

Check out the March 2021 Newsletter!

See the online version at vvschool.ca/news-events/newsletter.



Learning Without Limits

March is here! With spring is nearly upon us, and the weather in most of the province has lately been suspiciously spring-like. Before long it will be time for spring jackets and long walks spent weaving around giant puddles on the pavement. COVID may still be with us, but at least the days are getting longer and the out-of-doors less daunting!

For VVS, March means summer school registrations. Summer school is a great opportunity to catch up on subject matters and get ahead in others—an especially invaluable option in a year that has been full of disruptions. Keep reading for more summer school information. Due to a recent decision by Alberta Education, we have had to make some changes to how our summer semester operates.

Spring also means that graduation is around the corner for our grade 12 students. We will be bringing you more information on this in the coming weeks, but for the time being we can tell you that there will be a virtual commencement ceremony for our 2021 grads. Stay tune to our website and our Facebook page for further information.

We always welcome your comments and feedback regarding this newsletter, or anything else. If you have any questions or concerns, please phone us toll-free at 1-855-974-5333 or talk with your teacher. If you have any VVS-related stories you'd like to share, here or on our website or social media platforms, please contact [Ben Freeland](#), our communications and marketing specialist.

Have a wonderful month of March!

Sincerely,



Mike Loitz,
Principal



Treena Bradbury,
Associate Principal



Frank McCallum,
Associate Principal

New This Month

Summer School Registration

Registration for 2020-2021 summer school courses opened on March 1. Unfortunately, due to a decision by Alberta Education, we have had to temporarily suspend summer school registrations.

Additionally, because of this decision by Alberta Education, we will not be able to accept work for assessment before the official start of the summer semester on July 1. We realize this comes as a disappointment to the many students who were hoping to work on their courses prior to the official start of the summer semester.



We anticipate that we will reopen registrations early next week. At that time, students may enrol in a maximum of 10 credits. Specific course format and required materials can be found in our [online course catalogue](#). Please visit our website for updates.

When students register, they will still have access to course content and assignments prior to July 1. Many of the courses have self-assessments and practice quizzes which are formative (meant to provide guidance) and that do not have marks associated with them. Students may access these formative assessments to guide their learning prior to July 1. Teachers will be available for clarification questions.

Students may begin to submit assignments for summer semester courses on July 1. Students will still have their transcripts updated by Alberta Education on August 20, well ahead of the new school year. Should you have any further questions about this, please contact the school at vv.main@pembinahills.ca.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this has caused.

Second Semester Dates at a Glance

April 9 – Deadline to register or withdraw from any second semester courses

June 15 – All second semester assignments/quizzes due (all grades)

June 22 – All second semester exams completed (all grades)

Summer Semester Dates at a Glance

March 1 – Registration for the summer semester begins

June 15 – Deadline to register for 5-credit summer semester courses

July 2 – Deadline to withdraw from 5-credit summer semester courses

July 10 – Deadline to register for or withdraw from 1 or 3-credit summer semester courses

July 15 – Marks for summer semester courses start being reported, as courses are completed

August 6 – All summer semester course work completed

The Tax Man Cometh!

For parents and guardians and adult upgrading students, the month of March means it's time to break out those calculators and start crunching numbers. As VVS is a public school, our courses and fees are generally not tax deductible.

Should you still need a receipt for your own records, you can obtain one by logging into the student information system (SIS) and then clicking on "Make a Payment" on the left side of the page, and then selecting "Print Receipt".



VVS Office Closed

All VVS support staff will be working home until further notice. The Calgary campus will remain open for exams and other business, but strictly by appointment. Those wishing to visit are required to book an appointment in advance and to wear a mask.

Our phone line (1-855-974-5333 x5317) is being monitored but not answered in person, due to our support staff working from home. All voicemails are being redirected to the VV Support email inbox and are being responded to in the order in which they are received. Our support staff may respond to messages either by phone or email. All other phone numbers and extensions will remain the same unless otherwise noted.

RE/MAX Quest for Excellence 2021 Bursary Program

Time is nearly out to apply for the RE/MAX of Western Canada Quest for Excellence bursaries. This year, the realtor is offering 16 \$1,000 bursaries to grade 12 students across western Canada.



The contest is open to any grade 12 students in western Canada attending high school between September 2020 and June 2021 who have not yet participated in graduation commencement ceremonies. The application period closes Monday, March 15 and winners will be notified in April 2021. Read more [here](#).

WISEST Summer Research Program - Applications Open

Registration remains open for the 2021 WISEST (Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science, and Technology) [Summer Research Program \(SRP\)](#), which runs from July 5 to August 13, 2021 for female students finishing grade 11 in 2021 with an interest in exploring careers in the STEM fields.

The deadline for applications is Wednesday, April 7. Applications are open to students from across Alberta, as well as to out-of-province students who meet the equivalent eligibility requirements. Read more about it [here](#).

Minister's Youth Council Applications Now Open

The Alberta government is currently accepting applications from junior and senior high school students for the 2021-2022 [Education Minister's Youth Council](#). The deadline is Wednesday, March 24. This year the ministry is recruiting at least 32 new members from across Alberta.



Applicants must be junior or senior high school students between the ages of 14 and 19 (as of September 1, 2021) who are passionate about education. Students are selected based on their experience and knowledge, demonstrated commitment to community service, and leadership and teamwork skills.

Read more [here](#) about the program and how to apply for it.

Accessing the Student Information System (SIS)

Parents and guardians who have not yet logged into the VWS Student Information System (SIS) should do so as soon as possible, as this is the best way to monitor your child's progress, review correspondence, keep track of course timelines, and stay up to date with your child's activities and submissions. You should have received an email providing you with login information for your account.



To get started, visit the [school website](#) and select the Course Login quick link button (below the rotational spotlight window) to be directed to the SIS login page. If you have forgotten your username and/or password, you can retrieve them by submitting your email address. You can also contact us at vsupport@pembinahills.ca or by phone at 1-855-974-5333 x5317 if you have any trouble.

Adult Learning at Vista Virtual School

Vista Virtual School welcomes applications from adult upgrading student—defined as those aged 20 or up as of September 1, 2020—throughout the year. For more information on our adult program, please visit [our website](#) or email us at vsadults@pembinahills.ca.

Student ID Cards Available

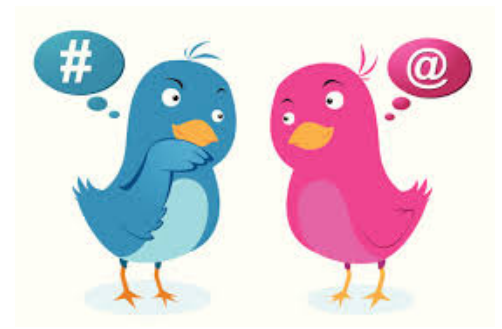
Are you or your child interested in having a Vista Virtual School ID card? Email us at vsupport@pembinahills.ca with your (child's) name and Alberta Student Number together with an appropriate headshot, and we will get this sent off to you.

School Council and Parent Input

Although we do not have a formal School Council, we welcome parents, guardians, and students to provide input on the operations of the school. Your suggestions can be directed to [Mike Loitz](#), Principal.

Engage with us on social media

In addition to this newsletter and our regular website news postings, Vista Virtual School is also active on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We encourage you to follow us for updates on everything from post-secondary orientations to work experience opportunities to news articles and online resources of interest to students and parents, as well as to just say hello and engage with us.



Also, should you come across any interesting virtual learning resources you think we should share via our social media networks, we would love to hear from you. We too are always learning, and we would love to share what you find out there.

Monthly Events Calendar

Check out our [monthly events](#) on our website. We update this calendar as events are added.

Important Dates in March

- March 1 – [Summer school registration opens](#)
- March 8 – [International Women’s Day](#)
- March 14 – [Daylight savings time begins](#)
- March 15 – [Deadline for RE/MAX Quest for Excellence 2021 Bursary](#)
- March 17 – [St. Patrick’s Day](#)
- March 21 – [Nowruz \(Persian New Year\)](#)
- March 22 – [World Water Day](#)
- March 24 – [Deadline for Minister’s Youth Council applications](#)
- March 27 – [Passover begins](#)

Mental Health 101 – A Helping Hand to Caregivers

Today’s children and youth, growing up in a hyper-wired and super-competitive world, face a barrage of mental health challenges the likes of which no previous generation has known. In Canada an estimated 1.2 million youths are affected by some sort of mental illness, and despite increasing awareness, less than 20 percent end up receiving appropriate treatment.

Thankfully, help is available. Alberta Health Services, in collaboration with the Mental Health Foundation, is offering free online programming for parents and caregivers of children and youth on topic ranging from anxiety and ADHD to emotional regulations. Sessions are offered online through Zoom and include hour-long lunch-and-learn sessions as well as 90-minute caregiver education webinars and drop-in sessions.



Upcoming sessions for the month of March include the following:

- **Parenting Teens in the 21st Century: Respectful Limit Setting with Adolescents**
Wednesday, March 10 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- **Anxiety Drop-in Series: Calming Our Bodies**
Thursday, March 11 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- **Building Executive Functioning Skills**
Monday, March 15 (Part 1) and Monday, March 22 (Part 2) from 12:00 to 1:00 pm
- **Parenting Strategies That Promote Positive Mental Health**
Tuesday, March 16 (Part 1) and Tuesday, March 23 (Part 2) from 12:00 to 1:00 pm
- **Supporting Self-Regulation in Elementary School Children**
Wednesday, March 17 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- **Anxiety Drop-in Series: Settling Our Minds**
Thursday, March 18 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- **Technology and the Teenage Brain: Digital Wellness for Families**
Wednesday, March 24 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- **Anxiety Drop-in Series: Overcoming Avoidance**
Thursday, March 25 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm

For more information on this webinar series, including registration info, visit the [virtual education page](#) on the AHS Children, Youth & Families Addiction & Mental Health website. This site also has many other resources for parents and caregivers, including videos and fact sheets on a variety of mental health-related topics.

Contacts

Principal	Mike Loitz		
Associate Principals	Treena Bradbury	Frank McCallum	
Academic Counsellors	Dominick Gallo	Andrea Robin	Christy Filgate (Special Ed.)
Adult Academic Counsellors	vsadults@pembinahills.ca		
School Hours	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (teachers' working hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)		
Contact Information	P: 1-855-974-5333	VVS Support x5317	
	<i>Edmonton Campus</i> x6100 300-10055 106 Street NW Edmonton, AB T7N 1P4	<i>Calgary Campus</i> x6200 341 58 Avenue SE Calgary, AB T2H 0P3	
School Email	vsupport@pembinahills.ca		
We're Online	Twitter @VistaVirtualSch	Facebook VistaVirtualSch	Website vvschool.ca
Connect with Us	Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates on events and activities throughout the year. Our website is also a valuable source of information.	Do you have a story to tell (or a typo to report)? Email Ben Freeland .	The newsletter is published monthly and sent to students, parents, and guardians by email.