



Selkirk Montessori School E-Newsletter

From the Head of School, Erin Hayes

I would like to personally invite all families to attend the Open House and Transition Night on January 19th.

It is a special night, showcasing our current students and welcoming those interested in learning more about Montessori, from pre-service teachers to expectant families, to those searching for something different for their children. I especially appreciate how our Grade 8s represent the school that night, touring those new to our community.

My first introduction to the school was not through the materials. It was not through teacher training programs or a university class. It was through observations in the Senior classroom, then grade 6 and 7. I was astonished by the way each of these students carried themselves through their own learning journey. The investment in their own learning was something I had never heard about from other teachers, let alone seen before.

It was not long before I knew this was not just a really special class. This was how Montessori adolescents grew up – believing

in themselves, willing to be vulnerable, asking questions to guide their learning.

I was both curious and excited, and the rest is history!

We have the exceptional privilege (and occasional challenge) of uniting three schools under one roof. Our Kindergarten Preschool, Elementary, and Middle School programs are all connected in their approach to education through the Montessori philosophy. However, as children mature and change, so too do the programs. Open House provides an opportunity for each child to showcase their growth

Just as the Open House is a showcase of what your child is currently doing, the transition portion of the evening is an opportunity to see what you might look forward to in the years to come. Gradually, over the years at Selkirk, students learn to take full ownership of their Montessori education: practicing work habits, practical life, and personal responsibility come to fruition.

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“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

C.S. Lewis

From the Head of School (cont'd)

Students have an exceptional ability to prepare for both short and long term work, self-monitor and reflect, and set goals.

The Middle School program is one of structured freedoms where, as the students grow, they can exercise the habits of mind to explore the curriculum at such a meaningful level.

Students are engaged in their learning at a mature level in which they shape and structure their experiences and learn to a depth of not just understanding but of true “knowing.”

Due to the personalized learning environment and the classroom setting with established relationships, students have the confidence to take risks and ask big questions using higher level thinking skills.

There are 16 teachers, all experts in their roles, working with the Middle School population of roughly 90 students.

I have always thought of a student’s experience here as similar to baking a cake.

In the early years, each student is mixing and measuring with the gentle guidance and support of an adult.

Each year, another layer of academic awareness, skill development, and work habits is added to the base layer. In these years, they gather skills and tools to use throughout their lifetime.

Finally, in middle school, the icing is added. The child makes this cake his or her own. They look at all the options available to them and choose the colours, shapes and details of their path. With discipline of strong work habits and an understanding of personal interests, strengths, strategies, and goals result in a spectacular creation.

These students are innovators, creative thinkers, healthy risk-takers, and empathetic peers who take responsibility for their education and advocate for their own needs.

Leaving without allowing a child to complete the middle years is like serving a cake without icing, it is still wonderful, but it is impossible to understand the spectacular creation it was sure to become.

Please join us for Open House and the years to come!



December Photo Gallery—Festivals of Light



The Seastars and Cormorants prepared and performed at a Festival of Lights assembly in December. We learned about so many celebrations from around the world, including: Hanukkah, St Lucia's Day, Yalda Night, Toro Nagashi, Christmas, Diwali, Kwanzaa and Chinese New Year.

Special thanks to all of the staff and students for sharing these wonderful celebrations with us.

From the Pacific Montessori Society Board of Directors

As you know, one of our top priorities at Selkirk Montessori is to deliver a quality education in a cost efficient manner. Board members are also mindful of the significant contribution made by parents and, accordingly, we seek to keep fee increases to a minimum.

In the December newsletter, we advised you that the Board of Directors had approved an increase in tuition, resulting in the following fee adjustments:

- * Half Day Kindergarten/Preschool: \$7,764 (an increase of \$18.83/12 months)
- * Full Day Preschool: \$12,952 (an increase of \$31.42/12 months)
- * Full Day Kindergarten: \$10,264 (an increase of \$24.92/12 months)
- * Elementary/Middle: \$9,641 (an increase of \$30.92/12 months)

The directors have approved an increase in out of school care fees and the mortgage retirement donation this year as well.

These increases were voted in specifically to continue to support our valuable educators and staff, who are the heart and soul of Selkirk Montessori.

Individual Student Fees have been adjusted slightly for next year to reflect increases in areas such as field trips, buses, camps, etc.

Middle School (Grades 5-8) families are reminded that Individual Student Fees, Outdoor Education, Camp T and Out Trip fees have now been combined rather than charged at the time of the various events. Grade 5-8 fees also include an additional \$100/child for Immersion Week.

In the past, these fees were charged separately. Now you are able to spread the cost of these over 10 or 12 months, depending on your payment schedule.

With this new fee structure, we look forward to being better able to plan and provide enriching experiences for your child's education.

The Family Statement of Commitment, which you signed last year, is still in force. We need the school, parent and child to work together to develop a healthy respect for the common expectations of the school and to employ the resources deemed necessary by the staff for the success of the child.

Anybody with questions or concerns regarding changes to the fee schedule or the Family Statement of Commitment is encouraged to contact Penny at penny@selkirkmontessori.ca.



December Spirit Day—Fancy Schmancy!



The Leadership students declared Fancy Schmancy Day in December.

Can't wait to see what they come up with for Spirit Days in 2023!

Selkirk Parent Group (SPG)

With the winter break behind us, the SPG is in full 2023 planning mode. If you have feedback on the activities we've run so far, or ideas you want to share, please pass them along to your class representative to gather and share with us. We are always looking for fresh ideas and ways to improve!

Wait, what is the SPG again?

The Selkirk Parent Group (SPG) is an independent committee of the Pacific Montessori Society. We raise funds to support our students and we foster an inclusive, effective school community through caregiver involvement. The SPG is led by its Chair, Cheryl B., and supported by all of you who graciously put up your hands when we ask for help or volunteers throughout the year!

Upcoming events

We're still lining up this term's activities. Watch for full details about:

- Selkirk Rocks the Heart rock hunt – heart-themed painted rocks hidden on Selkirk property and the surrounding area ... add your own rocks, take one home, give one to a friend, or re-hide your find!
- Art Cards - buy cards and other items featuring some of your child's artwork
- SpiritWear and Purdy's Chocolates sales



If you're looking for a rainy-day activity, start painting rocks now in anticipation of the February rock hunt event!

January reminders

- Hot lunches start up promptly on January 3 and run to March 18
- Upcoming: February 10 is our next Pizza Day!
- Upcoming: Selkirk Rocks the Heart rock hunt runs February 13 to 16

Registration for 2023-2024



Re-Registration

The Ministry of Education requires us to collect registration forms for students each year. Please check your email for a link to the re-registration package. Remember that space is limited in a few of our programs and the deadline is Tuesday, January 31st.

Siblings

If you are a returning family and have a new sibling to enrol for the 2023-2024 school year, please email Erin Andrews at reception@selkirkmontessori.ca for a separate [new student registration link](#). Again, the deadline for submission is Tuesday, January 31st.

Bursaries

Families requiring a bursary for the 2023-2024 school year, please email penny@selkirkmontessori.ca for the application forms. This paperwork must also be completed and returned by the January 31st deadline to be considered.

Waitlisted Children

We will be in touch with families on the waitlist by mid to late February. Please be patient...but don't hesitate to contact us if you are anxious! I am always happy to hear from parents that they are still keen to get their child(ren) enrolled.

Not Returning

The decision to move a child from one school to another is never an easy one; however, for many reasons (religious affiliation, finances, moving, convenience, family history – just to name a few) you may decide not to return to Selkirk for the 2023-2024 school year. We'll be sorry to see you go.

We ask that you let us know as soon as possible. Your child will let us know if you don't; maybe not in so many words, but in their own way, that they are not coming back. It has been our experience that children become confused when they are told they are making a move. They wonder, "Is Selkirk still my school? Is there any reason to keep working hard here? Do I still have to follow the rules of the school?" We've even had children say to a teacher, "I don't have to listen to you because I'm not coming back to this school." You can imagine the detrimental effect this can have on your child's education, especially as we still have six months of school to get through!

We want to ensure that your child's experience at Selkirk is a positive one, right down to their last day of school. It's a fact of life that some of you will be leaving. Come talk to us about making the transition an easy one for your child, for their teachers and for the school community as a whole.

If you have any questions about registration for 2023-2024, please email me at penny@selkirkmontessori.ca or call 250-384-3414.



2970 Jutland Road
Victoria, BC V8T 5K2
250-384-3414 (tel)
250-384-3420 (fax)
reception@selkirkmontessori.ca

We can make a difference.

www.selkirkmontessori.ca



We are always delighted to be able to participate in the Angel Gift program for Our Place Society. The children do such a beautiful job of decorating the gifts and glean a better understanding of poverty and social issues in Victoria.

Dates to Remember

- ♦ January 3rd—First day back after winter break
- ♦ January 09-13—Kindergarten/Preschool Observations
- ♦ January 19—Open House/Transition Night (5:30 pm)
- ♦ January 31—Re-registration deadline
- ♦ February 3—Junior Musical
- ♦ February 14—Kindness Assembly—all Welcome
- ♦ February 17— Non-Instructional Day (no school for children)
- ♦ February 20—Family Day (school closed)

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.