

Feeding bellies and brains: A new breakfast program gets underway at Ross Ford Elementary School

A new breakfast program is off to a great start at Ross Ford Elementary School in Didsbury. The program got its start a few weeks ago, thanks to the vision of the school's Family School Wellness Worker.

"It's been exciting connecting with the kids in the morning," says Jenna Sauve, Family School Wellness Worker.

She says, "It gives them a chance for a soft start to the day, where they sit and talk to each other. For the students whose families might be challenged to get enough groceries, it gives the kids knowledge of when they'll have their next meal. Feeding bellies feeds brains too, and helps kids be ready to learn."

Sauve said she noticed a need last year when students were regularly coming to her during the day for snack foods such as goldfish or granola bars. She wanted the students to have nutritious foods available to them as well, which prompted the idea of a breakfast program.



Jenna Sauve (left), Family School Wellness Worker at Ross Ford Elementary School, serves breakfast to Ross Ford students with Jordyn Guthrie, a parent volunteer.

The program is open to any student in the 20 minutes before school starts. Between 65 to 75 students, or about a quarter of the school's population, take advantage of the opportunity each day.

Breakfast offerings include fruit on a daily basis. Cereal, muffins and bagels are rotated through the weekly menu. On Fridays, the school offers a hot breakfast of waffles, pancakes, or breakfast sandwiches. Food is left available for students who might be hungry throughout the school day as well.

Save-On Foods in Didsbury donates fruit and cereal each week, Daphne's Market in Didsbury donates muffins, and parents of students contribute donations. Cash donations from Ember Resources help the program, as does nutrition money from the province that is distributed from Chinook's Edge School Division.



Sauve operates the program daily, with the help of volunteer parents and staff members. She says the program doesn't just help the students who might not have easy access to food at home. It also helps the students who need a gentler start to their day.

Jordyn Guthrie is one of the parent volunteers. Guthrie's daughter is in Grade 1. ***"Not only is this a great program, but it helps my daughter feel more comfortable at school," says Guthrie. "Her older sisters attend Westglen School, and going to school by herself has been an adjustment. When I am here in the morning for breakfast with her, it eases her into the day. It feels like a family environment when the kids are eating their breakfast."***

"It is changing the dynamics of our school for the better," says Sauve. "There are fewer tears and better self regulation for students. Having full bellies, and a chance to come in and get settled opens the students' capacity to learn."

"We can see the difference this program is making already, and how it helps students when they are properly fed, and when they have a chance to socialize and ease into the day," says George Thomson, Principal, Ross Ford School. "Students definitely enjoy it. They are calmer and more able to concentrate on learning."

Thomson says, "Thank you to Genna for this great idea, and for getting it underway. You have gone the extra mile, and we are grateful. Thanks also to staff and parent volunteers who are helping."



Career Connections student feature

Chinook's Edge high school students take steps toward veterinary careers

A group of Chinook's Edge students are developing career ready skills in veterinary science this year. Fourteen students from nine Chinook's Edge Schools are enrolled in the Veterinary Technical Assistant Certificate (VTA) program at Olds College.

One of those students is Rilynn Ulry, a Grade 11 student from Ecole Olds High School. (Pictured second from right in the group photo)

"I'm loving the VTA program," says Ulry. "I've always wanted to pursue a career with animals. I was very excited when I found out this program was offered in high school!"

Ulry says she completed two animal health courses last year, and decided to pursue VTA after enjoying that experience.

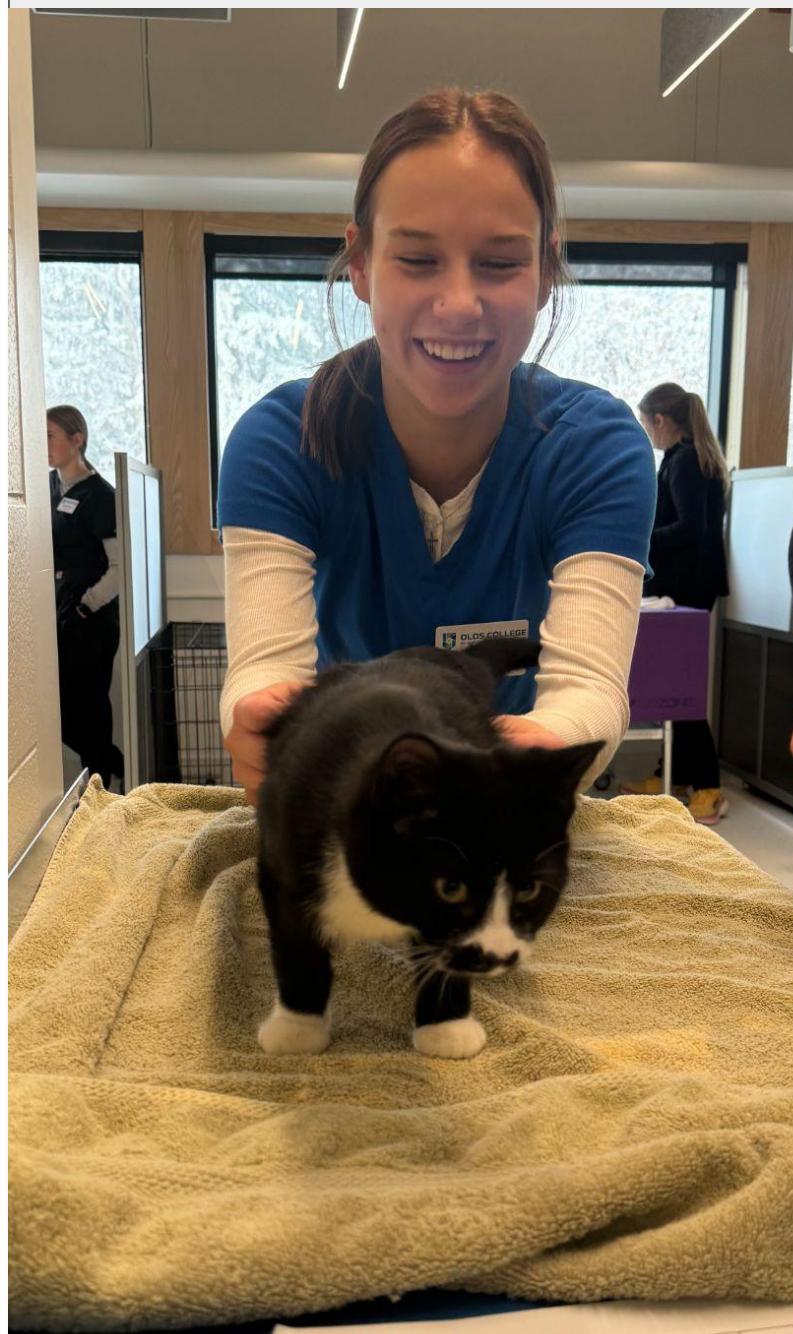


"It's so much fun and it's making me want to have a career as a vet even more. The most eye opening experience was our dog lab, and practicing all the different techniques for handling. So far I have loved every minute of it and it makes me more excited for my future in this industry."

Students in the VTA program take five courses including:

- Introduction to the Veterinary Profession
- Small Animal Restraint and Handling
- Principles of Veterinary Clinical Procedures
- Veterinary Equipment and Instrumentation
- Veterinary Patient Preparation and Husbandry





Courses run over two semesters and each for 15 weeks. The online portion of the course is delivered mostly asynchronously.

Also, each student is expected to be in person at Olds College for five Saturdays and for about five hours of lab learning on each date.

Students who complete the program earn up to 25 credits towards their high school diploma, and they earn a VTA Certificate from Olds College, and convocate from the college. Also, they are eligible to begin work in the industry immediately.

The cost of the program is about \$3,700 for individuals enrolled after graduating from high school. The program tuition cost for Chinook's Edge students is free to the student (the division covers the cost).

Learn more [here](#).



Chinook's Edge staff and students pause to remember

Chinook's Edge staff and students took a moment, last week, to pause and remember the individuals who fought for freedom in world conflicts. Through school assemblies, as well as in assignments involving art, music and poetry, educators helped students appreciate the sacrifices of Canadians who served, and the freedom we enjoy as a result. Here are a few highlights.



Spruce View School



C.P. Blakely School



Didsbury High School



Cremona School



Jessie Duncan School



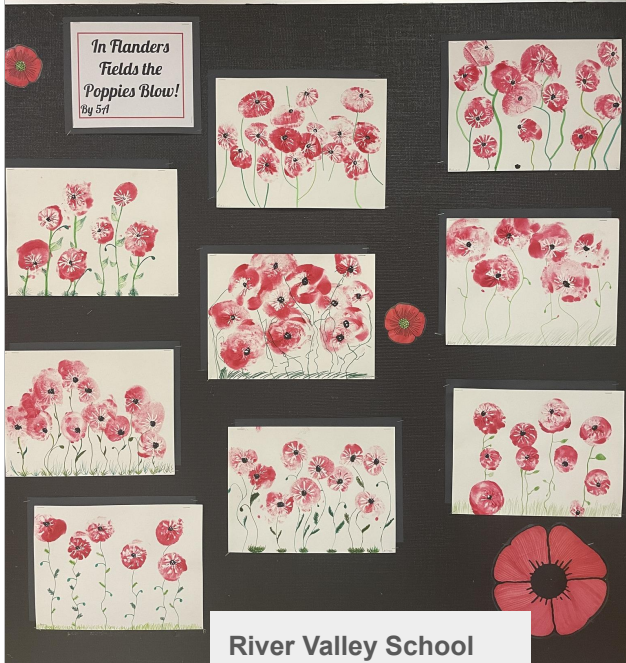
Hugh Sutherland School



River Valley School



Innisfail Middle School



River Valley School



Innisfail High School



Bowden Grandview School



Didsbury High School





Ecole Olds Elementary School



Delburne School



C.P. Blakely School



Delburne School



Ecole Fox Run School



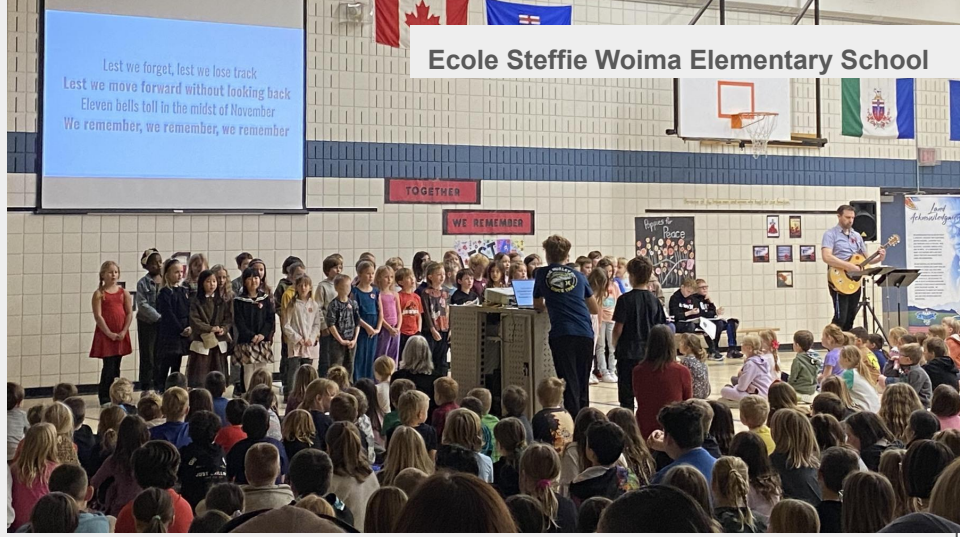
Poplar Ridge School



Sundre High School



Penhold Crossing School



Ecole Steffie Woima Elementary School



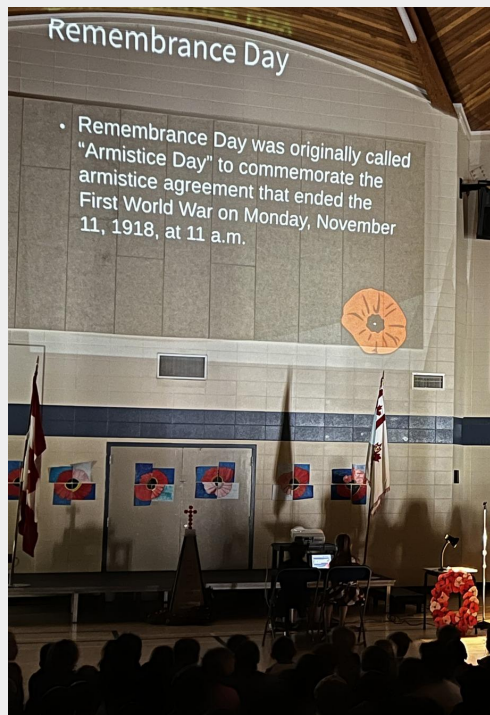
Elnora School



Reed Ranch School



Penhold Crossing School



John Wilson Elementary School



Ross Ford Elementary School