, the students created amazing models of what their towns would look like with the makeover. They will finish out their last quarter of middle school with a discussion of the European Theatre of World War II and a study of the Holocaust.

### FOURTH GRADE

This Spring, 4th grade is excited to implement a "Walk to Learn" approach for our Science, Social Studies, and Reading Writing Strategies rotations. This has helped students excel in a group setting that has met their individual needs. All three fourth grade classes have been grouped to accommodate different learning styles. Students have enjoyed collaborating with classmates from other classes. We have also implemented a similar model in math for a mid-chapter or end of chapter review. This has proven successful with higher scores at the end of the chapter and better understanding of the material.



THIS SPRING, KINDERGARTENERS MADE LEPRECHAUN TRAPS!

