# JOHN NORQUAY ELEMENTARY

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# October Newsletter

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

One of the things we appreciate about October is that it is often the month when everything begins to come together.

The excitement and uncertainty that come with the start of a new school year start to settle, classrooms find their rhythm, and students become more comfortable in their learning environments. Across the school, we see students participate more confidently, tackle new challenges, and strengthen relationships with their peers.

Small moments tell the story. A student volunteering an answer when they were hesitant a few weeks ago. Children welcoming new classmates into a game. Learning routines is becoming second nature. These moments remind us how much growth can happen in a short period of time.

As we move through the fall, we are looking forward to Student-Led Conferences on October 20 and 21.

These conferences give students an opportunity to share their learning, reflect on their progress, and talk about where they would like to go next. They also provide valuable time for families and teachers to connect. We know that students benefit when home and school work together, and we hope every family can participate.

If you have not yet signed up for a conference time, please connect with your child's classroom teacher as soon as possible. As a reminder, all students will be dismissed at 2:00 p.m. on October 20 and 21 to accommodate conferences.

While you're visiting the school, we invite you to stop by the display outside the office featuring our staff's *"When I Was a Kid..."* reflections.

The display has sparked plenty of smiles and conversation. Students have been carefully studying childhood photos and making their best guesses about who is who, while staff members have enjoyed sharing stories from their school days. We hope it inspires a few conversations at home and perhaps a story or two that your child has never heard before.

Thank you for your continued partnership. Norquay is strengthened by the relationships between students, families, and staff, and we are grateful to be part of such a caring community.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday, October 20**
- Conferences, students dismissed at 2pm
- District cross-country meet from 1 to 3pm
- PAC pizza day

**Wednesday, October 21**
- Conferences, students dismissed at 2pm

**Friday, October 23**
Province Wide Pro-D day, classes not in session

**Tuesday, October 27**
Grade 6 Immunization

**Thursday, October 29**
1 to 1 reading workshop for grade 1 families, see invite sent by email

**Friday, October 30**
- Family Reading in the Dark: gym doors open at 8:30am. Please bring something comfy to sit on, a favourite book and let's read together!
- PAC movie matinee: Please see attached, RSVP for attendance

**Thursday, November 5**
Individual photo retakes

**Tuesday, November 10**
Indigenous Veterans Day/Remembrance Day assembly

**Wednesday, November 11**
Remembrance Day, schools closed

**Tuesday, November 17**
PAC pizza day, more information to follow

**Friday, November 20**
Professional Development Day, classes not in session

**Tuesday, November 24**
PAC meeting at 6pm, virtual

**Friday, November 27**
- Intermediate and primary assemblies
- PAC photo fundraiser after school, more information to follow




## PRINCIPAL AND VICE-PRINCIPAL FOR A MORNING

In October, Lola, Scarlett, Leo, and Austin had the opportunity to be Principal and Vice-Principal for a morning. They were amazing helpers and took on a variety of important jobs around the school. From checking that the earthquake bin could be opened, choosing the sound for the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill, shredding papers, photocopying pizza forms, and helping in the staff room, to making announcements and supporting the earthquake drill, they were busy all morning!

When asked about their favourite part of the experience, they shared:

- **Lola**: “I really loved choosing the sound for the earthquake drill.”
- **Leo**: “I liked unlocking the earthquake bin.”
- **Scarlett**: “I liked putting out the apples.”
- **Austin**: “I liked shredding paper.”

All four students agreed that they had a lot of fun!

If you would like your child to have a chance to be Principal or Vice-Principal for a morning, consider volunteering at a PAC event or attending a PAC meeting. Each time you participate, your name will be entered into the draw.

Thank you to our PAC for making opportunities like this possible!

## LIBRARY LEARNING AT NORQUAY

October is here... and almost over!

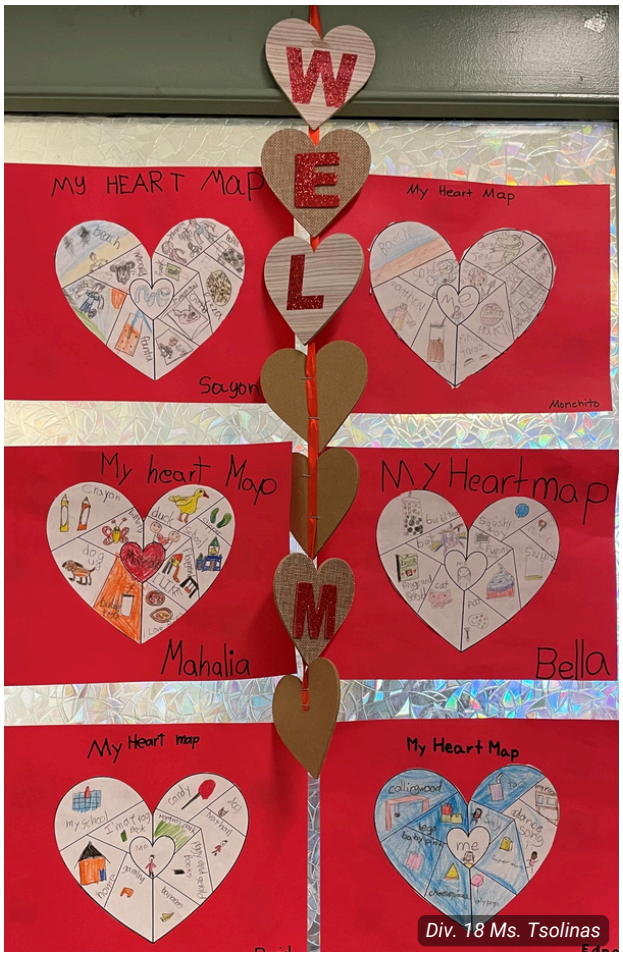
Students have been busy becoming library experts by learning how to find "just-right" books, choose books for both home and classroom reading, and explore a variety of genres. Students may borrow up to five books for one week at a time.

Our library monitors have also been learning to be library managers by helping with book circulation, organizing shelves, tidying spaces, and supporting other students.

We're beginning exciting ADST projects where students will Design, Make, and Share their creations.

And one of our favourite traditions has arrived: Reading in the Dark during Pumpkin Week!

Happy reading, Norquay!




## LOST AND FOUND REMINDER

Our Lost and Found has had a busy first month of school.

If your child has been missing a jacket, hoodie, water bottle, lunch container, or another item, there's a good chance it has found its way to the lunchroom lost and found alcove.

While you're here for conferences, please take a few minutes to have a look in the basement. Families are often surprised by what they discover.

Any unclaimed items remaining after conferences will be donated.

Thank you for helping us reunite these belongings with their owners.

# YEARBOOK CONSENT

We are beginning the process of putting together this year's yearbook, thank you PAC and Ms. Ba, teacher sponsor.

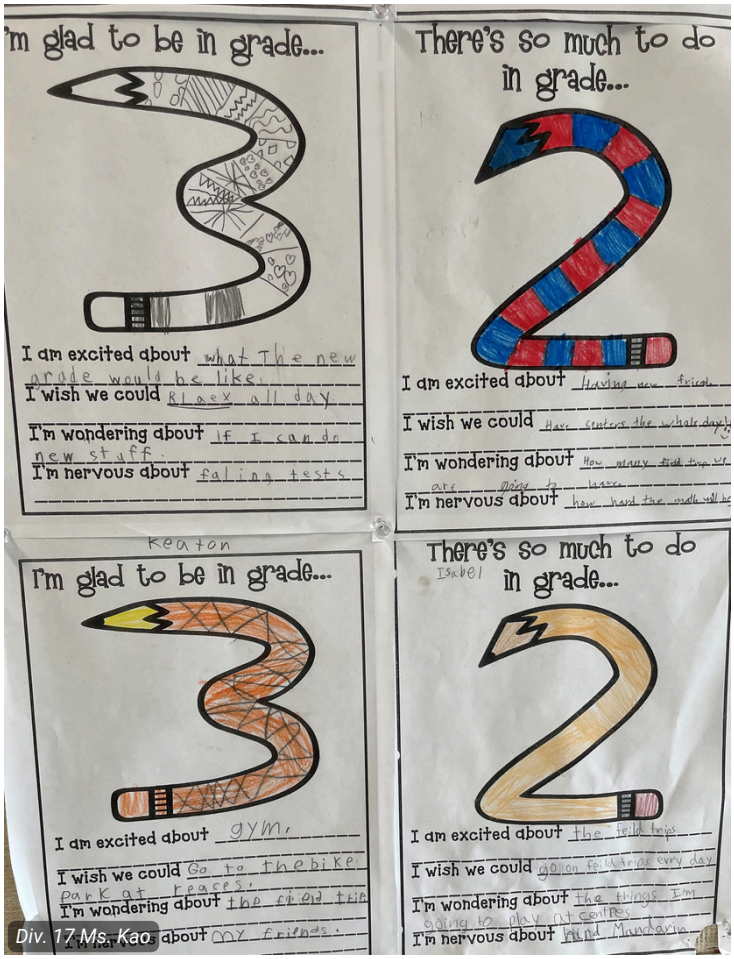
The Vancouver School Board (VSB) and its schools are authorized to collect, use, and disclose student personal information in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ("FIPPA"). At the start of the school year, your child's photo will be collected for operational purposes such as attendance or ID verification in accordance with section 26(c) of FIPPA.

As part of its commitment to protecting student privacy, the VSB is providing notice to you regarding the collection, use and disclosure of your child's personal information and image(s) for the purpose of creating a school-specific publication of the school year (a yearbook) and, if applicable, featuring their school photo, class composite photo, and other images (ex. Sports teams or clubs), in accordance with sections 32(a) and 33(1), respectively.

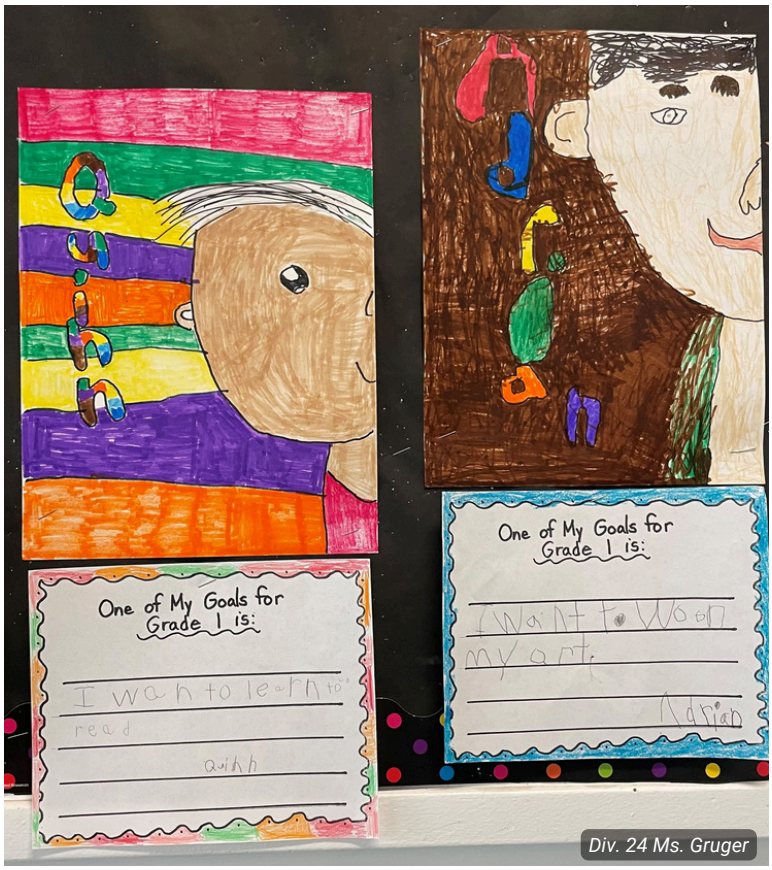
**If you do not wish for your child's personal information or photographs to be included in the yearbook, please email the school by December 1, 2026. Production of this year's yearbook will be coordinated by the school PAC. If you do not wish for your child's image and personal information to be included, that will be shared with the PAC.**

Unless withdrawn, this consent is effective immediately from the day of receipt and lasts until June 30th of the current school year.

Thank you!



Div. 17 Ms. Kao



Div. 24 Ms. Gruger

# HALLOWEEN

Halloween is one of the most anticipated days of the fall for many students, and excitement is already building.

To help ensure a safe and enjoyable day at school:

- Costumes should be school appropriate and allow students to participate safely in learning activities.
- Toy weapons should remain at home.
- Masks that completely cover a student's face are not allowed.
- Costumes should be respectful of all cultures, identities, and traditions.

We are looking forward to celebrating together.

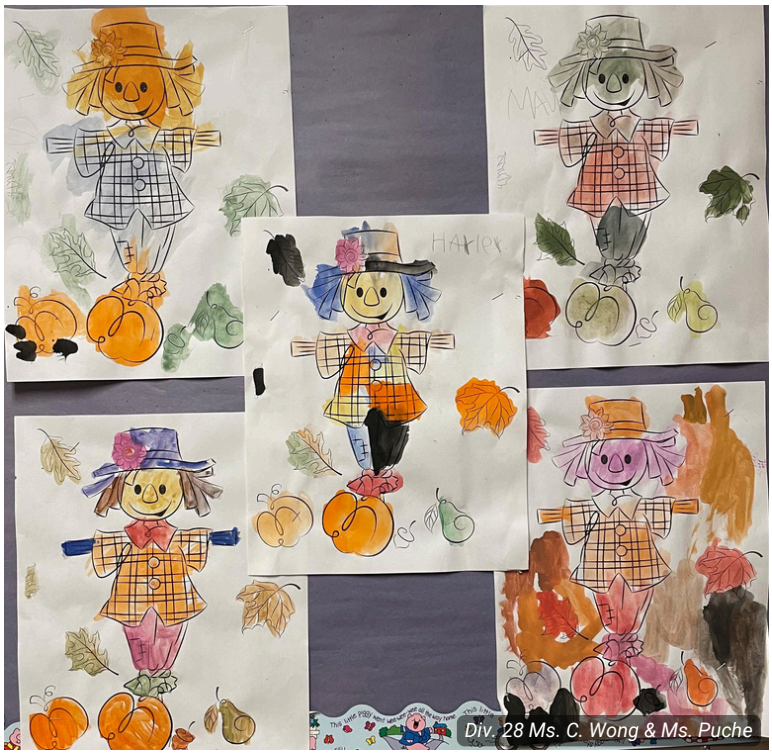
If You're Out Trick-or-Treating...

For many children, Halloween night is a highlight of the year.

Before heading out, take a few moments to review a plan with your family and talk about ways to stay safe.

- Choose costumes, shoes, and accessories that are comfortable and easy to walk in.
- Consider adding reflective tape, glow sticks, or carrying a flashlight.
- Travel with friends, family members, or a trusted adult.
- Cross streets at designated crossings.
- Visit homes with porch lights on.
- Wait until candy has been checked at home before enjoying any treats.
- Be respectful of neighbours and their property.

We hope everyone enjoys a fun and memorable Halloween.




## BEAVER COMPUTING CHALLENGE

Students in Grades 5-7 who enjoy solving problems and tackling interesting challenges may want to consider participating in the Beaver Computing Challenge.

The competition is organized through the University of Waterloo and focuses on computational thinking rather than advanced coding skills. Students can participate online during school hours.

Competition Dates:

- November 12
- November 13

Lunch Hour Practice Sessions:

- October 22
- October 27
- November 5

Many students enjoy the challenge because it encourages creative thinking and perseverance. No previous experience is required.

More information is available at:
https://cemc.uwaterloo.ca/contests/bcc

Thank you to Ms. Wang for making this opportunity available to our students.



## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 - FAMILY READING IN THE DARK

A few years ago, we asked students a simple question: *What would make you love reading more?* Their answers were clear: reading with family, reading in a cozy space, and reading with food. From those conversations, our Family Reading Mornings were born.

We try to host these special events once each term, and we would love for you to join us.

On Friday, October 30, the gym doors will open at 8:30 a.m. for Family Reading in the Dark. Bring a favourite book and something comfortable to sit on, then settle in for a cozy morning of reading together. We'll have light snacks available to enjoy while you read.

We look forward to seeing you there!

A huge thank you to our staff sponsor, Mr. Warkentin, and our student sponsor, Isaac, for helping make this special event possible.




## ADAM'S APPLES

Students passing through the front office have likely noticed the bowls of apples available each day.

Through the Adam's Apples Program, students are encouraged to "take two" - one for themselves and one for a friend.

At its heart, the program is about connection. An extra apple can be a reason to sit with someone new, check in with a classmate, or include another student in a conversation. Simple acts of kindness can have a powerful impact.

In a time when many young people spend more of their lives online, those small moments matter. They help students feel welcomed, noticed, and connected to the people around them.

As psychiatrist and Adam's Apples Board Member Dr. Muffy Greenaway notes, "Although it may seem simple, the impact of one apple leading to one connection can be a turning point for one student who is struggling."

We are grateful to be part of a program that encourages kindness and community, one apple at a time.

## CROSS COUNTRY

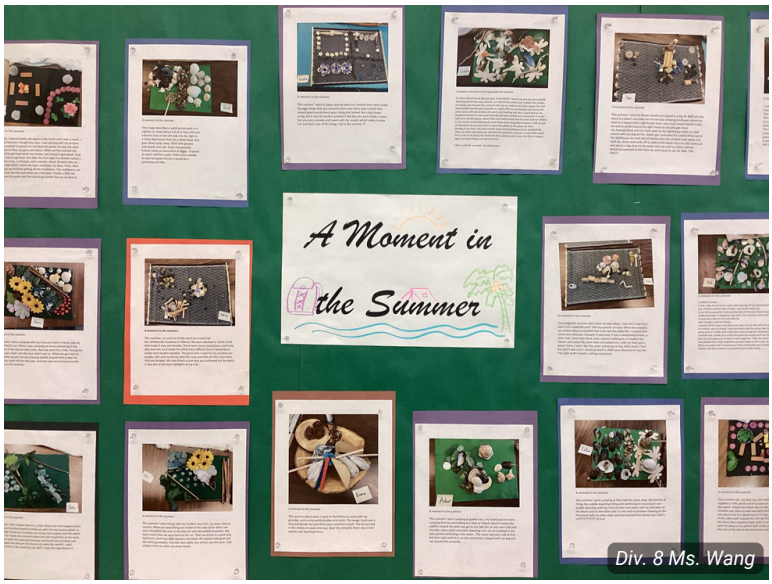
Twice a week, our Cross Country team headed out to train, and what a season it has been. It was wonderful to watch students grow in confidence as they tackled longer distances and discovered they could do more than they thought.

Research tells us that regular physical activity supports focus and learning, and we saw that connection come to life through our runners' dedication and growth.

A heartfelt thank you to Ms. Tran, Ms. Challenger, and Ms. Julie for sharing their time with our students, and to the families who helped get runners to meets and cheered them on from the sidelines. Opportunities like Cross Country happen because of the strong spirit of volunteerism and community that makes Norquay so special.

We can't wait to hear how our runners do at the DISTRICT Cross Country Meet tomorrow.

**GO NORQUAY GO!**



Div. 8 Ms. Wang

## TERRY FOX FUNDRAISER UPDATE

Our Terry Fox Run was another wonderful example of what can happen when a community comes together around a common purpose.

This year, Norquay raised $1,500.35 for cancer research.

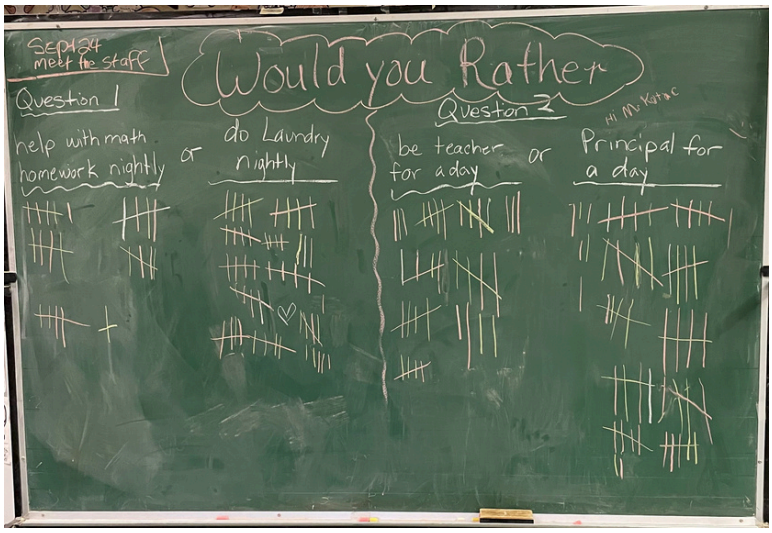
- Cash Donations: $695.35
- Online Donations: $805.00

Total Raised: $1,500.35

Every contribution helped carry forward Terry's message of hope and determination.

Thank you to everyone who donated, participated, and supported the event.

A special thank you goes to Ms. Hughes, Ms. Challenger, Ms. Adams, and Mr. Warkentin for their leadership. We are also grateful to our student hosts, Amber, Bella, Jaqueline, and Nuhany, who helped make the day such a success.




## PARKING REMINDER

Morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal are some of the busiest times of day around our school.

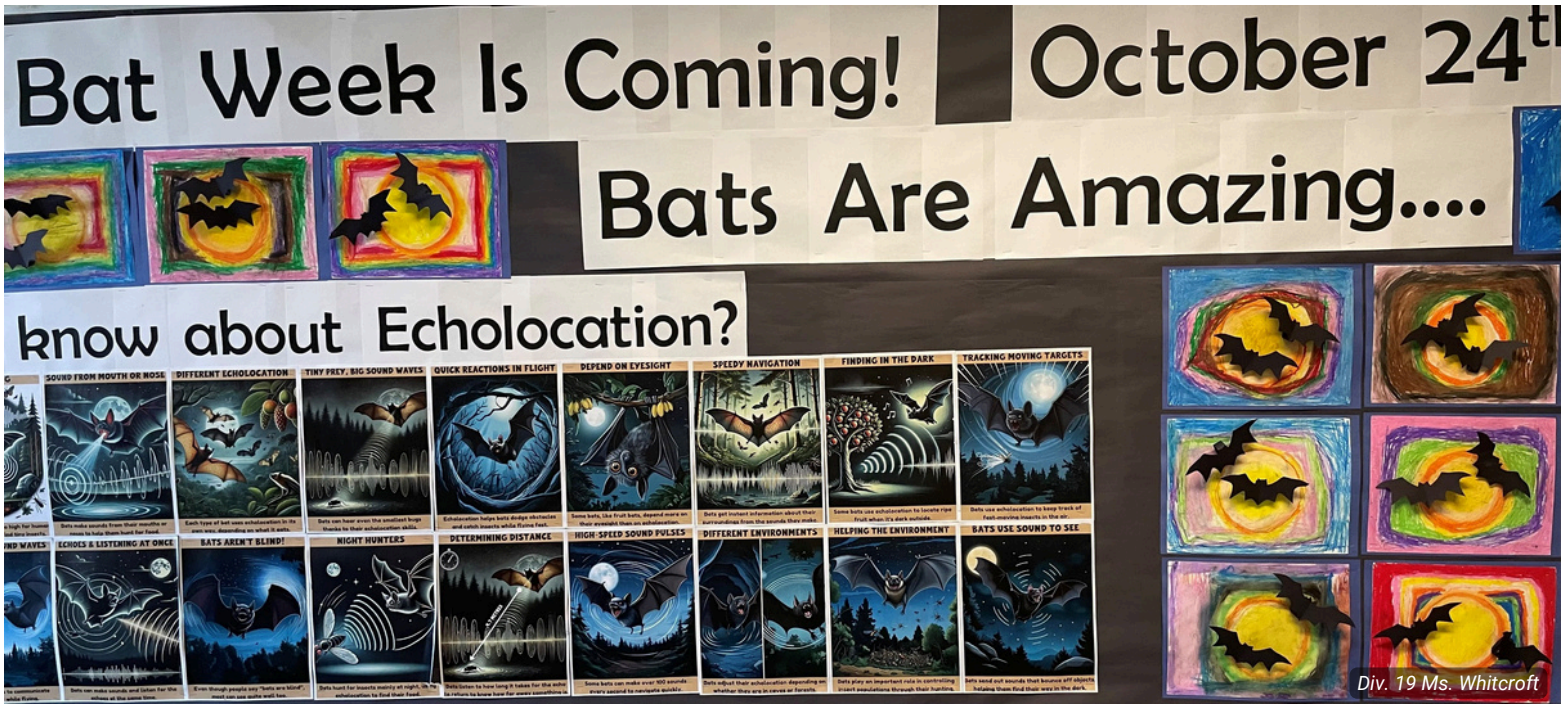
We appreciate the care families take to help keep students safe. A few extra moments of patience can make a significant difference.

Please remember to:

- Follow all parking and stopping regulations.
- Avoid stopping in crosswalks or no-stopping zones.
- Watch carefully for students crossing the street.
- Respect our neighbours' driveways and property.

Thank you for helping make our school a safe place to arrive and leave each day.


PAC Pumpkin Patch




## NEW PROVINCIAL RESOURCE: B.C.'S WELCOMING SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Education and Child Care has launched B.C.'s Welcoming Schools, a new online resource hub designed to support safe, caring, and inclusive school communities.

Families will find information about student well-being, mental health, online safety, reporting concerns, graduation requirements, newcomer supports, and resources for educators.

If you are looking for information or support related to your child's school experience, this is an excellent place to start: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/welcoming-schools


PAC Pumpkin Patch

## PAC CORNER

Thank you so much for making our school-wide Pizza Day and PAC Pumpkin Patch such a wonderful success. It was wonderful to see students across the school come together, participate, and enjoy these fun community-building activities.

Our next PAC event is Family Movie Night on Friday, October 30 (see attached flyer).

A few important reminders:

- Attendance is limited, and families must RSVP in advance.
- This is not a drop-off event. All students must be accompanied and supervised by an adult for the duration of the evening.
- Families are encouraged to bring blankets or mats for seating.
- Low lawn chairs are welcome. Larger camping chairs may be asked to move to the back to ensure everyone has a good view.
- Students may bring their own nut-free snacks.
- A concession will be available, with suggested donations for items such as popcorn, chips, cookies, and juice boxes.
- Halloween costumes are welcome and encouraged!
- Volunteers are still needed to help make the evening a success.

Please see the attached flyers for RSVP details, volunteer opportunities, and additional event information. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Office Administrative Assistant:** Sandy Lowe
**Principal:** Deena Kotak Buckley
**Vice Principal:** Curtis Mathewson
**PAC Chairpersons:** Hannah Tan
**School Liaison Trustee:** Victoria Jung
**Director of Instruction:** Chris Wong

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