

MARCH
2023



Selkirk Montessori School E-Newsletter

From the Head of School, Erin Hayes

Did you know that we are in our ninth year of Immersion Week for our Middle Years students? It is an incredible week of immersive learning both within and across grades.

Research tells us that as children move into adolescence, they begin to prune. And they don't just prune the adult intervention in their lives, it's the activities from their lives. This can be due to the streaming of activities from recreational to competitive. Or related to changing confidence with changing voices, bodies, and peer groups. Or a change in interests and trepidation to join a new interest with peers who have practice and experience behind them. Students who stay in activities that they enjoy feel more connected to themselves and to each other in healthy ways.

Wanting to combat the isolation students sometimes experience, we began to look at ways where students could both explore their gifts and test new interests. Immersion Week was born from this reflection. To meet this aim, we continue to offer strong arts and languages courses complimented by fun clubs, and then add our Immersion Week.

We know what a child immersing themselves in a topic, putting effort and concentration into that topic, seeing growth over a short period of time can have. It has: a positive impact on their self esteem; a general increased understanding; an understanding that talent is developed through concentrated effort and that skills are transferable. Children begin to see what we know to be true as adults: that there are many ways to be involved in an interest without competition or a need to prove excellence, but rather for the pure joy of growth, expression, and connection. At a time where students are measuring their talent against their peers and figuring out how they want to stand out, they recognize how to define this and that talent is developed, not just an innate trait.

Wondering by now how this all works? The week before Spring Break, in the mornings our students do an intensive study of a curriculum related topic across their grade group. This is an immersive group challenge that often ends up with a collaborative group product at the end. Engineering, space, and human rights have all been past topics.

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March 4th, the
only day that's
also a sentence.
~ John Green

From the Academic Head (cont'd)

In the afternoon, students immerse themselves in the study of one area, rapidly acquiring a skill set, while developing a deep understanding of the content in that area. They will be led by a teacher-expert and will culminate the week with a showcase that allows groups to share what they have learned on Friday afternoon.

We start by selecting a wide variety of topics that the teacher-experts can guide students through. Students then select their top three interests and groups are composed according to size and compatibility. Though students might not get their first choice every year, we are confident everyone will be able to participate in one of their top three. Students are often surprised as a new interest begins to take root or when they find themselves building a new relationship with peers over a common interest they did not know they shared. Areas with high interest are often offered in subsequent years.

Over the week, students build skills, but more importantly, they come to understand that community is built through participation, communication, and common interests. These all contribute to growing confidence and increasing ability to see value in having hobbies and activities that add value to their lives, at whatever level they participate in. They see that with time and effort, their skills will grow and they can repeatedly adjust the time and effort scale to match their goals or shift their activities to match their goals and interests without losing community or the skills they have built.

Some past and present offerings of immersion week include:

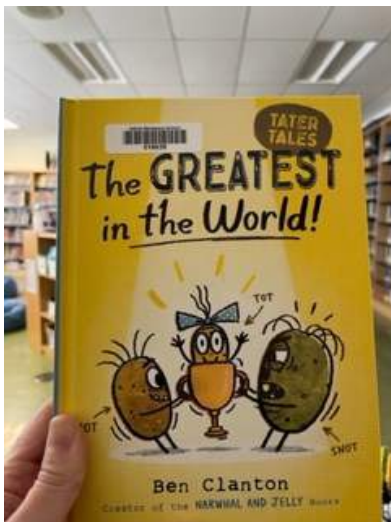
- Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable landscapes
- Animal Care
- Cycling and Bike Repair
- Extreme Reading
- Weaving and Felting
- Book Nook Making
- Outdoor Art
- Tennis
- Golf
- Jug Band
- Busking
- Robotics
- Water Polo
- Spheros
- Cooking
- Baking
- Cold Water Immersion
- Karate
- Meditation and Mindfulness
- Cake Decorating
- Roller Skating/Blading
- Crafting
- Dance
- Stage Craft
- Product Development
- Photography
- Sculpture



Spring Book Fair—Russell's Books!

The Russell Books Book Fair was back in true form this February and I am so proud to say it was a wonderful success! This fair could not have been possible without the generous support of our student and parent volunteers: THANK YOU! We were told that our set up/take down happened in record time and the team at Russell's was very impressed by how many helpful hands we had. A special mention goes out to the grade 5/6 Book Club for their **Bake and Bookmark Sale** who worked hard over hot ovens and braved smelly marker fumes to bake beautiful baked goods and create page markers for the kids to enjoy. One very astute grade 2 student was heard to remark that the "bake sale really buttered the book fair up!" and that we "really sweetened the deal!".

One of our most trusted literary enthusiasts (ahem, and dedicated SPG member) declared the greatest book of the fair to be: *Tater Tales - The GREATEST in the World!* by Ben Clanton (the creator of the Narwhal and Jelly Books). This book is funny, punny, has a sweet message about friendship and potatoes, drawing tutorials and exciting action!



There was also a cozy corner for the students to curl up in and share a story together.



In total we sold over \$4000.00 worth of stock for Russell Books! As they profit share 30% of the take with us, along with a bonus from Books For Schools, we ended up with just under \$2000.00 for new books for the library and classrooms! We are overjoyed! Thank you so much for your support.

We will be hosting one more book fair this year at the beginning of April with MUNRO'S BOOKS! This one is not in the school; it will be online and in Munro's Books downtown. Any purchase that you make and attribute to our school will go towards us having ordering credit with the store. Let me tell you first hand that credit with Munro's is like having actual gold.

Thank you, thank you!

Bree, Toby and Amanda in the library

Favourite Book/TV/Movie Characters



Another Spirit Day has come and gone. As you can see, this year, the costume of choice was Wednesday Addams!

Admin staff went all in this year with a Winnie the Pooh theme. What will we come up with next??



Selkirk Parent Group (SPG)

Spring equinox and spring break are just around the corner. We hope you had fun seeing out the last days of winter by painting, hiding, hunting and sharing rocks during the 2nd annual “Selkirk Rocks the Heart” rock hunt. Thanks to Penny N for organizing!



Help keep the Hot Lunch Program going!

Hands down, the Hot Lunch Program is our most effective fundraiser. Led by the Selkirk Parent Group (SPG) and an enthusiastic volunteer crew, the program funds things like field trips, other off-site events, and transportation to and from these functions. These activities are more than “fun extras”. Learning happens everywhere, not just in our classrooms, and these enrichment events are valued by students and staff alike.

To keep these events going, we need to keep the Hot Lunch Program running. And to do that, we need your help. The program is best run by a team of volunteers, to accommodate a variety of skill sets and personal schedules. In short: the more, the merrier.

Most tasks can be done outside of school hours and from home—so, no, you don’t have to rush out on your break to deliver lunches. Much of the work happens at the start of each lunch term, and fluctuates based on how many lunch days, special lunch events, vendors and menus there are.

We need help with all kinds of tasks, from printing labels to coordinating menus. (Got a picky eater? Here’s your chance to cater to their preferences. Literally.)

Watch for more detailed information coming soon from your class rep on ways to get involved!

Upcoming dates

- March 6 – ordering and payment deadline for Purdy's Chocolates (pick up your order in the office April 3)

Last Chance to Register for Pro-D Camps!

We are excited to partner with Petit Architects to provide camps for kids on professional development days in May and June, 2023. The registration links below are live for the May 19th and June 5th Pro-D Days!

[Design A Playground](#)

May 19th Pro D Day Camp, Ages 8-11

Location - Selkirk Montessori

Time: 9:30-3pm

Learn about cool playgrounds designed by architects and build your own model of one! All supplies are included and you will take your model home with you.

[Home-On-The-Go, Design A Campervan](#)

June 5th Pro D Day Camp, Ages 8-11

Location - Selkirk Montessori

Time: 9:30-3pm

Think small in this hands-on course where we will learn how to design for mobility and living in the outdoors! Students will design their own campervan model and take it home with them.



Student Learning Survey 22/23

The [2022/23 Student Learning Survey](#) is optional for independent schools and currently available until April 28, 2023. The survey is open for students in Grades 4, 7, 10, and 12, as well as parents, staff, and principals/vice-principals. For technical and administrative support, contact AWIS at 1-866-558-5339 or at support@awinfosys.com. For questions about the survey, contact EDUC.ReportingUnit@gov.bc.ca.

Kindness Assembly/Valentines Day



Special thanks to the Owls and Orcas for a delightful Kindness Assembly in February.

We have a **ROCKS** contest happening as well and we are filling our buckets with Respect, Open-Mindedness, Communication, Kindness and Success.

Admin staff received some very special treats from our Eagle friends on Valentine's Day!



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We can make a difference!

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We had a wonderful time at the Regional debates up at Brentwood School. We came third and made it to the Provincial debates coming up this weekend! Thanks to our debaters, moderators, grad Sadie and of course, coach Gigi!

Dates to Remember

- March 13-17—Immersion Week (Grade 5-8)
- March 17—Last day before Spring Break
- March 20-31— Spring Break
- April 7/10—Good Friday/Easter Monday (Holidays)
- April 17—Swimming lessons start (Grades 1-4)

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