

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5 (SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)



MAY 2023



Students love to learn here, Staff love to work here, Families love to gather here

A Message from the Superintendent

It is so hard to believe it is June, and schools are a flurry of activity. I had the honour of attending Sparwood Secondary's Graduation, and it was such a classy event. What struck me was how much the community supports the graduates. I believe over \$50,000 in scholarships were awarded to less than 30 graduates; amazing! I look forward to attending Fernie Secondary and Mount Baker/Kootenay Education Services graduation ceremonies later this month.

On the topic of community, it is always heartbreaking when tragedy hits our district. No words can capture the disbelief and heartbreak we all felt after learning about the accident on June 1st. Our hearts are with the families, first responders and communities impacted by this tragic loss. Thank you to the collective efforts of our district's crisis response team, led by Director Tichauer, for supporting our schools, students, families, and staff. There is support available if anyone is struggling; please reach out to your administrator or union president if you need assistance.

Field trips and school-wide activity days are in full swing. I encourage you to check your school's newsletter/calendar for upcoming events. I was able to attend the Cranbrook elementary school [track meet at the College of the Rockies](#). It was so wonderful to see students cheering each other on, participating and smiling from ear to ear. How can you beat a day of ribbons, sunburns, and memories?



The Ministry of Education and Child Care has announced a commitment to funding a position for districts to support the Early Years and Child Care position for programs for ages 0-8 in each district. Now that we have completed a district-wide environmental scan, we look forward to having someone take on this important portfolio and move the district forward with child care.

We have wrapped up our engagement nights and had over 100 participants come out between all of our communities. The engagement nights gave us an opportunity to talk about our current district priorities and goals and provided schools with an opportunity to talk about their successes and the next steps around their growth plans. We will release a 'what we heard' document summarizing the feedback we received from the online engagement survey and our face-to-face meetings. Thank you to everyone who participated.

Lastly, congratulations to the 2022/2023 graduates on this incredible achievement. You are leaving secondary school with a strong foundation for success, and the district has no doubt that you will go on to accomplish great things. Remember to make good choices, believe in yourself, and never stop striving to be the best version of yourself.

As we shift to structured literacy practices in grades K-3, SD5 has continued to support schools and teachers with implementing UFLI Foundations, an explicit and systematic phonics program. Erin Jones, District Literacy Support Teacher, worked with Student Service teachers from elementary schools across the district.

The group spent an afternoon learning about the research behind the resource and how they can use it to support our tier two and tier three students with reading difficulties. Twenty teachers also joined Erin on May 5th for a deeper look at how to use UFLI to maximize small groups and explore some of the additional UFLI resources available to support whole group, tier-one instruction.

Teachers continue to see positive results in using this resource as a core component of their reading program.



Literacy



During the April RSA session, Erin Jones hosted two sessions on fluency. The first session provided K-3 teachers with the “what,” “why,” and “how” of fluency instruction, while the afternoon session was tailored to grade 4-6 teachers. Participants deepened their knowledge of why fluency is a critical component of their reading instruction and left with some practical and engaging ways to practice fluency with their class.

The SD5 subscription to Tumblebooks lasts all year and is perfect for encouraging summer reading on the go. Head to www.TumbleBookLibrary.com to check it out! User Name: Kootenay Password: Reads

CLASSROOM DEMONSTRATIONS

Kathy Conlin, the District Numeracy teacher, worked with teachers at EIDES, FJMES, TMRES and KLC Fernie, modelling number talks and coteaching lessons on division, fractions, decimals, and percent. Number talks are a 10-minute warm-up routine that requires students to reason through problems orally while the teacher models the thinking on the board. The routine celebrates students' diverse thinking. Teachers can use number talks to introduce new content or review previous content.

NUMERACY



GROWING INNOVATIONS

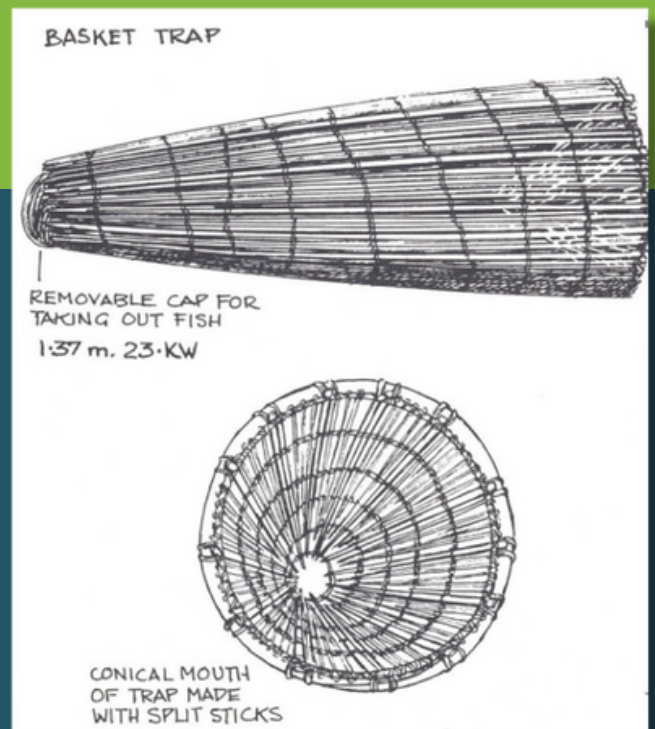
Kathy attended the Growing Innovations conference at UBC in May on behalf of our team to present two tasks we created that link the Ktunaxa Creation Story with place and numeracy. The tasks were well received, and our project has inspired other districts to begin similar work. Many good conversations and connections were made!

MATHEMATICAL MINDSETS

The Mathematical Mindset book club met virtually to discuss the path to equity in math. Equity in mathematics means ensuring that all students reach proficiency and that there are no differential achievement outcomes for racial, ethnic, linguistic, gender, or socioeconomic groups. Jo Boaler suggests five strategies to accomplish this goal:

- Offer all students high-level content,
- work to change ideas about who can achieve in mathematics,
- encourage students to think deeply about mathematics,
- teach students to work together,
- give groups with differential achievement outcomes additional encouragement to learn math.

Many of the members of the group bravely shared their personal stories in reference to a time they experienced the most elite construction of math.



FRENCH IMMERSION

Bonjour tout le monde! Here is what has been happening in the wonderful world of French Immersion in April and May:

In collaboration with our District Literacy Teacher, Erin Jones, we are part of a national trial for the French Immersion universal literacy screener. Two of our grade 2/3 teachers have been trained and are using the screener to collect data on our immersion students to inform and improve our practice. Another meeting is planned for June 14 to discuss the next steps and potential screening from Kindergarten to grade 3.

Primary immersion teachers met on May 18 with District French Immersion teacher Marzia Bottoni to edit the curriculum and resource guide for our Kindergarten teachers, parents and administrators. Structured literacy and oral comprehension were at the core of the discussion, and we are excited to show our administrators our scope and sequence.

In the vein of improving literacy skills, Marzia Bottoni has landed on an amazing phonics program by Toronto literacy coach Lindsay Cochrane called I Can Read in French. Lindsay has been invited to train our primary and grade 4/5 middle immersion teachers on how to use the program and sound wall. We can't wait to work with her in October 2023.



PHOTOS: MBSS GRAD
AMAZING RACE

Our district held a BC Regional Braille Challenge in April with two of our braille readers. Braille Challenge is held across Canada and the United States for students who are blind or visually impaired. It is the only academic challenge of its kind for students with vision impairments. The challenge motivates students to practice and refine their braille literacy skills which are essential to academic and employment success. Our students completed challenges that looked at spelling, proofreading, reading comprehension, and charts & graphs.



STUDENT Services

From Monday, May 8th to Wednesday, May 10th, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in grades 4-12 from the East and West Kootenay's (School Districts #5, #6, #10, #20, #51), along with staff from the Provincial Outreach Program – Deaf/Hard of Hearing (POPDHH) and the Deaf Well-Being Program (DWB) came together at Blue Lake Camp to connect in nature and learn more about Deaf Culture, American Sign Language (ASL), and experience accessible outdoor learning games and activities. This annual camp, Kootenay Connection, is facilitated by district Hearing Resource Teachers, POPDHH, and Blue Lake Staff. Funding for the camp is provided by POPDHH, with local districts covering the bussing and transportation costs. This year at Kootenay Connection, Hearing Resource Teachers and POPDHH staff were delighted to see the bonding that took place among students and their willingness to use ASL, gestures, and body language to communicate with all who attended.



COMPASSIONATE SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP

A Compassionate Systems Leadership workshop was held at the St. Eugene Mission in May. We had 15 participants from our district and the BC CSL Leadership Team. The group comprised principals, vice principals, an Indigenous education coordinator, counsellors, our social-emotional teacher, and District Management.



What is Compassionate Systems Leadership?

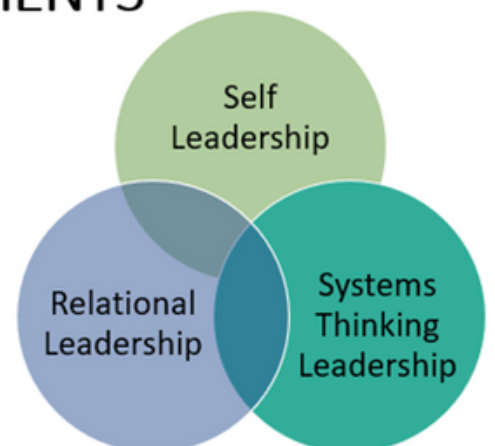
- Self, Relational, and Systems Lenses for Leadership
- A pillar of [BC Mental Health in Schools Framework](#)
- [ERASE](#) website; compassionatesystemsleadership.net

Connecting Indigenous Worldviews, perspectives, and [First Peoples Principles of Learning](#).

THREE SYNERGISTIC ELEMENTS

Compassionate Systems Leadership has three core elements to support systems change and well-being.

- **Self Leadership** – cultivating self-reflection, self-awareness and mindfulness practices
- **Relational Leadership** – building authentic connections where space is created to be truly present
- **Systems work** – understanding and fostering connections between self, others and the broader system





On May 26th, Elkford Secondary School PE students headed out for a day on a working adventure. Mr. Gulyas' and Mr. McAllister's grade 8/9 students were given pickaxes, axes, shovels, drills, hammers, and handsaws at the trailhead, then headed up into Elkford's mountains to support the Elkford Trail Alliance (ETA) in maintaining a portion of Elkford's Trans Canada Trail. This large group of students was broken up into three teams; there was a group in charge of clearing the trails of winter falls and spring overgrowth, one group was building a "squeeze gate" (to stop ATV and motorized traffic), and the last group was tasked with building trenches to divert water from eroding the trail itself. Students hiked 8.5 km, worked on trails and had an epic lunch in their mountains.



This was a day for all the volunteers on site, where they saw students work with an intrinsic motivation to do something good for their community. Students were connected to the land and their community. It was evident that it was more than just digging dirt. Students worked as a team, communicated, gave positive vibes and had a fundamental willingness to work.

AROUND THE DISTRICT



Kindergarten students came to build mason bee houses with Mr. Lund's senior shop class at Sparwood Secondary.



The Laurie track team competed at the Zone Championships on Wednesday, May 24th. The junior girls team placed first out of twelve teams, and the combined boys and girls junior team placed third overall.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

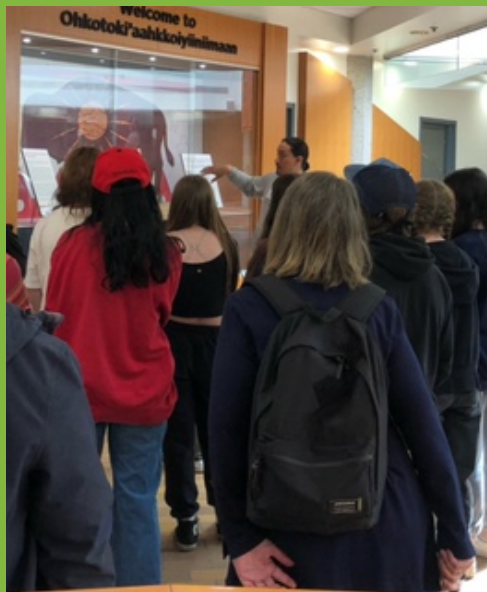
On May 11th & 12th, staff and 18 Indigenous students from Parkland, Laurie, and Mount Baker, toured Lethbridge College, The University of Lethbridge, and The University of Calgary.

The students were impressed with Lethbridge Colleges' welcoming atmosphere, Diploma programs, and sports facilities. They learned that OKI means WELCOME in Blackfoot.

They also enjoyed touring the University of Lethbridge's massive corridors, its breathtaking views of the coulees, and learning about the many Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs.

The University of Calgary has a beautiful campus, with attractive student housing massive Olympic Oval, and is known for its Computer Science, Engineering, and Health programs.

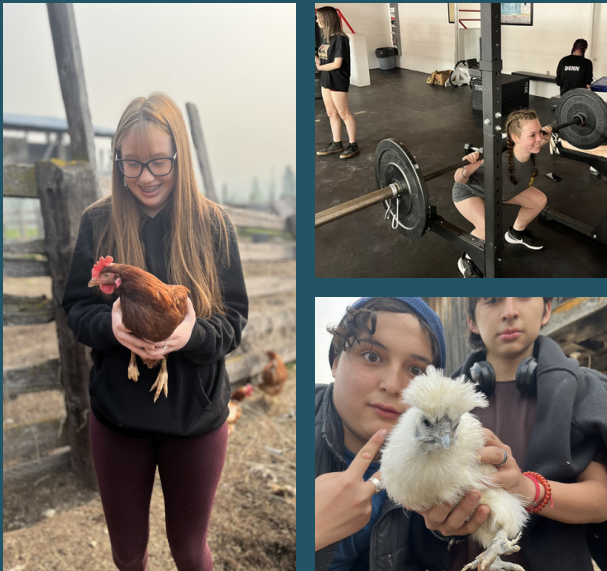
It was an eye-opening trip that inspired students; helped them make connections and future contacts.





On May 16, Ms. Traub's Outdoor Ed class from Sparwood Secondary had the fantastic opportunity to go whitewater rafting with Canyon Rafting on the Bull River. The students worked on developing skills in a complex and dynamic environment while learning how participating safely in outdoor activities requires teamwork, communication, and collaboration. Thank you to Canyon Rafting for such an amazing and unique experience!

AROUND THE DISTRICT



Mr. Gulyas' Senior PHE class at ESS underwent a strength, conditioning and nutrition unit. Students started with teacher programming and guidance in the school weight room. Students not only made connections to their school and local gym but to their food as well. Students then went down to a farm, where they discussed the value of farm fresh eggs and the different nutritional values compared to the standard white grocery store eggs. Next, students went out and picked up and held chickens, selected their own chicken eggs, and finally culminated the adventure by cooking their own eggs over an open fire and then eating them. The hope with this programming is that perceived barriers were lowered, strength was made, confidence was built, and a newfound connection to a renewable food source was deepened.

The MBSS outdoor leadership students and a crew from Cranbrook Society for Community Living worked together to create mason bee houses. They learned about the biology of mason bees and their importance and worked with new friends to paint, install cavities and then put the mason bee homes up in local parks (Spooner and Cranbrook Food Action Garden). Thanks to James, Wildsight and Fraser Basin Council for supporting this project!



TRADES EVENTS

SD5 was successful in receiving a grant from SkilledTradesBC to run a Discover Trades event and Project Heavy Duty.

Discover Trades is a hands-on experience in the technical trades for grade 9's that has helped shape the learning plans of a substantial number of students who attend. Students visited local a local metal fabrication shop and cabinetmaking shop, then returned to COTR, where they did carpentry, welding, and electrical projects under the mentorship of our Youth Train in Trades foundation level grade 12 students.

Project Heavy Duty was attended by grade 11 and 12 Elk Valley students. Students began by obtaining their OFA level 1, followed by safety training from WorkSafeBC, a tour of the Komatsu Heavy Equipment Shop and a visit to the Fording River Teck Coal mine. Under the mentorship of owner/operators, students rotated through 12 stations operating different types of equipment.

Thank you
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and
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