VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL

SCHOLARSHIP. COMMUNITY. GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

News & Notes
Vermont Commons School
May 14, 2021

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, May 15th

- 1pm - 2:30pm: **Ultimate vs Colchester HS** at Veterans Memorial Park

Tuesday, May 18th

- 4pm - 5:30pm: **Ultimate vs Montpelier HS** at Veterans Memorial Park

Thursday, May 20th

- 4pm - 5:30pm: **Ultimate vs Milton HS** at Veterans Memorial Park

Saturday, May 22nd

- 11am - 12:30pm: **Ultimate vs South Burlington HS** at Veterans Memorial Park

The 2021-22 Core Calendar is now live on our website!

You can view all of our upcoming events on the **Calendars** page of our website, and find updated Zoom links by clicking "**More Details**" under individual events.

Amy's School Counseling Office

Virtual IT Help Request

News from Amber in Development

- Did you know that **100% of our faculty have made a gift to the VCS Annual Fund** this year? It's a remarkable gift to our community—that our faculty believe in our students and our school enough to invest in VCS themselves. You can help us get to our **goal of 100% family participation by June 30** when you **make a gift online** or mail a check to school with "Annual Fund" in the memo. All gifts directly support our students and faculty. Thank you!

- Class of '21 Families and Students—**Senior Gift Update**: To date, you've **raised over $13,750 for the DEI Scholarship Fund in honor of the Class of '21.** This is amazing! Seniors, families, grandparents, you can still support this effort by **making a gift online** (indicate Senior Gift in the "Optional" drop down menu) or mailing a check to school with "Senior Gift" in the memo line. Thank you!

NEASC Survey Reminder

The NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) survey for our reaccreditation self-study will remain open for an extra week. Please complete it as soon as possible. It should only take you 15-20 minutes, and your thoughtful, candid responses will help us to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth as a school. Thank you for taking the time to share your insights with us.

The survey will close on Monday, 5/17.

NEASC Parent/Guardian Survey

Purchase Your 2020-21 Yearbook!

This year, in addition to pictures of our adventures throughout the year, the yearbook will also contain artwork by our wonderful artists and the best pieces from the three Evening of Readings. Don't miss out on getting a copy!

The price remains the same as last year, **$45,** and there are two ways to purchase it:

- Cash or check (made to VCS, give it to Adriana or Amy)
- You can also buy it online by clicking on the following link: VCS Yearbook 2021

If you have any questions, please let us know.

Thanks!

Adriana and Amy

Vermont Youth Dancers Back on Stage!

Vermont Youth Dancers presents *As You Are, The Story of Belle and the Beast,* a dance theatre production of the classic fairy tale. A selfish young prince and his castle staff fall under a spell of a mysterious enchantress, who turns him into a frightful beast, until he can learn to love and be loved in return. Belle may be their only hope, as she takes her mother's place as prisoner at the castle. But time is running out... Will the spell be broken? This wonderful story of community, sacrifice and identity is told by VYD through exciting hip hop and poignant lyrical choreography, along with stunning sets, lighting and costumes. Do not miss this unique performance – the choreography, song lyrics, and the acting and emotion the dancers put on the stage is something unusual and beautiful!

Please help support VYD -- including Vermont Commons' own Finn Verdonk '22! -- as they provide mentoring, leadership, and performance opportunities for young community members and have given back thousands of dollars in support of other community organizations.

VYD brings this show to Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center in Stowe with a small live audience, and there are still UNLIMITED live stream tickets available for the two shows on Sunday, May 30th at 12:30 and 6:30 p.m.

Ticket information: sprucepeakarts.org

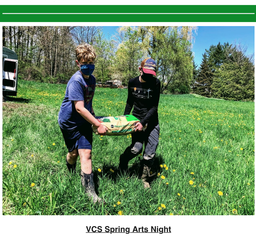
VYD information: vermontyouthdancers.org

Friday Afternoon Activities for Middle School Students

On the next three Fridays (5/21, 5/28, and 6/4), we will be hosting a variety of optional and fun activities for middle school students from 1-3. If the weather will be nice, we'll walk to Szymanski Park and play some combo of field games including kickball, whiffleball, cornhole, Kubb, ultimate disc, etc. If the weather looks rainy, we'll default to a movie or other indoor activity. Either way, pickup will be at 3:00 at the VCS building.

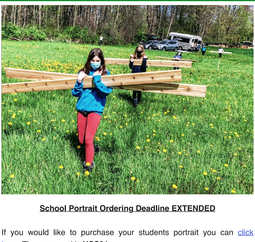
VCS Goods and Gear Year-End Sale!

All VCS Goods and Gear, from t-shirts to sweatshirts and hats to water bottles, is now 50% off. We need to clear out all the old stores to make way for fresh new items, due to arrive at the start of the new school year in August. Now's a great time to stock up on styles that won't be seen again. You can pay with cash, check, or card; we can deliver to your child during the school day or you at pick-up or drop-off; and we will have a list of available inventory and prices early next week. Sizes and colors are limited. GO TURTLES!!! Questions or requests can be emailed to info@vermontcommons.org, and we'll follow up with you directly.



VCS Spring Arts Night

The VCS Arts Council is excited to announce **Spring Arts Night**, which will take place as a Zoom webinar on **Tuesday, June 1st at 6pm**. We are looking for video submissions from all grades with any type of art: visual, musical performances, drama, poetry, dance, comedy or anything else! Submissions are due **Friday May 28th**, you can send your work to Matt (mdavide@vermontcommons.org).



School Portrait Ordering Deadline EXTENDED

If you would like to purchase your students portrait you can click here. The password is **VCS21**.

If you have any questions about the portraits you can contact Ambient Photography directly: Alex Pintair, Ambient Photography, (802) 872-0905, www.ambientphotography.com.

If you already ordered portraits before spring break, they have been delivered to the school and have been given out to students who have been present in the building.

2021 - 2022 Enrollment Reminder

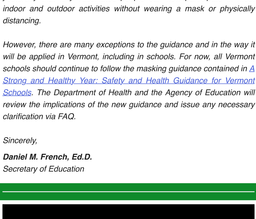
Reminder that the following items are now due:

- Online paperwork for 2021-2022 (includes: medical forms, emergency contacts, photo/video permissions, etc)
- First tuition payment for 2021-2022
- Financial Aid applications & all required forms

To complete your enrollment forms, log into your RenWeb account on Family Portal, and select the Enrollment link on the left-hand tab.

NOTE: RenWeb is only able to allow 1 parent access to the full enrollment documents at a time. If you do not see your child's documents, please check all custodial parents' accounts.

If you have any questions, please contact Linda Bursell at lbursell@vermontcommons.org.



A Note on Changes in Guidelines

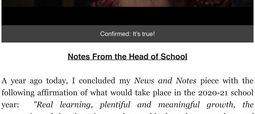
Published today by Secretary Dan French, Agency of Education:

You may have heard from Governor Scott at the press conference today that Vermont will be adopting the CDC guidance announced yesterday that fully vaccinated people can now participate in most indoor and outdoor activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing.

However, there are many exceptions to the guidance and in the way it will be applied in Vermont, including in schools. For now, all Vermont schools should continue to follow the masking guidance contained in A Strong and Healthy Year: Safety and Health Guidance for Vermont Schools. The Department of Health and the Agency of Education will review the implications of the new guidance and issue any necessary clarification via FAQ.

Sincerely,

Daniel M. French, Ed.D.
Secretary of Education



Notes From the Head of School

A year ago today, I concluded my *News and Notes* piece with the following affirmation of what would take place in the 2020-21 school year: "*Real learning, plentiful and meaningful growth, the connection of that learning to the world, the robust, regular, and dynamic relationship between the teacher and student, the ongoing integrity and strength of our community.*" Despite all the uncertainties, changes, and challenges of this school year, as it

swiftly approaches its conclusion, it's affirming to re-read those words knowing that is what has happened. And, as always, we actively--even this close to the end of the year--spend everyday trying to do things better and to remain responsive to feedback, ingenuity, and opportunity. If we can make tweaks between now and June 11th so that will improve things, you bet we're looking to do so! To that end, Jasmine sent out an email to all students in grades 8 - 11 with the following Youtube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeqhZiGS37c. IF you're a parent/guardian of a child in one of those grades, they may already have told you about it, and I'm here to confirm it's true. As we've been working over end-of-year specifics the last several days, we arrived at a major change in our plans: we're cancelling final exams this year.

The students have dealt with more than their fair share of anxiety and stress this year. They've proven themselves so many times over that they simply don't need to do it one more, extremely high-pressured time. In fact, we don't want to end this year--this 15-month period--on a note of stress, exhaustion, and anxiety. Same goes for the teachers. If we'd caught enough of a breath ourselves to get to this, reflect on it, and sort out the many details in time for last Friday's *News and Notes*, I would have written then, rather than having to change things on you a week later. But it's worth it. Letting these teachers and students end differently, after such an incredible year of dedication and follow-through, matters. They've earned it, and they don't owe anyone anything more than simply to continuing learning and growing right through that week in June.

So the new plan is that we'll keep doing classes through June 8th for all students (*note that 6th and 7th graders still have Wednesday, June 2nd off, except that they are invited to join via Zoom the presentations of the Senior Projects that morning, which will be happening between 8:30 - 11 a.m.*). **June 9th will be the last day of school for all grades**, (*except Seniors);* we'll wrap up festively with field day in the morning and our annual Awards Ceremony in the afternoon. The Senior Overnight campout has been moved to that night (June 9th) and the Senior/Faculty Hike will be June 10th. The Parent Ambassadors have graciously agreed to host core group end-of-year gatherings at families' homes on June 10th. And the Graduation ceremony, for Seniors, their families, and the Faculty, will take place Friday, June 11th, at 1 p.m. and will be livestreamed for other community members.

Real learning, plentiful and meaningful growth, the connection of that learning to the world, the robust, regular, and dynamic relationship between the teacher and student, the ongoing integrity and strength of our community.

It's difficult to improve on these notions, other than to say, *you're almost there, and well done!*

Dr. Dexter P. Mahaffey
Head of School

USEFUL SCHOOL LINKS

Give to Vermont Commons

Guide for Students & Families

2020-2021 Community Calendar

RenWeb - Parent Login

VCS Website

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