

Student Success

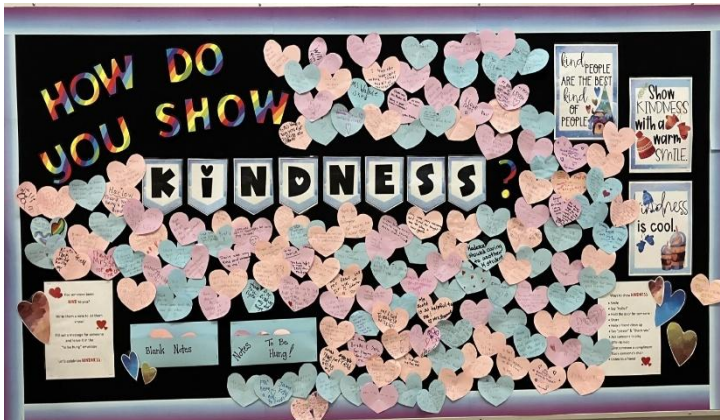
- 1 Close the achievement gap.
- 2 Enhance early learning experiences.
- 3 Improve literacy and numeracy.
- 4 Improve middle grade success and transitions to secondary.

I am pleased to present this month's Superintendent's Report to the Board of Education.

Over the past month, our senior team has been actively engaged in elementary school visits, conducting comprehensive academic reviews alongside school administrators, teachers, school counselors, and support staff. These reviews have focused on the success plans for individual students, analyzing school data, and digging into connections to school learning plans. Our

goal is to ensure that students in our district are ready for upcoming transitions and receive the support and resources they need to achieve their full potential. It remains a priority that we continue to place a strong emphasis on the achievement and support for children and youth in care, Indigenous learners, and children with diverse abilities. These groups often face unique barriers that can impact educational outcomes. By identifying the barriers and working collectively on systemic shifts, we are creating a system where all learners can thrive and reach their full potential. Alignment of structures within each school and the entire district is fundamental to reaching this outcome, as well as ensuring the achievement of the [Board's Strategic Plan](#). I would like to express my gratitude to school staff and senior leadership for their commitment to the academic review process in support of *Student Success*.

This month's report also features a number of other district highlights including school activities that took place on Pink Shirt Day which re-emphasized our collective commitment to being allies and creating school cultures where inclusion and belonging remain at the forefront. The theme of showing "kindness" was prevalent throughout the district on February 26th! Research on kindness illustrates that being kind boosts feel-good hormones and contributes to an overall sense of well-being. This work aligns with the SD22 goal of *supporting student wellness*.



Also, the Climate Action Ripple Effect "CARE Kickoff" that was launched at Bloom Secondary School is featured in this month's report. The trailer for May's CARE Expo can be found at [CARE Expo on YouTube](#). Excitement is in the air for this upcoming important event as we *empower students to support climate action and have a positive impact on the environment!*

K. Mitchell

Karla Mitchell
Superintendent of Schools

Student Success

To provide many pathways for all students to pursue and achieve desired outcomes.

Indigenous Education Department: Winter Gathering for Parents



In February, the Indigenous Education Department was excited to host parents from throughout the district for a Winter Gathering at W.L. Seaton Secondary School. The evening began with greetings from Mike Grace, Seaton Principal, followed by opening comments from Charity Sakakibara, Director of Instruction, Indigenous Education.

The first presentation of the evening was given by Amber Anderson, a master literacy teacher from the school district, who shared strategies and resources for supporting literacy skills for both primary and intermediate students.

A delicious dinner was provided by Peggy and Daniel Joe, which was shared by all who attended the gathering. Dinner was followed by a presentation from Chris Colclough, Seaton school counselor, who discussed required courses and credits for grades 10-12 students

and also the opportunities to apply for scholarships, bursaries, and awards upon completion of high school. The Winter Gathering provided an excellent evening of connections with families of Indigenous learners.

Dual Credit Success for the Indigenous Early Childhood Education Assistant Cohort

Congratulations to the 14 Indigenous Early Childhood Educator Assistant students who earned their credentials recently from [Nicola Valley Institute of Technology](#) (NVIT). This collaborative effort through the SD22 Dual Credit program was celebrated with a graduation at Seaton Secondary School. Students were presented with program diplomas by NVIT Vice-President of Students, Dr. Aruna Gore, as well as ECE-A Instructor and OKIB Band Counsellor, Rachael Marchand. What a great step toward promising career options. Well done everyone! Thank you to the SD22 Careers Department for always seeking new opportunities to ensure student success.



Hillview Elementary School

February truly showcased Hillview's commitment to wellness, belonging, and student voice.

As Hillview prepared for March Learning updates, students reflected on core competencies and personal goals, reviewing and setting new goals for the remainder of the school year.



Coach Graham from the Vernon Tennis Association visited Hillview and shared his love and skill of tennis with all students from kindergarten to Grade 7. For two weeks, students participated in fun and engaging lessons and games, developing their tennis skills.

Intermediate students were happy to see Ms. Laura at Hillview again as they continued to learn about their own character strengths and the character strengths of others. Students learned about intense emotions and how to be more resilient, focusing on identifying unhelpful thinking patterns and how to reframe these negative feelings to be more positive and self-reflective.

Ms. Anderson's Grade 6/7 class created a Kindness Challenge for the whole school to participate in. Her class worked hard and wrote beautiful, individualized kindness poems for each division. Students and staff were reminded that acts of kindness and kind

words really do matter and can make a huge difference in people's lives.

Finally, the amazing SBRT team worked hard to provide a welcoming and safe space in the Resource Room for all students to come if needed. The resource room is a mindful space, open to students who need a break to self-regulate before returning to class, an alternate space to go at recess or lunch, or a place to connect with a trusted adult. Quiet games and activities are always available.

Harwood Elementary School

At Harwood School, staff are committed to *providing many pathways for all students to pursue and achieve their learning goals.*

The school has been holding whole school assemblies to build a collective understanding of the 7 Grandfather Teachings. This month, the focus was on the lesson on honesty, encouraging students to be true to themselves and act with integrity. Additionally, Harwood welcomed Kenthen Thomas to share the story of "Day and Night," enriching students' understanding of Indigenous cultures and traditions.

Kindergarten to grade 5 students explored the history of ballet dancing, engaging in the art of interpretation through movement. This initiative enhances early learning experiences by introducing students to diverse forms of expression and creativity.



Students also had the opportunity to learn curling with the Vernon Curling Club, promoting physical activity and teamwork. Led by Mrs. Augaitis, grade 6 students spent a day at the indoor pickleball

facility, learning and connecting with the pickleball society. These experiences help make the school a welcoming place to learn and work by encouraging collaboration and physical fitness.

The second annual March Madness event will continue to promote a sense of belonging within the school. Highlights include "Harwood's Got Talent," allowing students to showcase their creative skills. Mrs. Scholz, the key organizer and leader for this event, ensures its success by providing a platform for students to express themselves and connect with their peers. Various spirit activities throughout the week further support student wellness and improved student voice and choice.

Ellison Elementary School

During the month of February, students at Ellison had a wide range of opportunities to focus on wellness. Many students participated in activities they would not normally have access to, such as skating, snowshoeing, yoga, and building campfires and shelters.



Ellison focused on student engagement by ensuring that students had voice and choice in their learning. One project allowed students to pick an area of learning to share as the 'teacher of the class.' One lesson focused on the 'Alaskan High Kick,' giving students and staff the opportunity to try out this

fun winter-time activity. Many students were also excited to participate in hands-on activities in ADST (Applied Design Skills Technology), such as building structures out of cardboard.

Okanagan Landing

The first few months of 2025 have been exciting for Okanagan Landing students as they have been out and about in the community! Grade 4 and 5 students headed up to Sovereign Lake, while the grade 6 and 7 students enjoyed their time at Silver Star Mountain. Many classes also took advantage of the opportunity to go skating.

During Winter Carnival, our grade 6 and 7 classes went to Kal Tire Place to cheer on the California Goldrush team as part of the Winter Carnival Hockey Tournament. It was a fantastic opportunity to build community and watch some great hockey!

As part of their leadership activities, Mr. Mitchell's grade 6/7 class visited Creekside Village and presented their talent show to the residents.

Kidston Elementary School

The students and staff of Kidston Elementary School are collaborating with Indigenous Lead Teachers to learn about and make materials for Indigenous games. The whole school will learn

about the history of Indigenous games and play them with their classes when they celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21st.

Leadership Excellence

To empower all staff to contribute to organizational excellence in the service of student success.

Learning Department

In support of SD22's commitment to anti-racism, the Learning Department hosted its first IBPOC Youth Symposium on February 18th at the school board office, marking a significant milestone in celebrating and empowering the district's diverse student body. The event, themed **"Voices United, Futures Empowered,"** brought together 27 students from grades 8-12 across the district. Under the guidance of Kim Tyssen (Learning Coordinator), four dedicated student trustees played a crucial role in planning, hosting and leading the symposium, ensuring its success.

The day was filled with meaningful activities that highlighted the rich diversity of SD22's students. Attendees had the opportunity to share their personal stories, encouraging a sense of community and understanding. One student reflected on the experience, saying, *"I liked meeting new people and that we were able to share in a safe space."*



The symposium also served as a platform for students to voice their thoughts on how the district can better support IBPOC students. In the feedback session, students emphasized the importance of asking questions, listening to students, and hosting more events like this symposium to create a sense of belonging. Overall, the event was a resounding success, leaving a lasting impact on all who attended. The feedback and insights gathered will undoubtedly help SD22 continue to support its IBPOC students, ensuring that every student feels valued and heard.

Fulton Secondary School

The beginning of March has been shaping up to be a busy few weeks at Fulton as students take on leadership roles within the school and in the community. Many classes have joined the CARE (Climate Action Ripple Effect) initiative and attended the kickoff event at Charles Bloom Secondary. Fulton students Jade and Haylee spoke at the kickoff, explaining the work they started and continue to do to encourage the government to provide free bussing for all teens in the province. Their work highlights the importance of continued advocacy for things that matter. They

also emphasized the importance of archiving CARE projects so that the work one group starts can be continued by future students.



The Film and Television 11/12 class has embraced an exciting opportunity by working with the [LIVE IT EARTH](#) Video Production Company to learn how professionals create films. Students are gaining valuable hands-on experiences by setting up film sets and operating cameras during production and interviews. The expertise of two international students was utilized to translate interviews. Additionally, the Film class has partnered with the City of Vernon for several initiatives, including the creation of a film about [Roost Solar](#).

Silver Star Elementary School

Silver Star demonstrates a high level of leadership excellence among both staff and students. For Kindness Day this year, grade 6 and 7 students showcased their leadership by creating vibrant poster boards filled with positive messages. They wore these posters before school started and handed out chocolate kisses and positive affirmations to everyone who entered the school at the start of the day.

Weekly assemblies, both virtual and in person, are prepared and delivered by students to the entire school community. For the Kindness Day assembly, several students took the lead, engaging the school in a day filled with kindness and compassion for others.



JW Inglis

It has been an incredibly busy month at JW! Leadership students have been planning numerous spirit days for the school to participate in, keeping everyone highly motivated during the cold month of

February. The staff also created their own 'underground' spirit week, leaving students puzzled when all staff members walked around with their clothes inside out.

Some grade 5 students took on Pink Shirt Day, creating posters and positive messages for all staff and students in the building. Instead of focusing on anti-bullying, the emphasis was on pro-kindness promotion.



This month, older students have gone above and beyond to show care and compassion for all, exemplifying their leadership skills. While the grade 6 students were away on their ski days, the grade 5 students took on the role of lunch monitors. They found it fun, though some realized it was pretty hard work.

In terms of staff leadership, every teacher is involved in the school's literacy residency, supported by the School District. The staff's authentic willingness to try something new and expand on their professional development is commendable. The motto "When we do it together, we do it better" truly resonates.

International Student Program

In the SD22 International Student Program (ISP), leadership excellence is highly valued. Over the past few months, ISP leadership staff have been analyzing and creating marketing plans to enhance recruitment efforts. A notable example is a recent recruitment trip to Mexico, where leadership staff identified opportunities and connected with partners and families in a region rarely targeted by other international programs across Canada. This venture has already proven to be highly successful. Another example of evidence-informed decision-making includes the analysis of marketing and recruitment effectiveness, evaluation of market trends, and education about emerging markets, all aimed at using data to guide marketing and recruitment efforts and maintain a strong and diverse program.

The SD22 ISP is also dedicated to supporting positive staff experiences and wellness opportunities. This commitment is demonstrated by recent team outings, such as snowshoeing near Silver Star Resort and playing pickleball at the Vernon Pickleball Association. These activities provide excellent opportunities for the team to connect and enjoy time together outside of their usual work environment.

**Community
Connections**

To build strong relationships amongst
all community members in the service
of student success.

vLearn Academy

On February 19th, vLearn welcomed over 500 members of the community to the annual SD22 Academy Information Night hosted at Clarence Fulton Secondary. The SD22 Academy Programs exemplify an innovative and unique approach between the district and community partners, fostering a diverse range of opportunities for students. Currently, vLearn hosts ten academy programs, including eight focused on

sports, one dedicated to dance, and one dedicated to outdoor education. A total of 241 SD22 students from Grade 8 to Grade 12 are currently enrolled in one of these programs.

Academy program providers are increasingly focused on promoting positive shared experiences among schools, students, and the broader community. They are leveraging the broader community and connecting athletes with experts in fields like human kinetics, sports psychology, and nutrition. They are also planning inclusive events such as *Try Academy Days*, community activism and volunteerism, conservation, and artistic performances, in addition to regular academy programming. For example, this past semester, the Beyond Sport Volleyball Academy hosted the third annual "Kindness Always Wins" event, setting a record for participation and success. This event was held at Fulton Secondary with the entire volleyball academy, along with parents, friends, and coaches, who came together to honor Emily Dahl's legacy. Head Coach Troy Lorensen emphasized the importance of teamwork and kindness, both on and off the court. The young athletes' efforts have left a lasting impact, showcasing the power of community and the enduring spirit of kindness.



vLearn is actively collaborating with new partners to extend the scope of the current academy offerings. Additionally, vLearn is partnering with the SD22 International Department to attract international students. These students are drawn not only by the promise of excellent academic programming but also by the unique experiences of an academy program. Notably, the soccer academy has seen significant international interest, with 23 of its 58 participants hailing from diverse

countries such as Germany, Spain, and Mexico.

As vLearn continues to promote strong relationships with the academy providers, the academy programs will remain a cornerstone of student development and success in the district. The vLearn team is looking forward to reviewing all the new applicants for the 2025-26 school year!

Climate Action Ripple Effect (CARE) Kickoff

The upcoming CARE Expo on May 29, 2025, has generated a lot of excitement among students and mentors alike! Thank you to Charles Bloom Secondary School for hosting the recent annual kickoff event, bringing together mentors and students to begin exploring their projects. The kickoff was an opportunity for student leaders to talk about their projects from last year and inspire this year's participants and ignite their curiosity. Students from across the district witnessed the results of an

electric bike project built by one of last year's participants, they heard from champions of teens for transit and the audience also heard from AIAO students about their CARE commitment. The kickoff event was emceed by Bloom Student Trustees, Maddox and Zander.

This event marks the start of the 2025 journey where students will engage in meaningful initiatives that address various community and global climate issues. Our students' involvement in the CARE initiative is crucial for the sustainability of our planet and the well-being of future generations. By participating in climate action projects, students learn about the impact of environmental issues and develop solutions to mitigate these challenges.

SD22's partnership with the [Fresh Outlook Foundation](#) plays a significant role in this endeavor. The foundation provides valuable resources and expertise, helping students understand the complexities of climate change and inspiring them to take proactive steps. This collaboration ensures that students are well-equipped to make a positive difference in their communities and beyond.

A change to the 2025 initiative is that the summit and expo will be a combined event to increase community engagement and impact. I look forward to seeing the results of our students' climate action efforts at the Expo!

