

OCTOBER 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:

We are so fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the province where the fall colours are breathtaking and the falling leaves remind us of how to let go and that change can be so beautiful. I hope everyone has settled into their school routines, it has been wonderful seeing and hearing about all the activities that are happening.

I would like to congratulate all our returning Trustees: Trina Ayling, Bev Bellina, Chris Johns, Doug McPhee and Wendy Turner. Please join me in welcoming our new Trustees: Nicole Heckendorf, Sarah Madsen, Alysha Clarke and Irene Bischler. I would also like to thank everyone who put their name forward; it truly reflects the commitment to our communities and support for Public Education. Lastly, a huge thank you to our Trustees that have retired from their service: Patricia Whalen, Krista Damstrom, Kathryn Kitt and our board chair, Frank Lento.

This month we have been promoting the 4 Seasons of Truth and Reconciliation course through the Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) for our educators. This is part of the Every Child Matters learning challenge and is free to CBEEN members. It is a 10-month course that has built-in touchpoints and discussions through the First Nations University of Canada.

October has been filled with amazing professional development opportunities for our staff. We had 9 educators go to be trained in Compassionate System Leadership (CSL). This approach inspires transformation and instructional best practices that lead to student success. Leaders build on existing foundations of strong leadership. They can then engage new system awareness tools and embed compassion into their work. Many educators also took advantage of Provincial Specialist Association conferences where many of our district teachers were presenting and showcasing the great work that is happening in our district. Even some of our retirees are still actively involved provincially. Thank you, Carol Johns, for organizing the speakers at the Primary Conference which included our very own Tera Merkel from Highlands.

School District No. 5 is very fortunate to be chosen as one of nine districts in the province to participate in the community of practice with Shane Safir and Dr. Jamila Dugan, authors of *Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation*. Through this focused community, district leaders will collaborate and discuss ways to create equitable transformation within districts and schools using the strategies in *Street Data* and the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning.

I am looking forward to attending Sparwood Secondary School/Frank J Mitchell's Remembrance Day Assembly on November 10th. It is so wonderful that we can have face-to-face events again.

Viveka

## LITERACY

The teachers at Rocky Mountain Elementary School met with Erin Jones, the District Literacy Support Teacher during the October Professional Development Day. They discussed The Simple View of Reading, Scarborough's Reading Rope, sight word acquisition, phonemic awareness phonics, vocabulary, and fluency. Primary educators are getting the opportunity to trial a new resource with additional training in November. Intermediate educators were provided with suggestions and instructional routines to strengthen their reading instruction.



Grade three teachers across the district met with Erin at the end of October, in both Fernie and Cranbrook to discuss the District's Strategic Literacy Plan associated with the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (Framework). As a response to the Framework,, grade two and three teachers will submit reading assessment data to drive decisions, create systems of support and ultimately move student learning forward.

### DIGITAL PROGRAMS FOR READING

Reading Eggs, our digital resource for reading instruction, is off to a great start with over 1,300 students enrolled and 75 teachers utilizing the program for instructional support. Students have access to reading practice 24/7!

### KTUNAXA LITERACY DAY

At Amy Woodland Elementary, students participated in a Ktunaxa words scavenger hunt around the school. Uncle Pete helped students pronounce the words in the scavenger hunt and taught them Ktunaxa words for household items.



## NUMERACY

Teams of teachers from Gordon Terrace Elementary School, Parkland Middle School and Sparwood Secondary School connected virtually with Carole Fullerton. Carole is a teacher leader and author on mathematics teaching and learning. The session focused on how to implement her K-9 common assessment numeracy tool. Teams are implementing the assessment in their classrooms this month and then will reconvene with Carole in November to analyze the data and plan ways to support students. The tool is available in both French and English. The assessment was co-created with numeracy leaders in Coast Mountain School District and is designed to be authentic, manageable, and classroom embedded. The assessment is meant to inform teacher practice.



## GROWING INNOVATION IN RURAL SITES OF LEARNING

Growing Innovation in Rural Sites of Learning is an initiative that explores the role of rural schools in community vitality. This initiative, run by the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia, invited us to submit proposals to participate in a grant opportunity to encourage collaboration between K-12 educators and Indigenous partners in the areas of numeracy and literacy. Kathy Conlin, our District Numeracy Support Teacher, successfully submitted her proposal! Her team's project will receive a \$1,000 grant as well as funding for one person to attend the in-person symposium at UBC Vancouver on May 6th. Kathy's project has a goal to facilitate reconciliation by authentically connecting Indigenous stories, local places, and open-ended numeracy tasks to invite different perspectives and ways of knowing. Their hope is that the experiences will enhance students' relationship with land and strengthen their identity as mathematicians.

The Rural Education Advisory (REA) is co-sponsoring a four-webinar series for educators at no cost. The middle years series is in its 4th year. The secondary series and the numeracy series are launching in year two and this year they've added an elementary series focused on literacy.

- Engaging all learners in the middle years: Student voice, numeracy and literacy <https://elvlc.educ.ubc.ca/middleyears2022/>
- Engaging all learners in secondary schools (literacy focus) <https://elvlc.educ.ubc.ca/engaging-all-learners-in-the-secondary-years/>
- Culturally responsive mathematics assessment <https://elvlc.educ.ubc.ca/culturally-responsive-mathematics-assessment/>
- What counts as primary literacy?: Pedagogy and practices that make a difference for all <https://elvlc.educ.ubc.ca/what-counts-in-primary-literacy/>



## MATH MANIPULATIVES

The kinesthetic and visual experiences that are offered when students use manipulatives support students' retention and recall of important mathematical procedures, facts, and understandings when manipulatives may not be provided. Manipulatives provide another representation of the mathematics being studied. Our district schools have access to many different manipulatives to make math fun and engaging.

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

## MANY HANDS

Students from Kootenay Orchards Elementary School built mechanical hands using low-tech, mid-tech and high-tech tools to help them explore the human body and its senses alongside the design process. They started with some straws and string to practice prototyping movable fingers. Their second effort had them create a hand design that was cut out of cardboard using the new Laserbox laser cutting machine at the Design Lab. They used their learnings from their first design to make the cardboard cut-out hand with articulating fingers. Finally, students built robotic hands using Lego and some basic coding. They also got to use their hands in virtual reality through experiences that use the Oculus hand-tracking feature to manipulate and explore virtual objects.

## MODELING EUKARYOTIC CELLS

Ms. Nimmo's Grade 8 science class at Sparwood Secondary was busy creating some amazing models of plant and animal cells using a variety of different materials. Students learned about the structure and function of eukaryotic cells including the roles different organelles and the cell membrane play in maintaining homeostasis within the cell.

## SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

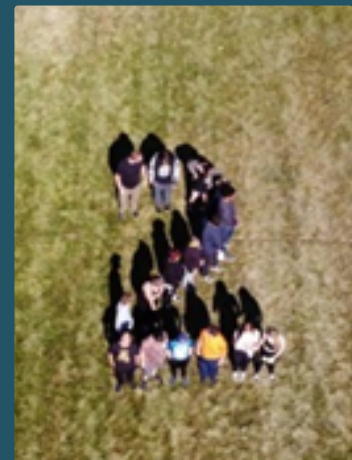
Sparwood and Fernie Secondary students practiced their video and photography techniques using drones. Sparwood students in Mr. Larson's class, with the assistance of Mr. McKenzie and Mrs. Froehler, captured photos of the graduating class of 2023 on the school grounds. Students spray-painted '23' on the grass and practiced setting up the shot with the students standing on the numbers. The grades 8/9 students captured some amazing photos of downtown Sparwood from across the highway. Mme Gibson's students at Fernie Secondary practiced a variety of videography techniques to capture the fall beauty of Fernie. Students controlled the altitude of the drone as well as the camera's gimbal while attempting different camera shots and angles.

## UNUSUAL PLACES & SPACES

Students in Mme Gibson's grade 9 class at Fernie Secondary School were challenged to create three to five still images placing themselves in unusual or unrealistic places using green screen technology. Students placed themselves in space, climbing cliffs, and even inside a cell phone.

## ROBOTIC ANIMALS

Students in Mme Murray's class from EIDES, built robotic buffalo using Lego robotics at the Fernie Design Lab. They programmed each buffalo to make different sounds and lights as it sensed different colored Lego pieces representing plants, water, and predators in its habitat. Each group built a unique habitat for their buffalo.





## DIGGING FOR TREASURE

Intermediate students from TM Roberts Elementary School took part in a full-day outdoor exploration activity at Wycliffe Park. Their day was filled with fun activities including frisbee golf, bocce and even some outdoor art activities. Mr. McKenzie, the Transformative Learning Teacher, with the help of Mrs. Eadie, hosted a treasure hunt. Students had to solve a logic algorithm to gather all the clues on a treasure map. This gave them a secret code to a locked box which contained the coordinates to the treasure. Then they used GPS devices to navigate to the treasure where they dug to find a box full of goodies.

## SAFE SCHOOL COORDINATOR

School District No. 5 recently participated in the yearly meeting of Safe School Coordinators from around the province. Topics included recent worrisome online trends, gang activity across British Columbia and future plans for Violence/Threat Risk Assessment training. It was a valuable few days and will lead to information sessions with our school teams and stakeholders.



## ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT MEETING

The Indigenous Education department held our first Enhancement Agreement Review Committee meeting of the year at the end of October. This committee brings together voices from the district, from schools, from Indigenous communities and organizations, from post-secondary and from our Elders. We are currently working on a new agreement and the committee has been giving valuable feedback in that process.

## BACK COUNTRY CAMPING

Students from the Elkford Secondary School's Senior PE classes hiked into the Elk Lakes backcountry campsite in September. Students showed up with their essentials and safely trekked nearly 16 km into the wilderness to camp overnight. It was an adventure that demonstrated strength, grit, and resilience as students worked together to make food, set up camp and motivate each other over the long journey. Everyone made it to Petain Falls and felt the power of the water. The mountains were majestic, the water was powerful, and the students were impressed.





## EXPLORING OPTIONS AFTER GRADUATION

Faculty from the Trebas Institute in Toronto traveled to Mount Baker Senior Secondary in October to meet with music students interested in post-secondary careers in digital arts, film scoring, music composition and music production. Jeff Wright, head of DJ Arts and Audio Engineering, and Jeff Szegvary, Head of Film and Television Production, gave workshops and seminars to give students at Mount Baker an inspiring insight into possible study opportunities in the world of music and film, and an invitation to collaborate on projects with Trebas students currently in the professional scene. Congrats to the Mount Baker Music students and thank you to Trebas and Global University Systems facilitator Graham Knipfel for the visit.

## STUDENT AFFORDABILITY FUND

The Ministry announced an allocation of \$60M in one-time funding to school districts. This funding is to be allocated to increase food security for students and their families, and to support students, parents, and guardians with affordability concerns related to items such as school supplies or education-related fees and equipment. The intent of this funding is to help directly support our students and their families.

School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) has been allocated \$693,747 related to this program.

School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) will provide the support to families in as flexible, private, and stigma-free manner as possible. Please contact your school principals for more information on how to apply for support.

