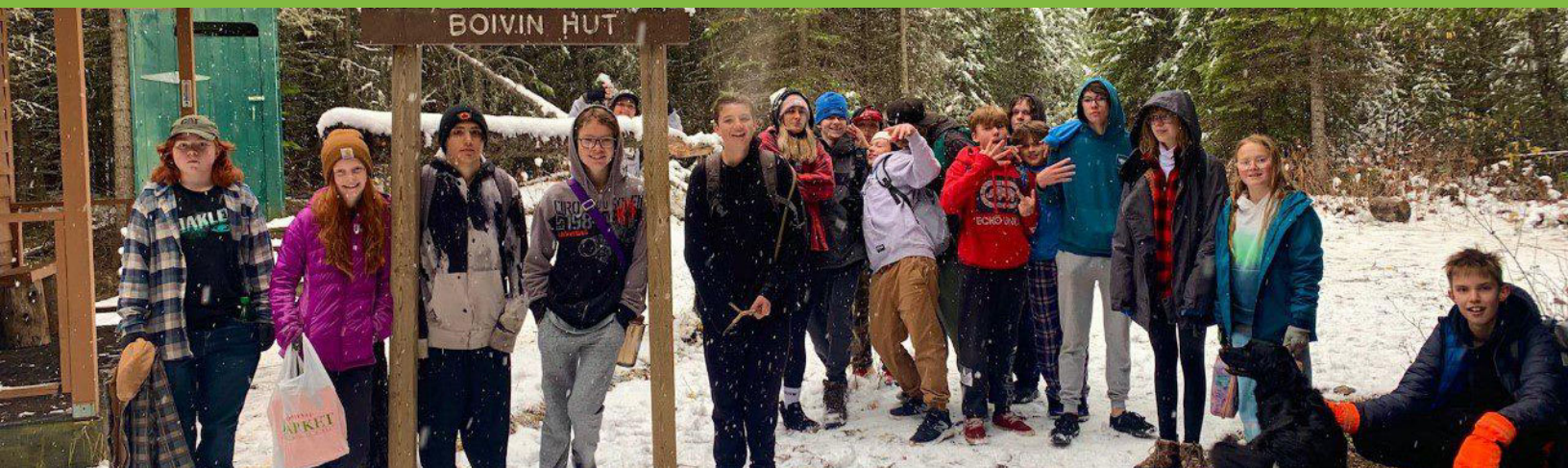


NOVEMBER 2022



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
(SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)

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



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear students, staff, parents and caregivers:

It is hard to believe that we are in the last month of 2022. November saw a lot of illness and absences across the district. Thank you to our schools and operations staff for ensuring that we remained open and for deep cleaning our buildings. The BCCDC has modified the guidelines around Covid 19 which you can review [here](#), as with Covid and any other illness the most important precaution is regular hand washing and staying home if you are sick.

Foundational Skills Assessments (grades four and seven) have wrapped up. These provincial assessments provide us with useful information that allows the District to reflect and make goals to improve student learning. It is one piece of information that we use along with district and school data to gauge how we are doing which guides district priorities that are reflected in the [Framework for Enhancing Student Learning](#).

Six of our trustees recently returned from the British Columbia School Trustee Association's new trustee orientation and academy. It was two and a half days of learning which included understanding the trustee's role, governance, Ministry of Education and Child Care updates, inclusive education and Truth and Reconciliation. A valuable resource that was highlighted is the Expect Respect and A Safe Education ([ERASE](#)), the link is available on the schools and district websites. The site contains a provincial anonymous reporting tool where students and parents can report concerns and resources around: mental health, racism, bullying, consent and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). I encourage you to check it out as it is frequently being updated. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to our Safe School Coordinator [Jason Tichauer](#).

We have 20 administrators, from around the district, registered for Trauma-Focused Schools. The course builds from research and applies a trauma-centric lens supporting children and youth with specific strategies, enhancing calm classrooms, and creating meaningful trauma-informed Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to help children, heal and learn. This learning complements the [Ministry's Mental Health in Schools Strategy](#) and aligns with many of our [schools' growth plans](#).

The District has put out a challenge to all board office employees and trustees to read to kindergarten classes. The goal is to have a guest reader in every kindergarten class by the end of the school year. If you would like more information or to book a guest reader please reach out to Executive Assistant, [Amanda Skene](#).

As we enter the holiday season, please remember that schools have funding available to support families and students in need. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your preferred school contact to access support through the [Student and Family Affordability Fund](#).

LITERACY

Reading comprehension is the product of skilled word reading and language comprehension. This year, primary teachers working with our District Literacy Teacher, Erin Jones, are focusing on strengthening their understanding and instruction in word reading. UFLI Foundations is an explicit, systematic phonics program that teaches students the foundational skills necessary for proficient reading. It is an example of an educative curriculum. This means using the materials will add to the teacher's professional knowledge and skills in the key areas of:

- The process of reading acquisition
- Key linguistic elements necessary for reading
- Evidence-based instructional methods that promote reading proficiency

Teachers from Rocky Mountain, Amy Woodland, and Pinewood Elementary schools have received their UFLI manuals and participated in professional development to learn how to effectively implement this resource.

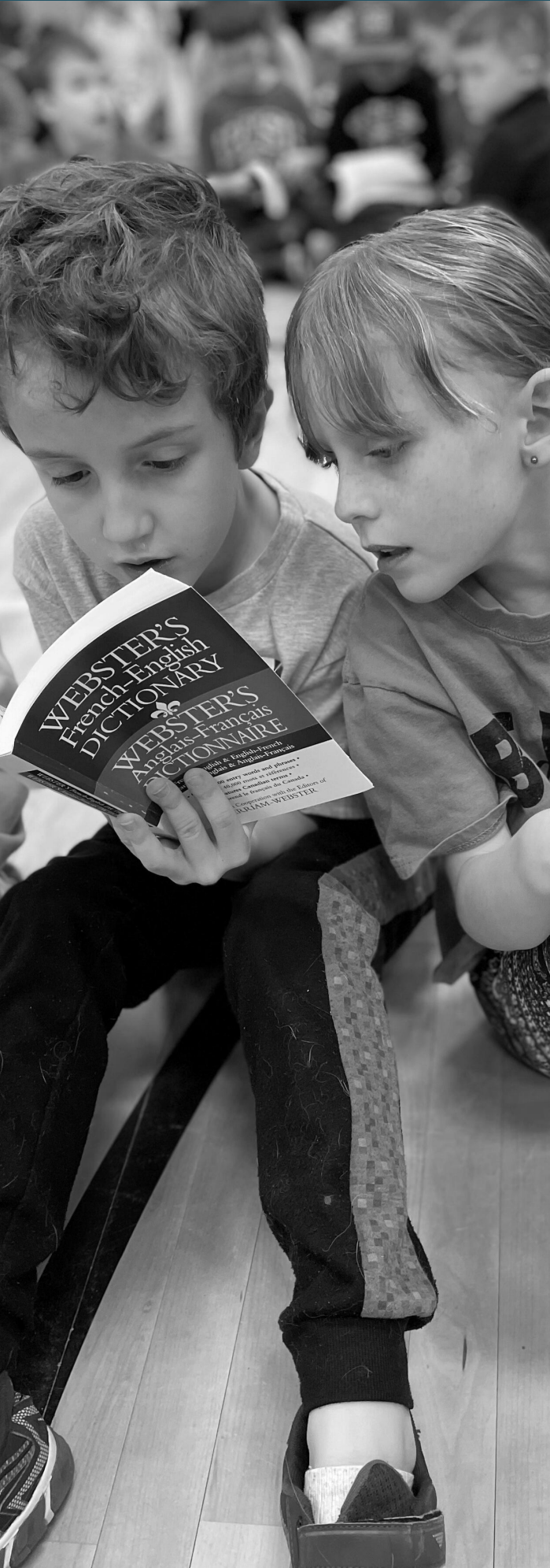
Kootenay Orchards Elementary School invited Erin into their intermediate classrooms to lead a discussion for their school-wide writing assessment. Erin shared an anchor book and facilitated a class planning session around the topic of "My Special Person". Students were encouraged to think about and discuss three main ideas describing their special person to help organize their writing. Planning is an essential part of the writing process. Students who build knowledge and have time to plan can make their writing clear and interesting for their reader; two writing goals based on Adrienne Gear's Powerful Writing Structures.

Erin spent the day at Parkland Middle School sharing information about how the brain learns to read and exploring evidence-based instructional routines supporting word reading, vocabulary development and fluency at the middle school level. Teachers will have the opportunity to work with Erin for a second day where they will examine comprehension and connections to disciplinary literacy.

École Isabella Dicken School invited Erin to speak at their November staff meeting. Discussions centred around the importance of reading assessments to inform instruction and monitor student progress. Erin spoke about the essential elements of reading instruction and some tools for assessment. There are many unanswered questions about this complex topic, and we look forward to ongoing discussions and the work ahead.



At this year's annual IT4K12 Technology Conference in Vancouver, Kim Froehler and Ryan McKenzie presented the results and resources of the Digital Literacy component, which the FESL group worked on last year. They showcased books that promote different digital and social skills and some classroom-ready activities that can build a foundation for the safe and efficient use of technology. A large part of the discussion surrounded the results of a survey that anonymously asked grade 4 students about their access, skills, and online activity when it comes to technology. The most important piece of information that the students want adults to know is that they "can't pause the game," referring to their experiences with parents asking them to stop their game. The comment, reiterated well over 50 times by different students, highlights the social and immersive context that they are interacting with.



NEWS FROM THE DRC

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Drawing from her experiences as an Indigenous scientist, botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer demonstrates how all living things—from strawberries and witch hazel to water lilies and lichen—provide us with gifts and lessons every day, in her best-selling book. We are extremely excited to add this Novel to our collection because of the opportunity for educators to use it to bring Indigenous wisdom and scientific knowledge to their classrooms. Please contact the DRC: resource.center@sd5.bc.ca if you are interested in borrowing this novel for your class.

WINTER OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

The temperature change can always be challenging, but the DRC is looking forward to bringing some winter excitement to outdoor learning. Ordered over a year ago, our long-anticipated cross-country ski equipment will bolster our current selection of skis, boots and poles creating more opportunities to get out and enjoy some fresh air

APPLYING THEIR LITERACY SKILLS AROUND THE DISTRICT

BUILD A SHELTER IN MINECRAFT EDUCATION

Students in Ms. Neufeld's grade 3 class at Isabella Dicken Elementary imagined they were stranded on a deserted island. Using Minecraft Education, they had to design and build a functional structure with access either by stairs or a ladder, that would keep them safe and warm.

WHO AM I?

Mrs. Halldorson's class at Kootenay Orchards Elementary began a journey toward a happy healthy community. The first part of their project had them explore their own identity through story and symbolism. Students read several Indigenous stories and explored the core competencies in relation to the Ktunaxa animals. They then designed a custom hand keychain that was cut out and engraved using a laser cutter. The second part of the project had them explore their community. They used a MakeyMakey circuit board to program an interactive poster or a song about someone valuable in their community.

NUMERACY

MATHEMATICAL MINDSETS

This month, School District No. 5 teachers ranging from kindergarten to grade 8, met virtually for the first session of Jo Boaler's Mathematical Mindset Book Club. The neuroscience of how the brain learns math and the power of mistakes and struggle were discussed. In the book, Jo Boaler argues that "any brain differences children are born with are nowhere near as important as the brain growth experiences they have throughout life" (pg.4). Her book challenges teachers to reflect and consider the effects of the messaging we communicate to students about their potential and the types of math experiences we offer students on students' belief in their mathematical ability. The next virtual book club meeting is on January 5th. If you would like to join the club, please email kathy.conlin@sd5.bc.ca.

CAROLE FULLERTON

Teams of teachers from Gordon Terrace, Sparwood Secondary, and Parkland Middle School met virtually with Carole Fullerton, a teacher leader and author on mathematics teaching and learning on November 10. They discussed the results of the fall numeracy assessment and plan the next steps for instruction. After conversations with Carole and their school team, teachers decided to embed new formative assessment techniques and games for joyful and meaningful practice, and intertwine vocabulary activities into their teaching to positively affect student achievement. In January, Carole will return in person to continue to work with school teams to explore ways to engage students in proportional reasoning using concrete materials and explore ways to scaffold students' ability to explain/justify mathematical thinking.

FIGURING OUT FLUENCY

Teachers from seven of our schools met to explore strategies to increase students' number sense and procedural fluency (math facts and beyond) that encourage lasting understanding. Teachers were given a resource that had over 100 games/activities organized by strategy and operation. The resource also has premade letters to send to parents explaining each strategy. Assessment tools are included. As a follow-up to the workshop, multi-day classroom demonstrations focusing on operations strategy, manipulatives, vocabulary, and assessment for learning will be taking place at FJMES and TMRES. If your school is interested in the workshop and follow-up classroom demonstrations, please reach out to the District Numeracy Support Teacher at kathy.conlin@sd5.bc.ca.



APPLYING THEIR NUMERACY SKILLS AROUND THE DISTRICT

AQUEDUCTS IN SPARWOOD

Ms. Sopko's Social Studies 7 class collaborated with Mr. Larsen's careers class to develop and articulate their creative and critical thinking skills. Students created aqueducts to solve the topographical challenges that Greek engineers faced moving water to Rome. Students tackled 3 scenarios and were evaluated based on the percentage of water successfully transported, and the weight and aesthetic of the aqueduct.



JR SHOP AT ELKFORD SECONDARY SCHOOL

The junior shop class at Elkford Secondary has been learning about catapults and trebuchets. The grade 8 and 9's have been building miniature catapults to shoot a distance of 10 feet. In this activity, the students use the engineering design process to create their miniature catapult and send things flying!



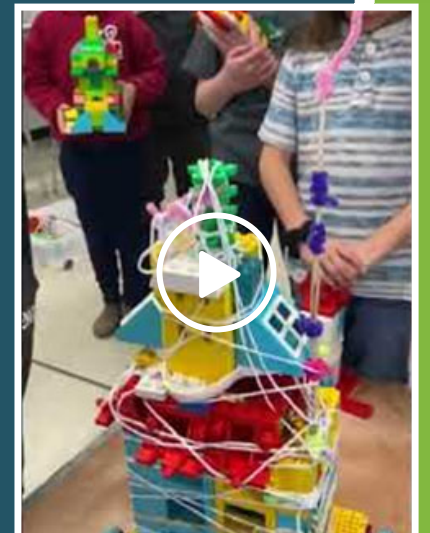
DESIGN AND CODE A ROBOT

Students in Ms. Howard's Chemistry 11 and 12 classes at FSS came to the Design Lab to design, build, and code a prototype of a robot that can remove hazardous waste. Students built the robot with multiple Lego pieces and were able to control the grabber attached to the front of the robot using different codes.



FEEL THE EARTH MOVE UNDER YOUR FEET

Mrs. Kirkpatrick's grade 5 class at Amy Woodland Elementary explored different landforms. Each student got to immerse themselves in an interactive geological tour using the Transformative Learning VR headsets. They were able to visit and learn about many of the most famous features in North America and even visited Iceland. On their visit to the Design Lab, they learned about the importance of earthquakes in the formation of different landforms like mountains, valleys and volcanoes. They were then challenged with building an earthquake shake table and had to design earthquake-resistant buildings.





ADVENTURES IN LEARNING

The outdoor learning environment plays an important role in the curriculum by providing students with opportunities to experiment and explore; ask questions and make observations; solve problems and build theories. To enrich their learning experience, these kindergarten and grade one students will be involved in learning activities on the school grounds and on walking field trips within the community throughout the year.

This year, with a combined class of kindergartens and grade 1s, the program will be Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays outdoors and two days in the classroom. The time outside leads to interesting inquiries, mathematical thinking, reading, writing, experimenting, and learning about our environment and community all in a play-based program suitable for students beginning school in kindergarten and for those already excited about building on their learning in grade one. Considering this a program that is expanding the walls of the classroom, building an awareness of living/non-living and man-made/natural objects in our community in what is referred to as place-based Learning. Taking learning outside the classroom is meant to give students opportunities to build first-hand knowledge of those things we study inside the walls of the school.

ELDERS IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

On November 22, we made our first steps to establishing an Elders in Residence program in our Elk Valley schools. We invited nine prospective Elders or Knowledge Holders to meet with some of our current Elders and Support Workers for a meeting in Sparwood. We had a great meeting and look forward to having folks assist our schools with these vital supports in Jaffray, Fernie, Sparwood and Elkford.

YOUTH TRAIN IN TRADES

Once again we have a very healthy intake of Youth Train in Trades (formerly Ace-it) students doing dual credit Red Seal programs through our partnership with the College of the Rockies. While the Industry Training Authority has slightly altered the funding allocation to school districts, we are pleased to still be able to support our students to the best of our ability. The following numbers represent the program and enrollment for the fall intake only. We look forward to another intake in January!

Program	# of SD5 Students
Heavy Duty Mechanic	2
Millwright	3
Hairstylist	3
Cook Training	4
Automotive Service Technician	2
Residential Carpentry	1
Electrician	1
Welding	1

WELCOME TO THE NEW BOARD

The new Board of Education of School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) was sworn in by Secretary Treasurer, Nick Taylor, on November 8, 2022.

The new board is comprised of four newly acclaimed/elected Trustees, Sarah Madsen (Elkford), Nicole Heckendorf (Fernie), Alysha Clarke (Jaffray/South Country), and Irene Bischler (Cranbrook) and five re-elected Trustees, Bev Bellina (Sparwood), Trina Ayling (Cranbrook), Chris Johns (Cranbrook), Doug McPhee (Cranbrook) and Wendy Turner (Cranbrook). The new Board Chairperson is Trustee Doug McPhee.



FRENCH IMMERSION

School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) has been awarded a grant of federal funds to support the implementation of a French Immersion Curriculum support Teacher.



Marzia Bottoni comes to us from Langley where she taught French Immersion for over 20 years. She is passionate about second language learning and enjoyed enhancing the FI and Languages program as department head for 15 years at Walnut Grove Secondary. She has been visiting the East Kootenays yearly for fishing and outdoor adventures and feels very grateful to be a part of the Elk Valley community. Marzia is excited to start working with students and colleagues as the French immersion curriculum coordinator for the District. "French Immersion was just being introduced in Langley when I started as a FI student. I remember our French coordinator with such fondness as a warm welcoming pillar for all students and staff. I hope to help create the same inclusive atmosphere as I come to know all our FI students and staff and help them in growing the program." "I am so excited to be here and to assist our community in a meaningful way."

The District has also hired a French TTOC.

Kelly Ann MacLeod, has been hired to be a TTOC at all of our French Immersion Schools, in both Cranbrook and the Elk Valley.



"I am the new French Immersion TTOC for the District. This is my seventh-year teaching, and I am looking forward to my new role. This is my second year back with SD5 after a few years living and teaching in Grande Prairie. I am a graduate of the French Immersion program in Cranbrook and have loved being able to teach French Immersion since graduating from university."

HUMAN RESOURCES

After a delay in CUPE bargaining, we have received the terms of reference from BCPSEA and we have now begun bargaining the CUPE Collective Agreement. An exchange of proposals happened in early October, and we are now in the process of reviewing and negotiating proposals.

Human Resources had attended a Job Fair in Fernie, BC sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and Kootenay Employment Services. The turnout by prospective employees was very low with less than 20 applicants coming through the doors within 4 hours.

Approximately 8 of these applicants stopped by the School District No. 5 table and had meaningful conversations with the HR Coordinator. We are hopeful that they will go on to apply for the jobs discussed. Follow-up with these prospective applicants will be happening in the coming days. Recruiting continues to be a focus of the HR department as we are in need to fill a variety of positions including Mechanics, Plumbers, Education Assistants, Noon Hour Supervisors, Bus Drivers and Custodians in particular within the Elk Valley.