

The Hedgehog Herald

Van Hise Elementary Monthly Newsletter

December 2024

NEXT PTO MEETING: Tuesday, December 10th at 6:30pm. IN PERSON @ VHE in the library. Zoom link [HERE](#)

This is a long email! Make sure to expand your email to view the whole message. You'll see a singing hedgehog at the end!



www.VanHisePTO.org



Thank you to everyone who has donated to our annual direct appeal.

In our first two weeks, we've raised approximately \$5,000 - or just 25% of our total goal.

PLEASE HELP US REACH OUR GOAL OF RAISING \$50 PER STUDENT

Though we welcome donations throughout the year (and our links remain active), we hope to reach our fundraising goal of \$20,000.

Online: [DONATE HERE](#)

Checks: Make payable to "Van Hise PTO"

Checks may be mailed to VHE: 246 S Segoe Rd, 53705 OR sent in a backpack (with a note or an envelope labeled PTO)

Your contribution is 100% tax-

5 ways your donation helps the **Van Hise Community** ensures everyone can engage!

1
Free Yearbooks & T-shirts for Every Student
Value: \$10-15/student



2
Free Ice Cream Socials for Every Student
2 per year. Value: \$5/student

3
Free Open Gyms & Weekend Fun
One event per month this school year, including 2 dances



4
Free Childcare at PTO & Empowerment Meetings

5
Teacher & Staff Grants
Supporting grade-level learning resources and enrichment



Donate at www.vanhisepto.org/direct-appeal-2024-25



deductible & eligible for company matching programs.

Thank you for your support and for the many ways you contribute to ensuring our children can continue safely learning together!

-Van Hise PTO

A Note from The Health Office

The Health Office is in need of the following items (fitting kinder through third grade):

- underpants
- body wipes

Any donations are appreciated and can be dropped in the office.



Events at a Glance | DECEMBER

December 10

December PTO Meeting
6.30PM in VHE Library
or **ZOOM**

December 13

Open Gym (6-8pm)

December 14

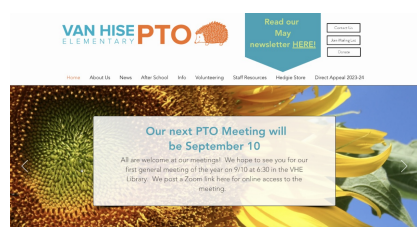
Open Gym (1-3pm)

December 21 - January 5

NO SCHOOL - Winter Break
School Resumes January 6

January 10

Glow Dance (6-8pm)
Sign up to Volunteer Here



We Welcome YOU!

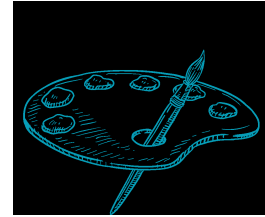
Our monthly PTO Meeting is coming up on Tuesday, December 10th.

There are lots of activities to plan, and we'd appreciate your voice!

- Please send any questions to prez@vanhisepto.org by Monday, December 9th.
- PTO provides child care free of charge to families. Email prez@vanhisepto.org if you plan to bring a child(ren) so we can plan accordingly.
- Our meeting agenda is available [here](#).

As always, check out our website at www.vanhisepto.org for up to date news.

Mr. Lynch's Art Room Update



- Kindergarten: Students are diving into colors, collage, and constellations as they create their stunning Northern Lights projects.
- 1st Grade: We're exploring urban architecture with vibrant rainbow city skylines, learning about line and structure.
- 2nd Grade: Students are crafting cozy hot cocoa mug drawings while exploring shapes and forms.
- 3rd Grade: Continuing their perspective journey, students are analyzing the colorful and unique work of artist Ted Harrison.
- 4th Grade: We've started our agamograph project, a dynamic art piece that shows a change between two images.
- 5th Grade: Exciting news! Students are designing this year's yearbook cover, showcasing their creativity for the entire school to enjoy.

Stay tuned for more artistic adventures!

Families and Community Engagement

The Van Hise PTO hosted several meetings with the Families and Community Engagement (FACE) groups last month. This includes a series of teams, empowerment groups, open gyms and weekend events, adult clubs and classes, grade-level meet-ups, trainings and speakers.

If you are interested in any of these empowerment groups or forming additional groups, [please let us know](#).

What to expect from the empowerment groups?

- The initial meetings are open to anyone who might be interested.
- The meetings will be in the Library at Van Hise.
- Children are welcome and child care will be available.
- Families and caregivers should come with ideas about what they hope to get from the group(s) - connections, resources, sub-groups, trainings, guest speakers, etc.

We are also looking for community support for these efforts.

- Do you or someone you know want to help with translation or interpretation?
- Do you or someone you know want to help provide child care support during meetings and meet-ups?

- Do you or someone you know have connections to free or discounted food (e.g., pizza) to serve at meetings or sell at events to raise funds?



Van Hise Gardens and Green Spaces Update

Thanks to the ongoing support of numerous enthusiastic educators, PTO Leadership, community volunteers, and scholars–The Rooted Program and Outdoor Education at Van Hise came alive this fall.

Over 75 scholars enjoyed the VHE garden and green spaces while participating in structured, curriculum connected, hands-on learning exploration together. A minimum of six consecutive weekly class sessions were conducted. Numerous scholars, families and community members engaged with the VHE garden and green spaces in a more informal format via student and/or family directed exploration during recess and/or before and after school (also during summer and weekend days), and/or through volunteer garden maintenance work over the summer and fall growing seasons.

September-November:

- Indoor Monarch Butterfly Metamorphosis Observation: Outdoor Milkweed Harvesting, Monarch Release, Milkweed Seed Collecting and Planting.
- Kindergarteners (3 classes, 52 scholars, 6 weeks) studied “The Six (Edible) Parts of Plants” and observed the weather to collect data and make environmental connections.
- The Garden Club After School Class (24 scholars grade K-5, 7 weeks) enjoyed harvesting and tasting the six edible parts of plants while working together to maintain and improve the Waukesha Street Garden Spaces.
- In the Waukesha Street Garden we completed the following task during class times.
 1. Harvesting, Tasting, Watering and Weeding
 2. Preparing beds for winter and new Milkweed and Garden Club Growing Spaces
 3. Planting daffodil bulbs and dreaming about Spring
- On November 17, 22 hearty helpers worked to put the gardens to bed for winter. Thank you!

Spring 2025:

- Plans are in the works to begin growing seedlings indoors in April, hosting another Afterschool Garden Club and two Spring VHE community workdays (cleaning up and planting the garden).
- We are also considering offering a mid-July VHE Community Garden Party to share produce and celebrate summer in the garden together.

We appreciate your participation in helping us lay an outdoor education foundation this fall. Our next VHE Garden and Green Spaces meeting is Wednesday December 18, 2024 at 5:00 pm in the VHE Library, space available

for children to entertain themselves quietly.

Let's continue to enjoy our time outside this winter!

Amy Ford-VHE [Rooted](#) Garden Educator in Residence

Ms. Ford-VHE Kindergarten Teacher and Outdoor Education Liaison/Enthusiast



Our fourth restaurant night is coming up on **December 17!**

Head over to Shake Shack in Hilldale (558 N. Midvale Blvd.) all day. The PTO will receive 25% of all sales.

USE Code: DONATE

Thanks to your generosity, we've raised over \$500 from Shake Shack Donation Days so far this year.



Upcoming Open Gyms

Join the Van Hise Community for Open Gyms

When: Friday, December 13 from 6-8 PM and
Saturday, December 14 from 1-3 PM

Where: Van Hise Gym

All students (and siblings) must be accompanied by an adult.

These are informal free and warm opportunities for kids and families to connect. There are no formal activities planned.



After School Classes

Thank you to everyone who has supported the PTO After School Classes this year. **Registration for 2025 winter classes will open Wednesday, December 11 at 12 noon.** Please contact the school social worker, **Amy Robel**, if you may need

financial support.

REMINDER: If your student is attending after school classes, please send them with a snack.

Please share your feedback [here](#) so that we can continue to build upon what works and find ways to improve and make the program even better.

We are also looking for additional support! Please email prez@vanhisepto.org if you have capacity and interest to help with after school classes - including folks with legal or communications experience.



Bucky Books

Bucky Book Orders End Dec 18th!

Buy your \$35 Bucky Book [here](#) by December 18th and save money while supporting the Van Hise PTO. There is a special promotion that gives you two \$10 Spare Time gift cards when you buy a Bucky Book now until December 18th.

The Bucky Book includes hundreds of coupons for local attractions and dining including:

- Madison Children's Museum 2 for 1 General Admission ticket - worth \$12
- Sky Zone Trampoline Park 2 for 1 All Day Pass - worth \$31.99
- Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream 2 for 1 cone or dish - worth \$7



Ollie's Labels

We want to reduce the items in Lost and Found this year and ensure your student's items make it back to them. Consider getting name labels from Ollie's Labels and VHE PTO receives 20% of every sale. This fundraiser is ongoing, and we will send reminders throughout the year.

[Order Labels](#)



Volunteering

If you haven't already, don't forget to verify that **your volunteer status is current**. The initial screening process includes some web-based training that takes time. Once approved, you need to renew your status each year. You must be approved by MMSD to volunteer in classrooms and to chaperone field trips, among other things.




There is a **new process for signing in at the office** this year. If you have a government issued ID, you must bring it with you the first time you sign-in via the new system.

Hedgie Store

The **Van Hise spirit wear store** is now open.

Please place orders by **December 9, 2024** for arrival before winter break.















Van Hise PTO Spiritwear Shop

Check out the Hedge Shop at the link above, or scan the QR code to be whisked right to the Hedge Shop. Make sure to consider buying Hedge Gear for Christmas Gifts. If you have any problems navigating the site, please call or text us at: 8282108233.

You can now purchase your items online in 3 easy steps:

1. Scan the QR code or go online to <https://vhstore.com/>
2. Choose your items and add them to your cart
3. Securely checkout with your credit card

Online Store Deadline: Monday December 9th, 2024 (11:59am CST)

Port & Company Youth Core Cotton Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors An indispensable t-shirt in our classic silhouette—with a very friendly price 5.4-ounce, 100% cotton/92...	Ladies Core Cotton Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors An indispensable t-shirt in our classic silhouette—with a very friendly price 5.4-ounce, 100% cotton/92...	Port & Company Core Cotton Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors An indispensable t-shirt in our classic silhouette—with a very friendly price 5.4-ounce, 100% cotton/92...	Long Sleeve Core Cotton Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors A no-fills t-shirt in our classic silhouette—with a very friendly price 5.4-ounce, 100% cotton/92...	Youth Crystal Tie-Dye Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors Individually hand dyed, each tee is as unique as the one wearing it. 5.4-ounce, 100% cotton/92...	Crystal Tie-Dye Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors Individually hand dyed, each tee is as unique as the one wearing it. 5.4-ounce, 100% cotton/92...
Distinct Youth Very Soft Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors A comfortable tee that delivers 5.4-ounce, 100% combed ring spun cotton... 34 singles/6040...	Distinct Very Soft Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors Crafted from ring spun cotton for ultimate comfort. 5.4-ounce, 100% combed ring spun cotton... 34...	Distinct Women's Very Soft Tee  11 Colors 11 Colors It's important to feel comfortable and this soft tee delivers. 5.4-ounce, 100% ring spun combed...	Youth Core Fleece Pullover Hooded Sweatshirt  11 Colors 11 Colors Cozy sweats in our core weight 7.8-ounce, 50/50 cotton/poly fleece/jet yarn for softnessho...	Port & Company Ladies Core Fleece Pullover Hooded Sweatshirt  11 Colors 11 Colors A cozy pullover hooded sweatshirt in our core weight 7.8-ounce, 50/50 cotton/poly fleece/jet yarn for...	Port & Company Core Fleece Pullover Hooded Sweatshirt  11 Colors 11 Colors Cozy sweats in our core weight 7.8-ounce, 50/50 cotton/poly fleece/jet yarn for...

This store is estimating to ship products by November 25th, 2024

Questions?
John Roth
828-210-5239
john@vhshirts.com
<https://vhshirts.com>



Donations

Please consider supporting Van Hise families this holiday season. **Amy Robel**, the school social worker, is collecting gift cards in \$25 increments. They can be dropped in the office and will be distributed to families prior to winter break.

Please consider donating high protein snacks like string cheese and meat sticks, as well as dried seaweed. They can be dropped off in the office.

Playground Volunteers

The PTO helps out with extra eyes and hands over the lunch period. Consider volunteering for a 30-minute time slot. Volunteers check in at the office to receive a vest and volunteer badge.



Find Volunteer Opportunities for Lunch, Recess, and Other Events Here

2024-25 Daily Schedule

Morning

8:10am - Doors open

8:10 - 8:25am - Breakfast is available

8:25am - Tardy bell

Dismissal

2:00pm on Monday

3:20pm on Tuesday - Friday

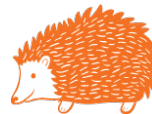
Mark Your Calendar

- December 10: PTO Meeting
- December 13: Open Gym
- December 14: Open Gym
- December 21 - January 5: No School - Winter Break
- January 6: School Resumes
- January 10: Glow Dance
- January 14: PTO Meeting



You've reached the end. We hope to see you Tuesday, 12/10 at the PTO meeting! Check www.vanhisepto.org for updates.

VAN HISE PTO
ELEMENTARY



Van Hise Elementary | 246 South Segoe Road | Madison, WI 53705 US

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