

Walking Together in the warm land of the Cowichan Valley

Mill Bay Nature School

Q'w'wintul newsletter



We acknowledge that for thousands of years the Malahat, Lake Cowichan, Quw'utsun, Halalt, Penelakut, Stz'uminus, & 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.

end SEPT 2019

Nature Trust of B.C.: Opportunity

We are looking for parent helpers to support our learners as they explore the forest down the street from our school with Nature Trust of B.C. Please let Tanya at the Nest know if you or a grandparent would be willing to support our teachers and children.

Communicating Student Learning - Learning MAPS

From the Field Guide: We are excited to engage with children from diverse backgrounds, gifts, talents, strengths, and challenges - growing the educated citizens outlined by the BC Ministry of Education (below). We recognize that there are many different ways to develop these capacities - many different journeys - no one-size-fits-all. In response to this challenge, at Mill Bay Nature School every child will have a personalized Learning Map. These Maps will guide the teaching staff as they tailor expectations and support, learning opportunities and challenges for individual children - to inspire, to provoke, to nurture all aspects of the BC curriculum. The Maps will be co-created by parents, teachers, and the child at the beginning of each school year, reflected upon throughout the year, and then re-visited each spring. Parents will be invited to reflect on the following questions which make up the Learning Map in the fall and spring at Mill Bay Nature School.

BC's schools assist in developing educated citizens who are thoughtful, able to learn & think critically, and can communicate; are creative, flexible, & self-motivated; have a positive self-image; are capable of making independent decisions; are skilled & able to contribute to society; are productive, gain satisfaction through achievement; strive for physical well-being; are cooperative, principled, & respectful of others and aware of the rights and responsibilities of the individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world.

(BC Ministry of Education)

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum-updates>

Last fall, in the flurry of new beginnings, families were asked to complete the Learning Map at home and Clan leaders read them; and responded by providing an "initial reflection" about each child before Christmas break. We did not create space, however, for dialogue - which we know is critical for deep understanding. In the Spring, then, we offered time for each family to meet with their child's Clan leader to review their child's Learning Map; Kim led the school in some field studies exploring "PLACE" so each Clan leader could be available during the day and in the evenings. We found this process very worthwhile. It is tricky, however, to create space for this to happen - in the busyness of our days both within and outside of school life. We are in the process of carving out time in the next 2 weeks so new families can meet directly with their child's Clan leader and 'vintage' families can review the Map designed in the Spring at home and submit it to their child's Clan leader (with a face to face review in the Spring).



(Please note: every parent is welcome, at any time throughout the year, to set up a time to dialogue with their child's Clan leader. We value greatly your perspective and input.)

Communicating Student Learning - Freshgrade

You will be receiving an invitation to participate in Freshgrade; it is a confusing invitation! In order to keep the Clans organized on the Freshgrade site, we have needed to have your child's Clan leader's **last name** and your child's **first name**. For example, **Fairwell Emmett**. We will be changing this into the Clan name and your child's first name (like last year). For example, **Owl Emmett** (which makes more sense!). We apologize for the confusion.

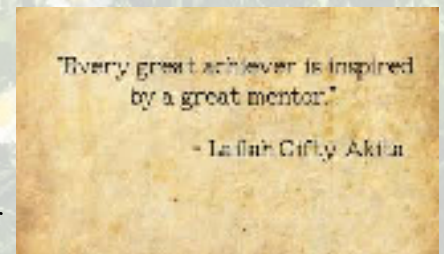


Freshgrade will be a digital portfolio of your child's learning - particularly highlighting the development of **Core Competencies** (Ministry of Education Curriculum): creative, critical & reflective thinking; positive personal & cultural identity; personal awareness & responsibility; social awareness & responsibility. **As we settle into our whole school and clan rhythms, we will begin to post images and comments which document your child's learning in these areas, as well as others.**

Mid year and final, summative reports written by Clan leaders documenting student learning will be provided at the end of January & June. This is consistent with School District #79's reporting policies.

Volunteering at Mill Bay

Are you or a family member interested in helping in Clans, supporting Art Classes, reading with children, playing on the field during Free Play, sharing your interests and passions with our children, etc. ? If so (and we would so LOVE your mentoring support), please contact our community coordinator Chris Miller - chmiller@sd79.bc.ca



Mark your calendar

Thanksgiving - **Monday, Oct. 14**

School Picture Day - Friday, Oct. 18

Professional Day - **Friday, Oct. 25**

Two hour early dismissal - **Wednesday, Oct. 30**

Until next time,

Q'shintul (Walking Together),

Kim

(on behalf of the staff at Mill Bay Nature School)



Our children with their Shawnigan Lake School Grade 9 buddies -
Friday, Sept. 20