

LEARNING TOGETHER

NO.4

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A picture says a thousand words...

LEARNING TOGETHER IN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5 (SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)



We have had an exciting start to the 2024 calendar year with extreme cold weather, Cranbrook boundaries and catchments adjustments, and the 2024-2025 calendar consultation and discussions. With the second semester starting, secondary schools are gearing up to ensure that staffing is in place for semester two.

I would like to take a moment to thank the Operations Department for the quick response and incredible support throughout the cold snap in January. Specifically, the Operations Department was able to isolate the flooding and bring in a response team in to assess the damage at

Fernie Secondary. I would also like to acknowledge the Kootenay Learning Campus for helping to support displaced staff, Fernie Secondary staff for pivoting and managing as the disruption continues, and for the IT Department for quickly redistributing and setting up computers at Fernie Secondary. The old saying rings true this month around “taking a village,” and we are so fortunate that staff were willing to relocate to create space for itinerants when a number of classrooms and offices were impacted.

The District hosted three community engagement nights to discuss the proposed adjustments to boundaries and catchments in Cranbrook. After listening to feedback from the community, the revisions will allow cohorts of students from various schools to move through the system together and maintain equity in educational options available to students. The process began back in the summer of 2023 and was a proactive approach to address the current and long-term enrolment pressures within Cranbrook.

The 2024-2025 calendar is now closed for public consultation. The calendar will go to the Board of Education for final approval in February. Once approved, the finalized calendar will be posted and sent out to families and staff.

January is recruitment month! The District presented to the current East Kootenay Teacher Education Program and the West Kootenay Teacher Education Program fourth year candidates. This was an excellent opportunity to highlight the benefits of working for the District. We provided support and answered questions about how to apply for open positions and also provided contact information. The Human Resource Department has attended three major job fairs to recruit both teaching and support staff. The District also relies on the communities to spread the word about employment opportunities. If you know of someone who is interested in working for the District, please reach out to: hr@sd5.bc.ca.

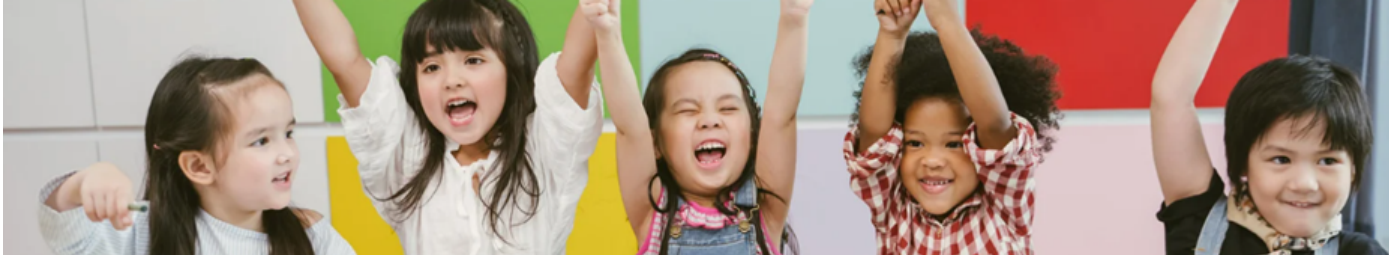
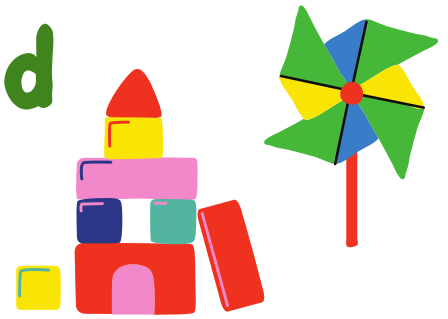
One of the major goals of the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning is targeting literacy in the primary grades. We are approaching a new cycle of assessment. Primary teachers will be engaging in assessment of learning so that we can identify struggling readers early and provide targeted supports. Thank you to District Literacy Teacher, Erin Jones, for supporting the teachers in this important work.

Viveka Johnson, Superintendent



Early Learning and Child Care

District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care,
Laura-Lee Phillips



The Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ) is completed by parents or caregivers at the start of their child's kindergarten school year. It is an innovative way to gather and report on children's experiences in their early environments prior to starting school. The CHEQ focuses on experiences in specific areas of development that are strongly linked to your child's health and well-being, education, and social outcomes.

Information collected using the CHEQ is both comprehensive and actionable and can be used to ensure that children have the opportunities and experiences they need to learn and grow. The data collected is used to help teachers, school personnel and community partners provide and improve targeted supports for children and their families. [Parent/Caregiver Info - Human Early Learning Partnership \(ubc.ca\)](https://parent/caregiver-info-human-early-learning-partnership-ubc.ca).

Twenty-one school districts in British Columbia participated in the CHEQ. The average participation rate for British Columbia school districts was 53%. We had an 88% completion rate in the District!

Some of our local data is provided below:

- 93% of our kindergarten students overall health in the last 12 months is very good - excellent.
- 40% of kindergarten students or the family used or received programs or supports.
- 86% of our kindergarten students ate breakfast every day in the last six months
- 82% of our kindergarten students sleep 10 hours or more at night.
- 70% of kindergarten students, in the last six months, played outdoors 6 to 7 days a week.
- 65% of our kindergarten students used an electronic device for more than one hour per day in the last six months.

To see more of our district CHEQ results please visit: [Childhood Experiences Questionnaire - CHEQ - Southeast Kootenay \(sd5.bc.ca\)](https://childhood-experiences-questionnaire-cheq-southeast-kootenay-sd5.bc.ca). For SD5 Early Years information, please visit: [Early Years Learning Resources - Southeast Kootenay \(sd5.bc.ca\)](https://early-years-learning-resources-southeast-kootenay-sd5.bc.ca).

For more information and examples of CHEQ and other Child Development Monitoring System data in action visit: www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/impact/data-in-action.

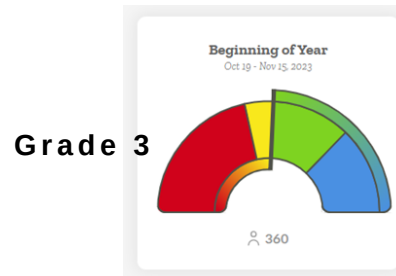
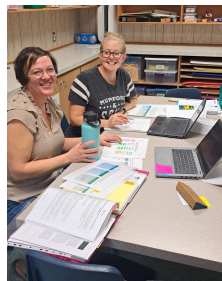
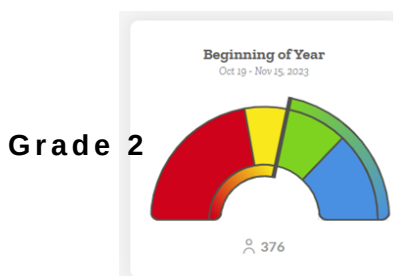


News from District Teachers

District Literacy Teacher, Erin Jones

This fall has been a busy one for literacy. As a district, we are shifting our assessment practices to identify needs more accurately for our emerging readers. This October all grade two and three teachers were trained in the administration, scoring and interpretation of Acadience Reading K-6, a universal screener. This universal screener differs from other assessments in that it is a brief, standard, reliable assessment of early essential reading skills. It is an efficient and economical way to assess early literacy skills three times a year to answer the question: who needs support?

The screener was administered to all grade two and three students in the fall (736 students total). We are in the midst of the middle of year screening period to assess if changes in instruction, added intervention and targeted supports have been effective and, to determine which students still need support. Based on our fall screening data we found that 43% of our grade two students are at, or above the benchmark (green & blue) and 49% of our grade three students are at or above the benchmark (green & blue).



After the initial training session, teachers had the opportunity to book the district literacy support teacher for a data meeting. These meetings allow teachers to really dig into what their reading data was telling them, identify needs within their class and plan next steps. Teachers from Kootenay Orchards, TM Roberts, and Amy Woodland have had data meetings with more meetings scheduled for Gordon Terrace, Rocky Mountain and Frank J Mitchell. The feedback from these sessions has been extremely positive.

Here is what some teachers had to say: “All of the teachers said you provided them with valuable information moving forward”; “Thank you so so much for coming and helping me understand how to help my students. I left feeling inspired that I can really target where they are at so that our time together is really valuable.”; “I finally feel like I know how to help my students”.

Once students are screened and identified as needing support some teachers then used a diagnostic skills assessment to dig even deeper and identify gaps in specific skills areas. Over 100 teachers have been trained and have made changes to their whole class, Tier One reading instruction, adding the use of UFLI: An Explicit and Systematic Phonics program to change reading results for their learners. Many grade two and three teachers are taking the next steps and using the assessment data from Acadience to target skill gaps for struggling students and using UFLI to close those gaps and increase overall reading proficiency. As we receive the middle-of-year screening results we are seeing the effectiveness of these changes. One class had over 57% of the students make above typical progress. That’s reason to celebrate! The district has also organized a renowned reading researcher to present a professional development session to address fluency needs in our classrooms. Dr. Chase Young will be in Fernie for the February 2 Professional Development Day.

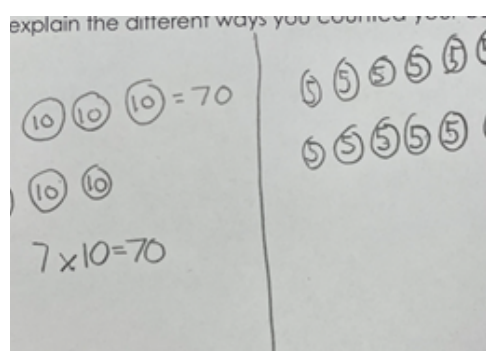
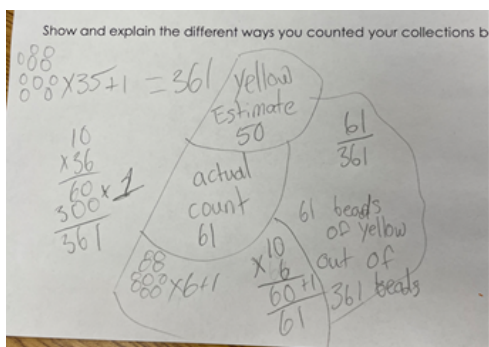
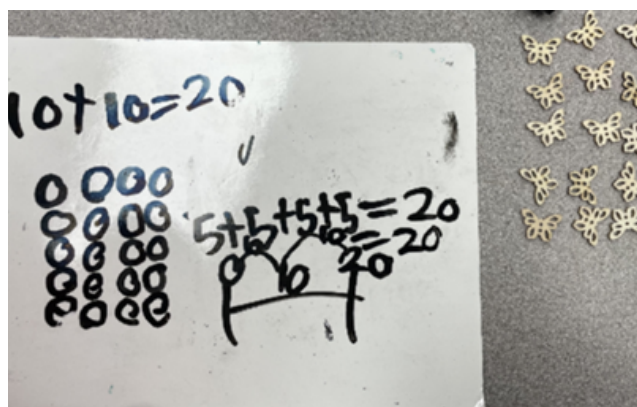


News from District Teachers

District Numeracy Teacher, Kathy Conlin











Counting Collections K-7

Counting collections is an inclusive instructional routine that builds number sense and fluency through a real-life context. The routine also invites students to reason, represent thinking flexibly, justify processes, and make connections between operations. An instructional routine is designed to be done repeatedly with a consistent method so students can focus on thinking. Kathy Conlin and Maxine Malmberg partnered to create multiple kits for K-7 teachers to borrow from the DRC. Each kit contains counting collections, organizational tools, a scripted lesson plan, and student recording templates. For further information, watch the implementation video available under the instructional routines tab on the numeracy homepage or attend Kathy's RSA Day session on instructional routines.



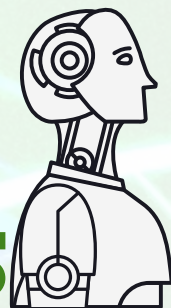
Updated Numeracy Portal Page

The numeracy portal page has been recently updated! Check out the renewed collection of tasks, resources, assessments, and draft scope and sequence documents. The page will be continuously updated, so check back often for new ideas and information! If your school is interested in workshops on any of the resources on the portal, please reach out to kathy.conlin@sd5.bc.ca

 Tasks	 Routines	 Basic Facts	 Assessment	 Resources	 Games	 Culturally	 Scope and Sequence
 Book Club	 Websites						



DISTRICT DESIGN LABS



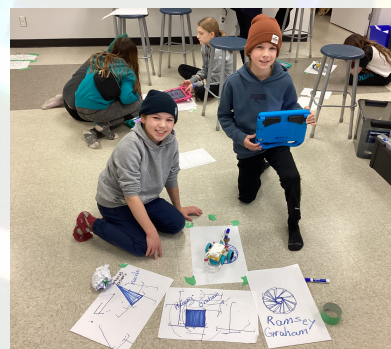
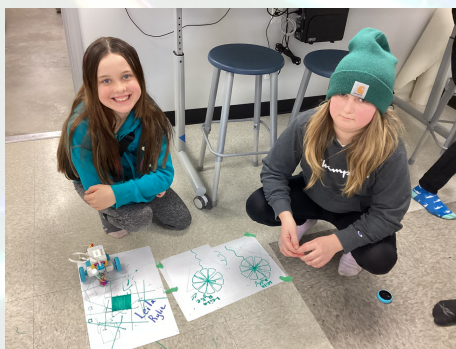
Teachers of Transformative Learning **Ryan McKenzie and Kim Froehler**

Do You Know How to Code a Square?

Madame Catherine's class from TM Roberts recently explored geometry through robotics and coding while visiting the Design Lab. Students crafted simple robots that facilitated complex thinking through coding and design. The challenge was to construct a functional pen holder and program the robots to draw an array of geometric shapes, each requiring precision in angles and distances. Harnessing core competencies, these grade 6 innovators tackled complex problems collaboratively, fostering a dynamic learning environment that blended technology, creativity, and critical thinking in a quick morning Design Lab visit.

Cold Quest, Hot Discoveries: Mount Baker Gym's Geocaching Adventure

Students from multiple Mount Baker Gym classes embraced the winter chill for two days of Geocaching exploration. On the first day, students navigated locations near the school, hunting down multiple geocaches with the help of hints, coordinates and GPS devices. Undeterred by the cold, they embarked on a second-day quest that took them on a historical journey through downtown Cranbrook. The multi-part treasure hunt had them gathering hints at local historical sites, culminating in a code that unveiled a hidden book within the public library. This immersive Geocaching experience encouraged problem-solving and teamwork while getting outside.



Level Up

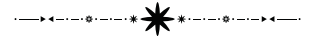
Students from Gordon Terrace Elementary used the Pixicade platform to craft their very own arcade games. Armed with paper, markers and imagination, students designed their games, and the Pixicade app magically transformed their visions into fully playable digital experiences. However, there was an intriguing twist – a secret mission awaited them. Mirroring the excitement of a traditional arcade were tickets and a prize chest. Unlike conventional gaming, the key to unlocking the prize chest wasn't in playing, but in providing insightful feedback on each other's games. Every meaningful comment earned them tickets, serving as the currency to open the coveted prize chest. The activity fostered digital literacy and a collaborative and constructive and accountable environment.





AROUND THE DISTRICT

Meet the Finance and Payroll Departments



Vintee Kaushal - Manager Finance

Vintee was born and raised in India. She moved to Canada in 1991 to join her husband in Sparwood, BC. In 1994 she moved to Cranbrook with her family and has called this town their home since then. Vintee completed her CGA designation in 2006 while working at BDO Canada LLP as an audit manager. In 2019 she joined the School District as an accountant and in 2023 accepted the position for Manager of Finance. Apart from working at the District, she enjoys cooking, travelling, reading and go for leisure walks in the forest on the weekends.



Meghan Gaudet - Accounting/Payroll Clerk

Meghan was born and raised in Cranbrook. She joined the district in 2022 as a school secretary and transitioned to the Board Office in March 2023. Meghan went to school for office administration, specialty bookkeeping, and has just finished her first accounting course at the College of the Rockies. In her free time, you can find her outdoors with her fiancé. Whether its walks with their dog, fishing, dirt biking, snowboarding, or exploring the mountains, they enjoy all that the Southeast Kootenay region has to offer.



Melissa De Bruyne - Accounting/Payroll Clerk

Melissa was raised in Ontario but now calls Kimberley home. She developed a love of the mountains at an early age from family ski trips to Banff and decided to move out west after high school. She moved to Alberta and coached downhill skiing for several years before completing her Sports & Recreation Diploma at Mount Royal College. She went on to complete her Bachelor of Commerce at Athabasca University. She has been in this role at the District since 2015. In her spare time, she loves doing activities outside with her husband and two children.



Patti Pocha - Manager Payroll

Patti was born and raised in Cranbrook. She has worked for the District since September 2013, starting as an Accounting/Payroll Clerk. She enjoys numbers, technology, and learning new things so has found her years with the District very interesting. Her hobbies include spending time outdoors kayaking, ATVing, and camping; and time indoors watching rock concerts, movies, doing puzzles or crafts, and playing board/card games. Patti also loves spending time with family, friends, and her 3 cats.



Jennifer Vickery - Payroll & Benefits Coordinator (Teacher, TTOC, Exempt)

Jennifer joined the District in 2022 as a CUPE Payroll & Benefits Coordinator and in September of 2022 moved to the Teacher/Exempt Payroll position. Her education consists of Business Administration and Payroll Compliance Professional certificates. In her free time Jen enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter. She loves to explore the outdoors with her family and their dog.





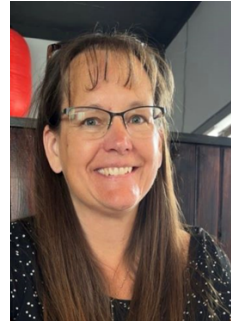
AROUND THE DISTRICT

Meet the Finance and Payroll Departments



Lauralea Tracey - Payroll & Benefits Coordinator

Lauralea was born and raised in the Elk Valley, currently enjoying the country life in Jaffray with her family. She loves spending time with her family, riding horses, taking her daughter to Alberta High School Rodeos and summers on the lake. Lauralea helped her parents and brother run the family business for 28 years. You could find her in the office doing the bookkeeping or in the pit running heavy equipment. When her parents decided to retire, the business was sold, and Lauralea continued her bookkeeping in Cranbrook for a local business. She joined the District, Payroll and Benefits Department in October 2022.



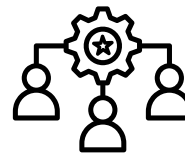
Wayne Rentz - Payroll & Benefits Coordinator

Wayne is originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba. He and his family moved to Cranbrook in 2023. This is when he joined the District office as a payroll & benefits coordinator. Wayne likes history, games and sports. He is an avid Pittsburgh Penguins fan.



Other News from Around the District

Career Fair - Teacher Recruitment



The Human Resources Department (the Department) is excited to have attended two teacher recruitment career fairs in January. The first took place at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, and the second at the University of Alberta (U of A) in Edmonton. Attending these career fairs came with a multitude of benefits.



The UBC career fair, provided the opportunity to meet with graduates from a wide range of specialties. The Department was actively seeking candidates for Band, Shop and French Immersion and was successful in connecting with 67 teachers in total, of which 2 were shop teachers 1 band teacher and 2 French Immersion teachers.

The U of A career fair in Edmonton was also equally rewarding. This event was designed to bridge the gap between students and employers, providing a unique networking experience. In total, the Department connected with 76 teachers of which 3 were shop teachers, 2 were band teachers and 12 were French Immersion teachers.

The Department put its best foot forward in highlighting some benefits of the District including the unique calendar, the focus and commitment to reconciliation, the high caliber of teaching and support and the superior class size and composition language in comparison to Alberta.

Please look out for job postings for hard to fill positions for next school year coming out very soon!



A picture says a thousand words...

