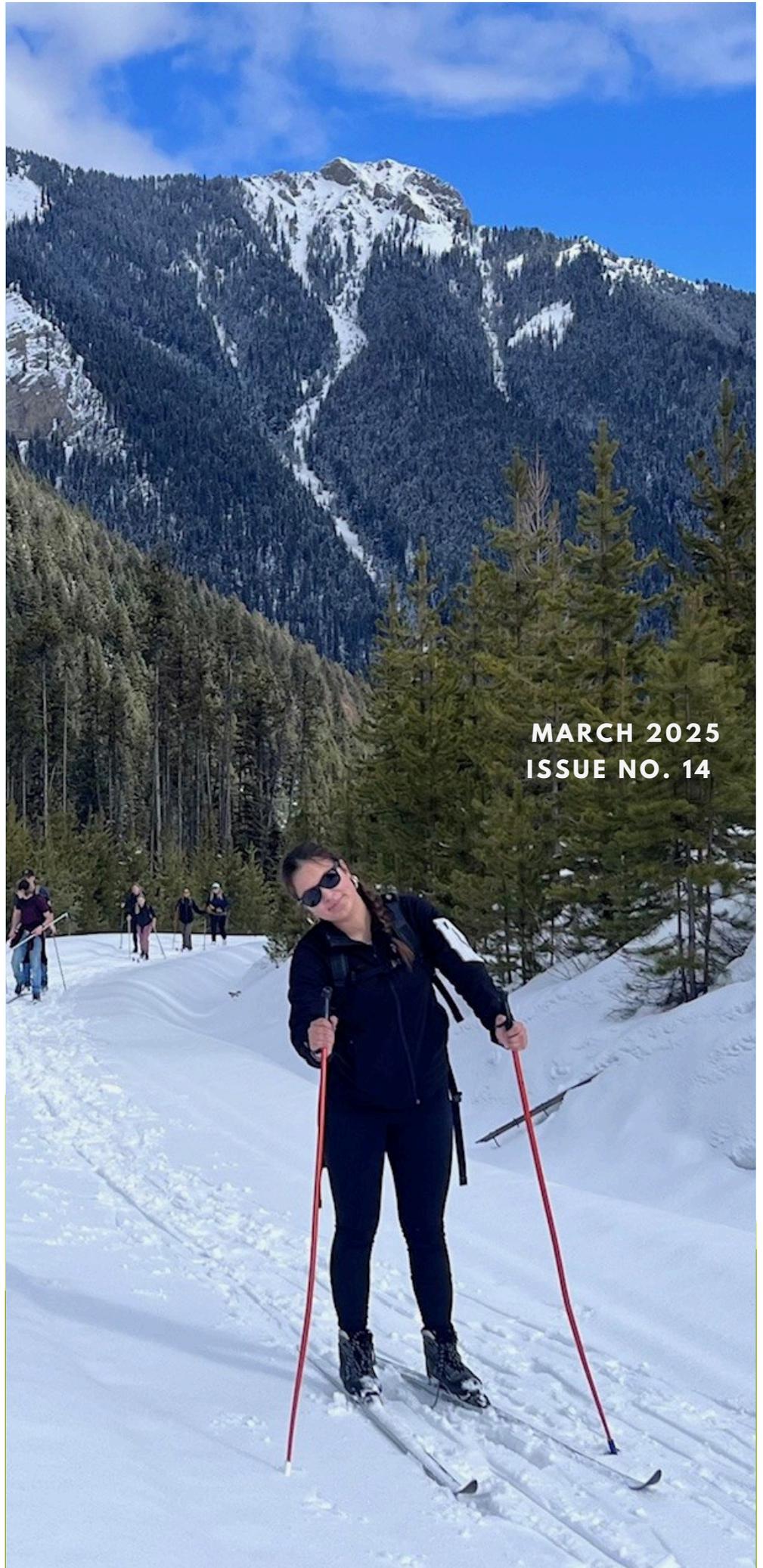


LEARNING TOGETHER

NO. 14



MARCH 2025
ISSUE NO. 14



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Community Engagement Nights

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



As we transition into spring, we have several updates, celebrations, and resources to share. We also want to remind families that kindergarten and general registration for the 2025–2026 school year is now open. We encourage you to explore the many benefits of British Columbia's public education system which is known for its innovative programs, dedicated educators, and inclusive approach. Our schools work tirelessly to ensure that every student feels supported and inspired, laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success.

On March 8, we honoured International Women's Day, recognizing the incredible contributions of women and celebrating the trailblazers in our school communities and beyond.

International Women's Day also served as an opportunity to encourage students to become allies in the ongoing pursuit of gender equity. Teachers and staff led discussions and activities highlighting influential women leaders, scientists, artists, and humanitarians—fostering a sense of empowerment and respect in schools across the District.



Our music programs have been in full swing with various spring concerts taking place in our communities. Students have showcased their talents through choir performances, instrumental ensembles, and creative collaborations. We are incredibly proud of their hard work, dedication, and artistry, and we look forward to seeing continued growth in their musical journeys.

Basketball season has come to a close, with our junior and senior teams participating in provincial competitions. We applaud the determination and sportsmanship demonstrated by our student athletes on and off the court. Additionally, an exciting elementary school tournament was held, culminating in events at ʔaḡamnik' Elementary School and Mount Baker Secondary School. Thank you to the coaches, families, and community supporters for making this season a success.

As many students and staff are enjoying spring break, we want to emphasize the importance of wellness and connection. If you know students who may need extra support, please remind them of the following resources:

- [Help Starts Here](#) – A hub for crisis response, victim supports, and mental health resources available 24/7.
- [Foundry](#) – In-person and virtual supports for young people aged 12–24, offering a wide range of health and wellness services.
- [KUU-US Crisis Line Society](#) – An Indigenous-specific crisis line available 24/7.
- [erase Website](#) – Information related to mental health and substance use, school and online safety, and diversity and inclusion.
- [erase Report It Tool](#) – A confidential service for students to report concerns regarding bullying, violence, or harassment.
- [Integrated Child and Youth Teams](#) – Providing coordinated mental health and substance use services to children, youth, and families.

We encourage students, parents, and guardians to stay connected; to reach out for assistance when needed, and to utilize these supports to help maintain well-being during the break. If you require support during spring break, please email: cbo.mailing@sd5.bc.ca



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

(continued from page three)

This month, we are highlighting our strategic priority of Fostering Safe and Inclusive Learning Environments. Our goal is to ensure that every student feels valued, respected, and supported both emotionally and academically.

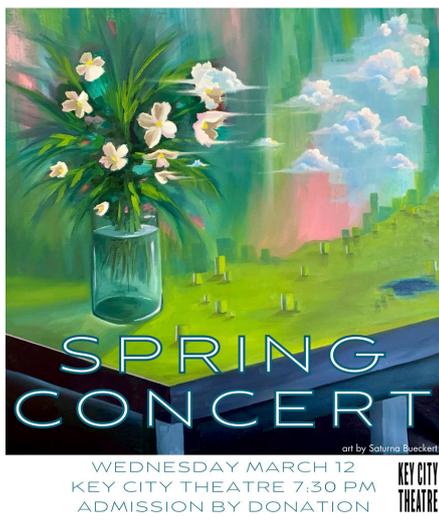
By engaging families, community partners, and our dedicated staff, we aim to create spaces where all learners thrive. From early childhood programs like StrongStart and Strengthening Early Years To Kindergarten Transitions (SEY2KT), and with multiple pathways to graduation, a sense of belonging is foundational to student success.

On behalf of the entire District, thank you for your ongoing support. We hope you are enjoying a restful and rejuvenating spring break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for the final stretch of the school year—lovingly referred to as April-May-June!

Remember to spread the word that registration for the 2025–2026 school year is now open, and we look forward to supporting your children’s educational journeys.

Viveka Johnson,
Superintendent

MOUNT BAKER MUSIC



The Mount Baker Senior Concert Band and the Selkirk Secondary Senior Band attended a workshop with the University of Lethbridge Wind Ensemble. It was an inspiring opportunity for the musicians to collaborate with each other and to share the importance of music education and appreciation at so many levels.

erase | **EXPECT RESPECT & A SAFE EDUCATION**



Early Learning and Child Care

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



The Child, Youth and Family Studies Dual Credit semester sponsored program is being offered to high school students in the District who would like to get a jump-start on a career in the health and human services field.



What do you need to do?

- Talk to your school counsellor
- Application packages **MUST** be submitted to your school, and students must be enrolled into dual credit programming before **September 30, 2025** for funding purposes.

Next program intake: February 2026

Successful participants of the program will be eligible to apply to work as ECE (Early Childhood Education) Assistants. With flexible online delivery, once working, students may build onto the 13 credits in the Child, Youth, and Family Studies (CYFS) academic stream to pursue full certification in Early Childhood Education, Education Assistant or Human Services Work.

Pre-requisites: 65% minimum in English 12



What you will gain:

- 16 high school credits toward graduation
- An educational qualification for work in an entry level position as an Early Childhood Education Assistant (ECEA)
- 13 post-secondary credits, Early Childhood Education (ECE), with 7 of these post-secondary credits being applicable in any one of the CYFS certificate programs

Submit an application package to your high school counsellor before September 30. If approved, your application will then be given to the Regional Transition Coordinator for submission to College of the Rockies. Soon afterwards, the College will contact you via email regarding your admission status.



GET A HEAD START WITH DUAL CREDIT

Dual Credit is an opportunity for high school students to begin post-secondary programs and courses while they are still in high school.

Why should I take dual credit?

- ✓ Save Money: Your tuition may be covered by your school district!
- ✓ Earn credits for high school and post secondary at once.
- ✓ Start college with a lighter load.
- ✓ Transfer credits to other post-secondary institutions.

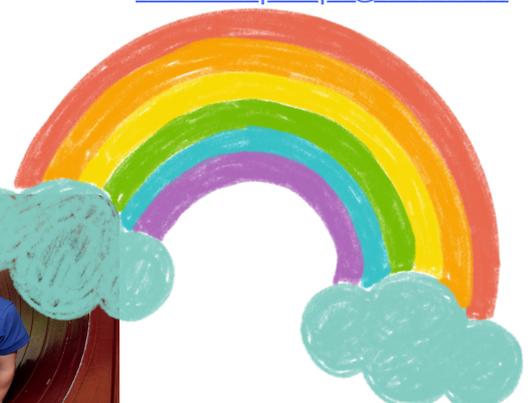


College of the Rockies

Need guidance? Speak with your school counsellor
Application package **MUST** be submitted to your school, and students must be enrolled into dual credit programming before September 30th for 1701 funding purposes.



For more information, please contact:
Laura-Lee Phillips (she/her)
District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care
laura-lee.phillips@sd5.bc.ca



News from District Teachers



District French Immersion Teacher, Marzia Bottoni

Here is what has been happening in the wonderful world of French learning in January and February!

In Core French we have been supporting our teachers with limited French-speaking abilities by providing resources that they can use alongside their students to learn French with them. As well, thanks to the French Federal Funding and the amazing Grade 5/6 French teachers, Bonhomme made a special visit during the Carnaval festival at Kootenay Orchards Elementary.

Teacher retention and community building are key goals. To support these, we hosted the first after hours Franco-fun night, open to any French speaking staff in the District. We held a virtual paint night, connecting with districts across the province from Surrey to Castlegar.

January and February were busy months as the District French Teacher, Marzia Bottoni, presented in Fernie and Cranbrook at various schools to inform parents and students about opportunities in early and middle French Immersion.

On February 28, there was a workshop on Artificial Intelligence in the Language Classroom, presented (in French) by Michele Gagnon. This event welcomed all French speaking staff including Core French and French Immersion teachers, teaching assistants, education assistants and administrators. It was an incredible day filled with valuable learning and new connections with colleagues from Sparwood to Kimberley.



News from the School Food Coordinator

School Food Coordinator, Vince Girimonte

Feeding Futures Website Launch

An updated [Feeding Futures website](#) has been launched to help schools, districts and families find important information about Feeding Futures funding and how schools and districts are creating and expanding school food programs in BC.

The website includes information on:

- What Feeding Futures funding is and how it works in BC
- Why school food programs matter
- Creating and expanding a school food program
- BC food and local food literacy
- Nutrition and the BC School Food Toolkit
- Additional grants and funding opportunities



News from Learning Services

District Principal Kaley Wasylowich



Fayth was new to Elkford Secondary last fall. She loves participating in outdoor activities and joining her PE classmates whenever possible. When she outgrew her last outdoor activity chair and required a new one, the Occupational Therapist fitted her for the Axiom 3 Push Chair.

The Elkford Lion's Club donated \$2,500 toward the new chair and the school fundraised the remaining \$1,500. It arrived on January 16, 2025, and Fayth loves it!



Pablo from Parkland Middle School working on Life Skills activities with his friend James and getting messy making cloud foam.



News from Learning Services

District Principal Kaley Wasylowich

Outreach
Provincial Resource Program

DEAF Education Terminology



Terminology changes over the years and sometimes outdated terminology can become offensive. One of my favourite quotes by Maya Angelou states “when you know better, do better”. So, here is a list of terminology to make sure we are doing the best we can. To continue to stay up to date and know better so that you can do better, we encourage you to continue to speak with members of the d/Deaf, d/Deafblind and Hard of Hearing communities, do research online and other places to stay up to date with the most current and appropriate terminology to ensure we are creating safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces.

Deaf (Capital D)

A term used to encompass deaf individuals regardless of their hearing threshold who participate in Deaf culture, society and mode of communication. Sign languages are often the preferred language.

Hard of Hearing

This term is used by individuals who most commonly use listening and spoken language as their primary languages to communicate with. It is used by individuals with various hearing thresholds.

deaf

This term can refer to individuals who have little or no functional hearing, however it can also be used by anyone who has reduced hearing. This is often a medical term but may also be used by individuals who do not identify with the Deaf community.

deafened/late-deafened

Individuals who acquired a hearing difference after birth. These individuals may not identify with either the Deaf or Hard of Hearing Communities.

d/Deafblind

d/Deafblind individuals experience a combination of reduced vision and functional hearing. These individuals will have varying degrees of hearing and vision which affects communication, learning, social interactions, mobility and access to information. This disability is considered an information-gathering disability. These students need support beyond what is provided solely to d/Deaf or Hard of Hearing or having individuals or those with a visual impairment. Students may work with Interveners who are EAs with specialized training to support the unique needs of d/Deafblind individuals.

d/Deaf-plus (unacceptable)

Previously used when referring to d/Deaf people with additional disabilities. However, preferred terms now include Deafblind, Deaf with CP., etc.

Hearing Impaired (unacceptable)

This is no longer considered an appropriate term to use when referring to d/Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals. This is a term that is used occasionally in the medical world but does not account for the unique differences between d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals and is a deficit focused term. When adequate supports are given, those with diverse hearing thresholds do not feel that their abilities are diminished.

deaf-mute (unacceptable)

This term is not appropriate. Regardless of if a d/Deaf person chooses to speak or sign, this does not make them “mute”. This term prioritizes verbal modes of communication and makes it seem as though d/Deaf individuals who do not speak cannot communicate. However, rich language also comes in the form of visual and tactile, not just auditory.

deaf and dumb (unacceptable)

This term is not appropriate. It originates from the medieval times and the idea that since some deaf individuals did not speak, they were incapable of cognitive functions. This is absolutely not the case and this terminology should never be used.

Sign Language

The official languages of Deaf communities. These are rich and full languages with unique grammar and syntax that span across the globe. There are over 300 different sign languages across the globe. The most common sign language in North America is American Sign Language.

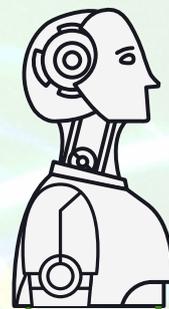
Listening and Spoken Language

Listening and spoken language is often used by deaf individuals and those who consider themselves hard of hearing. Individuals do not have to choose between a sign language or listening and spoken language. There is no disadvantage of learning multiple languages, however there are many benefits!

Teacher of the d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing: This term is more inclusive than the term Hearing Resource Teacher (HRT). The title ‘Teacher of the d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing’ recognizes that there are multiple modalities of communication and that hearing is not the only or main focus for our students. Teacher of the d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing is the term recommended by the Canadian Association of Educators of the d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CAEDHH).



DISTRICT DESIGN LABS



Teachers of Transformative Learning Ryan McKenzie and Kim Froehler

Typing Skills Enhanced: Typing Pal and Tap Touche Programs

We are thrilled to announce that the Typing Pal and Tap Touche programs are now available to all grades four to nine classes in the District. With over 750 students already participating, these bilingual programs offer engaging, interactive practice and fun games designed to improve typing speed and accuracy. Teachers have embraced these resources, integrating them into classrooms with the ability to support and track student progress. Developing strong typing skills is essential for students, enhancing their efficiency, confidence, and digital literacy.

Mini Band with Handmade Instruments

Students from Ms. Thomson's class at Gordon Terrace Elementary showcased their creativity by forming a mini band with handmade instruments. They employed 3-D printing technology to create whistles, maracas, and even a kazoo. Additionally, they assembled drums and string instruments using cardboard and other crafting materials. Students utilized the cardboard cutting tools to prototype different shapes and test out different sounds. To top it all off, they integrated "Makey Makeys" to create digital instruments, blending traditional crafting with innovative technology.

Science Fair at Fernie Secondary Sparks Innovation

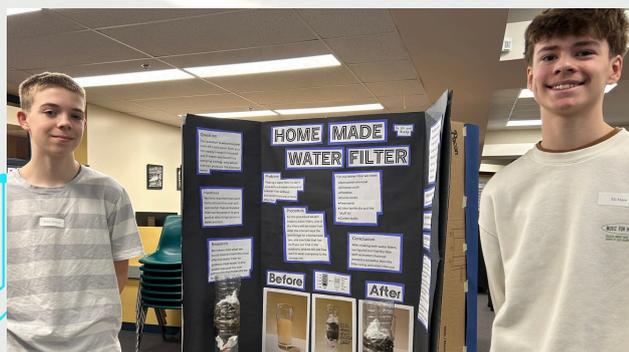
Science Fair season is in full swing, bringing incredible creativity and innovation to the forefront! At Fernie Secondary, Ms. Lloyd's Grade 8/9 Science Fair showcased a diverse range of projects tackling real-world challenges. Some projects explored the best type of charcoal for filtering water, redesigning hospitals to improve patient comfort and recovery times, while others explored the mysteries of space—delving into wormholes, black holes, and how studying the universe can lead to solving challenges here on Earth. These projects highlight the power of scientific inquiry and the next generation's drive to solve big problems.

Field Trip Season at Fernie Design Lab

This month, a variety of classes from the Elk Valley had an opportunity to dive into robotics and coding in the Design Lab. Using LEGO robotic kits, classes built and programmed simple machines, learning how sensors and motors can bring their creations to life.

Students from Ms. Medcalf's grade 3/4 class from Frank J Mitchell Elementary let their creativity shine as they designed unique bus models, including a motorized bus that moves with a motorized ferris wheel, and an accessible bus with ramps on hinges.

Students in Ms. Brower's class from École Isabella Dicken Elementary explored the science of motion through a hands-on LEGO robotics challenge, where they investigated how wheel size affects movement on a robotic car. Afterwards, each group redesigned their robots to participate in a battle bot challenge. These hands-on activities helped students connect engineering concepts to real-world applications, deepening their understanding of movement, measurement, and problem-solving.





OUTDOOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION



Mount Baker Secondary Outdoor Career Students

The Mount Baker Secondary Outdoor Career students mentored students from Kootenay Orchards Elementary on the use of compasses and orienteering. They set routes and navigated around Mount Baker Secondary.



Fernie Secondary Outdoor Education and Physical Education Classes

Fernie Secondary's Senior Outdoor Education students recently completed a remarkable cross-country ski journey in Elkford. Students covered over 12 kilometres of challenging terrain! This incredible trek through the majestic mountains of Elkford, fostered teamwork, resilience, and a deep appreciation for nature.

Students pushed their limits, celebrated their accomplishments, and forged lasting bonds. The experience highlighted the power of perseverance and the rewards of embracing the journey.





IN THE SCHOOLS



News from Schools Across the District

Gordon Terrace Elementary

Rylind McKinnon visited Ms. Ruoss' class to talk about her journey from being a student at Gordon Terrace to her career in the PWHL with the Toronto Sceptres.



École Isabella Dicken Elementary

Students in Ms. Bird's grade four class enjoyed learning through science experiments in March.



Making Pie at Pinewood Elementary

Bree and Mrs. Doll made their own pastry and baked an apple pie for the Grade 4/5 class.



East Kootenay Regional Science Fair

EAST KOOTENAY REGIONAL SCIENCE FAIR 2025

AI AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS FOR GRADES 6-12

WHEN: APRIL 11, 2025
 WHERE: COLLEGE OF THE ROCKIES IN CRANBROOK
 REGISTER HERE: EKRSF.CA

WIN CASH AND OTHER PRIZES
 WIN A TRIP TO NATIONALS!

Mount Baker Secondary Entrepreneurship 12

Congratulations to Gabe, Prince and Imman of the Entrepreneurship 12 class. The students won the FortisBC, "Tech Innovation in Action" prize at the Build-A-Business showcase. Their project was the carbon footprint tracking app called GreenPrint.

Congratulations to Ava who was also a finalist for her browser extension that tracks sustainable brands called ConsciousClick.



A picture says a thousand words...



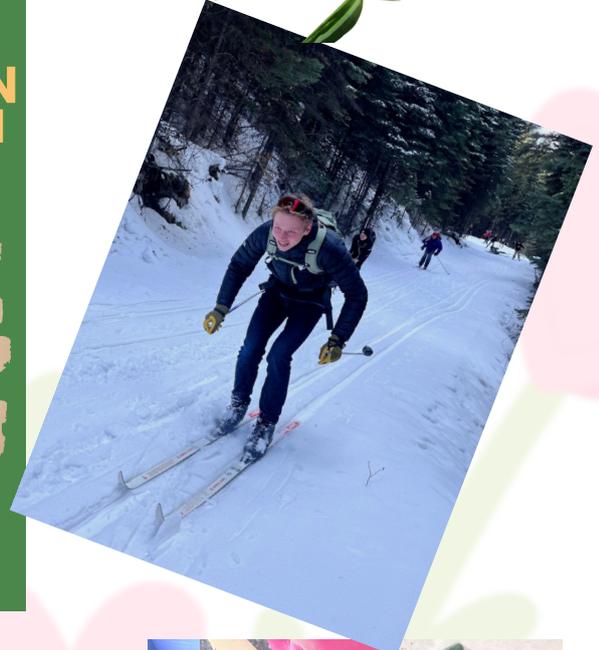
School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay)

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Grasmere School Site



When: April 22, 2025
Where: Grasmere Hall
Time: 6:30-7:30 p.m.





School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) 2025-2026 Annual School Calendar

July 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
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31						

September 2025						
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28	29	30				

October 2025						
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November 2025						
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30						

December 2025						
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28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
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February 2026						
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March 2026						
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29	30	31				

April 2026						
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26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



School Breaks



Professional Development Day



Stat Holidays



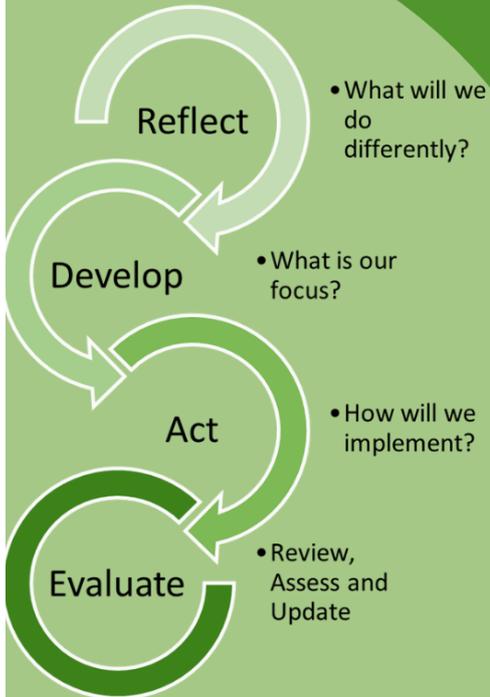
Administrative Day

Approved by Ministry of Education and Child Care
March 7, 2025



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5 (SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NIGHTS



MAY 13 - FERNIE
(Ecole Isabella Dicken Elementary)
6:00-7:00 p.m.

MAY 14 - JAFFRAY
(Jaffray School)
5:30-6:30 p.m.

MAY 28 - CRANBROOK
(Mount Baker Secondary)
6:00-7:00 p.m.

JUNE 3 - SPARWOOD
(Sparwood Secondary)
6:00-7:00 p.m.

JUNE 5 - ELKFORD
(Elkford Secondary)
6:00-7:00 p.m.

TOPICS

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning for the District and the Community

School Growth Plans

Strategic Plan

