



Clayton Elementary

7541 184 Street
Surrey, B.C. V4N 3G5
604-576-6411
Principal: Mrs. L. Fenrick
Head Secretary: Mrs. D. Copan



Oct. 1, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This year Clayton Elementary is looking to develop and extend its positive impact on the world outside of our own learning community. As a part of this initiative we have created a Global Connection Club that will help put in to action some of our ideas to create positive change for learners who are a part of our Global community. Ms. Maxwell, one of our Education Assistants, will be travelling to Africa at the beginning of November with a team of dedicated volunteers with the Pemberton Lions Club to support the Phelisanong Center in Lesotho through Africa's Gift, a non-profit charitable organization. We believe that there is an opportunity to involve our students, help them become aware of global issues, and show them the power they have to create change. Change doesn't have to be something that happens to *them* – they can take initiative and make things happen. They can help to find solutions and be part of this project that cares for and assists those less fortunate. Students have already started to learn about Lesotho in our school family groups.

Ms. Maxwell's team will be able to take approximately 80-100 pairs of gently used shoes and rain boots to donate to the of this community. As a school, we are aiming to supply the entire amount of donate shoes for the team. When we think of Africa, we think HOT! In fact, Lesotho can be very hot but it also gets very cold due to its high elevation. There is always a shortage of proper foot wear which can be quite expensive to purchase there. Rain boots and warmer shoes are particularly coveted. The children at the center seem to range from toddler to teenagers so a variety of sizes would be happily received.

Throughout the week of Oct. 1st-5th we will be collecting gently used shoes and boots. We ask that families send any shoes that are still in good repair but are no longer needed. If we are able to collect more than required amount we will pass any surplus on to other local charities. Students can bring the shoes and boots for donation to their class and give them to their classroom teacher. Please put shoes/boots in a bag labelled "Africa" so that there's no mix up and we don't donate someone's gym shoes!

For more information about how the Phelisanong Center was born and its journey to where it is today, please watch the video found with the link provided. Or check out their website

Website visit: www.phelisanon.org.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVLrIVz8ApE&feature=youtu.be>

We look forward to this exciting opportunity to help our global community!

Clayton Staff

More Information about Lesotho

Lesotho (pronounced Loosootoo), a small land-locked and mountainous country in Southern Africa, roughly the size of Vancouver Island. Its population is approximately 2.2 million. It is an extremely poor country with only about 56% of the workforce employed and of those employed 30% earn less than \$1.20/day. The infant mortality rate is approximately 84 deaths for every 1000 live births. The average life expectancy is 40 years due mainly to rampant HIV and acute malnutrition.

Africa's Gift is a non-profit charitable organization (charity number 1149830) whose focus has been on income generation and economic development within rural communities in Lesotho. Their projects help communities to find ways to support themselves and reinvest in their businesses. Over the last 9 years, they have had a focussed project in Malea-lea wherein they created a self-funding, fully operational, 1-hectare teaching farm adjacent to the high school. On this farm they grow product on a forward contract purpose for local food stores and back-packers lodges. This creates jobs for locals. As well, it provides a working, teaching farm where school groups attend structured day and block release programs providing all the written and practical skills necessary to grow their own food.

In addition to the farm, Africa's Gift built an elementary school, teacher housing, a water capturing system, and solar energy system in Malea-lea.

In 2017, the project in Malea-lea was coming to a close, having provided all the necessary infrastructure and training necessary to make them self-sufficient. The charity went looking for a new mission. It soon found one in the community of Leribe and an organization called Phelisanong. Phelisanong is a community-based organization founded in 2001 by a group of disabled and HIV/AIDS positive villagers. It created a Children's Center which provides a home, family and community for children and youth living with various mental and physical disabilities, HIV/AIDS, and other chronic illnesses, as well as orphans. It is the **only** school in the country of its kind, that accepts children with both physical and mental disabilities. Although there is deep caring by the staff for the children, the conditions are challenging. There are scarce resources, with approximately 50 children for every 1 adult. Unfortunately, it turns away more children than it can help due to lack of infrastructure and resources. After consulting with staff, the charity decided that its next project would be to assist this school by providing much needed housing for the children. In March, a team of volunteers laid the foundation for the building. Ms. Maxwell's team of volunteers will be constructing the rest of the building, wiring it for electricity, building a wheelchair access ramp and possibly building two more outhouses. It will be busy and productive two-week trip!