

Walking Together in the warm land of the Cowichan Valley

Mill Bay Nature School

Q'shintul newsletter



We acknowledge that for thousands of years the Malahat, Lake Cowichan, Quw'utsun, Halalt, Penelakut, Stzuminus, & Lyackson Peoples have walked gently on the unceded territories where we now live, work, learn, and play. We seek a new relationship with the first peoples here, one based in honour and respect, and we thank them for their hospitality.

Beginning of **September 2020**

Welcome Back Friends!

I sit looking out into the smokey sky - what a strange time - *regular patterns disrupted, expectations ever shifting, a temptation towards grief emerging.* AND YET ... *this week* - when the children arrived at MBNS - it was a family reunion - *smiles, energy, stories, connections, love!* And for this, I am very grateful. To think that we are co-creating a place, a culture, a school - *on behalf of the school district* - where the first day of school brings this kind of joy, this kind of soul, these kind of relationships. I find myself grateful, in spite of everything else ...

Thank you for entrusting us with your sacred children - 'Xe 'xe smun'eem - as school reopens worldwide in a time of a pandemic. We don't take this lightly. We know it takes courage and trust to believe that we are following excellent health and safety protocols, as well as the prescribed learning group (POD) model shared in my August email - that we are creating a place that is COVID safe *AND* full of the promise of rich learning and growth for each child in our care - we are committed to staying true to our Field Guide.

The Dandelion POD will have teachers that you are familiar with - Anne, Chris, Erin, Lawrence. The Cedar POD is undergoing some changes: Karin will be leading the Blended Clan this year; Brian will be leading a crew of intrepid adventurers; Phaedra will be supporting the entire Cedar POD with Literacy, as well as leading Playful Inquiries; Myra will become a Cedar Clan teacher and continue as our Art/Design Lead teacher for Playful Inquiries. We welcome Sheila Karrow as a Cedar Clan teacher, and accomplished Artist/Phd student researching the decolonization of education; and we are looking for a Physical Literacy lead teacher to add to the Cedar POD teachers - *providing rich opportunities for our kinesthetic learners.* This will take about a week to sort out; in the meantime Kim will be supporting the Cedar children as a teacher. *Thank you for your patience.*

Some things to note:

1. Sign and return your walking permission form **ASAP** (extra copies are in the Nest/Office)
2. Dress appropriately for the weather **each day** as we are **outside all day** ... even in the rain
3. Bring a plastic box of writing/drawing/measuring/cutting tools with your name on it (to leave at school during COVID daze)
4. Please remind your child to **try not to touch** other children ... *it's so tricky and difficult to remember.*
5. We are continuing to look for wood rounds for our outdoor classroom spaces. Any leads?
6. School hours are 8:28 am to 2:13 pm (set by the school district :)

Until next time, Q'shintul (Walking Together), Kim 