

October 2025



Selkirk Montessori School E-Newsletter

From the Head of School, Erin Hayes

Words Matter

“Our words have creative power. With our words, we can speak blessings over our future.” – **Joel Osteen**

A parent asked me recently what I think will be left as AI begins to replace jobs. As I have pondered all the minor tasks of my job made easier by AI, the one thing that AI could never replace is capacity for independent, critical thought as I consider the experience, position, and previous interactions with the partner in communication.

AI cannot accurately, and in real time, gauge the impact of my words. It is up to me to measure and respond to the emotions, joys, worries my words land on.

Our youngest students are learning to use their words to communicate while our oldest students are learning to wield the power of the words they carry with purpose.

A very intentional part of our return to school has been our “Take What You Need” board.

Each sticky is a pocket whisper, a reminder of the strength we carry in the messages we give each other and ourselves. These little sticky notes had been disappearing so fast.

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“October, the month when the trees all remind us how beautiful it is to let things go.”

Message from Erin (cont'd)

Yesterday, as I replenished our “Take What You Need” board I wondered if the stickies are just getting thrown out.

Later that day, I was visiting classrooms and, on the way, saw a locker hanging open. When I went to close it, I saw one of our grade 3 students had been quietly selecting some and hanging hers in her locker. She even found a blank sticky and wrote herself one. So today I replenished the board with a few of her own message. (Sharing this picture with her joyful permission).

So, as you move through this word, please give yourself and others grace.

Seek to interpret words and actions in a positive light, not only as a kindness to others, but to feel a lightness in the positive lens others view you through.

Have the courage to have hard conversations valuing both yourself and your partner, and the conviction that relationships and people are worthy of critical, creative, and compassionate thoughts. This is at the very core of what makes us all human.



“Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”

FRANK OUTLAW

Truth & Reconciliation Assembly



Many thanks to the Leadership students for creating a meaningful and heartfelt assembly this year. Florence and Carmen Dick attended the assembly as our honoured guests. We appreciate Florence for sharing her knowledge and Carmen for helping us learn and pronounce the Lək'wəŋən version of our classroom names.



Counsellor's Corner

The Dogs of Selkirk Montessori

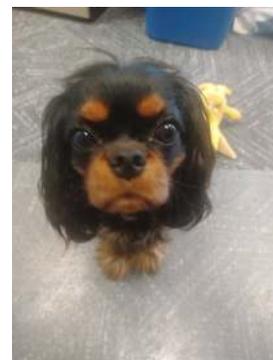


Happy October! It has been a wonderful first month back. I have had the pleasure of spending my mornings greeting students as they arrive and offering support with their transition into school. For the most part, the students have been happily coming in, which is a testament to the relationships they've built with their teachers and classmates.

It's understandable, however, that some students may need some extra care and attention to ease them into their day. The littlest students at our school may be experiencing time away from their grown-ups for the first time! For others, adjusting back to full-time school after a summer off can feel like such a big hurdle. Overall, it seems as though most students are starting to feel adjusted and ready for the school year ahead.



Toby, who belongs to our Librarian/Primary French/PE teacher, Bree Chong, is at the school a few days a week and can be found in the library with his mom, or in the Learning Support Room with Carlyn. You may occasionally see him helping our Admin staff in the main office. Toby is part Shih Tzu, part Havanese and is 100% cuteness overload. He has proven to help boost students' confidence in reading and writing!



Holly, a purebred Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, belongs to our Principal, Erin Hayes. Holly spends a few days per week at the school, keeping our main office a warm and inviting place to be. You may also see Holly with Erin at the back door greeting students first thing in the morning. Holly's sweet face is bound to turn any frown upside down!



My King-Schnauzer, Frankie, is with me most days of the week. He is a certified PATS therapy dog and absolutely loves supporting our students during drop-off, counselling sessions, and other various activities throughout the school. Recently, Frankie provided students with some extra comfort during the Grade 6 Vaccines. The nurses were grateful to have an extra helper there!

Counsellor's Corner (cont'd)

To ensure the safety of both the students and our doggy staff, Bree and I have been visiting the classrooms to go over some guidelines and expectations. We have explained to the children that if they would like to pet a dog (both in and out of school) it is always a good idea to do the following:

- Ask the owner for permission to pet the dog
- Ask how/where the dog prefers to be pet
- Pet the dog one at a time

It is very normal for some children to feel unsure or nervous around dogs, especially if they have had negative interactions with dogs in the past. To normalize the fact that dogs (and animals) are not everyone's cup of tea, we have made sure to communicate with the students that interacting with the dogs is completely *optional*. However, all three dogs have very calm and gentle temperaments, so most children eventually become quite comfortable with them over time, even if it's just to say hello.

If you or your child have any concerns, or if you would like more information about the benefits of dogs in schools, please feel free to contact me via email at counsellor@selkirkmontessori.ca

More information about PATS (Pacific Animal Therapy Society) can be found on their website: <https://www.patspets.ca/>

Warmly,

Carmelle Hermoso, M.Ed., RCC
School Counsellor

Reference:

Jones, Erin & Shannon, Grant. (2025). Dogs in schools: Dogs Connect as an example of a dogs-first well-being dog programme. Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work. 37. 109-120. 10.11157/anzswj-vol37iss1id1168.

“There is nothing truer in this world
than the love of a good dog.”

Selkirk Parent Group (SPG) Update

The leaves are crunchy, the mornings are crisp, and Hallowe'en is just around the corner. The SPG held the first meeting of the school year on September 18 and planning is well underway for a year full of fun events and tasty fundraisers. Watch this newsletter and the weeklies for details on fundraisers like Purdys Chocolates (orders will arrive in time for winter holiday celebrations), West Coast Seeds in the New Year, and more.



Thank you to all who took part! Remember, all caregivers are welcome to attend, and no commitment is required (though be warned: getting involved is highly contagious).

An Apple a Day ...

In the meantime, savour the change in seasons with some delicious apples grown here in BC! Each box sold raises \$8 to \$10 for the SPG, which really means \$8 to \$10 towards things like classroom supplies, field trips, school events and other enrichment opportunities for our students. These apple sales are a new fundraiser this year, so please tell us what you think once you've had the chance to crunch into an Ambrosia or Honeycrisp apple.



Annual Hallowe'en Howler

For many kids, October means "Hallowe'en". For many years now, the Kingfisher Class (grades 7 & 8) has put on this fun family event. The SPG supports it, too, and there are many ways you can get involved. Watch for volunteer opportunities and start planning your costume!

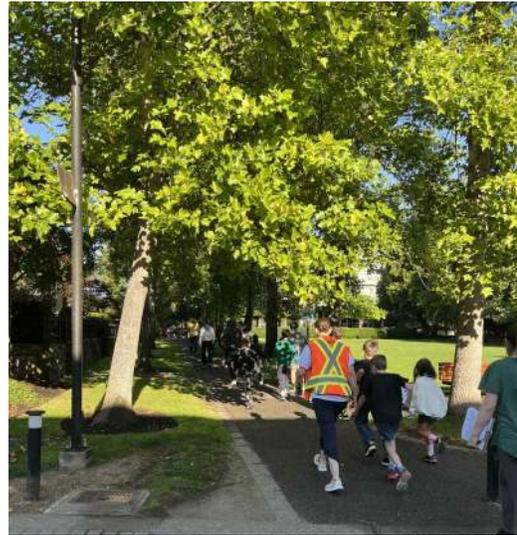
Key dates for October ...

Oct. 6: Apple orders and payments due and hot lunches start this week

Oct. 23: Apple pick up at school - details to come

Oct. 25 (Saturday): Hallowe'en Howler - come do the Monster Mash together!

Terry Fox Run 2025



Special thanks to Doug for coordinating the Terry Fox Run again this year. All our students take part and Penny was here to help cut the tape for the KP run in the gym.



Annual General Meeting Information



Tuesday

NOVEMBER 18th

6:00 PM

The annual general meeting of the Pacific Montessori Society will be held in-person at the school on **Tuesday, November 18th**.

Board treasurer, Francis Rowe, will go over the financial statements for the 2024-2025 school year and the approved budget for 2025-2026 will be provided as well. Directors will also have prepared reports for your review.

We have two parents at the school who are running for office at the AGM: Sameer Jinnah and Rene Gautier. Current director Piper London will be running for a third term. Many thanks to Chris Bechard for his years of service on the board. You have made a difference!

Please email pjbarner@shaw.ca if you are planning on attending. I need to know how many chairs and packages to prepare.

The Great Outdoors!



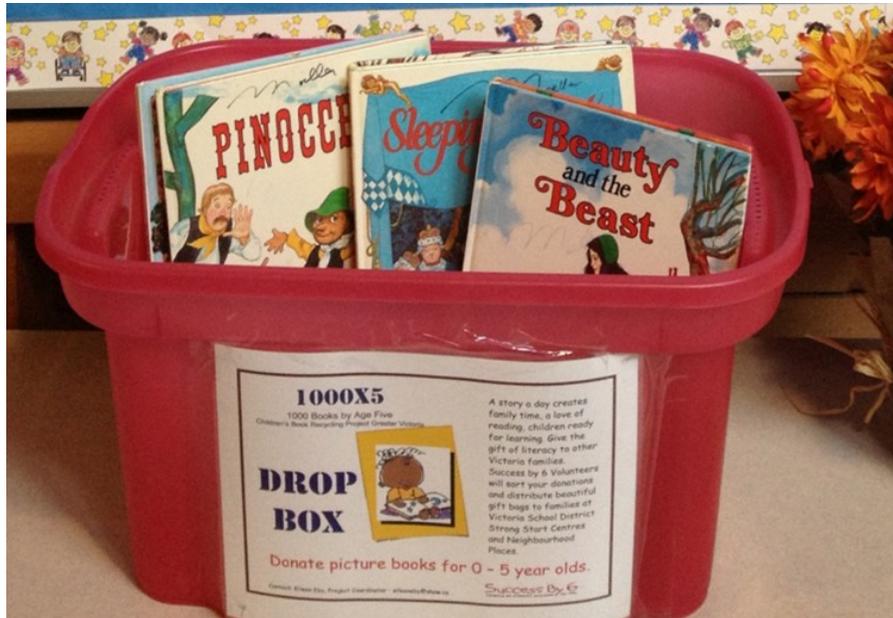
Our Cross Country Club hit the ground running in September! Thanks to Noel for coordinating. Kudos to our staff and parent volunteers who supervised the practices and helped at the meets. Congrats on another successful year!



Danielle had these students for Outdoor Education in September. The weather was amazing!

Library Note

1000X5 Book Recycling Project shares facts The necessity of reading with babies and toddlers



*Books in the home for babies and preschoolers are 70% more effective at predicting school success than is the parents' educational level.

*Books in the home are more effective than literacy outreach programs.

* Over 14 years 1000X5, with your help, has donated 365,000 books for babies and preschoolers. Check out our 90 second video showing the project in action

<https://youtube/zbdIWkjgGPI> and www.1000x5.ca

Provincial Government Employees—TAKE NOTE!

You can donate directly from your payroll!
Automatic payroll deductions make giving easy.

Choose to donate through PECSF and you will make a difference at Selkirk Montessori!

Choices include up to 10 of your favourite charities (Donor Choice) or the Fund Supported Pool. Each Fund Supported Pool is made up of local programs and services unique to your own community (PECSF region).

All CRA registered charities are eligible. Your donations will appear automatically on your T4 slip, making tax time a breeze!

For more information and to donate, this link.

[*Provincial Employees Community Services Fund*](#)



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We can make a difference!

www.selkirkmontessori.ca



Don't forget to bring in your donations for the Community Fridge!

Dates to Remember

- * Fri, Oct 3—Grades 5-6 Sleep Over
- * Wed, Oct 8—Individual Photo Day
- * Mon, Oct 13—Thanksgiving Day (Holiday)
- * Thu, Oct 16—Great Canadian Shakeout
- * Tue-Thu, Oct 21-23— Child Hosted Visits
- * Fri, Oct 24—Non Instructional Day
- * Thu, Oct 30—Photo Retakes

Selkirk Montessori School is located on the traditional territories of the Lək'wəŋən people, today known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on this territory.