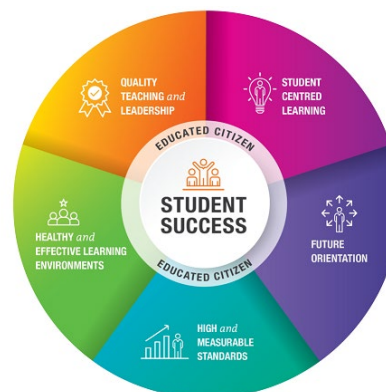


I am pleased to submit this month's Superintendent's Report, highlighting key actions moving the District forward in accomplishing the [Board's Strategic Plan](#). An important focus this month has been on Academic Reviews during which school teams and district staff have collaborated at each secondary school in the District. We are grateful to be alongside OKIB staff in this endeavour as well. The purpose of the reviews is to monitor attendance, academic performance, and learner wellness on a student-by-student basis in order to ensure data-driven decision-making, equity and inclusion, holistic development, school connectedness and ultimately a high-quality path towards graduation. Each student has unique needs, strengths, and areas for growth. By understanding their individual characteristics, school staff can tailor instruction and supports to better meet each student's needs, thereby enhancing learning outcomes. Identifying specific areas where a student may be struggling allows for timely and targeted interventions, which can prevent small issues from becoming significant obstacles to success. Overall, this individualized approach supports the development of well-rounded, successful learners who are equipped to thrive in diverse environments.

Throughout the reviews it was highly evident to me that school teams deeply know learners, their levels of achievement and their individual stories. They are paying additional attention to the success of children and youth in care (CAYIC), Indigenous learners, and students with disabilities or diverse needs. This focussed attention is critical to success and makes our schools caring, culturally relevant, and motivating places in which to learn. This year during the Academic Reviews we are integrating the monitoring of School Learning Plan Goals (and school data) and the strategies undertaken by school teams to meet the goals, as well as ensuring alignment with the Board's Strategic Plan. This structure also contributes to the bigger picture of what has been working well and deserves to be celebrated. This reflective and responsive process is part of the continuous improvement cycle to promote student success as per the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Continuous improvement on student success in BC is guided by the following principles:



As we continue to strive towards your Vision of ***becoming a community where all are respected, and each person is encouraged to develop their potential***, I would like to acknowledge the work of Luke Friesen, Director of Instruction (Learning) who has been instrumental in the success of the learning conversations during Academic Reviews. SD22 is fortunate to have school staff and system leaders who help create the conditions under which learners can flourish.

Karla Mitchell
Superintendent of Schools

Student Success

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

Silver Star Elementary School – Cultural Learning and Student Storytelling

Silver Star's Mr. Anderson led students through a Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) project, which transformed the library into something truly special—an intimate, cultural space filled with the memories, student creations, stories, and warmth of each child's family. Dia de Muertos comes from Mexican tradition which honors loved ones who have passed away. Over the course of several weeks, students approached this project with dedication and respect, learning not only about the history and traditions of Dia de Muertos but also how to honor and celebrate the lives of those who came before them. The goal was to stay as true to the traditions of Dia de Muertos as possible, and this shone through in both their project work and their understanding of the meaning of the traditions. Watching the students speak so openly about their families, weaving cultural learning with personal pride, was a reminder of the power of storytelling and community. This project allowed them to honor their loved ones, share their stories, and experience the beauty of remembrance.



Learning with HARU at Kalamalka Secondary School



Two Kalamalka Secondary students had a unique opportunity this past month to work with research students from UBC and The Honda Research Institute. These students had the chance to interact with a social robot called HARU that is being prototyped for use in classrooms. The robot supports cross-cultural interactions with students in other countries. Over three days, the students interacted with a computer interface, the HARU robot, and students in Japan to learn and connect through activities led by the robot. Dr. Sakamoto (Research Associate at UBC) helped facilitate the experience with HARU and the Japanese students. This was a truly incredible opportunity for students in our district.

Environmental Stewardship and Health Promotion at Harwood Elementary School

Harwood School has been making significant strides in enhancing student success by aligning its efforts with the strategic plan to support student wellness and amplify student voice and choice. A key initiative in this endeavor is empowering students to take climate action and positively impact the environment. Recently, the school acquired 20 mountain bikes, thanks to a generous grant from the BC Winter Games

Legacy Committee. These bikes are now an integral part of the physical education and health curriculum, aimed at teaching students the basic skills of riding and ensuring they feel comfortable on a bike.

This initiative not only promotes physical fitness but also encourages outdoor activity and environmental stewardship. Leading this exciting program is Ms. Augaitis, who is also supported by local BMX World Champion Kevin O'Brian. This program is a testament to Harwood School's commitment to holistic education, where student wellness, environmental consciousness, and skill development go hand in hand.



Leadership Excellence

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

Learning on the Land with Career Programs

Our SD22 Forestry Program teacher, Nathan Bartel, offered a professional development opportunity for teachers for a day of learning on the land at the SD22 Forestry Woodlot. An impactful day of learning was had by all as many teachers lived out their real life “Tonka” dreams by learning simple maneuvers on the heavy-duty equipment. I would like to thank Mr. Bartel and District Principal, Corrine McWhinney, for inviting me to tour the Woodlot in November and have an opportunity to speak with students about the personal relevance of their learning experiences.



AI and STEM at Clarence Fulton Secondary School

Students at Clarence Fulton Secondary are exploring ways to become leaders in their community as the school works to **foster a culture of continuous growth and professional development**. Recently students had the chance to meet healthcare professionals and learn about the roles and responsibilities



of Respiratory Therapists. Fulton has partnered with UBCO to improve their practice in the world of STEM. Staff have participated in professional development on both AI and STEM. Students have benefitted through this partnership by having guests from UBCO teach lessons on coding, robotics, and circuitry. Fulton staff participated in professional development on generative AI, plagiarism, and the tools available that the district has approved as teacher resources for AI. They have since booked more professional development with district Innovation Technology Coordinators.

VSS Student Voice: Anti-vaping Strategies

Recently I had the opportunity to visit Vernon Secondary School to engage with the Student Voice representatives concerning their proactive stance on addressing vaping within the school environment. The students asked great questions, expressed their concerns articulately and demonstrated their initiative by brainstorming strategies to combat this issue at the school level. It is encouraging to see such dedication and leadership from students in tackling challenges that directly impact their well-being, learning environment, and feelings of safety. In support of their efforts, District Counsellor Doug Rogers will be collaborating with the students to further develop and implement effective strategies. This partnership highlights our collective commitment to promoting a safe and healthy school community.

SD22 Student Trustees: Current and Future Leaders

I had the pleasure of meeting with Student Trustee representatives from grades 10 to 12 on two occasions this fall to initiate conversations on governance topics. These meetings, co-facilitated by Director of Instruction (Luke Friesen), engaged a group of highly motivated students eager to enhance their leadership skills, with some expressing interest in future political pursuits and board service opportunities. Our last discussion was enhanced by the presence of Secretary Treasurer Adrian Johnson, who joined us as a guest speaker, providing valuable insights into governance, operations, and leadership. The engagement and enthusiasm of these student representatives are so encouraging, and I look forward to supporting their development as future leaders.

Powerful Thinking with BX and Hillview Elementary Staff

BX and Hillview Elementary staff members came together during the November 8th Pro-D day to collaborate, learn, and grow. This was the second consecutive year the two schools learned together during a school-based Pro-D day. It was also the second-year that literacy and reading expert Adrienne Gear presented to the staff. Her focus this year was on her new book *Powerful Thinking*.

Adrienne Gear's philosophies "help teachers shift their beliefs and "stretch" their thinking around reading comprehension, literacy instruction, and content-area learning." Adrienne shows teachers practical ways to create a "culture of thinking" that can be integrated into all areas of learning. Her practical work and lessons came to life in classrooms the week following the Pro-D session.

Leadership at JW Inglis

The JW school community would like to acknowledge the grade 6's for their outstanding leadership during their volleyball season. They exemplified excellent sportsmanship and determination. Where they excelled the most was in their leadership skills. Not only did they support their teammates, but also students on other teams. They were proactive with setting up extra practices and reminding their coaches!

The grade 6 Leadership Crew has been actively taking a role in collecting compost and recycling weekly throughout the school. They also have taken a leadership role in supporting younger students at lunch and at outside time.

JWI staff members have been proactively taking steps to implement Restitution Practices within all school environments. The school continues to prioritize professional development days so that the school can continue to lead in SD22 in relation to Restitution Practices.



Cherryville Elementary School

Cherryville staff have worked together through professional development to better their skills on having conversations as well as difficult conversations that establish safety, are respectful, state facts, look at other's perspectives and work together towards a resolution. A follow up to their workshop was a curriculum meeting where staff shared a skill of focus around having conversations, read and discussed two articles, and chose a recommended reading resource to review and share back to the group in the new year.

Beairsto Elementary School

Team Beairsto came together on the recent Professional Development Day to work on a variety of topics. They spent part of the morning analyzing the learning needs of staff to ensure that the professional development they are doing is timely and responsive to the needs of students and staff. The rest of morning was a chance for teachers to dig deeper into a variety of topics including making literacy assessments and practices more powerful tools, outdoor learning, Indigenizing the curriculum, and Shifting the Balance (structured literacy practices). The afternoon was spent with POPARD (Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders) learning about behaviour.

Early Learning & Child Care



With a focus on creating inclusive Preschool programming where all children belong, District Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and Early Childhood Educator Assistants (ECE-As) have been engaging in rich professional development. In collaboration with the Inclusion Education department, Preschool staff have been learning more about augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices that support young children, as well as using visuals in programs. ELCC is grateful for the support of Kevin Poettcker, District Inclusion Specialist, for his work alongside the team as they work together to support our child care work force and empowered them to deliver equitable

and inclusive care.

Learning Showcase hosted by vLearn Students

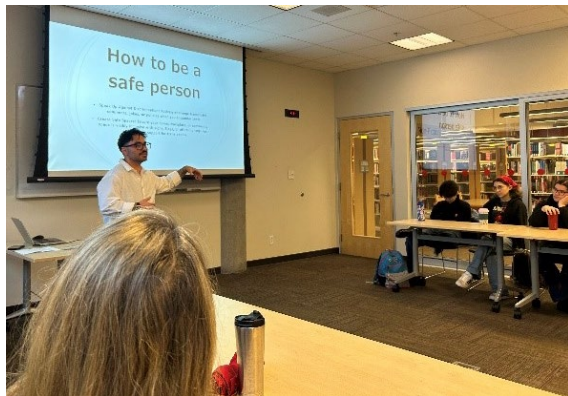
With the first snow on the mountains in the syilx territory, vLearn students invited the community to share stories and celebrate their learning experiences from the past few months at our elementary showcase. This event highlighted the diverse talents and interests of students through various inquiry and passion projects. Some students even shared small business ventures they created, showcasing their innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. This bi-annual event not only celebrates the uniqueness of vLearn's home-based blended learning program but also helps continue to establish and maintain important community connections. It emphasizes student voice and choice, honouring each



student's personalized learning journey. Participating in this celebration is important as it helps everyone be more connected within the vLearn community, reinforcing the sense of unity, inclusion, and support among students, parents, and educators.

Learning Department: Student Engagement in Voices of Vernon Anti-racism Program

Community connections are vital for promoting a supportive and inclusive environment within School District 22. One exemplary initiative facilitated by Kim Tyssen (Learning Coordinator) highlighting this



importance was the Voices of Vernon event, held in November. This event is a collaborative effort between SD22 and local organizations aimed at engaging high school students in meaningful dialogues about racism, discrimination, and prejudice. By providing a platform for culturally diverse community members to share their stories, Voices of Vernon promotes intercultural understanding and strengthens community bonds through storytelling and creative expression.

The program aligns with core competencies and anti-racist dispositions, reflecting SD22's commitment to fostering an environment of respect and empathy.

Following each talk, students engaged in an art project that empowered them to share their personal journeys. This creative process not only allows students to express themselves individually but also fosters a sense of community as they collaborated to create a collective art piece.

One student reflected on the experience, saying, "Voices of Vernon was very inspirational, authentic, and overall amazing. I think it was a very eye-opening experience. It helped me realize that even though things are hard right now, there is hope that it will get better." By participating in Voices of Vernon, students learn to appreciate the diverse experiences and perspectives within their community. This initiative underscores the importance of community connections in building a more inclusive and understanding society. It demonstrates how educational programs can go beyond traditional learning to address social issues and promote unity, ultimately enriching the educational experience and strengthening the community as a whole.

Community Connections

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

Scholarship Donor Appreciation Event

School District 22 recently hosted the 3rd Annual Scholarship Donor Appreciation Event to honor and appreciate the community members and groups whose generous donations support students pursuing post-secondary education. This event highlighted the crucial role these contributions play in shaping the future of students, providing them with opportunities to achieve their academic and career goals.

I would like to extend gratitude to all the donors for their generous support, as well as to the dedicated staff and volunteers who made this event possible. A special thank to Seaton Secondary for graciously hosting the event, and to band teacher Mr. Jason Paas and the Seaton Band for their lively entertainment, which added a new and memorable touch to the occasion.

Ellison Elementary

Ellison's school goal in the area of community connections is to promote a culture of respect and inclusivity by embracing the BC Human Rights Code as a guiding principle. The school strives to strengthen community bonds through increased collaboration, ensuring every voice is heard and valued. Some of the ways Ellison is working to support this goal includes cultural celebrations, involve community members in school activities, and whole-school Indigenous education.

Ellison students recently participated in cultural learning during Diwali. The learning experiences were led by the amazing ELL teacher, Ms. Brar, with help from some students!

Recently Ellison students were engaged with the City of Vernon's "Name the Zamboni" contest, successfully choosing one of the names! The "Sniper Wiper" Zamboni was on display during a weekend game, and many of Ellison students and staff were able to attend. One student even did the ceremonial puck drop. Congratulations Ellison!



Kalamalka Secondary School

In November 2024, Kal showcased its passionate community spirit through opening their doors to many visitors through a series of exciting events. On November 19th, in partnership with Valhalla Pure Outfitters, Kalamalka Secondary's Outdoor Ed program run by Mr. Britton hosted the Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival, showing a half dozen adventure films.

Kal also hosted the family of schools for an elementary school volleyball tournament, uplifting the young athletes and promoting a sense of community. The Kal Cheer Club, sponsored by Ms. Nelson, ran the event and spread positive cheer and enthusiasm, ensuring everyone felt welcome and supported.

ALP / Crossroads



Staff and students of ALP/Crossroads work collaboratively with many outside agencies, whether it be through presentations or volunteer activities. So far this year ALP/Crossroads have worked with NOYFSS, CMHA, YISH, Archway, CYMH, MCFD, Interior Health, RCMP, Youth Probation, Whitevalley Resource Center, Village of Lumby and the Take a Hike Foundation. From a volunteer perspective, ALP students have spent time at the Upper Room Mission and the Good Food Box in Vernon, and Crossroads students participated in the First Responders annual Food Drive for the Lumby food bank. Opportunities for students to be able to give back to their communities provides them with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Alexis Park

The Vernon Active Living Center will serve as a cornerstone for community connections for the residents of Vernon. The students of Alexis Park Elementary are fortunate to be located next to the construction site and are fascinated by the progress of the construction each day. Students, in partnership with the City of Vernon and Clark Builders (site contractor), have been busy painting panels to decorate the construction fence along 43rd Avenue. We all hope to see the panels installed on the fencing before the Winter Break.

Alexis Park Elementary also has an amazing PAC that works hard to support students in many ways. This was the second year that the PAC has organized and hosted a Holiday Market and silent auction, which has become a significant source of fundraising for school activities over the course of the school year. The hard work of PAC volunteers and the many members of the community who donated items for the silent auction are greatly appreciated.



Indigenous Education

I am happy to share the success of the recent District Indigenous Parent Night, where over thirty parents joined us to share a delicious meal prepared by Lead Teacher Sheryl Newton, and engage with our dedicated Indigenous Education team. Attendees had the opportunity to meet the Director of Instruction, District Principal, Lead Teachers, Indigenous Outreach Workers, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent.

During the event, staff provided valuable insights into their roles and responsibilities, as well as an overview of current and upcoming projects aimed at supporting Indigenous students and community. A Winter Gathering will be held on February 3, 2025, and a Spring Gathering is scheduled for April 28, 2025. We look forward to continuing these meaningful conversations and fostering a strong, supportive community. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to the success of the evening. limlāmt to the staff who supported this successful event.