



The Constellation

The Monthly Newsletter of Strathmillan School

SEPT
2026

MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

A new year brings a sense of hope, optimism and excitement. Returning to school brings an opportunity for new learning, new friendships, and growth.

We are excited to welcome returning and new teachers to Strathmillan. Ms. Richardson has returned to teach mornings in Grade 3, Room 1, along with new teacher Ms. Rishi. Our English as an Additional Language teacher, Ms. Orloff, has also returned to work after a brief absence. We welcome Ms. Clendenan as a new literacy support and resource teacher, and Ms. Shapera as our new music teacher.



We're pleased to share school information with you, such as contacts, bell times, attendance, lunch program, and student expectations in our 2026 – 2027 handbook, which you can access at this link:

[Strathmillan School Handbook.](#)

Welcome back!

Warren Nickerson (Principal) and Kellie Straub (VP/Guidance)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION – Mr. McKenzie

Welcome to the new school year! We'll be off and running early this year – literally! Cross-country running sign up will happen right away, and practices begin next week. Check out the calendar outside the gym for dates of practices and meets. The dates are also listed in the calendar at the end of this newsletter. Each student needs a signed permission slip to participate.



PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – SEPTEMBER UPDATES

Happy “Back to School”, everyone! As we start another school year, the Strathmillan Parent Advisory Council (PAC) would like to invite all parents, guardians and caregivers to consider joining us. The PAC is a volunteer group that meets once a month. We are focused on building relationships within the school community, and we raise money for school-focused initiatives! Last year, your PAC was responsible for Fun Lunch, Teacher Appreciation, Grade 5 Farewell, outdoor school improvements and the community Music Night.

To keep up to date on all PAC activities & fundraisers, please follow us on Instagram **@strathparentcouncil**

Joining PAC

We are always looking for new members to bring new ideas! Please feel free to reach out to us through our Instagram (@strathparentcouncil), email us at strathcommcouncil@gmail.com or join us at one of our meetings!

Upcoming PAC Meetings:

- **Annual General Meeting - Tuesday, September 22, 6:00 PM**

All meetings will be held in the Strathmillan School Library.

Tears & Cheers

For the families of all our Kindergarten students, we will be hosting a “Tears & Cheers” Meet and Greet outside the Kindergarten doors on the morning of the first day of school, September 11. We will have coffee and treats! Come mingle and share a few tears with other parents/guardians as your students make this big transition.

Fun Lunch

We are thrilled to be offering “Fun Lunch” through Healthy Hunger again this year! Fun Lunch will be available to all Grade 1-5 students. Parents can sign up for an account through www.healthyhunger.ca Lunch day, the food will be delivered to your student’s classroom (or Daycare if your student attends Strathmillan Childcare Centre for lunch)! Please note, we cannot offer Fun Lunch to Kindergarten students as they do not stay at school for lunch.

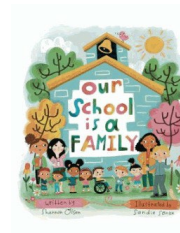
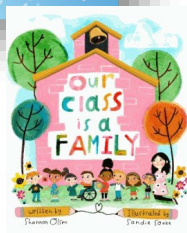
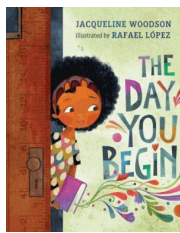
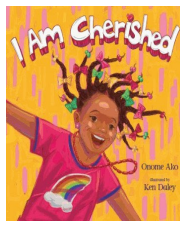
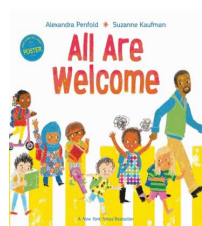
Upcoming Fun Lunch Dates:

- Thursday, September 24 - Papa John’s Pizza (Order Cut-Off Saturday, Sept. 19)
- Thursday, October 29 - Restaurant TBD (Order Cut-Off Saturday, Oct. 24)

We are looking forward to another amazing year at Strathmillan!

LIBRARY - Ms. Branco

Welcome back to the school library; the books have missed you! My name is Mrs. Branco and I'm excited to share the school year with you. We will have fun story times, explore the countless books in our well-stocked library, and choose books that will strengthen our reading and writing skills. Students will have one library class per school cycle. Please bring library books back to school on or before your library day, so you can choose new ones!



Fines are NOT charged for overdue books, but a replacement is requested if a book is lost.

Sora is a digital reading platform available to all SJASD students that gives students access to browse and borrow eBooks and audiobooks from school libraries 24/7 for a month-long loan period.

Developed by Overdrive, staff and students can access Sora through their SJASD computer login. The free app is available for download. See the [SJASD Library Resources](#) website for links to Sora instructions as well as other SJASD Resources.

Resource and Guidance – Mrs. Straub

Zones of Regulation

The Zones of Regulation is a framework that helps children identify, understand, and manage their feelings. The framework categorizes all human emotions and states of alertness into four distinct, color-coded "zones": **Blue** (low alertness, like feeling sad, tired, or bored), **Green** (calm, focused, and ready to learn), **Yellow** (heightened alertness, like feeling anxious, frustrated, or excited), and **Red** (extremely intense emotions, like explosive anger, terror, or complete overwhelm).

When we support students at Strathmillan who are exhibiting high-magnitude behaviors like hitting, throwing, running away, and severe work refusal, we use a structured, trauma-informed approach. When a child reaches the Red Zone, their logical brain completely shuts down, meaning there is no sense talking or reasoning with them until they are helped back into a calm state. In the Red Zone, children are experiencing intense emotions like anger, terror, or complete overwhelm, and their logical brain is temporarily offline. A child must feel safe and regulated before they can learn from a mistake or change their behavior.

Here are four ways that we support a child who has gone into the Red Zone:

Prioritize Safety and Stabilization

- Ensure immediate physical safety. Remove dangerous objects from the area or gently move other children away to create a secure environment.
- Co-regulate instead of reasoning. Use your own calm presence, steady breathing, and soft tone of voice to help quiet their hyper-aroused nervous system.



- Keep your language minimal. Drop complex explanations and demands, using only short, predictable phrases like "You are safe" or "I'm right here."

Focus on Connection First

- Validate the emotion, not the behavior. Acknowledge their intense feelings by saying "I see how angry you are" without immediately lecturing them on their actions.
- Match their energy safely. Meet their emotional intensity with deep empathy and attentiveness, rather than responding with cold detachment or matching their anger.
- Offer physical comfort carefully. Provide a hug, a hand to hold, or a comforting touch only if the child welcomes it, respecting their personal space if they push away.

Pause Discipline and Teaching.

- Postpone lessons, consequences, and discussions about what they did wrong until their body and mind have fully returned to the Green Zone.
- Do not force eye contact. Recognize that demanding a child look at you while they are deregulated can feel threatening and escalate their defense mechanisms.
- Ignore the urge to fix it immediately.
Resist the temptation to solve the underlying problem right away, focusing entirely on helping them de-escalate first.



Reflect and Restore

- Repair and teach later. Revisit the incident hours later—or even the next day—to discuss what happened, practice coping strategies, and handle any necessary consequences.

These strategies take training and patience for our staff to implement. It's most important that adults keep their emotions in check.

MOBILE VISION CLINIC – Friday, October 2

The Mobile Vision Clinic will be visiting our school again this year. We are pleased to partner with this service, which helps make vision screening and eye care more accessible for students and families.

The Mobile Vision Clinic is a social enterprise organization that works alongside our school division to identify students who may have vision concerns that could affect their learning, reading, or participation at school. Clear vision plays an important role in student success, and vision difficulties can sometimes go unnoticed. Early identification of concerns can help ensure students have the support they need to fully participate in learning.

Qualified eye care professionals provide vision assessments and, when appropriate, recommendations for follow-up care. The service operates through existing provincial health coverage. Manitoba Health covers eye examinations for children and youth ages 0 to 18 every two calendar years. If glasses are recommended, costs are the responsibility of families through their private insurance plans or direct payment.

Participation in the Mobile Vision Clinic is completely optional. Families whose children have recently seen an optometrist may not feel a further assessment is necessary at this time. The clinic is intended as a convenient option for families who would like to access vision services through the school setting. If glasses are required, the Mobile Vision Clinic can assist families with the ordering process through their insurance provider; however, glasses are not provided free of charge.

We value this opportunity to support the health and well-being of our students and appreciate the partnership with the Mobile Vision Clinic.



SEPTEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
6	7 LABOUR DAY	8 Day 1 • Inservice – No School	9 Day 2 • EY Triad Conferences	10 Day 3 • EY Triad Conferences	11 Day 4 • First Day of Classes • “Tears and Cheers” PAC • Rosh Hashanah	12
13	14 Day 5	15 Day 6 • Hearing Screening • Cross Country Practice 12:00 – 12:25 • UN International Day of Democracy	16 Day 1 • Cross Country Practice 12:00 – 12:25	17 Day 2 • Cross Country Running Mini-Meet (Heritage School)	18 Day 3 • FUN Lunch Order cutoff (Sept. 19)	19
20	21 Day 4 • Yom Kippur • UN International Day of Peace • Cross Country Practice 12:00 – 12:25	22 Day 5 • Early Dismissal • Fall Equinox • Cross Country Practice 12:00 – 12:25 • Strathmillan Parent Council AGM – 6:00 PM	23 Day 6 • Cross Country Running Meet (Athlone School)	24 Day 1 • FUN LUNCH – Papa John’s Pizza (Strathmillan PAC)	25 Day 2	26
27	28 Day 3 • Cross Country Practice 12:00 – 12:25 • Confucious’ Birthday	29 Day 4 • Cross Country Practice 12:00 – 12:25 • Orange Shirt Day	30 • National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (no school)	Oct 1 Day 5 • Divisional Cross Country Running Meet – Assiniboine Park	Oct. 2 Day 6 • Mobile Vision Clinic • Terry Fox School Run	27

UPCOMING DATES in OCTOBER

- Oct. 1 Divisional Cross Country Running Meet (Assiniboine Park)
- Oct. 2. Terry Fox School Run
- Oct. 6. Early Dismissal: Staff meeting
- Oct. 6. Strathmillan PAC Meeting
- Oct. 12 Thanksgiving (No School)
- Oct. 14 Fall Photo Day
- Oct. 20 Early Dismissal
- Oct. 23 MTS PD Day (no school)
- Oct. 24 Fun lunch order cut-off
- Oct. 28 Provincial Election / Inservice Day (no school)
- Oct. 29 FUN LUNCH
- Oct. 30 Halloween Parade