

School District No. 5

[Southeast Kootenay]



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5
SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY

Learning Services

September 2024



Learning Services

The District has been supplementing Learning Services to ensure adequate support in all of our communities. For the past two years, we have been using a needs-based assessment to ensure equitable resources in schools.





There is a strong focus on early intervention with Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Speech-Language Assistants (SLAs) in the District elementary schools. These professionals work with identified students to support language development, Augmented and Alternative Communication (AAC), and provide strategies for our neurodiverse learners.

The Social Emotional Learning Teacher also supports early intervention through Sunshine Circles, a group based on Theraplay principles that focuses on the social and emotional development of all children. Sunshine Circles gives children an opportunity to practice their self-regulation and co-regulation skills and to feel encouraged to take on achievable challenges. Educators lead playful, cooperative, and nurturing activities to create an atmosphere of fun, caring, acceptance, and encouragement. The goal is to enhance children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Sunshine Circles provides educators with the resources to maintain an emotionally positive environment that supports cognitive development for all children.

Universal supports in classrooms have been a major focus to ensure all students have accessible access to the curriculum. The District has adopted Reframing Behaviour through the Crisis Prevention Institute, which approaches difficult behaviour from a trauma-informed lens. Reframing Behaviour is a research-based program that helps all educators build a more positive, supportive learning environment and prevent disruptive behaviour. This program has replaced the MANDT program that was previously used to support self-regulation and de-escalation of student behaviour.

Educational assistants have been increased over the last two years, with two additional training days in August before the start of the school year. Every school has a School-Based Team (SBT) that meets regularly to discuss and problem-solve student needs. Compassionate Systems Leadership training has been provided to principals, vice principals, district management, Social Emotional Learning Teachers, youth care workers, counsellors and all clerical staff. Trauma-Informed Schools professional development has been provided to school administration, district management, and both unions (CFTA and CUPE).

Book studies have been hosted across the District around trauma-informed practices and social-emotional learning. Some of the books studied include:

-  "Connections Over Compliance: Rewiring Our Perceptions of Discipline" by Lori L. Desautels
-  "The Re-Set Process: Trauma-Informed Behavior Strategies" by Dyane Lewis Carrere and Wynne Kinder
-  "15-Minute Focus: Regulation and Co-Regulation: Accessible Neuroscience and Connection Strategies that Bring Calm into the Classroom" by Ginger Healy
-  "Girls on the Brink: Helping Our Daughters Thrive in an Era of Increased Anxiety, Depression, and Social Media" by Donna Jackson Nakazawa

Principals and vice principals also did a book study on "Street Data: A Next Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation" by Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan.

In September 2024, the District has increased the time of school psychologists from 1.9 to 2.0 FTE. This increase in time will prioritize testing of students to support their learning plans, with special consideration given to priority populations.

The Social Emotional Learning Teacher has been supporting schools in implementing The Reset Process (Carrere, D. L., & Kinder, W., 2020), a neuroscience-based approach to improving behavioural success in children kindergarten to grade eight. The Re-Set Process provides extensive school-friendly strategies that have proven to de-escalate and re-regulate students while maintaining an environment that maximizes learning.

We know that regulation occurs in community with others and that co-regulation is a biological imperative. Through the Re-Set Process, a dysregulated person progresses from a state where emotions and survival instincts are ruling the brain to a state of restored balance - a balance of healthy emotional and cognitive functioning. The process meets the student where they are and then moves the student, step by step with a regulated adult, toward their own regulated state. From the more regulated state, the student is poised to engage in a learning task, talk through a difficulty, understand someone else's perspective, and much more.

The District data shows that this is supporting our priority populations at the school level with fewer office referrals and more students being able to regulate and return to class. The success of this process is reaching community members supporting Indigenous learners, and we received a \$4,000 grant for the 2024/25 school year through the British Columbia Chapter - Association for Learning Environments to expand The Re-Set Process.