



St. Helen's School Newsletter | Sept 2025

Principal Waldemar Sambor
Vice Principal Anthony Belmonte
Vice Principal Anthony Canosa

NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

In early July, I had the privilege of joining the 10th Anniversary CISVAAA El Camino pilgrimage—a journey that was both deeply spiritual and profoundly memorable. Together with a group of administrators, we walked nearly 200 kilometers through Portugal and Spain, concluding at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, which houses the shrine of Saint James the Great.

Along the way, I treasured moments such as stepping into centuries-old churches, attending Mass and prayers, and experiencing my faith in ways that will guide me throughout the years ahead. One special moment was when a monk blessed me saying, “You are the leader. You must share your faith with the community, especially in this Jubilee Year, when the Church offers us a special time of renewal.”

Pilgrimage allows us to encounter God in a fresh way. On the El Camino, the daily rhythm of prayer shaped our hearts, reminding us that true leadership flows from faith. As one fellow pilgrim shared, “God loves to use pilgrimage to challenge us and bring us deeper into our faith and relationship with Him.”

The photo below is of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, which houses the shrine of Saint James the Great. May it inspire us all as we enter this school year with renewed faith, hope, and joy.

Once again, our hearts are heavy as we hear of violence and loss of innocent lives in Minneapolis. These senseless acts of shooting shake our faith in humanity and leave families grieving, communities broken, and a nation searching for peace. In these dark moments, we are called to pray for the victims, for their loved ones, and for an end to such violence.

Sincerely in Christ,
Waldemar Sambor
Principal



Living,
Celebrating, &
PROCLAIMING
OUR FAITH



I would like to encourage every family to make Sunday Mass part of their week. To attend together as a family if possible since Mass is more than tradition, it is a foundation of our Catholic life. Being part of a Catholic community means committing to nurture our children's faith. The journey begins at home and is strengthened in the parish, especially through the Eucharist. Let's begin the school year with a renewed commitment to placing God first in our schedules and in our hearts.



STAFF ALLOCATIONS

Principal	Mr. Waldemar Sambor	wsambor@cisva.bc.ca
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Gr. 6B	Mrs. Lindsay Mincieli	lmincieli@shschool.ca
Gr. 7/VP	Mr. Anthony Belmonte	anthony.belmonte@shschool.ca

LRT/Special Ed Director	Mrs. Teresa Utini	tutini@shschool.ca
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Facility Maintenance Manager	Mr. Paul Mobilio	office.shel@cisva.bc.ca
Maintenance	Mr. Llyod Villota	office.shel@cisva.bc.ca

Note: Please note all staff emails are posted on the school website.

We are pleased to welcome Arthur Lo on contract as our band teacher and assisting us with school Masses. His e-mail address is arthur.lo@shschool.ca

Teacher emails are for general communication purposes. This form of communication is not a replacement for parent teacher conferences. **For all absentee notes, please submit the absentee form on our school app no later than 9 am.**

PEC MEMBERS 2025-2026

Mr. Gavin Dsouza	Chairperson
Mrs. Stefania Bogdanovic	Vice Chairperson
Mr. Nick Corea	Treasurer
Ms. Lana Piovesan	Secretary
Mr. Chris Cheung	Participation
Mrs. Nikolina Grauer	Participation
Ms. Monica Alvarez	Maintenance
Fr. Alessandro Lovato	Pastor



MONTH AT A GLANCE

SEPT 2	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (FULL DAY)
SEPT 2-5	NO UNIFORM, BUS OR LUNCH PROGRAM
SEPT 3-5	OUTDOOR ED (GR. 4-7)
SEPT 4	MASS @ CAMP EVANS (4PM) PARENTS WELCOME
SEPT 8	FULL UNIFORM & BUS BEGINS
SEPT 12	SCHOOL MASS (FULL FORMAL UNIFORM)
SEPT 19	TERRY FOX RUN
SEPT 23	ST. MARY'S CROSS COUNTRY MEET
SEPT 24	INDIVIDUAL PICTURE DAY (FULL UNIFORM)
SEPT 26	ORANGE SHIRT DAY (WITH UNIFORM BOTTOMS)
SEPT 29	NO SCHOOL
SEPT 30	NO SCHOOL (TRUTH & RECONCILIATION)

First Day Of School Reminder

Please note that for the first day of school, students are to line up in front of the modular classrooms at their designated cone. Please be on time as we will all proceed to the Church shortly after 9 am. Parents are welcome to join us in the Church to welcome our staff and students back for another school year.



Special Thank You

St. Helen's Staff attended a study day retreat in Squamish which highlighted that our faith is the most important subject in our school. We are called to serve our community and families. We also highlighted the importance of working together, focusing on relationships between students, parents, and the community at large. We need to accept one another and treat each other with kindness, respect, and compassion.

Summer Maintenance

With the rising cost of construction, we recently added additional fencing for the safety of our students, both around the playground and along the west side of the church. If you are willing to help us with these additional expenses, please contact the office next week so we can recognize your generosity. **We will be having a ribbon cutting ceremony right after our paralit on Sept 2nd at approx. 9:30 am.** All sponsors, PEC and parents are welcome! We are deeply grateful for your support.

Bell Schedule

- 8:00 am - supervision
- 8:55 am - morning bell
- 10:15-10:30 am - Primary recess
- 10:30-10:45 am - Intermediate recess
- 12:00 -12:30 pm - Primary lunch
- 12:30-1:00 pm - Intermediate lunch
- 3:00 pm - Dismissal bell
- 3:30 pm - Supervision ends

SCHOOL INFORMATION

St. Helen's School App

Our school app, which can be downloaded onto your smartphone, gives parents and students access to information regarding the upcoming school year. To submit an absentee letter on the app, click the 'School Info' tab, then 'Absence Form', pick your child's grade, fill in the form and submit. Please note that all notes must be submitted by 9 am daily.

This will directly notify both the office and class teacher of your child's absence.

If your child arrives late to school (after 9 am), it is the parents responsibility to check them into the office and we will walk the child to their classroom if needed.

Communication

No lunch drop offs during school hours. Please ensure to communicate with your child before school regarding play dates and pickups. Please do not contact the school to pass along messages to your children unless it is an emergency.

Edu-Pac School Supplies

In an effort to ensure that all students are prepared for the school year, we have purchased school supplies for all students from Edu-Pac in bulk. No further supplies are necessary from parents. This program was implemented to help our parents.

Pre-Authorized Debit

Reminder that tuition will be charged on the 1st of every month(Sept-May). Tuition payments made through PAD must be kept updated. If your chequing account changes, please notify the office asap.

Fantuan Lunch Program



Our new lunch program will be launching on Oct 1st. More information to come. Please ensure to pack a lunch for your child for the month of September.

SEARCHERS NEWS



Safety is very important to all of us. After a discussion with the staff and input from parents, we are putting signs in front of our playgrounds to ensure that they are used properly. A reminder to parents that our school doors remain locked. Please refrain from asking students to open them for you. If you need to enter the building, please buzz the front doors to allow our staff to let you in.



Max Kim in Mexico!



Chloe Kemp in the British Virgin Islands!



Aveline Song in Korea!



Ada Secchiati in Palm Springs!



I hiked with my daughter and grandson through the High Note Trail from Whistler Mountain, over Flute Mountain, across the Musical Bumps, and down to Russet Lake to the new hut.

This hike is often considered one of the best in the world, known for its breathtaking views of Fissile Peak, Overlord Glacier, and the Spearhead Range.