

The Jay

ISSUE 06



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pause

by Sophie De Launiere

INSIDE SMUS

Boarding & Goodbyes

by Jane Lee

ELL Student Experiences

by Sara Qian

School Sports

by Lauren Dhrolia

Leadership in the 2025-26 School Year

by Youlan Li & Mira Wirk

Modern Language Articles

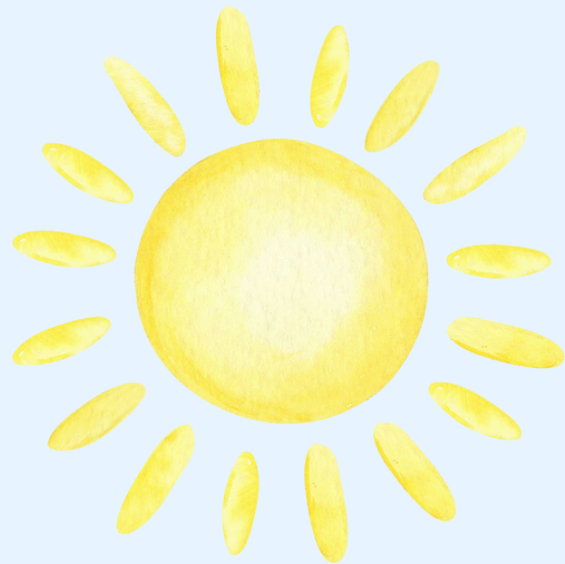
by Estee Luk & Janette Ooi, Elliot Mairet, Luis Osuna Santos & Maria Garcia de Bustamante

Spotlight Interview

by Claire Ru

Editor's Note

by Mira Wirk, Julian Gale & Kayler Kim



Pause

by Sophie De Launiere

It is always time for something. Time for lunch, time to go to school, time to go to bed, time to grow up.

I even find myself choosing a time to relax. No matter how much I want to escape it, life's minutes continue marching by. When I allow myself to let go of the clock's constraints, I am able to focus on the present moment. Consequently, I draw more value from moments of freedom than the moments I try to plan out. There is no erasing time, but I have a choice in how I approach experiences.

In 2023, Qualicum First Nation Elder Kim Recalma-Clutesi (Ogwi'low'gwa) spoke to the Senior School as part of SMUS's assembly for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Before the assembly, all students were informed about Indigenous ways of teaching. We learned that when a person is speaking, there are no time limits on what they say; instead, the speaker talks for as long as it takes to convey their message. I found this method fascinating. In Western culture, we are constantly time-bound. For this one day, we did not have to be somewhere at a certain time after the assembly. Kim would speak for as long as she needed.

Kim's teaching opened my eyes. I listened, enraptured, as she spoke of clam gardens, Indigenous history, children, learning, and reconciliation. Her words flowed like the tides she was speaking of, ebbing with sadness and flooding with passion. Water finds its way between rocks, into tide pools, and around seaweed, touching uncountable things. Similarly, the topics Kim spoke of varied greatly. Many Indigenous ideas are based on circularity: children learn, then teach when they are older; the land is meant to be cared for, and it will provide for the people who do. The cyclical nature of Kim's speech aligned with this idea. She immersed me in her words, transporting me to a different level of thinking, one where I could see the bigger picture of life and my place in it. I was only one person in the world, meant to listen and learn from my experiences. Kim could have spoken forever, and I would have stayed. Time did not matter to me in that moment.

I think that nearly all humans are, subconsciously, most joyful when they are free from time. Students say they look forward to the summer holidays because of the warm weather and because they will see their friends. On a deeper level, though, I think what makes summer special is the expanse of free time laid out in front of us.

At the end of August, on the last day of work, my coworkers and I decided to eat dinner together on the yacht club's patio.

We chatted and laughed, took the time to order appetizers and drinks, and the warm breeze washed away our cares. We had nowhere to be after dinner, an entire evening laid out in front of us. We ordered main courses and ate them slowly, savouring them. We got to know each other better. After dinner, as people dispersed at their leisure, my closer friends and I found ourselves remaining at the table. On an impromptu decision, we went paddle-boarding. All sorts of shenanigans ensued. We explored Cadboro Bay while exchanging lighthearted banter. I felt light; my chest was a helium balloon. Memories were being created, and I was aware of that. I was fully present in the moment and felt that I had an extra lens I was seeing through: a lens that made every person shine a little brighter, every laugh a little more musical.

I was focused.

As a very organized person, I often find myself taking on the responsibility of managing time for a group. In the back of my mind, there's usually that niggling thought of, "are we on schedule?" Being immersed in Western culture, with its rigid adherence to time, made me a slave to the clock. That August evening, however, everyone was there to enjoy the night for as long as they wanted. The burden of time was removed from my shoulders. I noticed details that I might not have if I were in a rush to get somewhere else. It is moments like these that fulfill me and that make me a more thoughtful and attentive person, helping me grow emotionally.

I didn't recognize it that evening, but it was Kim's speech that created the shift in my thinking. She helped me find a pause in our frantic world. Since then, I have been able to discern when I do and do not need to worry about time. If I go out for lunch with someone, we may have places to be afterwards, but for the time we are together, I concentrate on them. All that matters is interacting with that other person. We connect over shared experiences, we learn from each other, and we build a relationship.

In the summers, parents often book back-to-back camps for their children. Students take summer courses and do internships in the hope of building their resumes. Although valuable experiences, these planned activities need to be balanced with doing "nothing." When children are able to be bored, they become creative. Games are invented with friends, and scenarios are made up. The decision is made to put three people on a paddleboard. Adults, too, need unstructured time. Going camping or spending a weekend gardening are examples of allowing the creative, exploratory part of ourselves to flourish. When people are relaxed, they internalize the small beauties of life, such as a compliment from a stranger, or the way the ocean smells of freedom. As a result of slowing down our lives, we can become more attentive and more individualized in our thinking. In today's society, we need creativity more than ever, especially with the prominence of technology and the push to always be faster, stronger, and better. Without any time to pause, there is no time for growth. I believe that extricating oneself from the restrictions of time is essential to finding value in the simple. It is crucial to embrace the mundane.





Boarding & Goodbyes

by Jane Lee

As we reach the final stretch of the year, everyone is eager for the last day of school and to finally start their long-awaited summer vacation. For boarding students, it's been a tough couple of months: trying to soak in all the experiences before saying goodbye. From those first awkward interactions in September to the last few days of Sun Centre dinners, boarding students have been together through it all.

This year, boarding has thrived in many ways, with new boarding students arriving from all around the world. As a boarder in Timmis house for the past two years, the relationships I have built with new students this year have been my favorite part of boarding school. Having friends in boarding allows me to have a family and a sense of belonging away from home. House games, downtown visits, shopping for snacks at Hillside, and late night talks in the common rooms are only a few of the things that bring boarders together to create a long lasting, special bond.

Although boarding school may be difficult to adjust to at the start of the year, the SMUS boarding community allows both international and Canadian students to instantly fit in. When I first started boarding, the people who guided me the most were my houseparents, heads of houses, and grade 12 students. They always made me feel welcome.

On behalf of the boarding community, I would like to thank the 12 Heads of House who consistently showed leadership and compassion. The Heads of House this year included: Ilaria Dolden and Rio Usugaya from Timmis House, Peter Wang and Emad Al Khusaibi from Bolton House, Alex Zhang and Cohen Labrecque from Barnacle House, Amelie Fleck and Carlotta D'Amico from Winslow House, and Yuriko Ishikawa and Maria Garcia de Bustamante O'Donnell from Symons House. From weekly house meetings to organizing teams for house games, they did it all!

At the end of the year, there is a lot to feel grateful for as we reminisce on all the memories we have made together as a boarding community. For me, boarding is an incredibly unique experience. It allows every student to be themselves and to find where they belong. Through stressful times and busy terms, boarding remains a place where any student can feel loved and supported. In the last short moments that we have together this year, especially for boarders, returning or not, please enjoy this time with the people who made your year memorable.

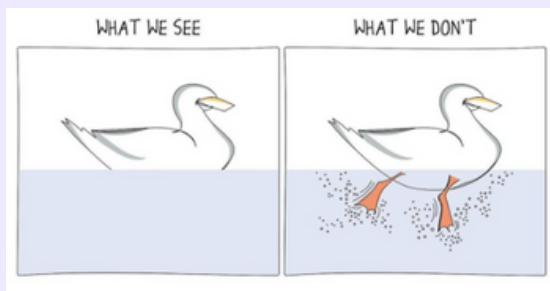
Teacher Interview: ELL Student Experiences

by Sara Qian

In this issue, I interviewed Ms. Hamilton to gain insight into her view of the experiences of ELL Students at SMUS.

What characteristics have you noticed in ELL students?

The number one trait ELL teachers and I have noticed is their bravery. It takes courage to come from your home country to SMUS as well as function and learn in a second language. Because ELL students are coming to a new culture and school system, they can be self-conscious. This gets in their way sometimes, as they find it hard to put themselves out there and talk to people. They are also hardworking. It may not look like it, but language learning takes a lot of energy.



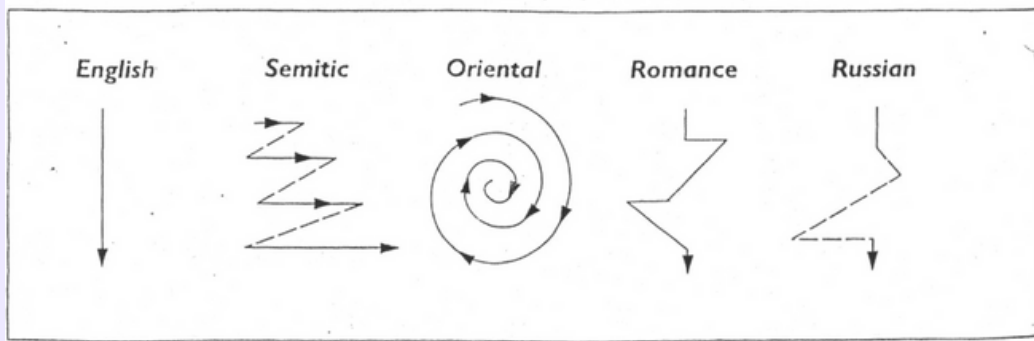
They are curious; you could not travel halfway around the world and learn everything in a new language if you were not curious. As they are learning English, their second language, it is also important to maintain their first language. I think that it is beneficial to speak your first language as a mental health break, as you express your true self when speaking it.

What do ELL students struggle with the most? Why?

Just like everyone else, ELL students want others to understand them. However, as they are just learning English, they may not be able to express themselves on a deeper level. Language learning is frustrating. When I studied 3 languages at Laval in Quebec, I wanted to talk on a deeper level, but was stuck talking about basic things like the weather. Similarly, ELL students face this challenge where they understand high-level content, like in math and science, but there is a gap between their understanding and their ability to express their thinking. As a result, people often misjudge their level of knowledge and skill. ELL students, in turn, struggle with self-confidence, which hinders their progress, as they may shy away from interacting with people.

Academic writing is another challenge for ELL students. Academic English is an additional language for native and non-native English speakers. In English academic writing, we tell the reader our main argument fairly early, whereas other languages may have a more indirect structure to express the main argument. When I was teaching my students how to write a thesis, some struggled. Some Asian students, for example, told me that stating a direct thesis right away feels like insulting the reader's intelligence. They would gradually reveal the main idea instead of stating it at the beginning. This difference between introductions reflects our thinking from speaking different languages. Thus, language carries cultural influences into academics and daily life.

Figure 17.1. Patterns of Written Discourse (Kaplan, 1966:14).



What are some strategies for language learning?

Talk with people. This process is scary and awkward, but it improves your language skills. As you participate in more conversations, you gradually build your confidence, make more connections, and integrate into your community.

Read every day. Read something that is interesting to you. Often, people think that they have to read classics or hard books, but if you hate classics or struggle to understand a book at too high a level, then it will not help you. Try read-along books, which are audio and ebooks in one, as you can hear the pronunciation and grammar as well as see the spelling and structure. The internet provides a variety of resources for language learning.

For help in academic writing, look at exemplars. Get a sense of the structure, which differs from the one in your first language. When you are still learning a language, you often don't spot these differences. If you need help, don't hesitate to reach out to your teachers. This is another struggle for my ELL students, as they learned different classroom expectations. When I was teaching in China, I was confused why my students didn't ask me for help, and they explained that asking a teacher for help is disrespectful of their time. Here at SMUS, please ask for help when you need it. In fact, this shows that you are a good student and care about what you are learning. Also, remember that language learning is nonlinear. The language learning process takes time and is full of ups and downs. You may make a lot of progress in the beginning because you are learning the basics, then you may plateau for a while when you need to use more complex language and more specific vocabulary. Persevere, and you will be rewarded with another peak.

What progress have you noticed from your current or previous ELL students?

I'm proud of how my ELL students increase their confidence throughout the school year. Although it is often hard to show your full self when learning an additional language, they start to ask more questions as the school year progresses. They even take on leadership opportunities, such as performing in chapel, making a speech, and becoming prefects, link leaders, and heads of houses, councils, or clubs. Their progress, bravery, and courage to express themselves surpass my expectations every year. As their confidence and English skills grow, they realize that they have the superpower of multilingualism, which gives them new cognitive pathways, a broader cultural understanding, and more job and university opportunities. They should be proud of their multilingualism and progress.

How can ELL students and non-ELL students connect with each other in the SMUS community?

ELL students are part of what makes our school community so special. ELL students are involved in sports, leadership, extracurriculars, and arts, just like other SMUS students. They bring new perspectives, cultures, and traditions that enrich the SMUS experience for everyone. One way for students to connect more with each other (boarders, day students, and ELL students in both of those categories) is to go out of their comfort zones and start conversations. On one hand, ELL students tend to be reticent to start conversations because they are self-conscious about making mistakes and not being understood. They don't want it to be awkward for them or others. On the other hand, native English speakers have told me that they are reluctant to start a conversation with a group of students who are speaking in another language. They don't know what is being discussed and if it is appropriate to interrupt. This shared hesitation demonstrates that both parties should try to converse with each other. It might be awkward at first, but you never know what lifelong friend you might meet. Most importantly, everyone is grateful to be included.

SMUS Sports: Inside the Rowing Team

by Lauren Dhrolia

School sports are a way to create lasting memories, build friendships, and create new bonds. Whether it is representing SMUS on the track, court, pitch, or water, all team sports share common values such as the importance of teamwork, discipline, and hard work. In an interview I conducted with three students from the SMUS rowing team, I learned about their favorite aspects of participating in a school sport. They spoke about how the demanding training schedule challenged their time management, the techniques they use to stay grounded and focused before a race, the unique ways their coaches have influenced them as individuals and how one of them managed to stand out from the crowd and get recruited.

What's your favorite part about participating in a school sport?

“My favorite part about participating in a team sport is the connections I have gotten to make with my teammates. Being around them all the time and building a strong connection with them would definitely be the most enjoyable part.”

“Definitely the connections you make. There's a bond between teammates that is so special and important for everyone to have, and I have so many close friends now, who are rowers, that I wouldn't have met otherwise.”

“Probably training together and winning together. Unlike being solo, where you win alone, it's more of a group effort to train and win as a team because you know that everyone tried their best.”



What did you take away from participating in rowing?

“I feel like the key takeaway of rowing this year was that hard work pays off. There were times when it felt like the hardest thing in the world, but we pushed through, and I saw how much of a difference that made once we got into our races.”

What did training look like as a team before going to nationals?

“We started nationals training a couple weeks before we left for St. Catherines, Ontario. We had training every morning from 5:45 am to 7am, as well as most afternoons either on land at Derby or on the water.

How did this schedule teach you about the importance of balancing your time?

“I think doing a school sport has taught me to appreciate how much time I have. For example, right now I don't have a sport and I have so much time to do my homework. Rowing has taught me to appreciate the time I have and make the most of it. On top of that, I feel very productive when I'm able to do a sport and a bunch of homework in one day.”

What was going through your mind before your national race?

“Right before we started the final, I was reflecting on the whole year and thinking about how much I wanted to win. I was so nervous. I just had to stop thinking and just really put everything I had into the race.”

“I visualize going down the course, and think about how it will all be over. No matter what, I'm not going back into the dock. I have to finish this. I take some deep breaths before I start and just think about everything inside the boat instead of outside. I focus on what I can control.”



What do you think you did differently that helped you get recruited?

“I trained on my own as well. I did more than what was just expected. For example, over winter break, a lot of people don't really train, but I made sure to put extra effort in. I also did extra training on the days when morning training was not scheduled.”

How have the coaches impacted you?

“Our coaches are such inspirations for everyone on the team. They make me work hard and strive to be a better version of myself. In the words of head coach Mrs. Walker-Curry, ‘one team, one family!’”

“I really look up to my coaches because they've been an important part of my journey. They constantly give me feedback, and push me to be a better athlete. They are important people in my life who I trust, can talk to and look to for advice”

“My coach, Mrs. Walker-Curry, had a huge impact on me. She had this saying that taught me the importance of being humble: ‘when you lose, you say little, and when you win, you say even less’.

Leadership in the 2025-26 School Year

by Youlan Li & Mira Wirk

With the school year coming to a close, several grade 11 students have been selected for formal leadership positions for next year. In this article, the incoming Council Heads will share their reasons for running for leadership positions and their goals for the coming school year.

Academic Council: Claire Ru & Caitlyn Chen



Why did you run for this role?

Claire: I ran for Head of Academic Council because I know how tough it can be to adjust to SMUS. I want to help students feel more confident accessing resources and ease academic stress in a supportive way.

Caitlyn: I ran for Head of Academic Council because I believe it's where I can make the most impact. With my background in academics, competitive sports, and music, I hope to bring a well-rounded perspective to ensure the council supports all aspects of student life at SMUS.

What is your vision for next year?

Claire: I want to improve the academic handbook to make course selection clearer and more student-focused. I plan to offer support during exam seasons with encouraging messages, gather feedback on ideas like rotating APs, and bring them to Ms. Lamarche. Most importantly, we want the Academic Council to stay a space where students can explore their interests and share academic projects.

Caitlyn: My vision is to build on the work of this year's leaders, Jaden and Helen, by improving the course selection process and creating better support for student-athletes, such as test accommodations, flexible deadlines, and potentially discussing changes to the term system.

Arts Council: Kate Han



See Kates thoughts on leadership on the SMUS Intranet!

Athletics Council: Manon Denux & Rayan Shariaty



Why did you run for this role?

Manon: Being one of the Heads of Athletics Council will give me the opportunity to bring as much school spirit to my senior year as I can. I wanted the role as I love playing sports and believe that SMUS could push itself to have even more events relating to physical activity to bring our community together.

Rayan: I ran for Head of Athletics Council, as I am extremely passionate about athletics. Especially because this is where I had the strongest feeling of community and inclusion throughout the past twelve years at SMUS. I feel connected to our school community and thought this would be a great way to give back: taking on the leadership responsibility that will help develop our school spirit.

What is your vision for next year?

Manon: Next year, I am excited to plan staff vs. student games, tournaments, and other fun lunchtime or after-school events to get everyone active.

Rayan: My primary goal next year is to help create meaningful activities that encourage student participation and involvement across all grades. I want to celebrate athletic accomplishments in a way that highlights the hard work and dedication of our student-athletes. I would also like to promote school spirit by organizing events that create healthy competition to strengthen our community and create a more connected and enthusiastic school environment.

Intercultural Council: Leila Mostachfi and Christian Ng



Why did you run for this role?

Leila: I joined Intercultural Council in grade 9 because I was excited to be part of a group that celebrates the diverse cultures at our school. At SMUS, we have such a variety of cultures and traditions within the student population. This allows us to learn about many different cultures. I ran for Head of Intercultural Council because I wanted to help create a space at SMUS where everyone feels welcome and respected.

Christian: I ran for Head of the Intercultural Council to promote inclusivity, celebrate cultural diversity, and bring students from different backgrounds together. I wanted to contribute to the SMUS community as a formal student leader and share my perspectives in this environment filled with energy.

What is your vision for next year?

Leila: My vision for this council next year is to continue our chapels about holidays and traditions that are very important to many at our school, but maybe aren't as well understood by other members of our community. I'd also love to plan more events that involve the whole school, such as a world food fair where everyone brings foods/snacks from their cultures for others to enjoy, as well as many other fun activities to allow students to experience other cultures! I can't wait to help lead the council next year and continue to create an inclusive environment!

Christian: My vision for the council is to host more cultural celebration events and listen to more student ideas on how we can make SMUS more diverse. My goal is to host festivals beyond the chapel in a way that allows students to actively participate and experience the different cultures represented at SMUS.

Outdoor Council: Yingfan Bai



Why did you run for this role?

Yingfan: I ran for Head of Outdoor Council because I am very passionate about the outdoors. From school outtrips to guiding trips outside of school and doing outdoor leadership, these experiences have shaped me in so many positive ways. I want to help create those same opportunities for others.

What is your vision for next year?

I want to continue our council's traditions from this year, such as rock climbing, and also introduce new ideas, such as skill workshops for everyone and full school-themed events to get more people involved. I'm also hoping to possibly run overnight trips for the council throughout the year.

Service Council: Lucy Turnbull & Bianca Batoni



Why did you run for this role?

Lucy: As a member of the council, I was inspired by the positive impact the council was able to make on the community. I ran for this position because I wanted a meaningful way to give back.

Bianca: I ran for Head of Service Council because I wanted to make an impact on not only the SMUS community, but other communities as well. Service Council brings people

across the school together to make change. The opportunity to lead an amazing group of people to make an impact is something I am really looking forward to next year!

What is your vision for next year?

Lucy & Bianca: Next year, as Heads of Service Council, we want to start more initiatives, with the goal being that several can stick around and become traditions. It could also be neat to do more work with other councils, like the Arts or Athletics Councils.

Sustainability Council: Natalie Chan & Ashley Baek



Why did you run for this role?

Natalie: I ran for this position because I am passionate about making our community a greener one. I truly believe that our small actions, even just within the SMUS community, can have a big impact.

Ashley: I ran for Head of the Sustainability Council because I've grown deeply passionate about the environment and wanted to take on a bigger role in creating change. I wanted to be someone who brings people together and turns ideas into real impact.

What is your vision for next year?

Natalie & Ashley: We plan to expand our reach by collaborating with other clubs and councils, involving nearby schools in events like the clothing swap, and launching visible, school-wide initiatives such as “energy-free” blocks. We also hope to incorporate reusable cups in Howards, create meaningful volunteer opportunities, and make council meetings as fun and engaging as possible—all while addressing a variety of current environmental issues.

Wellbeing Council: Mira Wirk & Crystal Cai



Why did you run for this role?

Mira: I ran for this role because I have enjoyed being a part of the Wellbeing Council, and well-being has been a big part of my life. I think it is important for wellbeing to be a prominent topic in our school community, and I want the Wellbeing Council to be a place where all students feel they can go to contribute, relax, and make new friends.

Crystal: I wanted to apply for this role because I think that wellbeing is so important in maintaining a happy and healthy lifestyle. Since the transition to high school can be challenging, I think that focusing on wellbeing is important in order to help students manage and balance out stress. I also think that it's an underrated council with so many opportunities for initiatives that can help students get to know each other better by creating an enjoyable and welcoming environment.

What is your vision for next year?

Mira: Next year, I want to focus on making sure wellbeing is a main topic all year round. This would look like implementing more themed weeks throughout the school year, such as movement week, or mental health week, where students could get involved in hands-on activities, or listen to guest speakers. I would also like to introduce a wellbeing section in the library during exam weeks, where students can come to reduce stress and socialize.

Crystal: Some ideas that I have for next year include setting up a wellbeing corner in an accessible place with some colouring sheets, puzzles, or crafts for students to unwind. Plus, I would like to enhance Wellbeing Week by bringing back the yoga t-shirts, having a bring your pet to school day, and just integrating wellbeing days throughout the school year, with things like hot chocolate or snacks to cheer up students during exam season. I am so excited to get working on these projects, and I hope everybody can come join the Wellbeing Council!

Grad Committee: Preeya Kaur & Isabelle Wu



Why did you run for this role?

Preeya: I look forward to planning our final year here at SMUS with many enjoyable excursions. After COVID, there was an unfortunate separation within grades, and I would like to bring us together to celebrate our last year.

Isabelle: I ran for Grad Committee Head because I wanted to help make our last year memorable by planning events that truly represent our grade. I'm passionate about creating a positive, fun, and inclusive experience for everyone.

What is your vision for next year?

Preeya: To connect our grade. I plan to hold events and have a graduation gala to remember! Activities like grad dodgeball and a movie night will bring our whole grade together to bond and enjoy ourselves. In addition, a gala at a venue as sophisticated as the exceptional students in our grade will leave us with one more amazing memory before heading our separate ways.

Isabelle: My vision for the grad committee next year is to make it a fun and inclusive space for everyone. My goal is to plan events that actually reflect what our grade wants. I also want to build more school spirit and make our final year at the school unforgettable.

Due to limited space, we were unable to interview all of the students who will hold formal leadership positions next year, including:

Head Prefects: Parker Sheehan and Ailo Streitel

Day Prefects: Sunny Fan, Saanvi Katiredy, Sophie De Launiere, Ridley McLeod, Rory Davison, Dominic Ely

Boarding Prefects: Youlan Li, Jasmine So, Kimberly Koo, Elmond Aphiwetsa, Jaiden Daniels, Declan Longridge

Heads of House:

Winslow: Maggie Stiel and Mackenna Brown

Symons: Anysia Tam and Ruby Dieringer

Timmis: Lily Ford and Valentina Elizalde Olea

Barnacle: Justin Tam and Ethan Lee

Harvey: Sony Saimon and Frank Tsai

Bolton: Tommy Hong and Gautam Jay

We look forward to seeing how these students shape our school community in the year ahead!

Modern Language Articles

端午節

By Estee Luk and Janette Ooi

端午節是中國重要的傳統節日之一，每年農曆五月初五慶祝。這個節日歷史悠久，帶著豐富的文化和民間傳說，是中國人民紀念歷史人物、祈求健康平安的重要時刻。

端午節最常見的習俗之一是賽龍舟，是有深厚文化意義的傳統儀式。很久以前，古人為了拯救投江的詩人屈原，划著龍形小船搜尋，就變成今天的龍舟比賽。比賽時，隊員們需要團隊之間的默契與合作，竭盡全力地划動船槳，配合鼓手的節奏向前衝刺。賽龍舟不只是中國的傳統活動，也在世界各地受到歡迎，讓每個人深入了解端午節的由來和文化價值。

粽子是端午節的傳統食物，含著重要的歷史和文化意義。粽子的起源是為了紀念屈原。屈原投江後，人們為了防止魚吃掉他的遺體，把包著糯米和餡料的粽子丟進河裡。這個習俗後來成為端午節的傳統。現在，粽子不僅是對屈原的紀念，也成為家庭團聚的象徵。每到端午節，家人都會一起包粽子、吃粽子，增進感情，讓傳統繼續流傳下去。

人們會在端午節喝雄黃酒以辟邪除蟲。傳說屈原投江後，百姓們擔心蛟龍傷害他的遺體。於是，有一位老醫生拿出雄黃酒倒入江中，聲稱這能藥暈蛟龍，希望可以保護屈原。果然，不久後江面浮現蛟龍，村民把它拉上岸處置。村民為了防範毒蟲攻擊，用筋纏住孩子的手腕，再以雄黃酒抹他們的手和耳朵。這是端午喝雄黃酒、塗雄黃防毒的民俗來源之一。

透過賽龍舟、吃粽子和喝雄黃酒，端午節成為中國重要的節日，含著中國文化的精神。無論是在中國還是世界各地，端午節提醒著人們要珍惜傳統，並將文化價值一代代傳承下去。



Les pensées d'un vétéran de SMUS

par Elliot Mairet

J'ai commencé ma carrière de SMUS à la maternelle, alors ça veut dire que j'ai passé treize années à SMUS. Presque tout ce que j'ai appris, tout ce que je sais, je l'ai fait dans le cadre de SMUS. Certains m'ont dit qu'être un étudiant à vie signifiait que j'étais ignorant, que cette bulle de privilèges empêchait ma vision des choses. Ils ont peut-être raison, mais je ne le pense pas. Je pense que SMUS m'a permis de m'épanouir parmi d'autres personnes qui aspirent à réussir. Mes camarades sont motivés, et cela a été une source constante de motivation. Leurs réussites ont été inspirantes et m'ont également permis de réussir. Je pense aussi qu'à SMUS, il y a un niveau de respect unique. Même en cours de français de quatrième année, à jouer à des jeux vidéo et à faire semblant de faire du Duolingo, je me sentais respecté. De la même manière, lorsque je m'amuse en cours de français de douzième année, je ressens le même respect. Pour moi, le respect mutuel avec les profs, et d'autres personnes, les amitiés et la possibilité d'évoluer au sein d'une communauté positive rendent SMUS unique. Même si certains critiquent le fait de passer toute sa vie à la SMUS, j'en suis reconnaissant et je ne voudrais pas qu'il en soit autrement.

Les pensées d'un vétéran de SMUS

por Luis Osuna Santos y Maria Garcia de Bustamante

Durante nuestro tiempo en SMUS, aprendimos mucho más que cómo resolver ecuaciones y cómo escribir ensayos: aprendimos quiénes somos y quiénes queremos ser. SMUS nos brindó una base sólida para construir nuestro futuro, no solo a través de la excelencia académica, sino también al enseñarnos valores como el respeto, el liderazgo y la empatía. La comunidad de boarding jugó un papel fundamental en nuestro crecimiento; vivir rodeados de personas de distintas culturas nos enseñó a convivir, a colaborar y a apoyarnos mutuamente. SMUS se convirtió en un segundo hogar, donde los desafíos diarios se transformaron en oportunidades de aprendizaje y crecimiento personal. Gracias a esta comunidad, nos vamos preparados para enfrentar lo que venga con confianza, gratitud y muchas ganas de seguir aprendiendo.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW:

Ms. Mao

by Claire Ru

For this issue, I continued conducting interviews with teachers in the language department. This time with Ms. Mao, one of our Mandarin teachers at SMUS.

From learning Spanish in Grade 10, to picking up English as my second language, choosing a language has always been an important aspect of my course selection. I am fascinated by the process and would recommend that every student at SMUS journey down the path of learning a new language.

The interview with Ms. Mao is especially significant to me, as Mandarin is my first language. The following content is translated from the original Mandarin transcript and edited in English.



When did you start learning another language and why?

Ms. Mao: While Chinese is an umbrella term for all the dialects and languages from regions in China, Mandarin is not my first language. My first language is Cantonese, which is very distinct from Mandarin. I started learning Mandarin in grade one, as I was studying in mainland China, where Mandarin was a mandatory course.

What do you like/dislike about your own experience of learning your language, and why?

Ms. Mao: I really enjoy speaking. As you can tell, I am a talkative person. Mandarin is a beautiful language: it contains a wide range of vocabulary and different tones, and the variation in tones can express a totally different meaning. The part that I didn't enjoy would be the pronunciation. Mandarin has a set of pronunciations that differ from Cantonese, which was challenging for me to adapt. For instance, the word vegetable in Mandarin is 蔬菜 (Shūcài). The distinction between "sh" and "s" confuses me a lot.

As for memorizing vocabulary, it is often difficult for people because there are fewer rules and patterns to follow. However, forming words from characters in Mandarin is relatively easy. Once you have learned some basic characters, you can extend them into words and apply them to sentences and conversations. I actually like memorizing things, as it doesn't expend much effort, and the memories can last for a long time.

How does speaking languages other than your mother tongue affect the way you think in those contexts?

Ms. Mao: The languages impact each other, but that impact depends on your ability to express yourself in each language and the environment you are in. For example, when you first acquire English, your sentence structure may still stick with your habit of expression in your first language. But after living in Canada and assimilating, you naturally learn from native speakers, and your English ultimately becomes more local and fluent.

For language learners, a pattern I see is overthinking. People consider the grammar and conjugations, and are afraid of making mistakes. What I always ask my students to do is forget about these worries when communicating, as long as they are transferring the message. This is because when you improve at a language, this pattern of overthinking fades, and the communication flows more naturally.

Why should students take another language at SMUS?

Ms. Mao: I think a foreign language should almost be mandatory at SMUS. I understand that other subjects are important too, and people are busy. However, in the times we are living in, a single skill set may not be sufficient. An additional language may open you up to more opportunities and resources, which are invaluable.

Furthermore, when you learn a language, you also learn the culture behind it. For instance, I have been incorporating a lot of Chinese culture into my lessons. 饺子 (Jiǎozi, also known as dumplings) are an iconic food for the Spring Festival. Although I would not expect you to tell me how to make dumplings, I would like you to know the meaning behind them. Why do we eat dumplings? Even if you cannot answer in Mandarin, you have still taken away an important part of Chinese culture. This cultural knowledge is a part of lifelong learning and prepares you beyond high school and university.

What does language mean to you? Is there any aspect of it that extends beyond a tool or medium of communication?

Ms. Mao: Languages definitely extends beyond a medium of communication for me. I like to see it as a key that opens doors. For example, if I had arrived in Canada without knowing English, I would have struggled, but since I know English, my life has been relatively easy here.

Also, the experience of learning languages has given me courage. I remember when I went to Vietnam with my students. I did not know any Vietnamese, but I was confident enough to pick up a few words here and there, because I had prior success learning other languages. This process of learning languages cultivates my social, learning, and communication skills, which inspires me. Now, I am not afraid of making mistakes as I try new languages and things in general. I can attribute that confidence to my experiences learning languages.

Editor's Note

As we wrap up the final edition of the year, we want to thank everyone who has made this publication possible. Thank you to all the contributors who invested countless hours of time and effort into these pages, and thank you to the readers who engaged with them. We appreciate all of your support!

While we say goodbye to Julian, one of our editors, who is graduating this year, we also look ahead to next year with excitement. Kayler and I will be continuing on as editors, and we're thrilled to welcome Sara as our new junior editor.

None of this would be possible without our teacher sponsors, Mr. and Mrs. Edgington. Thank you both for your time, care, and commitment to our work.

See you next year!

- Mira, Julian, and Kayler

Editors-in-Chief