



Media Release

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STUDENTS FIND SUCCESS BY CONNECTING

Scavenger Hunt fun with the RCMP Liaison Officer scores points within Vernon Schools.

Recently the students in the School District No. 22 Connections Program participated in a scavenger hunt that involved Constable Neil Horne SD No. 22 RCMP Liaison Officer. Students at each of the High Schools were involved in the scavenger hunt which involved a hunt inside and outside of the school.

Connections is a program offered at each of the local Secondary Schools in SD No. 22. The purpose of this program is to provide students with course alternatives, a supportive environment with individualized learning along with social emotional support.

The staff attached to this program value and involve outside agencies and community partners such as: The Upper Room Mission, The RCMP, The Salvation Army Foodbank, and Community Futures. These community partners, District staff and our School Based Resource Teachers work together to provide a unique program that offers appropriate social, emotional, and learning supports for the youth that are working within this program.

Giving back to the community is a foundational element of the Connections Program. Of equal importance is providing activities such as our RCMP Scavenger Hunt that provides students with activities that contribute to well-being and develop strong community foundations.

Activities include giving back to the community and incorporating community programs to help students gain credits towards graduation. This "outreach" component of Connections allows students to interact outside of the classroom, gaining a greater understanding of our community and themselves while doing a variety of individual wellness activities and community-based volunteer work.

Connections helps to give students a sense of purpose and belonging. In student's own words:

"The reason I love coming to Connections is because it feels like a family."

"If it wasn't for Connections (classroom and outing activities), I'd have quit coming to school or been expelled by now."

"For me, these outings are helpful. They help me forget about things. It is the only time I can shut my

*brain off.
Kinda live in the moment.”*

Connections provides a wraparound approach for students, building a safe & supportive community embracing individual needs which helps students feel “connected” and find success on their school journey.

“Only when kids feel loved, and they are accepted and belong can they feel safe and begin to find success.” - one of the outreach facilitators

Robyn Lindahl – SD No. 22 Secondary Inclusion Specialist, “In the upcoming 2022-2023 school year, we are looking at expanding Community Outreach opportunities available to students within the Connections Programs due to the positive response that we have heard from our students.”

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Christine Perkins, Superintendent of Schools
cperkins@sd22.bc.ca

or

Christine Love, Director of Instruction, Student Support Services
lfriesen@sd22.bc.ca

or

Robyn Lindahl, Secondary Inclusion Specialist
RLindahl@sd22.bc.ca