

JANUARY 2021



Selkirk Montessori School E-Newsletter

From the Head of School, Erin Hayes

Running a school is very much like parenting. Each year brings with it new challenges, pandemic or no pandemic.

With the toughest of times, there are also wonderful nuggets to carry us through. I am not going to lie, there are days with this Principal gig that I wonder what have I gotten myself into?

Just like parenting, I wonder how I was so fortunate to have these people as mine to guide and care for, supporting them to grow into their own unique selves. Can I do enough?

In education and in our families, research and technology are constantly reshaping curriculum. We must filter what to hang onto and where to be open to change, people need you to

hear their worst fears and help them fix their stubborn problems, and your job is to support and protect all of them - the kids, the staff, and then squeeze a little more out to be supportive and compassionate with the parents.

Every so often there are a few little rewards - like seeing a teacher show unending patience and using the phrases we so carefully crafted in last night's meeting to help a student through a stuck moment - and succeeding!

Like hearing a teacher say, "We are in it for the long haul!" when they could say, "I can't do this".

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*"Hope
Smiles from the threshold
of the year to come
Whispering 'it will be
happier'..."*

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Message from the Head of School, Erin Hayes (cont'd)

Like when a student presents you with a piece of work that they have toiled tirelessly on and want you - specifically you- to be proud of them.

Or when a parent tells you that you are the adult they measure a positive character trait by.

And when a teacher says, "I want to learn this so I can do it for my students."

Or to watch a student contemplate a real solution rather than a right answer.

Amongst all the self-doubt and the many choices and juggled demands and inevitable moments of disappointment, teachers and admin have to keep looking for the nuggets, the golden moments that shine a light on the path we have chosen and help us continue to move down it — even on the days you have to watch parents, kids, and teachers struggle with their own self-doubts.

In those moments, show them their nuggets.

We Felt the Love!

Many thanks to our school families for all their generous gifts to our staff and admin this year. Thanks also to Kate McKenzie (Selkirk Parent Group) for coordinating the staff gifts. Special mention to Brian McKenzie for the DryWorld wet bags, the Sayal/Gupta family for the delicious samosas and to Piper London for gift certificates to her hair salon, The Old Hat. We are overwhelmed by all your kindnesses!



Karma Time—We need your help!

Welcome back and Happy New Year!



The school is looking for parent volunteers to complete the grocery shopping for our emergency bin and to take the old food for donation.

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. We are also asking for someone who would be willing to take the old food to a local food bank for donation.

Please email me at karma@selkirkmontessori.ca if you are interested in lending a hand. Thank you.



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A reminder that all school guidelines and information can be found on our school website. Please continue to refer to our school website for any changes or updates.

Take Care Everyone!

Karma

School Volunteers Make A Difference!



We had an amazing group of volunteers to help sort and package Purdy's chocolates this year!

Thanks to parent Dale Degagne and Karma Wolski for pulling it all together. Volunteers included Natasha Reed, Jennifer and Zane Stewart, Renée Watson, Penny Nightingale and Penny Barner.

We sorted 94 orders on an entire pallet of chocolates! So much fun and all COVID protocols in place.

Thanks also to Lara Engst for the Spirit Wear and Shelley Plaxton and Erin Hayes for the cheese fundraisers. We really have incredible volunteers.

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: \$7,318 (an increase of \$21/month)
- Full Day Kindergarten/Preschool: \$9,664/\$12,209 (an increase of \$28.10/\$35.60/month)
- Elementary/Middle: \$9,000 (an increase of \$26.20/month)

Once again, there have been no changes to the before and after school care fees.

These tuition increases were voted in specifically to continue to support our valuable educators and staff, who are the heart and soul of Selkirk Montessori. In addition, in order to continue keeping on top of our technology, we will be replacing laptops and upgrading SmartBoards as required.

Individual Student Fees have been adjusted slightly for next year to reflect increases in areas such as Student Insurance and French workbooks.

Middle School (Grades 5-8) families are reminded that Individual Student Fees,

Outdoor Education 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 \$40/child for Immersion Week.

In the past, these year end and out trip fees have been charged separately. Now you are able to spread the cost of these over 10 or 12 months, depending on your payment schedule.

As mentioned in the December newsletter, the directors have also approved a one-time COVID surcharge fee of \$300/family. This will help cover the costs of increased cleaning of our facility during the day and spraying mid-day and in the evenings to help keep our students and staff safe and healthy. We will be reviewing this surcharge in May 2021 — fingers crossed it won't be necessary!

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

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, the COVID surcharge or the Family Statement of Commitment is encouraged to contact Dina Wood, Chair of the Pacific Montessori Society Board of Directors.

Making Memories—December 2020



Our special Santa, Craig Anderson (above), came by with treats for the children and we had some holiday wishes to share with him.



Congratulations to grade 8 student Nathan Hellner-Mestleman on his Leadership project, Selkirk Monesantizer. He has already raised \$1,000 selling the product, which will be donated to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. We packaged two sets up for Dr. Bonnie Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix.



Office staff (above) were treated to some carols by music teacher Kristen Birley and the Triple Threat singers.

Bree had us curled up, cozy and reading in our favourite place. Lots of us were in bed, or next to our Christmas trees! Congratulations to Charlie and Teo, the winners of gift certificates to Bolen Books.



Teachers and students decorated their doors (or more) so that we could all enjoy winter festivals from around the world. Apparently, the grade one-twos REALLY loved decorating Christmas trees. Check out their hand made ornaments on the next page.



Owl Class (below) — Japanese New Year



Chickadee Class (above) — Hanukkah

Shinnen omedetô gozaimasu.



Cormorant Class (above) — Winter Solstice

Making Memories—December 2020 (cont'd)



Eagle Class
(all around)
—Diwali

Sea Star Class (above) - St. Lucia's Day (Scandinavia)



Hummingbird Class
(above)—Philippines



Orca Class (left) —Nativity
[Very appropriate, as Angela has announces she is having a baby in the spring!] Kingfisher Class (right) - Nathan's creation is entitled "Solstice".



(Left to right)
Otter, Marmot
and Raccoon
classes—Festival
of Trees.



Registration for 2021-2022



Re-Registration

The Ministry of Education requires us to collect registration forms for students each year. As you know, by popular demand, re-registration is being done online via Transparent Classroom this 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 29th.

Siblings

If you are a returning family and have a new sibling to enrol for the 2021-2022 school year, please email Laura Bondar at reception@selkirkmontessori.ca for a separate new student registration link. Again, the deadline for submission is Friday, January 29th.

Bursaries

Families requiring a bursary for the 2021-2022 school year, please email penny@selkirkmontessori.ca for the application forms. This paperwork must also be completed and returned by the January 29th deadline to be considered this year.

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 2021-2022 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 2021-2022, please email me at penny@selkirkmontessori.ca or call 250-384-3414.

URSTRONG—Message from Dana Kerford

Dear Parents and Friends,

I want to thank you all for attending our *Language of Friendship* workshop online.

You were all amazing, coaching your kids along, and empowering them to put out their Friendship Fires. A great big thank you to Erin Hayes, Kate McKenzie, & your wonderful Parent Group for making this happen, and to all the teachers at Selkirk Montessori who are teaching our curriculum, Friendology, to your children.

We hope this workshop sparked some interesting conversations with your kids. We are so grateful for your school's commitment to the social-emotional wellbeing of your children and hope you all take advantage of our FREE Parent Membership to access hundreds of resources!

We have loads of activities, videos, and articles for you to continue on this friendship journey with your child. We hope that, as a URSTRONG Family, you will continue to reinforce the important messages of empowerment, self-compassion, & kindness at home.

As a next step, we would recommend:

(1) Explore all the resources available to you and familiarise yourself with everything!

(2) Complete the activity called Must-Haves, Deal-Breakers, & Ice-Cream to help your child really crystallise the difference between healthy & unhealthy friendships.

(3) Pop back often! We add to the resources regularly, so be sure to keep up with what's new.

Please give your kids a big hug for us and get in touch if we can help in any way. Your children are lucky to have parents and teachers who understand the importance of building healthy relationships!

Kindly,
Dana



Dana Kerford

Founder | Friendship Expert
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We can make a difference.

www.selkirkmontessori.ca



Thank you for your generous donations to the Angel Gift program again this year. We are grateful to the SPG and the staff for putting it all together in this special time of need in our community.

Dates to Remember

- ♦ January 4th—First day back after Winter Break
- ♦ January 28th—Virtual Open House (details to come)
- ♦ January 29th—Re-registration Deadline
- ♦ February 12—Non-Instructional Day (no school for students)
- ♦ February 15th—Family Day Holiday
- ♦ March 12th—Last Day before Spring Break
- ♦ March 29th—First day back after Spring Break

Join us for a
**Virtual
OPEN HOUSE**

January 28, 2021
Time TBC