

mindful teaching & learning rooted in the warm land of the Cowichan Valley

Mill Bay Nature School

deep roots

We respectfully acknowledge that we are learning on the tradition, ancestral & unceded territory of the Malahat, Lake Cowichan, Quw'utsun, Halalt, Penelaukut, Stz'uminus, & Lyackson People

newsletter

August 2018
first edition

As I sit in my Okanagan Valley backyard this cool morning, listening to the birds and enjoying my coffee, I notice the white sky and wonder if it is smokey in the Cowichan Valley as well? I hope you have received the Field Guide to Mill Bay Nature School, and perhaps have even had a chance to glance at its contents. It was my hope that the Guide would help you to become better acquainted with the philosophy of the school, as well as begin to think about clothing and footwear for the varied seasons. In this newsletter I will be answering some of the questions that I have been receiving as we look forward to fall start up in a good way. I am grateful for your curiosity and wonders, and look forward to gathering again when I return to the Island on August 20.

Warm regards, Kim Ondrik

Things we know ... so far

- **School Hours are 8:30 am to 2:13 pm**
- **BUSES WILL GATHER IN THE FRONT DRIVEWAY OF THE SCHOOL**
- **Parents are asked to drop their children off on Cobble Hill Road (safe process to be determined)**
- **OUR MORNING ENTRANCE WILL BE THE NORTHEAST DOORS (AROUND THE BACK OF THE SCHOOL - ATTACHED TO THE GYM)**
- **There will be 2 mudrooms (at Northeast entrance) with spaces for children to hang their backpacks and stow their belongings**
- **TO PREVENT MUD PUDDLES IN THE SCHOOL, ALL LEARNERS WILL BE ENCOURAGED NOT TO USE THE FRONT DOORS**
- **Mornings will begin with a circle gathering in the gym. Parents and community members are always welcome.**
- **CHILDREN ARE WELCOME TO EAT HEALTHY SNACKS OR DRINK WATER THROUGHOUT THE DAY WHEN NEEDED (KEPT IN A LIGHT BACKPACK THEY WILL TAKE OUTSIDE WITH THEM)**
- **Lunch will be eaten as a community in the gym space - children are asked to bring litterless lunches and water bottles**
- **THE \$25 SCHOOL FEE WILL COVER SCHOOL SUPPLIES. PLEASE PAY OUR SECRETARY SOMETIME DURING THE FIRST WEEKS. IF FINANCES ARE TIGHT FOR YOU RIGHT NOW, PLEASE HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH KIM.**

Goodbye Darlene.

Hello Sarah !

We are sad that Darlene, the amazing singing secretary, has decided to remain at her present position at Cowichan High where she has put in a lot of time & energy. We will miss you Darlene, and appreciate your contributions to the makings of MBNS. We are very happy to welcome Sarah Macdonald to our pod. A life-long islander, she is always up for an adventure !

Kindergarten Gradual Entry

After a survey to parents and thoughtful conversation with the staff, Kindergarten students are invited to begin full-days on the first day of school. Because we are taking up a multi-age structure, our rookies will find support from more seasoned learners, as well as the staff. If **any** child needs more support from a parent/guardian/adult friend, we will always be accomodating & welcoming - whether it's at the start or throughout the year.

Hot Lunch

We hope, this fall, to co-create some sort of lunch program - of soup & homemade bread perhaps? Logistics are always the challenge. Kim is happy to work with parents to design a process that is sustainable, nourishing & available to all learners. April is willing to include cooking as part of her mathematics curricular design. *Wouldn't it be amazing for the children to learn to make the food they eat?*

If any parents or community members would be willing to form a committee, please let Kim know.

Supply Considerations ...

- In the Field Guide, clothing and footwear are discussed. *Again, because every child is different, it's important to consider your little person and what they will need to be comfortable during the varied seasons.*
- It would be very useful if every child *bring a small and light backpack* to carry snacks, water, and tools into the field. Ideally, this would remain at school. *A second pack would go back & forth - from home to school.*

On the hunt for donations

On page 3 you will find the original list of items that we were looking for. **We are still on the hunt!** *It has been an inspiring process to watch community members give and help us begin in a good way. We are very grateful and encouraged by the support.*

Books in particular - nature themed - are very important. We hope that everyone can donate some from their personal libraries. *How exciting to watch our collection grow over time!*

Mill Bay Nature School OPEN HOUSE

As recommissioning is still in process, an announcement will be made as to when we will open our doors for tours.

TBA !

Cowichan Valley School District Calendar

PLEASE FIND THE 2018-2019 CALENDAR FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT ON PAGE 4 OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

NOTICE THE EARLY DISMISSAL TIMES AS WELL AS PROFESSIONAL DAYS & HOLIDAYS.

Don't forget to water our seeds !

Reuse, Repurpose & Share

Mill Bay Nature School is a start-up
& presently is a blank canvas or empty space.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR DONATIONS -
FOR THINGS THAT MAY BE GATHERING DUST
IN YOUR BASEMENT #THANKYOU

We are also NOW looking for
the following larger items:

- Fridge (for egg fund raiser)
- Fridge (for cooking program)
- Deep freeze (for donations)
- Fruit & Vegetables (for cooking program)
- Kitchen ware (for cooking program)

- Books of all shapes & sizes (in particular - picture books, nature field guides)
- Gently used school supplies (crayons, felts, pencils, erasers, pencil crayons, rulers, duotangs, paper, etc.)
- Hammers
- Screwdrivers
- Nails & screws
- Wire
- Leather & leather-like couches
- Cushions
- Carpet squares
- Bookshelves
- Wooden chairs
- Wooden tables
- Floor & table lamps
- Mini-lights
- Area rugs (colourful)
- Memory foam (to make floor cushions)
- Ribbon (silky/soft)
- Yarn
- Fabric
- Burlap (for outside fort construction)
- Scarves
- Buttons
- Large needles, thread, embroidery floss
- Picture frames (all shapes & sizes)
- Embroidery hoops
- Old dress shirts (for paint smocks)
- Watering cans
- Metal buckets
- Garden tools - shovel, rake, hoe, etc.
- Long sticks (for lean-to fort construction)
- Drift wood (all shapes & sizes)
- Rocks (all shapes & sizes)
- Logs (all shapes & sizes)
- Magnify glasses
- Tweezers
- Nets
- Ropes / pulleys
- Bird nests
- Animal bones
- Any kinds of loose parts/ collections: nuts, bolts, marbles, lids, feathers, curtain rings, etc. Type to enter text
- Mason jars (with & without lids)
- Baskets (all shapes & sizes)
- Cookie sheets
- Anything else that you think would delight or engage a child!

2018-2019 School Year Calendar

School Opening Day (2-hour Early Dismissal)	Tuesday, September 4, 2018
1-hour Early Dismissal	Wednesday, September 19, 2018
Non-Instructional Day (District Pro-D)	Monday, September 24, 2018
Thanksgiving	Monday, October 8, 2018
Non-Instructional Day (Teacher Pro-D)	Friday, October 19, 2018
2-hour Early Dismissal (PLC)	Wednesday, October 24, 2018
Remembrance Day	Monday, November 12, 2018
2-hour Early Dismissal (PLC)	Wednesday, November 21, 2018
Non-Instructional Day (Curriculum Support)	Friday, November 30, 2018
Last day of school before Winter Vacation	Friday, December 21, 2018
Winter Vacation	December 24, 2018 to January 4, 2019
School re-opens after Winter Vacation	Monday, January 7, 2019
Non-Instructional Day (District Pro-D)	Friday, January 18, 2019
2-hour Early Dismissal (PLC)	Wednesday, January 30, 2019
Non-Instructional Day (Teacher Pro-D)	Friday, February 15, 2019
Family Day	Monday, February 18, 2019
Last day of school before Spring Vacation	Friday, March 8, 2019
District Closure	March 11, 2019 to March 15, 2019
Spring Break	March 18, 2019 to March 22, 2019
School re-opens after Spring Vacation	Monday, March 25, 2019
1-hour Early Dismissal	Friday, April 5, 2019
Non-Instructional Day (District Pro-D)	Monday, April 8, 2019
2-hour Early Dismissal (PLC)	Thursday, April 18, 2019
Good Friday	Friday April 19, 2019
Easter Monday	Monday, April 22, 2019
Non-Instructional Day (Teacher Pro-D)	Friday, May 3, 2019
2-hour Early Dismissal (PLC)	Wednesday, May 15, 2019
Victoria Day	Monday, May 20, 2019
Last day of school for students (2-hour Early Dismissal)	Thursday, June 27, 2019
Year-end Administrative Day	Friday, June 28, 2019