



## Happy Holidays!

And just like that, a year has passed! We both started at Foothills Digital School on January 10 of this year. We have difficulty believing that we are entering our twelfth month of being the administration team at this school. We are thankful for our excellent staff of teachers – each who brings a different perspective and talent to the table!

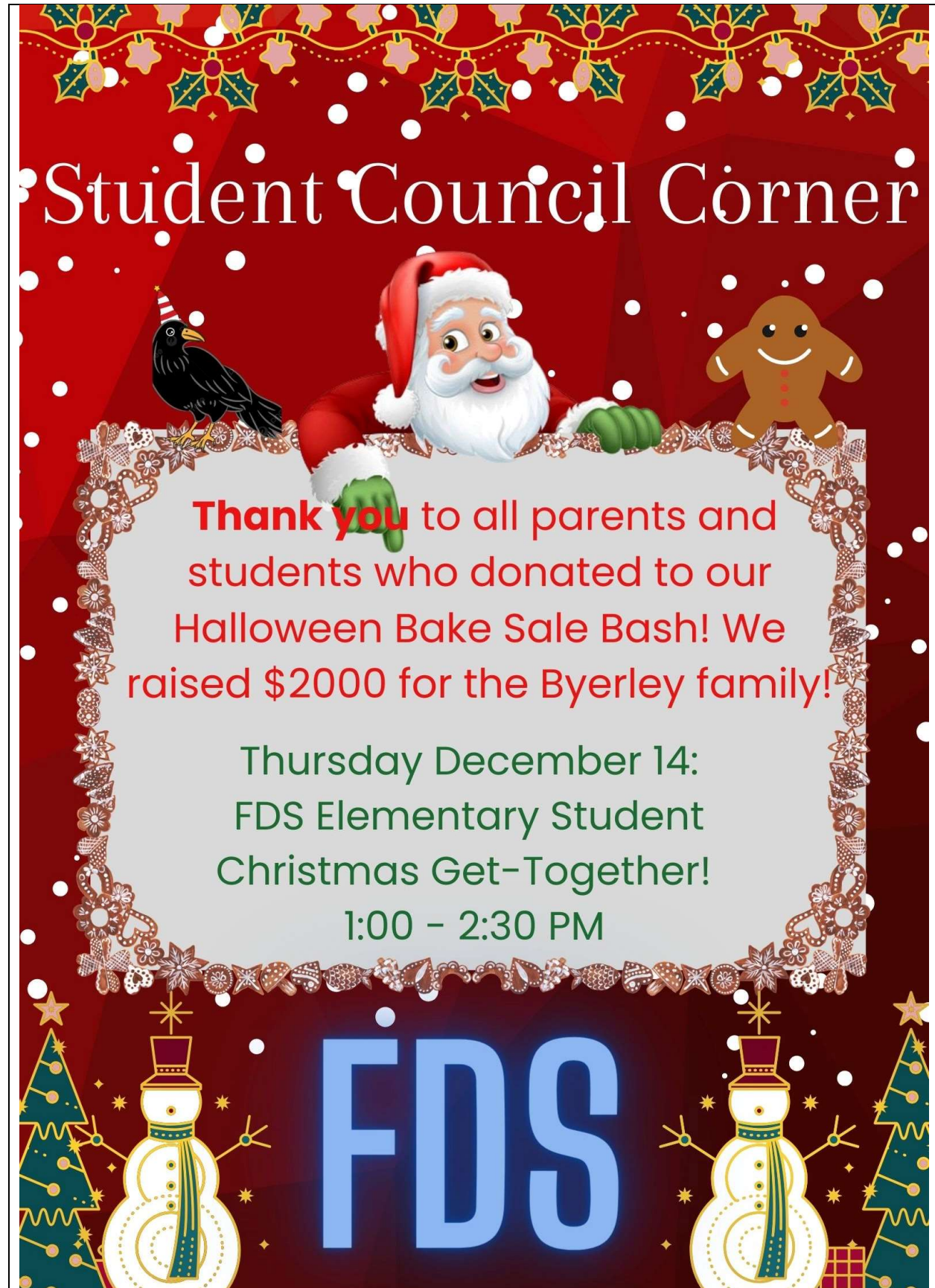
As we move toward the winter holidays, we ask you to take some time out of the season's busyness to read the December Newsletter, as there is important information. Some of those items are:

- Our new **Student Council Corner**. This is where our council will write and share what they have been up to and any new initiatives they are planning for the holidays and the new year.
- **High School Course Withdrawal**. As we near the end of the first semester, we have included important information about high school withdrawals. It is important to withdraw if your student (or you) will not complete the course to avoid a negative grade on your transcript.
- **Verification Forms and School Fees**. We thank Mrs. Thorbjornsen, our Office Data Facilitator, who completes verification forms. Alberta Education requires updated information from families yearly, and this is a mandatory form to complete. Mrs. Thorbjornsen has also sent reminders that school fees are to be collected. Please read that section carefully for instructions on how to pay school fees.
- **Attendance Letters**. At in-person schools, families receive attendance letters when student attendance shows they have missed 10% or more in a month. At FDS, we measure attendance through student engagement. Please read this section regarding the why and next steps behind these letters.
- **ILPs** – we have gone through the Individual Learning Plans for students with an ILP. Please see this section for further details surrounding these documents.

A reminder that school dismisses for the holidays on **Friday, December 22 at 3:15 PM**. Our teachers will be on holiday and will not be available for correspondence during that time. On behalf of the entire staff at Foothills Digital School, we wish you a wonderful, healthy, and safe holiday season!

Sincerely,

Sarah Clark and Brad Skeet, Foothills Digital School Admin Team



# Student Council Corner

**Thank you** to all parents and students who donated to our Halloween Bake Sale Bash! We raised \$2000 for the Byerley family!

Thursday December 14:  
FDS Elementary Student  
Christmas Get-Together!  
1:00 - 2:30 PM

# FDS

## **Mental Health and Wellness Supports**

Foothills School Division is pleased to offer a host of wellness supports available to our students and their families. To access these supports, please visit <https://www.foothillsschooldivision.ca/page/3124/wellness>. If your child requires mental wellness support and you are unsure where to begin, please get in touch with your child's teacher(s). We can connect you with our Family School Liaison Counsellor, Ms. Lindsay Boucher, who can connect with you and determine the next steps for support.

## **FOOTHILLS High School Course Withdrawal** DIGITAL SCHOOL

We are now at the time of year when high school students should be making decisions regarding withdrawal if they need to catch up in their course. Please listen to your teacher's recommendations as they understand what is required to complete a course at the standard they have set out.

Students under 18 years old will need the course withdrawal completed by a parent and sent to Foothills Digital School by email. For our adult students, you must complete the withdrawal form and submit it. **Foothills Digital School will only complete a withdrawal from a course with this form. Please use this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/7WHeWGbjZU> to fill out the form. You will receive an email confirming the withdrawal.**

Please reach out to us if you have further questions regarding this. **Please note that if a student in high school is in danger of not completing the course, the parent or student needs to take responsibility for the withdrawal to avoid a non-passing grade being placed on transcripts.**

## **Attendance Letters**

School attendance is mandatory for students up until the age of 16. Whether students learn in person or in a digital environment like Foothills Digital School, they are expected to engage with their courses and teachers. Students who are not attending school, for different reasons, students are sometimes not present for class meetings (Grades 1-9) or engaging in their courses through completing assignments and submitting work for assessments. When the course teacher has noted a trend, the FDS administration is notified.

**The administration will send "attendance letters" to families and students who have not engaged in their courses, along with the next steps that the school may take to assist with attendance and engagement.**

## Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) have now been completed for students on those plans. We thank parents of students on ILPs for meeting the parent perspective form. We have also changed many of the strategies on existing ILPs as they were for in-person learning and our digital environment requires different strategy.

Foothills Digital School will email the parents of students who have ILPs this week. We explain the changes to the ILP and instructions on logging in to CLEVR to view, print, and digitally sign the ILP. **As we are a digital school, we do require a digital signature on the ILP.**



## Foothills School Division System of Reporting

Starting for the 2023-2024 school year, Foothills School Division will email all families at the end of each month to remind them to check their child's progress in their classes. This is an important piece of our reporting system and ensures we can address student needs well before issuing a Learner Profile (report card). You may read more about this at this link: [Parent Guide to assessment & reporting \(Newsletter format\) \(foothillsschooldivision.ca\)](https://www.foothillsschooldivision.ca)

Foothills Digital School has two reporting systems as we have a diverse learning population.

**Grades 1-9 students** – parents will receive an email each month from Foothills School Division for you to check your child's Edsembli grade books. You will see summative grades (grades applied to the learner profile). Should you wish to have more information regarding teacher feedback on these assignments, please contact your child's teacher, and they can direct you to your child's assignments for feedback.

**Grades 10-12 students** – our high school teachers use the Moodle Gradebook and Parent Portal to report achievement. Parents should have received an email from Doug Stevens with their login (your email address) and password when the course started. Each month, you will receive an email from Foothills School Division asking you to check your child's progress in Edsembli. **Instead, we ask you to view the Moodle Parent Portal.** You may follow the instructions at this link to view your child's gradebook on the Moodle Parent Portal: [FDS Progress Report Email to Parents.docx](#). This is only for Grades 10-12.





## School Fees – PAST DUE

Notices for school fees for the 2023/2024 school year were sent out in September and are now PAST DUE. Payment can be made online via your Edsembli [portal](#), or we accept Cash and Cheque at the school.

To apply to the Foothills School Division for Fee Assistance, you may go to [AP 506](#)



## Verification Forms

2023/24 Student Verification Form has been shared with your Parent Portals. A verification form **MUST** be completed for every student. The portal is on our Web Page **Family & Community>Edsembli Parent Login**.

Please log in to the Parent Portal ([Parent Edsembli](#)) to complete the form immediately, and please see the attachment for instructions on how to complete the form online. If you are having difficulties accessing your site (this is the same site where you see your fees and student Lerner Profiles), please contact Mrs. Thorbjornsen at [thorbjornsent@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:thorbjornsent@fsd38.ab.ca)



## Academic Counselling for FDS High School Students

We congratulate Mz. Isberg who has taken on the role this year as the lead teacher for Foothills School Division's off-campus (work experience) program.

We are pleased to announce that Ms. Allison Fitzpatrick, Oilfields High School's academic counsellor, will support Foothills Digital School students. An email went home to our high school families two weeks ago. Please contact Ms. Fitzpatrick with academic counselling questions regarding course selection and graduation requirements at [fitzpatricka@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:fitzpatricka@fsd38.ab.ca).

If you require further counselling, such as pacing plans for high school students or connection to other supports, such as Family School Liaison Counselling (FSLC) and Individual Learning Plans (ILP), please email Mr. Skeet ([skeetb@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:skeetb@fsd38.ab.ca)) or Ms. Clark ([clarks@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:clarks@fsd38.ab.ca)), first, and we would be happy to have a conversation.

## DUAL CREDIT ENROLLMENT

Registration is now open for Dual Credit Winter Session Courses from **SAIT** and **OLDS** College for **students currently registered in grades 11 & 12**. Students can use this opportunity to gain Post-Secondary AND high school credits while discovering their Career Future possibilities.

**SAIT** Courses: Intro to Business (currently full but is waitlisted), Anatomy and Physiology, Infection Prevention & Control, Medical Terminology, Science of Health and Wellness

**OLDS College** Courses: Veterinary Practice: The Team Connection, Electronics and Control Systems in Precision Agriculture, Global and Sustainable Tourism, Applied Ecology, Managing Landscapes, and Training for Performance.

For further information about these courses and dual credit programming, contact Lori Isberg our Off Campus Education Lead at [isbergl@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:isbergl@fsd38.ab.ca)

## Pursuing a degree in STEM?

You can win a \$120,000 or \$100,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship!

You must be nominated by your school and have applied at one of the 20 partner universities. Once nominated you will be asked to fill out an application.

The Schulich Leader Scholarship school nomination deadline is **January 30, 2024**.

To find out more details about scholarship criteria and application process go to <https://schulichleaders.com/>



Creating the next generation of technology innovators



We are now accepting applications for 20 lucky students to spend a weekend away at the U of A.

Their adventure will include transportation reimbursement\*, accommodations, meals and a jam-packed schedule of events. They will stay in residence, visit state-of-the-art facilities, uncover hidden gems on campus and experience U of A student life first-hand. We'll also take them around our city, including our breathtaking river valley and iconic West Edmonton Mall.

**Who:** 20 Grade 11 Students From Across Canada

**What:** U of A Getaway

**When:** May 24 - 26, 2024

**Where:** University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

Students can learn more and apply at [uab.ca/getaway](https://uab.ca/getaway). The application deadline is **January 31, 2024**.

*\*Up to a maximum based on location.*



### Happy holiday season!

My name is Jennifer Shaw-Dearden and I am the Junior High Humanities teacher here at FDS.

For many people, this is one of the most exciting times of the year. We recognize, however, that this special season can be exceptionally stressful for many families, particularly considering inflation and today's high cost of food. We know that we have some families with us who may have experienced job loss, illness, or other circumstances which make the Christmas season financially difficult.

At FDS, we are fortunate to be able to offer some Christmas food hampers for those who may need a bit of a hand up this year. **If your family could use some support, we would like to provide you with a basket containing a turkey and all of the trimmings.** Be assured that all names will be kept anonymous, and your only communication would be via email with me.

If you would like to receive a holiday food hamper, please send an email to me at [shaw-deardenj@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:shaw-deardenj@fsd38.ab.ca)

Please include the following information:

- Your name/The contact person
- Your contact number
- Number of people in the family (Please include number of children for special treats)
- Any dietary needs or allergies
- Any dessert or other food items that may be a family tradition

Please respond to this email no later than this coming Monday December 11. This will provide enough time to put in our order with Sobey's Okotoks. Gift hampers will be available for pick up on Friday December 22 from the side door of Dr. Morris Gibson School.

We hope that this might provide you with a little relief this year. We wish all of our students and families a magical holiday season!





## New Edsembli Family Portal – Coming Soon

We're excited to announce a new Edsembli Family Portal will be released soon and it will be replacing the current Edsembli Connect platform. The new Family Portal is designed to enhance your involvement in your child's education. This platform provides you with convenient, mobile-friendly, access to important information- -all in one place--regardless of the school(s) your children attend in our division.

You will receive login instructions from "Edsembli" by December 11, 2023. The email will come from **no-replies@edsemblicloud.com** and titled: Family Portal Account Created by Foothills School Division. Yahoo and Hotmail accounts typically send these emails to the Spam & Junk folders so please be sure to check these regularly as this email will contain your Username will be included in this email along with a link to reset your Password which will then take you to the new login screen.

**FDS Christmas Party**

**When?** Thursday, Dec 14th 1:00 - 2:30 pm

**Where?** Foothills Digital School  
147 Crystalridge Dr, Okotoks

**What?** crafts, hot chocolate, snacks, cookie decorating, games, lots of fun!

## **Important School Dates**

**December 1** – Semester 2 registration opens for new high school students currently not in FDS.

**December 14** – In-Person FDS Student Christmas Event. **1:00 – 2:30** PM. Come for crafts, cookie decorating, gingerbread houses, hot chocolate, and a gift game. This is followed by the Dr. Morris Gibson (DMG) Student Market at 2:30 PM.

**December 15** – Local/School-based Professional Learning Day. NO SCHOOL.

**December 22** – Last day of school before Christmas Break. Please note that this is a **full day of school (no early dismissal)**.

**December 25 – January 5** – Christmas Break. NO SCHOOL.

**January 8, 2024** – School resumes after Christmas Break.

**January 8, 2024** – Semester 2 (January 31 – June, 2024) registration for **new FDS High School Students** begins.