

We wish to acknowledge as a school community that we continue to work, learn and play together on the homelands of the Ktunaxa People

Fernie Secondary School

	May 2025	
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Principal's Message

With only one month left in this school year students and teachers are working hard to stay focused and complete their courses. Enriched learning experiences are also underway, including field trips to Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park, Frank Slide, hiking, whitewater rafting on the Bull River, Theatre Productions in Calgary and Track & Field Provincials in Langley. Our Grade 12 students are preparing for graduation—an exciting milestone for them and for our school community.

Planning for the 2025-26 school year is ongoing. If your family is anticipating a move or a change in your child's enrollment, please let us know as soon as possible. Knowing in advance when students will be leaving helps us plan effectively for class placements, staffing, and support, ensuring a smooth transition for your child and a well-prepared start to the new school year.

I also want to share a growing concern with the increase in vaping incidents in our school washrooms and in the broader community. Possession or use of tobacco products—including vapes—is not permitted at school. To help families navigate this issue, I've included some resources from Health Canada and Interior Health with information about the risks of vaping and tips for how to talk with your child. These resources are designed to support parents in having informed, supportive conversations at home.

As many of you know, I will be moving into the Principalship at Isabella Dicken Elementary next year. Mrs. Romero and I are working closely with Mr. Jason Sommerfeld as he prepares to join Fernie Secondary as the new Principal. We are committed to a smooth leadership transition for students, staff, and families.

Important upcoming dates:

- **June 20 at 9:30 AM** – Student Awards and Recognition Assembly
- **June 23- 25:** Completion Week (no scheduled classes)
- **June 26** – Final Learning Updates available in MyEd (please review, save, or print your child's report)
- **June 27 at 10:00 AM** – Class of 2024 Commencement Ceremony at the Fernie Arena

Thank you for your continued partnership as we finish the school year with focus and care.

Sincerely,

Nicole Neufeld

Featured Articles

Upcoming Events

June 2nd to June 13th - Grad Assessments

June 3rd - Spring Band Concert

June 3rd - PAC Meeting - 7:00pm

June 4th - Theatre Production Group Field Trip - Legally Blonde

June 5th - Elementary Schools District Track Meet

June 9th & 10th - Writing on Stone (grade 11)- Field Trip

June 11th - Grade 7 and new Parent Information Night 6:00pm

June 13th - NO SCHOOL - Pro-D

June 16th - Grade 6 Orientation Day

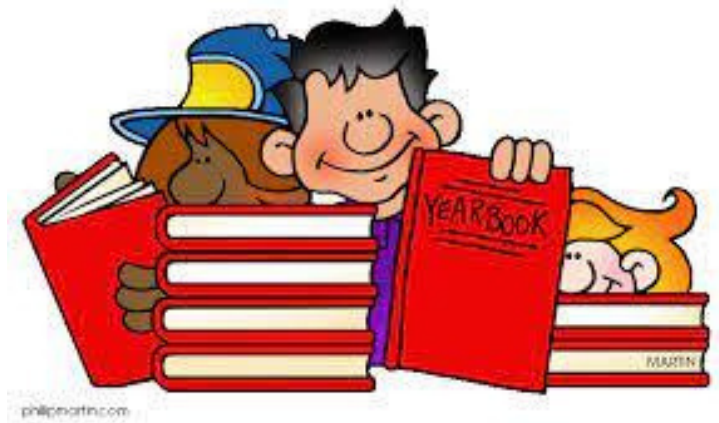
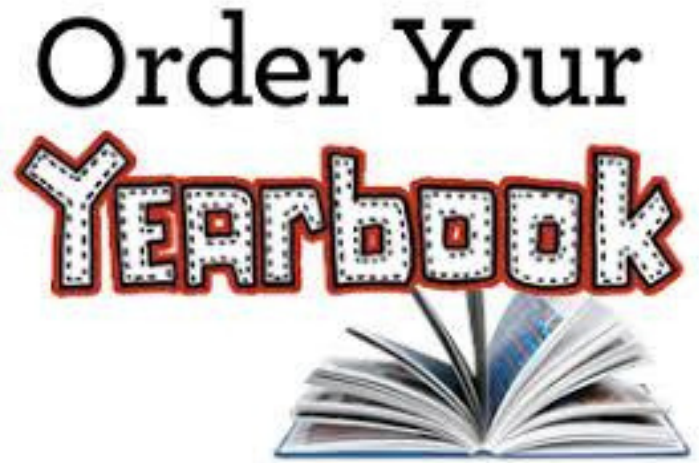
June 18th - Double blocks: AA (AE) lunch BB BF)

June 19th - Double blocks: CC(CG) lunch DD(DH)

June 20th - Student Recognition (am)
Student Council Fun Day (pm)

June 26th - Learning Update Published to MyEd

June 27th - 2025 Graduating Class
Commencement Ceremonies 10:00am
Fernie Arena



**You can order your
yearbook on School
Cash Online**

FERNIE SECONDARY SCHOOL PRESENTS:

May 27, 28, & 29, 2025



BEETLEJUICE

The Musical. The Musical. The Musical.

7 PM AT FSS TRAYNOR HALL - DOORS OPEN AT 6PM

TICKETS: \$12 - AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT FSS DRAMA ROOM
OR BIG BANG BAGELS

Tickets are for sale at Big Bang Bagels or the Drama Room

TRASH BASH

On April 22nd, Fernie Secondary students and staff once again hit the streets for the annual Trash Bash, celebrating Earth Day with community spirit and environmental action. Under the leadership of the student council and with support from teachers and local organizations, students spread out across Fernie to collect litter and beautify their town.

This year's turnout was incredible, with over 300 participants covering neighborhoods, parks, and trails. The school was divided into groups, each tackling a different area of the community. By the end of the day, dozens of bags of garbage were collected — everything from plastic wrappers to forgotten bits of winter debris.

Some of the more surprising finds this year included a set of tires, an old exhaust pipe, and even a discarded bicycle. These discoveries served as a reminder of how important it is to dispose of waste properly and the lasting impact litter can have on the environment.

The Trash Bash continues to be more than just a cleanup; it's a reminder of the power of collective effort and a hands-on way for students to take pride in their environment.

Erin Webber



FSS Outdoor Education and PE 8 Explore Their “Backyard.”

This April, students from Outdoor Education and PE 8 have been actively exploring their surroundings during the "shoulder season." They have been investigating local forestry cut blocks in the valley. Outdoor Education students visited a nearby cut block, while PE 8 took a nature walk to observe the various patches along the valley edges.

During their local adventures, students had the opportunity to get an up-close view of the dam being built on the Elk River from the robust local beavers, learning about the impact and the effects of beavers in the local and nearby forests.

Additionally, Outdoor Education has been engaging with the community by biking down to James White Park, where they enjoyed a round of disc golf. Meanwhile, PE 8 students have been practicing their skills on the school course and are planning to play on the Bug City course later in April.



Student Vote Day

Our Student Vote day was a success!

On April 23rd, Grade 10, 11 and 12 students participated in Student Vote Canada.

In BC, 1001 schools participated in the Federal Vote for students. A total of 155,370 students across BC voted! Fernie Secondary School had 130 students vote (a 44.4% turnout).

The results were:

Conservative - 54

Liberal - 46

NDP - 16

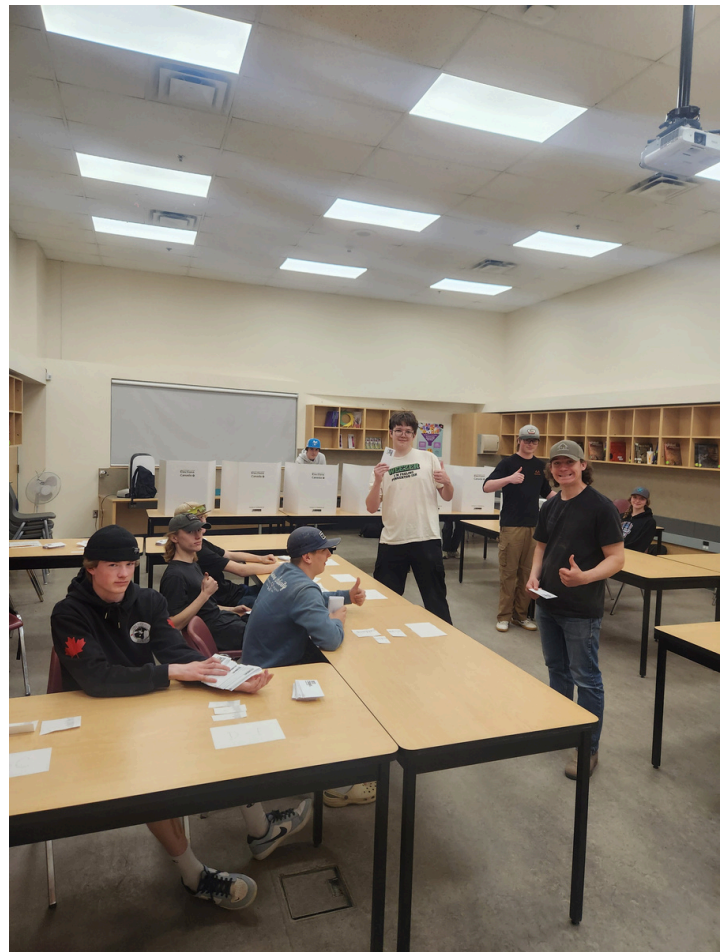
Green - 9

PPC - 3

Independent - 2

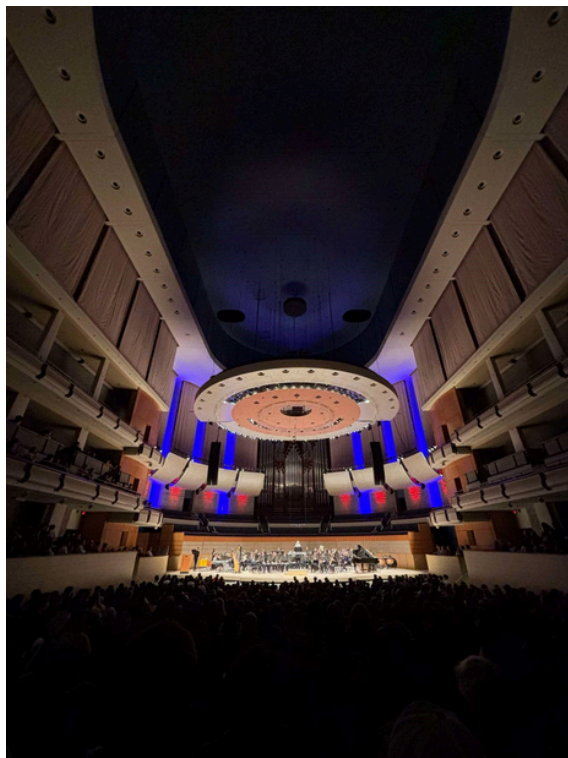
Thanks to everyone who participated.

The Grade 11 Explorations in Social Studies class.



Music students travelled to Edmonton last month to represent Fernie Secondary School on a provincial stage in the Edmonton Cantando Music Festival. The grade 8/9 Band Class performed three contrasting pieces at the Winspear Centre, and the Jazz Band performed three contrasting pieces in the Yardbird Suite jazz club. All students participated in workshops as ensembles and masterclasses on their specific instruments, in addition to watching other school bands for inspiration. We also had a bit of fun at Galaxyland amusement park in West Edmonton Mall and bowling. We are so proud of how much the students learned about their instruments, about playing as a cohesive ensemble, and for representing Fernie Secondary so positively.

To see our students perform some of the songs from the Festival and more of our beginning band students, come to the Spring Band Concert on June 3rd, beginning at 7pm in Traynor Hall at Fernie Secondary School. Proceeds from ticket sales support maintenance of our equipment and support students' financial accessibility to trips like the Edmonton Cantando Festival.





Gourmet Campfire Cookout - Mr. Cullins





Liam, Nadia, and Myelle from the FSS Lifeskills Program had an awesome time representing our school at the District Track Meet in Cranbrook! They showed their skills in the 100m sprint and shot put events, bringing great energy and enthusiasm to the day. Beyond the competition, they loved meeting students from other schools across the region and cheering on their fellow Fernie Falcon Track and Field teammates. Way to go team!



Senior Art Class worked hard on their clay sculptures inspired by Indigenous Ways of Knowing. Students were asked to design their forms based on indigenous stories and symbolic meanings. This project involved research, planning, sculpting, painting, and glazing. Students wrote artist's statements for their creations explaining the reasoning, artistic processes, and personal growth. Currently, the sculptures are on display in the main hallway of FSS.



Welcome

Grade 7 and New Parent/Guardian Information Night

We will be holding an information night for parents/guardians of next year's grade 7 students as well as any other new families. We will cover topics such as grade 7 courses, how our timetable works, services and supports available at FSS and extracurricular activities. School tours will be available and we will have time for a question - answer session.

NEW DATE
JUNE 11, 2025

Fernie Secondary School

Traynor Hall 6:00pm

250-423-4471



Join us in celebrating the

FERNIE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Class of 2025

Friday, June 27th, 2025

10 AM-12 PM

Commencement Ceremony
@ Fernie Memorial Arena

LIVE STREAM

www.youtube.com/@mckeedesigns71



6:00 PM

Grad Photos @ City Hall

6:45 PM

Grad Walk - *City Hall to Fernie Memorial Arena*

FERNIE MEMORIAL ARENA

6 PM - 10 PM

Food Trucks
-Eat Hits the Spot, Flippin Crepes, Buffs Smokin BBQ

7:15 PM

Grand March

7:30 PM

Family Dance

9 PM

Prom - *Grads & Guests Only*



Vaping and Youth Factsheet

Vaping is and has been a growing concern for many caregivers, educators and health professionals for the past few years. [Vaping](#) is the act of inhaling an aerosol, often called *vapour* or *cloud*, which is produced by heating a liquid with a battery-powered device known as vapes and e-cigarettes. The liquid ("vape juice" or "e-juice") is sold in a variety of flavours that are appealing to youth.

It can be difficult for adults to know if a young person under their care is vaping. Some liquids are hard to smell and vapes can be small and [mimic the look of common objects](#) such as flash drives or pens.



Read on to learn more about important vaping facts and myths to help adults and children have informed conversations.

1. MYTH: Vapour products are harmless

Vapour products are marketed as a harmless alternative to smoking, which is misleading. As we continue to learn about the long term risks of vaping, the short-term health effects such as coughing, inflammation of the lungs and increased heart rate indicate a need for caution. Also, vape juices often have nicotine, a substance that can be toxic and lead to poisoning through ingestion or skin contact, especially for young kids and pets.

2. FACT: More school aged youth have tried vaping than smoking tobacco

Vaping among youth is on the rise. About 41% of Grade 7-12 students in BC have tried vaping while 21% have tried smoking. It is estimated that 20% of all vapers in Canada are teens.



3. MYTH: The "cloud" from a vape is just water

Vapour products do not produce smoke or steam, but rather an aerosol of fine particles of many substances: propylene glycol, glycerin, flavourings and other chemicals. Some might sound inoffensive because they are usually okay for ingestion, but they may harm the lungs.

Vape clouds may also contain heavy metals, like nickel, chromium and lead, and formaldehyde produced during the heating. Some of these substances have been linked to cancer and respiratory and heart disease.

4. MYTH: E-juice does not contain nicotine

Vapes usually have a psychoactive substance, the most common ones being nicotine (a stimulant found in tobacco) and THC (the main mind-altering chemical found in Cannabis). Besides being very addictive, nicotine changes activity on the attention, memory and learning areas of a developing teen's brain and can affect impulsivity and mood.

In BC all vaping products must contain either nicotine or cannabis, but never both combined. Unregulated products; however, might still be illegally available or purchased out of province. In the past, about half of the products labeled as "nicotine-free" were found to actually contain nicotine.

5. **FACT: Vaping may lead to smoking**

Unfortunately, after many years of steady decline in Canada and BC, smoking among youth seems to have stabilized, which is concerning. Vaping might have something to do with it. Nicotine, often present in vapes, is a highly addictive substance. Youth are more vulnerable to addiction because their brains are still developing. Studies show that teens who vape have a higher risk of starting to smoke, but the reason for it is still unclear.

6. **FACT: Vapour devices can be used to inhale other substances**

Some vaping devices can be modified to be used with unauthorized and potentially harmful substances. Informal sources of vaping liquids, including THC are risky and have been linked with [vaping associated lung injury \(VALI\)](#).

7. **MYTH: Vaping won't increase my risk of COVID-19**

Because it affects lung health, vaping may increase the risk of severe illness and complications from COVID-19. One early study found that the disease was 5 times more common in young people (13-24 years-old) who vaped and 7 times higher for those who vaped and smoked. Although the reason for the result is still unknown, it warrants caution.

8. **FACT: You can be a role model even if you use commercial tobacco or vapes**

Even if you smoke or vape, you can still be a good influence by not offering tobacco and vapes to other people and talking about your experience (e.g. how it's hard to quit).

Also use these products responsibly. Avoid using them in the presence of youth, at home or in the car, even when they are not with you to protect them from the chemicals in vapes and tobacco that stay in the air and on surfaces. Keep cigarettes, vapes, liquids and cartridges (including empty ones) out of the reach of children and pets to avoid poisoning. Dispose of cigarette butts and batteries in a safe and environmentally sound manner.

9. **MYTH - Kids won't listen to me**

Kids who receive helpful information about vaping from an adult are less likely to vape. Here are some tips to strike a conversation:

- ✓ Timing is key. Take advantage of situations like passing by a group of teens vaping or a person vaping on a TV show to bring up the topic.
- ✓ Help young people feel comfortable by building a positive and non-judgmental conversation on this and other topics.
- ✓ Listen and answer their questions truthfully.
- ✓ Encourage good decision making.
- ✓ Help kids build strategies for peer-pressure and coping with stress.

10. **MYTH: It's too late. They are already vaping**

Not all people that try vaping become dependent on nicotine and it may take a while for someone to become a daily vaper. Keep the topic in conversation and offer help to quit. Still, it can take multiple attempts for someone to successfully quit vaping. Doctors, nurses and counsellors can provide support. BC youth can also access help and information from [QuitNow](#) and free counselling through [Foundry BC](#).

11. **FACT: It is illegal to purchase or sell vapour products for minors**

Vapes and its liquids and cartridges are available on the internet and at local retailers. It is against the law to sell or provide any vapour products to someone under the age of 19. If you suspect someone is providing vapour products to minors, please contact the Tobacco and Vapour Prevention and Control Team at: tobaccoandvape@interiorhealth.ca.



For more information and resources visit the [Tobacco and Vapour Prevention and Control](#) resource page on IH website.

Be patient and ready to listen

- › Avoid criticism and encourage an open dialogue.
- › Remember, your goal is to have a meaningful conversation, not to give a lecture.
- › Thank your teen for being honest with you if they tell you that they have tried vaping or vape regularly. Then offer to share some information about the risks of vaping, and discuss the benefits of being smoke- and vape-free.
- › If your teen tells you they are interested in quitting or reducing their use, help them come up with their own goals and support them in achieving them.

Get support

- › Ask your healthcare provider to talk with you and your teen about the risks of vaping and ways to be smoke- and vape-free.
- › Consider suggesting that your teen talk with other trusted adults, such as relatives, teachers, faith leaders, coaches, or counsellors whom you know are aware of the risks of vaping. These supportive adults can help reinforce your message.
- › Download or obtain a copy of the “**I quit for me**” youth guide. It can help your teen learn more about their reasons to quit vaping and/or smoking, choose their own way to quit and help them stay smoke-free/vape-free.



KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

- › Don't expect to have just one conversation with your teen. Odds are you will probably need to talk about it many times. Remind your teen that you are always available to chat about this issue.
- › Keep in mind that talking about it can also set the stage for important discussions about tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, nonmedical use of prescription drugs, like opioids, or other risky behaviours.



Nicotine replacement therapies aren't recommended for teens

Nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs), including nicotine patches, gums or pouches, are designed to help adults stop smoking. They're not intended for anyone under 18 years of age unless it's recommended by their doctor. These products can be harmful if not used as directed.

For more information on vaping or cannabis, visit:
Canada.ca/vaping or Canada.ca/cannabis