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Van Andel Institute Supports Administrators, Teachers, Parents, and Students Alike During a Challenging Year

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (December 7, 2021) — As we look ahead to a new year, we also reflect on another challenging season for the administrators, teachers, students, and parents with whom we work. VAI's mission is to create classrooms where curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking thrive. We do this by providing a wide variety of programs and resources to support educators and students as they navigate the shifting landscape. As the year comes to an end, we want to make sure educators have access to all the free tools and resources available to help make their world a little easier and a little more effective, and we look forward to adding to them in the year ahead!

For Administrators & Teachers:

- **Better Together: A Virtual Event for K–12 Administrators**
Admin networking events focusing on relevant topics like top K-12 administrator concerns and ways to combat learning loss.
- **VAI's Admin Guides**
Relevant and comprehensive guides designed to equip administrators with strategies for school development. This year featured *Beyond Learning Loss: Six Ways Schools Can Thrive in the Aftermath of the Pandemic* and *7 Tips for a Successful School Improvement Planning*.
- **VAI Education Spotlights**
Articles created to assist teachers in lesson application. Publications included *The Science (and Art) of Equity and Using Alternative Assessments in the Classroom*.
- **Blue Apple Timely Topics**
8 free lessons connecting to current events like *Celebrating Black History Month*, *Respectful Debate*, and *Spooktacular STEAM*. These lessons have been downloaded more than 2,400 times and used throughout the United States and over 25 other countries.
- **Coming Soon! NexGen Inquiry Quests**
Save time and master science standards with these low-prep, high-engagement video-guided quests. These compelling scenarios capture student interest while introducing them to a real-world problem they can solve with science.
- **Field Trips**
Field Trips which immerse classrooms of students—and their teachers—in learning science through inquiry. Students conduct unique, grade-specific investigations and participate in hands-on discovery.

For Parents & Students:

- **Afterschool Cohorts**
Our flagship program for students in grades 4-7. This FREE program offers students the opportunity to investigate modern issues using scientific tools and resources.
- **Summer Camps**
Week-long camps filled with exploration for grades 2-12. Students examine fossils like a paleontologist, investigate a crime scene like a forensic scientist, and much more! Our 2022 schedule will be launched January 2022, so stay tuned!
- **Keep Curiosity Alive**
Engaging activities and resources that kids can do during the summer, on weekends, or after school.

To learn more about these resources, visit vaei.org.

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ABOUT VAN ANDEL INSTITUTE

Van Andel Institute (VAI) is an agile biomedical research and education organization that unleashes innovation to multiply impact. Established in Grand Rapids, Michigan, by the Van Andel family, VAI collaborates around the world to advance bold ideas in biomedicine and education. With a staff of more than 400 and a growing network of partners, VAI studies the origins of cancer, Parkinson's and other diseases and translates its findings into breakthrough prevention and treatment strategies to improve human health. The Graduate School at VAI offers a Ph.D. in molecular and cellular biology through a research-intensive, interdisciplinary program that prepares students for successful careers as independent investigators. VAI also is dedicated to creating classrooms where curiosity, creativity and critical thinking thrive, offering engaging programs for K-12 students and transformative professional development and instructional tools for teachers. Find out more about Van Andel Institute by visiting vai.org.