

# LEARNING TOGETHER

NO. 16





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# LEARNING TOGETHER IN SCHOOL

## DISTRICT NO. 5 (SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY)



As we move into the final stretch of the school year, I am filled with a renewed sense of pride and appreciation for the vibrant learning community that defines School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay). This past month has been a celebration of student talent, community engagement, and educational innovation, truly a reflection of our new strategic priority: Empowering Student Voice and Choice. This priority emphasizes creating spaces where students can lead, innovate, and shape their learning in meaningful ways.



One of the most inspiring moments this month was sitting in on the District Dogwood Scholarship presentations. These student-led projects were a remarkable showcase of creativity, dedication, and real-world application. I watched as one student shared their journey of organizing a community car show and rebuilding a 1988 Audi, a feat of both skilled mechanics and community connection. Another student brought craftsmanship and care together in building a home sauna for their family. And yet another presented a thoughtfully designed website focused on volleyball injuries, merging athletics, design, and health education. These projects demonstrate the incredible capacity of learners when given the opportunity to pursue their passions.



Graduation season is just around the corner. To the soon-to-be graduates: we are proud of all you have accomplished and excited for what lies ahead. As you attend celebrations and prepare for the next chapter, please remember to be responsible and safe, your future is bright, and we want you to step into it with confidence and care.



I also had the absolute pleasure of attending Mount Baker Secondary School's production of Footloose. The energy, talent, and dedication on display were extraordinary. It reminded me that school is not just about academics, it's about making memories, finding joy, and being involved in the community around you.



This month has also seen several successful Ready, Set, Learn events across our communities. These gatherings have been a heartwarming introduction to school for young learners and a meaningful way to connect with families. Our Engagement Nights continue to provide valuable spaces for conversation and collaboration between families, educators, and the District.

In Sparwood, Project Heavy Duty returned with another unforgettable experience for grade 11 and 12 students. This hands-on event gives youth the opportunity to explore trades and operate heavy-duty equipment alongside professionals, a true testament to experiential learning and career readiness.

As we head into the final weeks of the school year, let's continue to encourage students to finish strong, stay engaged, and make the most of every opportunity.

Thank you to all our staff, students, families, and community partners for helping make this year one of growth, connection, and celebration.



Fernie Secondary students hit the streets for Trash Bash



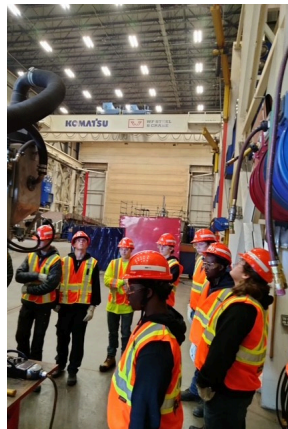


# Supporting Pathways to Graduation - Project Heavy Duty



Photos contributed by Tristan Taylor

Students in grades 11 and 12 from Sparwood Secondary, Elkford Secondary and Fernie Secondary participated in Project Heavy Duty at the beginning of May. The event took place in Sparwood this year and is scheduled for Cranbrook in 2026.





# Early Learning and Child Care

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



## May is Child Care Month

With the school year winding down and spring in full swing, it is a great time to recognize and celebrate a group of people who make a big difference in children's lives every day—our child care providers.

Child care providers play a foundational role in children's development. From early learning experiences that spark curiosity to the steady encouragement that builds confidence, child care providers are often among the first to help shape a child's journey. Whether they are in StrongStart, preschools, after-school care, home-based settings, or child care centres, their work is essential—not only to families, but to our community.

This month, we invite you to join us in recognizing and thanking the child care providers who go above and beyond. Their patience, creativity, compassion, and professionalism deserve to be celebrated—not just in May, but all year long!

To all of our amazing child care providers: thank you for your compassion, your commitment, and the incredible impact you make every day. You are truly the heart of early education and care in our community.

### Early Years Learning

[Southeast Kootenay Child Care Resource & Referral \(SKCCRR\)](#) | [Community Connections Society of Southeast BC](#)

[Child care information for families - Province of British Columbia](#)

[Our Plan: ChildCareBC - Province of British Columbia](#)

## Ready, Set, Learn... Rotary Park in Cranbrook



# News from the School Food Coordinator

School Food Coordinator, Vince Girimonte

A great recipe for greenhouse vegetables....



## BC TOMATO CUCUMBER SALSA



### INGREDIENTS

BC Tomatoes, diced	350 g
BC Cucumber, diced	350 g
Salt	2 g
White Onion, finely diced	1/2
Jalapeno Pepper, finely diced	1
Cilantro Leaves, chopped	20 g
Lime, juiced	1

### DIRECTIONS

1. Season tomatoes with salt and toss to combine.
2. Transfer to fine mesh strainer set in a bowl and allow to drain for 10 to 20 minutes. Discard liquid.
3. Combine drained tomatoes with onion, chilies, cilantro, and lime juice.
4. Toss to combine and season to taste with salt.



“Is KDS open during the summer?”

Can I write a test in the summer?

Can I work on my course over the summer?

Is there teacher support during the summer?

**YES!!!**

Stay tuned for a summer schedule coming soon!

**DID YOU KNOW  
KDS IS OPEN  
DURING THE  
SUMMER??**

Kootenay Discovery School will remain open and staff will be working consistent hours through the summer!

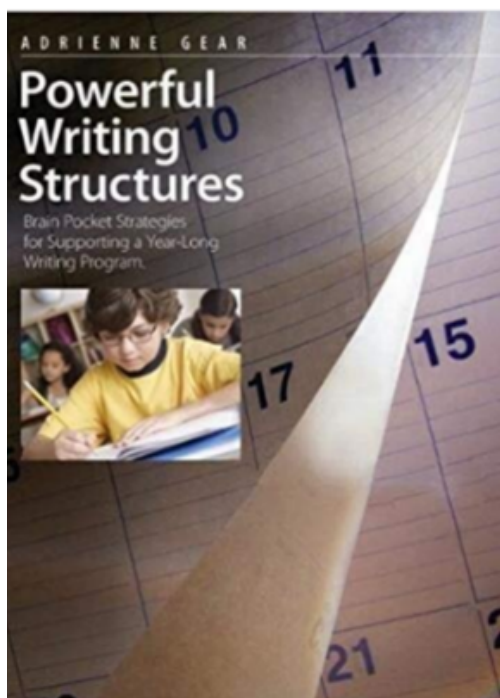
[Click here to complete your online course request.](#)





# News from District Teachers

District Literacy Teacher, Erin Jones



## Adrienne Gear: Powerful Writing

The District welcomed teacher, author and literacy expert, Adrienne Gear, to lead teachers through a day of learning about the resource Powerful Writing Structures.

Thirty-five teachers from across the district came together to learn about how to build a community of writers using specific routines, explicit teaching and modeling, intentional practice and conferencing.

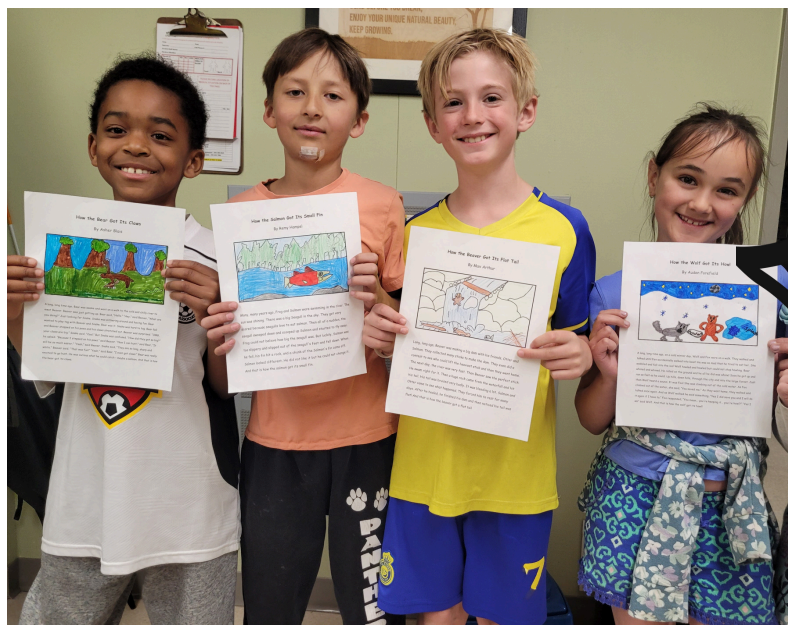
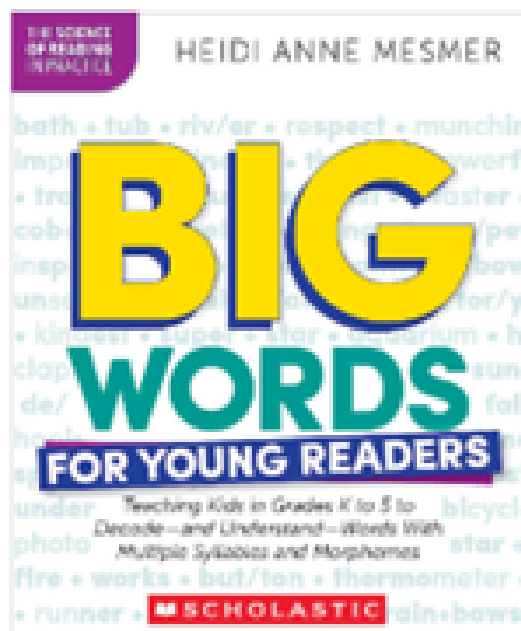
Teachers walked away feeling empowered and knowledgeable to change their writing practices in for students from kindergarten to grade six.

## Big Words for Young Readers

Over forty teachers joined the district literacy support teacher during the RSA professional development day to learn about strategies for reading big words.

Teachers left the session knowledgeable about what makes words big and how to break that down for their students through engaging activities and intentional practice.

This session was based on the book by Dr. Heidi Anne Mesmer.

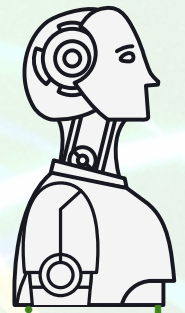


Students in Mrs. Temrick's grade 3 class at École Isabella Dicken display their Legend stories.





# DISTRICT DESIGN LABS



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

## **Tiny City, Big Ideas: Kindergarten Planners Shape the Future**

Kindergarten students transformed into city planners during their time in the Design Lab. They explored maps and city features using Google Earth and their own experiences, then looked back in time with historical images to see how Cranbrook has changed over the last 126 years. Students then built their own cities starting with a train track network and adding buildings and resources made from LEGO, cardboard, and cut outs made on the Cri-cut Machine. To finish, they used Green Screen Technology to place themselves in their cities—an exciting morning of creativity and learning!



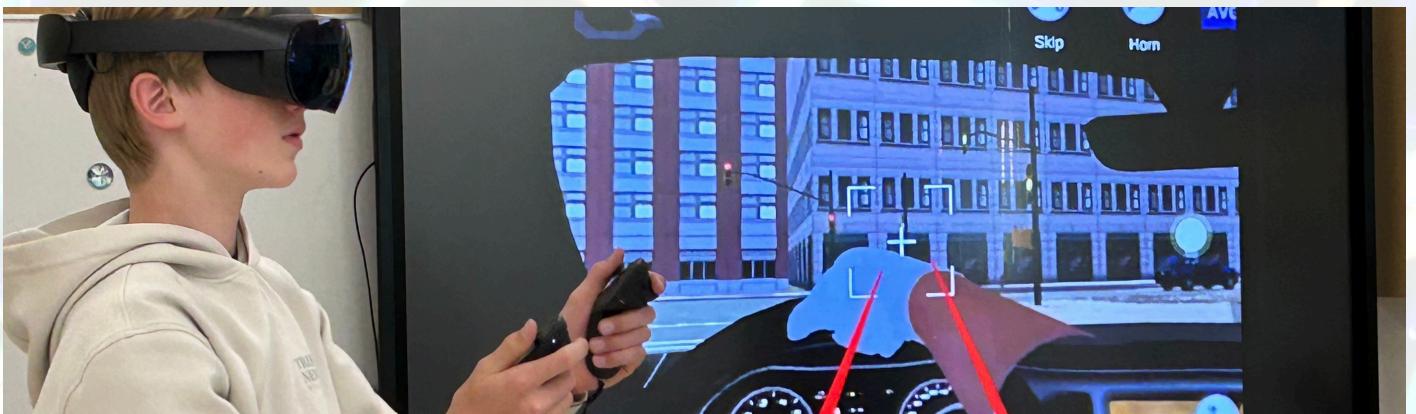
## **Wild Designs: Building Creatures That See, Feel and Move!**

Mrs. Yuille and Mr. Stewart's class visited the Design Lab to learn about animal adaptations and how animals sense their environment. Students designed legs for their animals to help them walk, then used LEGO sensors to bring their creations to life. By using colour and motion sensors, buttons, and their imaginations, each student built a unique animal that could see, feel, and react to its surroundings.



## **Hands-on-Learning in Virtual Reality**

Students in Ms. Davies' psychology class at Fernie Secondary experienced hands-on learning in a virtual reality environment using ICBC's Street Sense, which immerses learners in various driving scenarios. This program takes learners through 30 driving scenarios, teaching them to recognize and avoid hazards in a safe setting.



## **Video Compilation of Selfie Drawings**

Mrs. Nagulapally's kindergarten class at Frank J. Mitchell Elementary created this great video at the Design Lab! Turn up the volume. This is frightening but amazing.

<https://youtu.be/uhJpJKjMcx4>



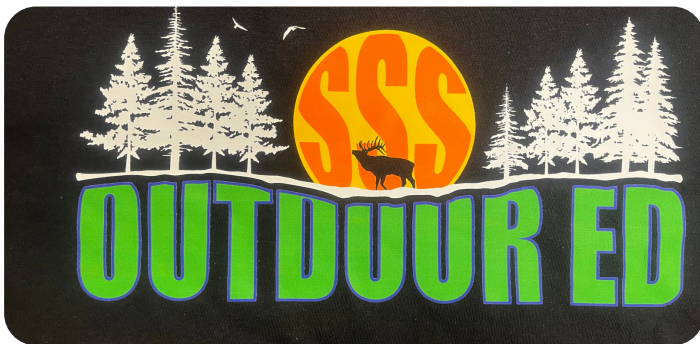


# **OUTDOOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**



## Kootenay Discovery School (KDS)

KDS middle school students in Fernie have spent the last few weeks learning and practicing camp cooking safety and technique, as well as trying out a few new recipes. Students are preparing to mentor their colleagues in the KDS elementary program during the June camping trip, which will feature the first annual "Golden Spatula" camp cooking challenge.



## Sparwood Secondary Outdoor Education and Physical Education Classes

Sparwood Secondary Outdoor Education student, Liam Felton, designed a logo for the program recently. He and other students then worked together to make t-shirts with the logo to sell as a fundraiser for their upcoming trip.

## Fernie Secondary Outdoor Education

Recently, Fernie Secondary School Outdoor Ed students had an amazing day at the ARQ Climbing Gym in Cranbrook, where they achieved their Top Rope Certifications with ARQ as well as showcased the true spirit of collaboration and learning.







# IN THE SCHOOLS



## News from Schools Across the District



### Track and Field

The second annual MBSS Invitational Track Meet was a huge success with almost 200 athletes and 13 schools represented.



**Gordon Terrace Elementary**  
Sticker design contest winners!

### Math Calculations at École Isabella Dicken Elementary

Mme Brower's class enjoyed time outside to work on math and area calculations.



### Pasta Week at Sparwood Secondary

Senior Foods students made pasta for Pasta Week!



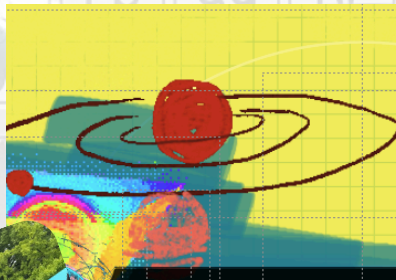
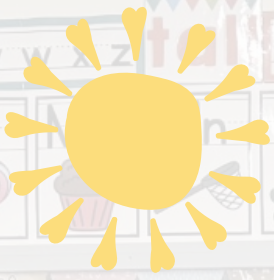
### Cutting Boards at Sparwood Secondary

These students came in at lunch to build hardwood cutting boards from birch that was milled by Sparwood Secondary.





*A picture says a thousand words...*



**June 9-12  
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.**

Reflect

- What will we do differently?

Develop

- What is our focus?

Act

- How will we implement?

Evaluate

- Review, Assess and Update

see  
you  
soon!

## TOPICS

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

School Growth Plans

Strategic Plan





*Open until*  
*May 30*

Diversity and Inclusion  
Questionnaire



*Open*  
*2017*





**CONGRATULATIONS**

**2025  
GRADS**

