



Superintendent's Report to the Board

February 19, 2025

Dream. Believe. Achieve.

As we welcome the longer days and turn our minds to the approach of spring, our focus also shifts to preparing for the upcoming school year. One of the aspects of readiness is to ensure an ongoing focus on leadership development as well as the recruitment and retention of exceptional leaders within School District 22. Monitoring and responding to current and future needs of the District with regard to leadership is one of the most fulfilling aspects of my role as Superintendent and it aligns with the [Board's Strategic Plan](#) as we ensure *Leadership Excellence*.

In 2024-25 a commitment to clear district procedures for hiring exempt management staff, developed in consultation with those directly impacted has been foundational. A structured approach ensures that we attract and select the best candidates for our administrative pools, while providing clarity and transparency to those already in leadership positions.

Currently, the District is actively engaged in filling the Vice Principal Pool with the invaluable support of our collaborative partners who serve as an Advisory Committee to the Superintendent. DPAC, VTA, PVP, CUPE and OKIB have all been invited to participate in the selection process, and students were consulted before the process began. The inclusion of multiple perspectives is crucial, as it enriches the understanding of district needs and leads to more informed and balanced decisions.



In addition to our efforts in administrative staffing, we continue to make significant strides in supporting prospective and early administrators through the Aspiring Leaders Program, going deeper in year 2 with our cohort as well as expanding membership to those early in their administrative careers. This program has been instrumental in providing regular opportunities for participants to explore instructional leadership topics and to network with their peers. Networking is a vital component for early leaders, as it promotes professional growth, encourages the exchange of ideas, and builds a strong support system that is essential for their development and success. I would like to thank Assistant Superintendent Katherine Oviatt and Principal Colline Johnson for their ongoing work with the Aspiring Leaders cohort.

As we continue to prioritize leadership development in SD22, our intentional efforts will enhance an environment that nurtures and recruits talent and ultimately drives student success.

Respectfully,

Karla Mitchell
Superintendent of Schools

Student Success

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

Indigenous Education: Self-expression Through Beading

Many Indigenous students in SD22 love to bead! And often they bead with their Indigenous Support Workers in Welcome Rooms throughout our school district. Student artists use beadwork to connect with their heritage and use techniques such as the peyote stitch and loom weaving. Beading serves as a form of self-expression, empowerment, and healing, promoting community and cultural pride.

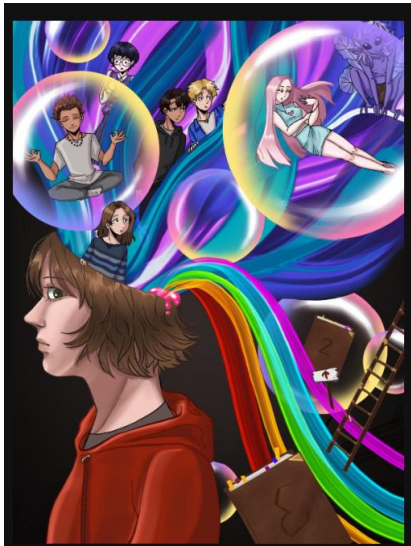


PADS is Promoting Inclusion at Lavington

At Lavington, the school is fortunate to have Rosa, a [PADS](#) (Pacific Assistance Dog Society) trainee. PADS supports people with disabilities and community care providers by partnering them with certified assistance dogs. Rosa is one of several PADS dogs that Lavington students have helped to train and socialize through classroom visits. Rosa's visits and the classroom discussions that are encouraged promote an understanding of diversity, inclusion, and the needs of people with various abilities and emotional support requirements. The school uses Rosa to teach kindness, compassion, and understanding differences.

Enlarging Your World at Vernon Secondary School

Students at VSS recently had the opportunity to participate in a multi-school art show at Gallery Vertigo in the downtown Vernon. This greatly benefitted students at VSS by promoting a sense of community and collaboration. The show provided students with a public platform to



artwork by Talia Buckner, Vernon Secondary

showcase their creativity and hard work and also allowed students to appreciate diverse artistic perspectives, enhancing their cultural awareness and critical thinking skills.

VSS students contributed a diverse range of works including paintings, collages, sculptures and photographs all united around the theme of *Microcosms: Enlarging Your World*. Many students attended the opening, along with members of the VSS school community and school district administration. In addition, many of VSS classes took field trips to the gallery both to celebrate the students' successes and to reflect on the viewer/creator relationship inherent in art-making.



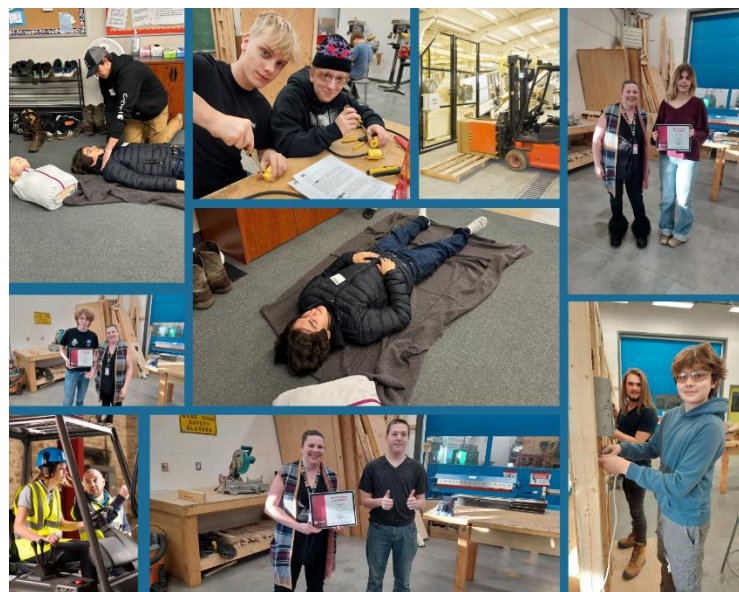
Bringing Learning to Life at Beirsto

At Beirsto, the school has been working on filling up their "Coyote Wall of Fame." Students are recognized for their kind actions, helpfulness, academic successes, and hard work. They get their picture taken with a trophy and earn a spot on the wall with their 4 Food Chiefs team.

Beirsto has also focused on providing opportunities for students to bring their learning to life in various ways, such as:

- ❖ learning about French Canadian culture through cooking and a visit from the famous Bonhomme Carnaval.
- ❖ demonstrating their ADST (Applied Design, Skills and Technology) skills by helping to assemble new Lost and Found storage hangers.
- ❖ engaging in anti-racism awareness through stories, assemblies, and street art.

Beirsto's students have stepped up and shown the many ways they can be successful. Vas-y les coyotes au grands coeurs!



Career Programs Update

This past semester, in partnership with Okanagan College, the Trades Sampler program was offered to two cohorts, totaling 32 students. These students spent the semester at the impressive OC Trades Center, where they engaged in hands-on learning across various trades, including carpentry, plumbing and piping, electrical, automotive, and welding. Additionally, they earned certificates in employable skills such as First Aid and Forklift Operation. This semester, two more cohorts have been launched, including an all-female Trades Sampler cohort.



STEM lessons at Cherryville

The K-3 students at Cherryville Elementary worked with teacher Mrs. Cowland during STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) lessons to create a dragon and snakes to celebrate the Chinese New Year, also known as Lunar New Year. The STEM activities culminated in a student parade through the school in order to display their creations to the school community. In BC, the emphasis on STEM education aligns with the province's goal to prepare students for a rapidly evolving world. By fostering a strong STEM foundation, we empower students to become lifelong learners, innovative thinkers, and problem solvers.

Leadership Excellence

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

Promoting Student Engagement at Charles Bloom Secondary

Charles Bloom's teaching staff came together at the January Pro-D day to collaborate and plan for ways to improve both student attendance and engagement. This effort correlates specifically with one of the school's goals of *improving student well-being and mental health*. Student resiliency is also a focus area this year at Bloom, in order to support student wellness.

One specific action designed to increase engagement levels this year was the introduction of a new course for Grade 10-12 students in the second semester: Art Studio 3D. Ms. Fenn, a classroom teacher and school counsellor, is partnering in a residency program with Lead Teacher, Rhiannon Johnson to provide innovative lessons and projects for senior students. These projects include topics on sustainability and C.A.R.E. (Climate Action Ripple Effect), important themes that matter to our SD22 students!



Leadership in Early Learning & Child Care (ELCC)

SD22 Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Ellen Anderson, is dedicated to supporting the ECE community in our region and has partnered with our local Child Care Resource & Referral program to lead a session called "Incorporating Mindfulness into Group Time" for local ECEs working in licensed child care programs. This interactive workshop showcases methods to engage children and promote well-being through mindfulness practices.

Neurolinguistic Approach Learning at Beirsto

Teachers spent an engaging Professional Development Day with Shauna Nero, an expert on French Immersion pedagogy, who shared teaching practices and resources on the [neurolinguistic approach](#) to learning another language.

Digging into the Data at Ellison Elementary

Ellison's staff met on January 24th for a school-based pro-d day to focus on one of their school goals: *Improving Student Engagement*. Staff members reviewed data from a school-created survey administered to students in grades 3 and 6, along with data from the Middle Development Instrument (MDI) and the provincial Student Learning Surveys (SLS), to guide their efforts in enhancing student engagement. During the day, the staff explored various resources to support students, including Everyday Speech, Open Parachute, EASE (Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators), and Little Spot of Emotion. Teachers worked in small groups to delve into these resources together.

Ellison's team also supports student engagement through several initiatives, including DND clubs, chess clubs, games club, choir, sports teams, and more.



Community Connections

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

Harwood Promotes Physical Literacy in Community

Harwood Elementary has been actively working to strengthen its connections with the community, providing students with enriching experiences that promote both personal and collective growth. One of the key initiatives is the Silver Star Ski Program, which offers grade 6 and 7 students three full days of skiing or snowboarding. This program is particularly noteworthy as Silver Star has made it accessible to students who might not otherwise afford it, ensuring inclusivity across all skill levels. Students are taught various levels of skiing or snowboarding, allowing everyone to learn and enjoy a new skill on the land.

Additionally, the school has initiated a swimming program for grade 3 students, utilizing the local public pool and swim instructors. This program is crucial as swimming is an essential life skill, especially in our region. By providing access to professional instruction, Harwood ensures that all grade 3 students can develop this vital ability.

Through these programs, Harwood Elementary is not only enhancing students' physical skills but also



promoting a sense of community and connection to the local environment. These initiatives reflect the school's commitment to providing comprehensive, inclusive, and community-oriented education.

Fulton Secondary Celebrates Good Citizenship

What a fantastic and well-deserved recognition for Ash Burdett a Fulton AIAO program student! Ash has recently been awarded the North Okanagan Optimist Club (NOOC) Junior Good Citizen for 2025. Ash's dedication to community involvement, advocacy, and leadership is truly inspiring. Thank you to the NOOC for visiting Fulton/AIAO and sharing this wonderful recognition with the school community.



In other Fulton news, grade 6/7 students from OKL were invited for a morning of activities to help support their future transition to secondary. The students participated in a dissection with a Life Science 11 class, practiced reading and writing with an English 9 class, met with leadership and Entrepreneurship classes, and toured the school. The students felt the experience was very positive and answered many questions they had about high school. Fulton also partnered with the OKIB Immersion school and invited their grade sevens for lunch in the cafeteria and time in the welcome room to make connections. In the afternoon, the OKIB Immersion students worked with science classes at Fulton, where biologists from Kingfisher brought in local salmon for a dissection unit.

Early Learning & Child Care (ELCC): It's all About Community

Supporting the success of young children through the development of strong relationships with our community is a priority for ELCC. Positive relationships build a strong foundation for children's learning, and ELCC is fortunate to have many connections in our community that strengthen outcomes for children, families, and educators.

Early Learning Success Teacher Deborah Hay Marion and District Early childhood Educator (ECE) Leola McMillan organize our district's Pop Up & Play events in collaboration with partners such as the Okanagan Regional Library, Interior Health, and the Okanagan Science Centre. These events help children transition into Kindergarten and connect families with valuable early years resources in our community.





Connections with SD83 and community partner early years educators through the Changing Results for Young Children research project builds strong relationships to strengthen the well-being of young children. Hillview Kindergarten teachers Jodi Johnson and Michelle Smyth have been collaborating with Mission Hill StrongStart/Preschool ECE Sylvie Scott and an SD83 educator to discover new ways to document the learning of young children.

Volunteerism at ALP/Crossroads

Students at ALP/Crossroads regularly work with many community organizations. They volunteer on a weekly basis at the Upper Room Mission and the Good Food Box. The Vernon Community Baptist Church has also visited to prepare and serve the Christmas Lunch. The Church has been working with ALP for many years, and the school would like to thank them for their continued support.

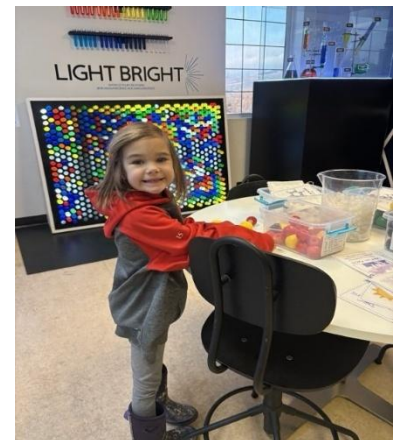
Recently, a presenter from the [ODD Squad in Vancouver](#) spoke to the students at ALP. Additionally, an agreement has been made with the Vernon Men's Shed, where students will be mentored to learn woodworking skills.



Developing a Sense of Belonging at Coldstream Elementary

At Coldstream Elementary, the school is enriching student learning and building a sense of belonging through strong community connections. A few recent school-community activities have included:

- ❖ Young scientists at Coldstream Elementary explored the wonders of science through an interactive visit to the Science Centre. These experiences ignited curiosity, hands-on discovery, and a deeper understanding of scientific principles.
- ❖ Special guest musician, Andrew Allen, brought the joy of writing and music to the school, inspiring students through live performances and interactive sessions.
- ❖ An active Reading Together Program partnership with the Literacy Society. This inter-generational reading program pairs students with dedicated volunteers to enhance reading skills, confidence, and a lifelong love of books.
- ❖ Students have enjoyed developing their physical skills and teamwork through local skating, skiing, and curling sessions. These activities promote physical fitness, coordination, and an appreciation for the local environment.



Service Learning Through Partnerships at BX

BX students have been learning valuable hands-on woodworking skills to help their local community. Students from grades 1-5 have taken on a community care project to build wooden crates with a special purpose. The student-built crates are being sold at a Spring Market (Saturday, April 5th, from 10am-3pm) hosted by the PAC at BX school. One hundred percent of the funds raised from the sales of the wooden crates will be donated to the local food bank.

Coldstream Lumber partnered with the school to donate offcuts from their mill for the project. Students have worked hard to sand and plane the offcuts before cutting them to size with a mitre box and handsaw. Students then glued and nailed the crates together to create the finished product. BX would like to thank Coldstream Lumber and their amazing BX PAC for supporting this project!



Community Connections at Mission Hill

At Mission Hill, the Emmanuel Baptist Church cooks lunch for the entire school community each year. While the church used to come to the school, for the past two years, the school has gone to the church instead. The school is divided between primary and intermediate students, and the lunch is served in two shifts. The Church is a welcoming member of the community and also hosts events such as Family Fun night, which brings the Mission Hill community together. The students love having a lunch prepared for them and enjoy sitting together as a school to share good stories and friendship. They also show their amazing manners and appreciation to all the volunteers, with each student cleaning up after themselves, demonstrating great social responsibility. The school is very proud of the students for their kindness and appreciation for the lunch.

