

# VLN Newsletter

Winter Edition

### Administration



Mr. Zhi Su

Dr. Kerry Handscomb

### Student Work



Demonstrations of Learning and student engagement

### Indigenous Titles



Lots of new books for loan



Indigenous Library Collection

## Winter 2023

Greetings and welcome to the VLN! We are so happy to share our first newsletter of the year. Our newsletters are intended to celebrate all the wonderful things that are happening as well as important information and upcoming events.

As we approach the end of the calendar year, we want to thank you for your continued support and collaboration. We are proud of our students and staff for their continued growth, progress, creativity and hard work.

We also want to wish you a wonderful winter break and a happy new year. We hope you have some time to relax, recharge and spend quality time with your loved ones. We look forward to seeing you again in January and continuing our learning journey together.

Stay safe and healthy!

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səliiwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

## Zhi Su (He/Him)

### District Principal

Greetings, I am so grateful to be the new Principal at the VLN and taking over the great work that former Principal Jim Rutley has done for almost a decade.

I am honoured to acknowledge that with deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public educational institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching and community engagement.



Service leadership is all about serving others with compassion and intentionality. As the Principal of Vancouver Learning Network, I am committed to working with our stakeholders to achieve the strategic goals for all students.

I have had the honour and privilege of being an educator for over 20 years. I hold a bachelor's degree in Human Kinetics and a bachelor's degree in Education in addition to a master's degree in Educational Technology - all from the University of British Columbia.

Before re-joining the Vancouver School District, I served as a District Principal for Online Learning, a District-Vice Principal of Curriculum for Blended Learning and Library Services, as a District Vice-Principal for Digital Literacy and Inquiry and as a Vice-Principal at Rick Hansen School of Science and Business for the Abbotsford School District.

Before joining the Abbotsford School District, I worked for the Vancouver School Board as a District Learning Technologies Mentor and, before that, as a Digital Immersion and Physical Education teacher at John Oliver Secondary School. It feels like coming home to the Vancouver Learning Network located at John Oliver School where I taught for ten years.

I have extensive experience in using technology to enhance teaching and learning in various settings. I have worked as an online teacher at the VLN during summer learning, as well as in traditional and blended classrooms throughout my career. I am well-versed in online and blended learning strategies and enjoy applying them in my practice.

I am deeply grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse group of people to meet the common goal of increasing student achievement and well-being. I have an uncompromising belief that all students can learn, given a positive learning environment, thoughtful and moral leadership, a committed and focused educational team, an encouraging community, and a supportive family. Also, central to my belief is a strong sense of equity and a desire to empower all learners to achieve self-actualization. I am a lifelong learner and believer in perpetual improvement in all aspects of life.

With gratitude,

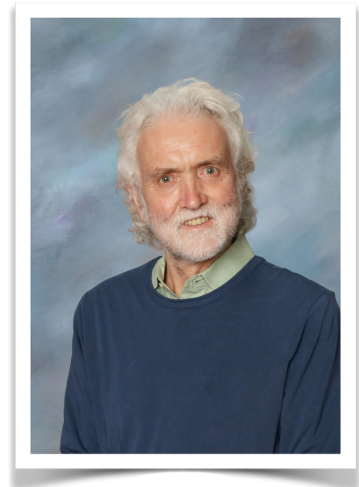
Zhi Su (He/Him)  
District Principal

## Dr. Kerry Handscomb (He/Him)

### District Vice-Principal

Dr. Kerry Handscomb began in education as a Mathematics teacher and Mathematics Department Head in the Vancouver School District.

He has been with VLN for seven years. Before that, he was an administrator at Windermere Secondary School and David Thompson Secondary School. Dr. Handscomb believes strongly in the special role that online learning plays in the education system. Students come to VLN for all sorts of reasons, and sometimes we provide the most appropriate educational opportunities for our students, who each have unique abilities and requirements.

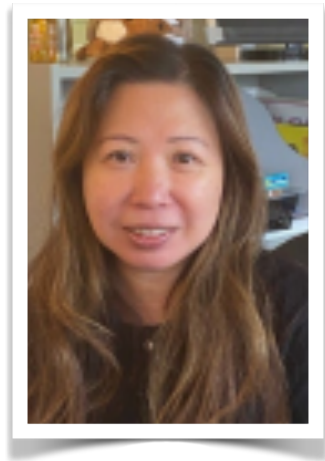


Our Elementary Office Assistant is Ms. Nancy Sanghera who may be contacted about registration, student access, updated contact information, and general inquiries. Call Nancy at 604-713-5544 for direct line.



**Ms. Nancy Sanghera**  
Office Assistant  
nsanghera@vsb.bc.ca

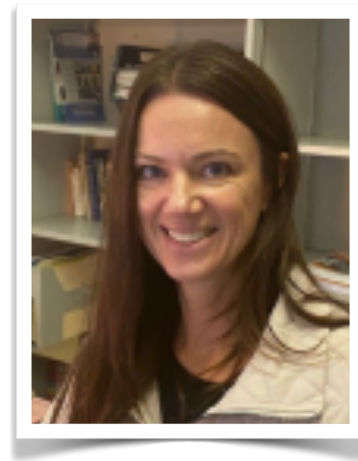
## Meet Our Elementary Staff



**Ms. Melody Martin**  
Grades K-2  
smartin@vsb.bc.ca



**Ms. Raman Gill**  
Grades 3-5  
rigill@vsb.bc.ca



**Ms. Christy Shea**  
Grades 6 & 7  
cshea@vsb.bc.ca

Our program boasts a fantastic team of teachers who have both experience and compassion. They collaborate effectively with their colleagues and with the students, creating a positive and inclusive learning environment. They are aware that online learning poses different challenges and opportunities for the students, and they offer them various options to demonstrate their learning, such as video presentations, digital portfolios, or creative projects. They also adhere to the most recent standards for assessing and reporting on student achievement.

Please contact teachers directly about course related questions or concerns.



Kindergarten E-Learning Sandbox I (EL...



When there is an **orange** dot, it means that there is a new message or notification. Please check messages regularly.



## Student Work

Whenever possible and with permission, we love to highlight student work and provide our students with an authentic audience to inspire them to reach higher and pay more attention to the work they produce. We know that when artifacts or demonstration of learning is shared to a wider audience beyond parents and teachers, they tend to take more care and ownership of their learning.

We are also exploring the Brightspace portfolio tool to document our learning over time.

Below are a couple examples of artwork from our grade 6 students with Ms. Shea.



Portfolio



**Bjorn**

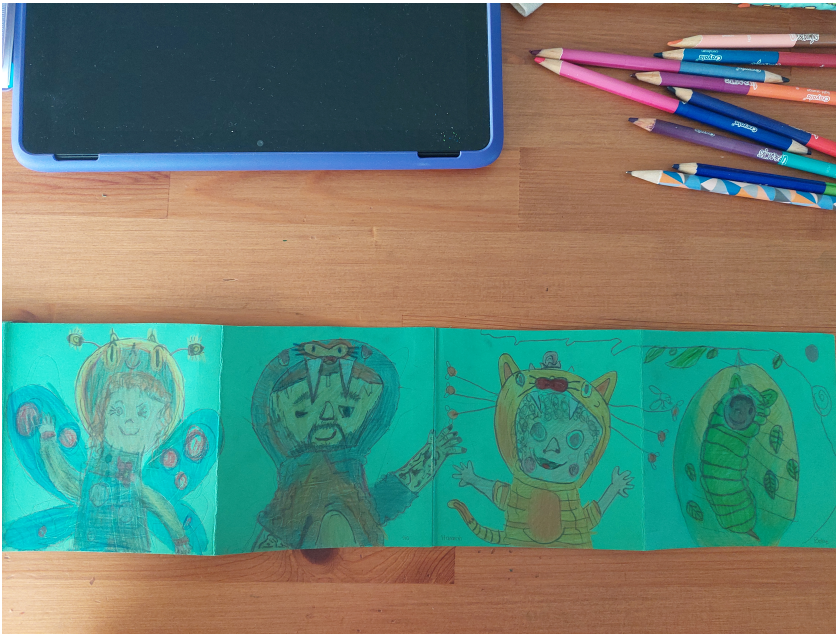
Grade 6 Student  
Spooky Silhouette Art



**Ruby**

Grade 6 Student  
Spooky Silhouette Art

## More Student Work

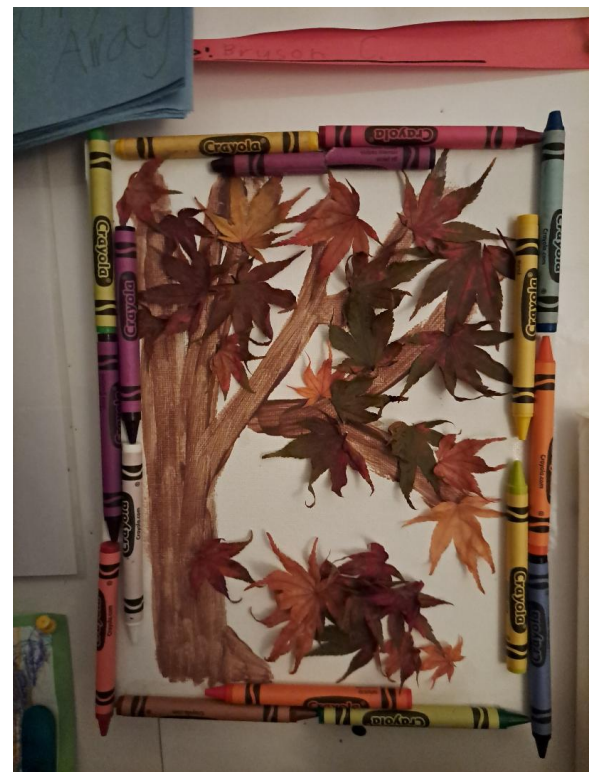


Art is an essential part of the curriculum for elementary students, as it offers many benefits for their development and learning. Art activities can help students improve their fine motor skills, such as hand-eye coordination, dexterity, and precision, which are important for writing, drawing, and other tasks. Art also provides students with opportunities to engage with different materials, techniques, and themes, stimulating their curiosity, imagination, and creativity.

### Leon

Grade 2 Student  
Social Studies, Family Connection (Character Traits of each family member)

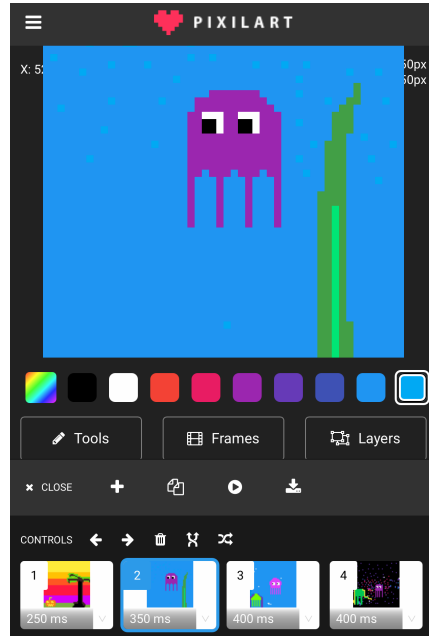
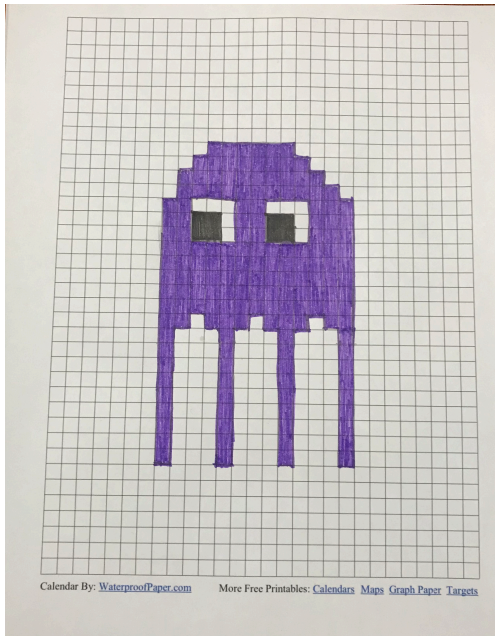
Furthermore, art allows students to express their feelings, thoughts, and opinions in various ways, enhancing their communication and emotional skills. Art can also foster a sense of identity, culture, and diversity among students, as they explore their own and others' artistic expressions. Therefore, art is not only a source of enjoyment and fun for elementary students, but also a valuable tool for their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Art is a part of the art, design, skills and technology curriculum in British Columbia because it fosters creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration skills. Art also helps students to express themselves, appreciate diverse perspectives and cultures, and develop a sense of personal and social responsibility. Art is not only a form of aesthetic expression, but also a way of learning, exploring and innovating across various disciplines and domains.



### Bryson

Kindergarten Student  
Tree Art

# More Student Work



Victoria  
Grade 5 Student  
Pixel Art Assignment



Katherine  
Grade 5 Student  
Pet Shelter Challenge



Epic Books



Kids A-Z



Zorbis



Mystery Science

Available Resources in Brightspace we license for our students. Ask your teacher.

## More Student Work



Mark  
Grade 6  
Winter Inchie Art



## Parent Advisory Committee

We are so delighted and grateful to our newly formed PAC. Parent are integral to the success of our students, especially in our parents are partners model. Our PAC include:

Chair - Nick Walker

Vice-chair - Birgit Karolines

Treasurer - Harshini McLeod

Secretary - Stephanie Clearihue

Our next meeting is on January 31.

UPCOMING PAC MEETING DATES FOR 2023-2024 (6:30pm):

January 31, 2024

February 28, 2024

March 27, 2024

April 24, 2024

May 29, 2024

June 19, 2024

We welcome all parents to our meeting and are always looking for more members-at-large.

PAC is organizing some field studies opportunities and events - please stay tuned!



## Tips for Families

### 1. Stay Up to Date on Progress

Maintain regular communication with educators to understand your child's progress and needs and how to support learning at home. Log in regularly to stay up to date on grades, feedback and work that's due soon.

### 2. Prioritize Wellness

Regardless of your child's learning format, your continued attention to their questions and concerns is important to their well-being. Model remaining calm, patient and kind. Be flexible with your child's learning. If schoolwork does not happen one day, that is OK! The following day is a new opportunity to try again.

### 3. Follow a Routine

A routine is helpful for maintaining overall well-being and academic achievement. Set regular hours for homework to help your child also make time for hobbies, physical activity and other interests.

### 4. Identify a Workspace

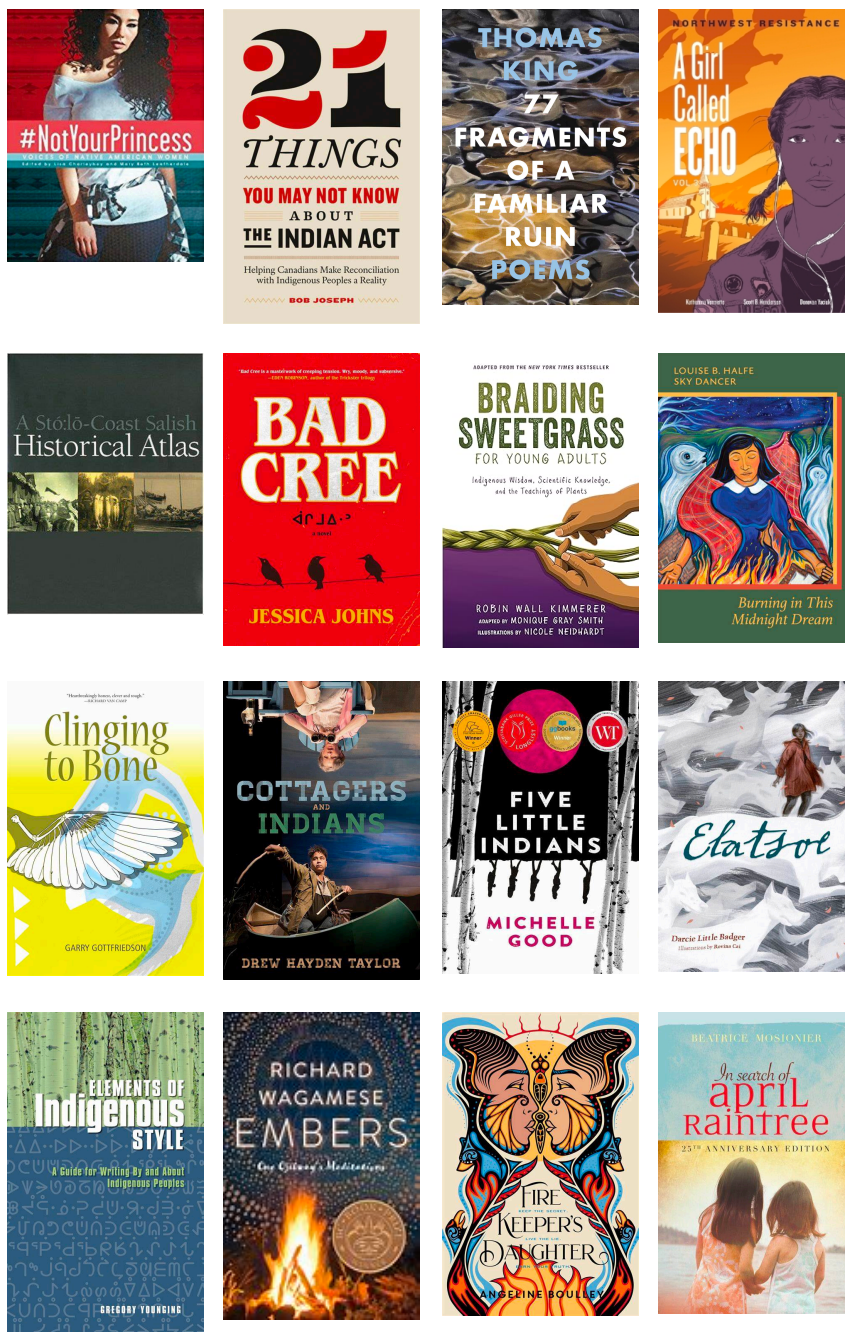
If you can, designate a space where students will study or complete schoolwork. Involve them in making that space their own by including books they love, art they created and other personal items that make the space feel welcoming.

### 5. Monitor Screen Time

Encourage learning activities that don't require technology, such as reading, writing, math games and more. Avoid having students engaged with a computer screen for lengthy periods.

We are proud of our parents as partners model and appreciate all the great work and support that happens at home. We are always here to help and our counsellors are available for consultation, support and advice.

# New Books for Loan



While many of these titles are not age appropriate for elementary students, we encourage parents to learn more with us in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation. We can all take part in learning and unlearning and parents are welcome to sign out our books as well. Go to our website for more info.

**Vancouver Learning Network** | 530 East 41st Avenue Vancouver BC V5L 3B9 | <https://vln.vsb.bc.ca>

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