

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, Qu'wutsun, 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.

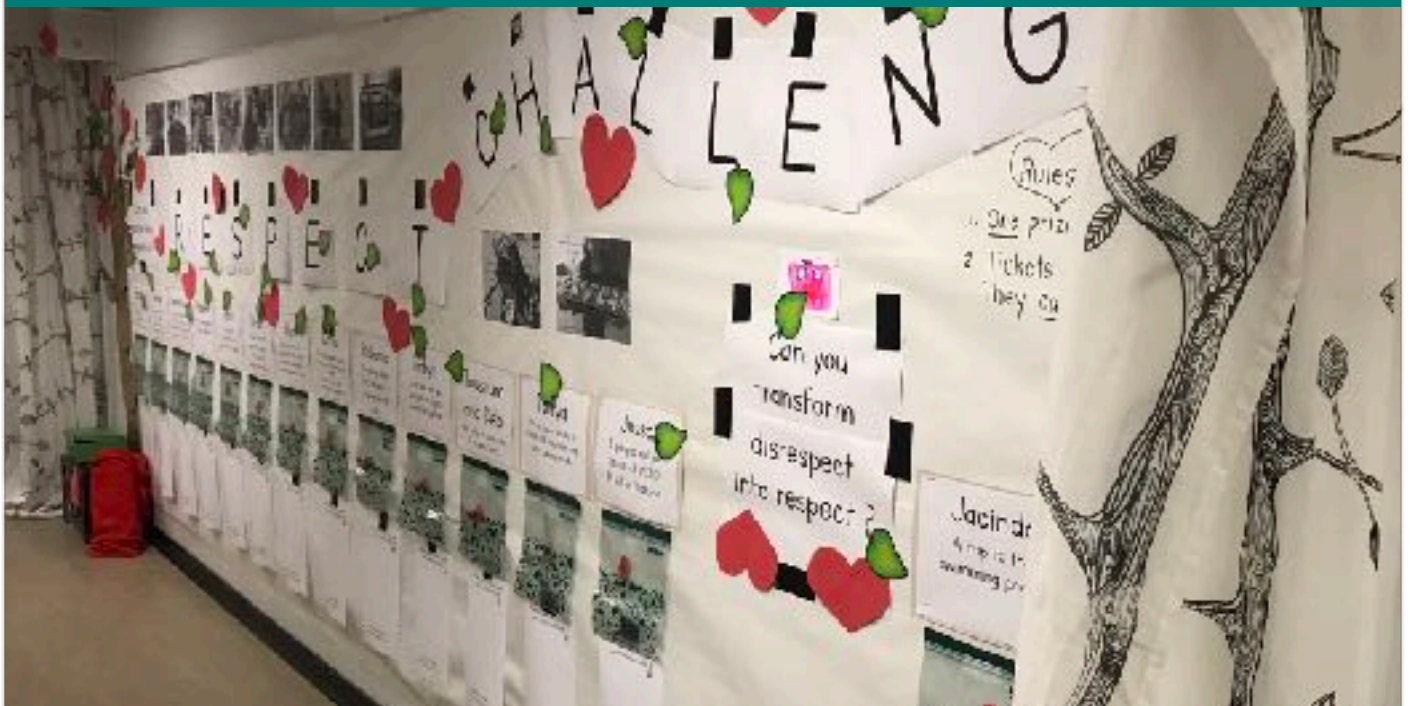


FEBRUARY 2020

THE RESPECT CAMPAIGN

attention = love

attention = respect



The RESPECT Campaign emerged from a desire to have our children understand what respectful attitudes and actions look like, feel like, and the impact they have on the world/community around them. We had noticed after Christmas break and snow days, many of the children were struggling with walking together - Q'shintul - AND we know that children learn best through concrete experiences and verbal feedback rather than verbal feedback alone - AND we were doing ALOT of talking about being respectful. So, the RESPECT Campaign began to take shape. We had made a promise to the children from the earliest beginnings of MBNS to not use shame or punishment to guide our responses to mistake making, and so we also did not want to feed a sense of 'carrots & sticks'; still, we knew that we needed to DO something concrete which would help develop the children's internal sense of respect (and its tightly connected concept - Q'shintul). Being inclined towards playfulness (because it facilitates an openness to the new and different), the adults in our community were willing to choose an adventure/outing/experience as a raffle prize. Some examples: Lawrence is dressing up as a unicorn to take 3 other 'unicorns' to McDonald's for lunch; Tousilum and Deb are taking a child to Starbucks for a special treat and rich conversation; our Superintendent is picking up a child and taking them for breakfast as well as a student →

voice meeting at Quamichan High School; Jacinda is taking a child swimming; and there are many more choices. We presented the Campaign by exploring through words and images what respect looks like, sounds like, feels like at MBNS, as well as how to turn disrespect into respect (through problem solving). Each adventure/outing/experience prize was pitched to the children in playful ways, and we explained how a ticket would be gifted to the children when respectful actions were spotted. (Karin proposed in Towne Hall that the children could catch the adults being respectful too, but this idea was voted down by the children.)

It took the first week to help the children understand that they did not need to ask for tickets; that they could trust the staff at MBNS to notice their respectful ways, and over time we have learned as a staff how to calibrate the giving of tickets so that it feels equitable to most children most of the time. Some children have more developed respect muscles than others so we had to ask ourselves over and over - what is fairness? - as it is not necessarily sameness. We have also learned that asking the children how they have been respectful (to be gifted a ticket) also brings to all of our attention the diversity and nuance of respectful acts, and how individual children are working on their respectful muscles. We are delighted to report that overall the level of respect at MBNS has increased (which was our original goal). For example: Towne Hall has a deepening attentiveness, and the vocabulary of respect and the turning of disrespect into respect happens with more regularity on the outdoor campus during Free Play. When asked, the children are also linking respect to Q'shintul on their own - "In order to Q'shintul, you need to be respectful to others - listen to them or wait for them - and not just for some fancy ticket." School District 79 made a short film last week that will be posted on their "School Stories" about Q'shintul and our Respect Campaign later this week. (Thank you to Stella, Phoebe, Willow, Sam and Lawrence who shared their thoughts and ideas on the film. You are amazing representatives of MBNS !)

This is our last week of the Respect Campaign - Friday is the raffle draw. And, then, we will learn some NEW lessons about R-E-S-P-E-C-T: How do you experience great joy in winning when others do not? How do you experience great disappointment without being disrespectful? AND many more things that we have yet to be aware of; we can always be assured of emerging lessons!

P.S. Because *everyone* has learned and grown through this Campaign, we will be having a school-wide bus trip to Duncan and the Duncan pool on Thursday, March 5 as a ***Celebration of RESEPECT***. **PLEASE KEEP THIS AS A SECRET UNTIL FRIDAY AFTERSCHOOL.** I will be letting the children know after the draw on Friday. *Attached you will find a permission slip.* There are paper copies in the Nest.

Please help us grow and develop
as communicators.

Consider providing feedback on our processes of
"communicating student learning"
by completing a survey:


<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P9GRNXR>

Thank you to everyone who
came out to the Garden
Building Gathering!

*What a beautiful beginning as
we continue to Q'shintul ...*

Karin is collecting 1 & 2 litre
clear plastic bottles to build
a greenhouse.

There's a collection area in the Nest.

Huy tseep q'u 
Until next time,

Kim on behalf of Mill Bay Nature School

Do you have any
seeds that you
would like to
donate to our seed
catalogue?

*Please drop off to
Tanya in the Nest.*

