

JANUARY 2024



# Selkirk Montessori School E-Newsletter

## From the Head of School, Erin Hayes

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I would like to personally welcome all families to attend the Open House and Transition Night on January 25<sup>th</sup>. It is a special night showcasing our current students and welcoming those interested in learning more about Montessori, including pre-service teachers, to expectant families and those searching for something different for their children. I especially appreciate how our Grade 8s represent the school at Open House by confidently leading tours for those new to our community.

We have the exceptional privilege (and occasional challenge) of joining three schools under one roof. Our Kindergarten Preschool, Elementary, and Middle School programs are all united in their approach to education through the Montessori philosophy. However, as children mature

and change, so too do the programs. Our Open House provides an opportunity for each child to showcase their growth within their current age group.

As well as being 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. It is gradually over the years at Selkirk that students are able to take full ownership of their Montessori education. Over many years, practicing work habits, practical life, and personal responsibility come to fruition. Students develop the exceptional ability to prepare for both short and long term work, self-monitor and reflect, and set goals. What a way to experience school!

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“Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go. They merely determine where you start.” —Nido Qubein

## From the Pacific Montessori Society Board of Directors

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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.

At a meeting immediately following the AGM in November, the directors approved tuition increases of 3% for Preschool/ Kindergarten and 9% for Elementary and Middle school programs for 2024-2025.

The increase in tuitions was approved specifically to continue to support our incredible staff, who are the heart and soul of Selkirk Montessori. In particular, we want to assure our dedicated educators that the directors are committed to continuing to improve their salaries given the contract agreement in the public system last year.

This has resulted in the following fee adjustments:

- \* Full Day Preschool: \$13,266 (an increase of \$32.17/12 months)
- \* Full Day Kindergarten: \$10,881 (an increase of \$26.42/12 months)
- \* Elementary/Middle: \$10,836 (an increase of \$74.58/12 months)

The directors have approved an increase in Out of School Care fees of 3% and the Mortgage Retirement Donation will be \$350 per year. Tax receipts are provided.

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

Grade 5-8 fees also include an additional \$120/child for Immersion Week.

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 Schedule of Fees or the Family Statement of Commitment is encouraged to contact Penny at [penny@selkirkmontessori.ca](mailto:penny@selkirkmontessori.ca).



## We Need Your Help!

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The school is looking for two parent volunteers to complete the grocery shopping for our emergency bin this month.

We are asking for someone to go out to the wholesale stores and obtain the large tins of food with the longest expiry date. You will be reimbursed for the cost of the food.

Please touch base with Stephanie in the office: 250-384-3414 or [reception@selkirkmontessori.ca](mailto:reception@selkirkmontessori.ca).



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## Welcome to our Selkirk Montessori Community!

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Congratulations to our own Natasha Allen and her husband Brody Frehlich. They welcomed Hero Beatrice Allen Frehlich and Sylvie Cordelia Allen Frehlich to their family. Sylvie was born December 3rd at 3:01 pm (5 lbs 2 oz) and Hero was born two minutes later (5 lbs 10 oz). Hero had to spend some time in the NICU, but all are now home, healthy and happy. (Photo credit: Brody Frehlich)

We are also very pleased to welcome baby Ainsley Joan Moser to our school community! Congrats Devon Bottomley (current teacher) and Nate Moser (former student)! Ainsley was born on December 12, weighting 7lbs and 6 oz.

# Selkirk Parent Group (SPG)

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## The SPG is ... you!

As parents and caregivers of children in the school, you are all members of the Selkirk Parent Group (SPG). The group is an independent committee of the Pacific Montessori Society and has two main goals: raise funds to support our students, and—through caregiver involvement—foster an inclusive, effective school community. It's led by a volunteer executive.

To get involved, have a look at our website, which details activities and includes information about specific and general ways you can get involved.



Designed by pikisuperstar / Freepik

## Upcoming activities

We're dreaming and scheming for 2024, including the possibility of a multicultural dinner. Let us know if this idea appeals to your family and if you'd be interested in helping out. Also, watch for information about upcoming Pizza Days and our new West Coast Seeds fundraiser!

We may be busy planning, but we're always looking for fresh ideas! Send your thoughts to your classroom representative, or attend an SPG meeting. [Join our email list](#) for full details about meeting dates, times and locations..

## Key dates for January:

- **Jan. 8:** Hot lunch orders start for the term
- **Jan. 25:** Stop by our table at the open house
- **Jan. 26:** Pizza Day



# Winter Concerts 2023



We had two wonderful concerts again this year. Many thanks to our outstanding music teachers, Mr. C and Jess, for getting the children ready for two **EPIC** (an in joke from the senior concert...) events. Thanks to the families for the great turnout — the grade 1-4 concert was packed to the rafters!

Thanks also to the teachers and staff who support the music program every year, especially around concerts and musicals. Many were supervising the children, or helping with set up, or taking care of the sound (kudos, Brian!). We appreciate you!

Selkirk music teacher, Kristen Birley, who is currently on maternity leave, attended both concerts. She brought her delightful baby, Alora, for her first concert experiences. As you can see, she was all smiles during the performances. Well, that may have been because Erin Hayes is a baby whisperer. lol





## Winter Concerts 2023 (cont'd)



Artwork  
by Erin  
Magnus :)

Have a happy, healthy and  
fruitful new year!

## Toby's Tales—Library Update

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Last term the Library was buzzing with keen students who joined our two Book Clubs; one for gr. 7/8 and one for gr. 5/6. Initially we had 30 students wanting to join the 5/6 club and some of my colleagues whispered, politely, that I should have limited the sign up sheet. But how can I possibly limit book lovers!? Luckily, the novelty wore off, the excitement waned and I was left with a dedicated following of kids who genuinely love books and libraries. It was because of the latter that I decided that we wouldn't really be reading a novel together, as most book clubs don't, at least not any I've been a part of. There were too many other jobs that the kids were excited to learn about and help me with.

We started at the Scholastic book fair where the kids (and their dedicated parents) baked cookies and mini matcha cakes to sell and raised almost \$400.00 between the two groups. With the funds the kids were able to choose some books that they felt were missing from our collection that I then bought for them. Once the new books arrived, we worked together to barcode, tape, stamp, glue and prepare the books to be unleashed on to the shelves. The best perk of the job was getting first dibs on the fresh pages.

As any good minimalist consumer knows, when you bring in new things you need to get rid of old things to make space. As libraries are never decidedly minimalist, there were many "classics" that were ready to be weeded. After discussing the guidelines (and establishing that I get final veto) I let the rabid students loose to devour the shelves that they have grown up perusing. They made mincemeat out of nearly 200 books that were decidedly MUSTIE (Moldy/Misleading, Ugly, Smelly/ Superseded, Trivial, Irrelevant) and accomplished in 20 minutes what takes me months on my own. Overhearing their squeals and giggles at a particularly "cringy" novel from the 90s or, equally, their delight at revisiting memories from their earlier childhoods filled me with an exceptional amount of joy.

Lastly, but certainly not leastly, (I take my liberties!) the younger book club has been diligently working on a 3D puzzle of the Hogwarts school grounds. It has been hilarious and touching to see the group starting to learn to work together after the initial giddiness of the task wore off. Now they are getting down to work and are determined to finish before the holidays. If they do not achieve their goal, I will use this as an excuse to have them back in the new year to simply be in their company once again.

For the love of kids who love books,

Bree & Toby





# Kingfisher Ancient India Museum - Photo Gallery



Kingfisher students studied Ancient India with Gigi and created a market museum for all our students to walk through. There were displays, games and toys from the era.





# Registration for 2024-2025

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## 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 Friday, January 26th.

## Change in Programs

Selkirk Montessori continues to evolve each year in response to the needs of its students, and the adjustments we have made have created a unique and joyful school environment for all. Programs have shifted in small increments and sometimes grand changes have taken place over the years as our students, parent needs, and society also changed.

Next September, we will see another change. After careful consideration, we have decided that the Half-day Preschool Program running within our Hummingbird full-day classroom is not ideal for our learners or sustainable for our staff. Rather than return to a half-day classroom, which is no longer in demand at the numbers we used to see, we will be re-enrolling the Hummingbird program as a full-day only program, as we do with our Chickadee and Eagle classrooms. This will allow our staff to invest in close, long-term relationships with their students and families.

The schedule will allow for more authentic, uninterrupted Montessori work periods, and students will benefit from a day with fewer transitions.

We know this move may be disappointing for families with children who still benefit from a half-day program or enjoy having their children home half days. If you feel your child would be better served by a half-day program, we encourage you to connect with some of our stand-alone Montessori preschools in town still offering this service, including Victoria Montessori, St. Christophers, and Bloom Montessori.

We also know that families may choose to pick their child up on special arrangement for partial days while enrolled in a full-day program and understand and respect these special circumstances.

If you have any questions about this change, please reach out to Penny and Erin.

## Siblings

If you are re-enrolling a currently enrolled child(ren) and have a new sibling you are hoping to have attend Selkirk Montessori for the 2024-2025 school year, please email [adminassist@selkirkmontessori.ca](mailto:adminassist@selkirkmontessori.ca) for an intent to enroll form. Again, the deadline for submission is Friday, January 26th. As spaces are limited, please remember that submitting an Intent to Enrol form is not a guarantee of registration.

## Bursaries

Families requiring a bursary for the 2024-2025 school year, please email [penny@selkirkmontessori.ca](mailto:penny@selkirkmontessori.ca) for the application forms.

(continued on page 9)

# Registration for 2023-2024

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## 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! We are 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 2024-2025 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 [erin@selkirkmontessori.ca](mailto:erin@selkirkmontessori.ca) or call 250-384-3414.

THE



TEAM



Many thanks to our intrepid Purdy's volunteers for helping us unbox, sort and bag all the orders this year. Kudos to our leadership volunteers — you did a great job, gang!

Our fearless leader, Penny Nightingale took control and we were in and out in no time at all!

We appreciate you all!







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reception@selkirkmontessori.ca

***We can make a difference.***

**[** [www.selkirkmontessori.ca](http://www.selkirkmontessori.ca) **]**



Cheers to a cup of hot chocolate thanks to one of our grade 3 students. The Kingfisher Café was busy doing a pop up before the holidays.

## Dates to Remember

- January 8—first day back from winter break
- January 15-19—KP observations
- January 25— Open House/ Transition Night (5:30-7:30pm)
- January 26—Re-Registration Deadline
- January 29— Non-Instructional Day

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.