

SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

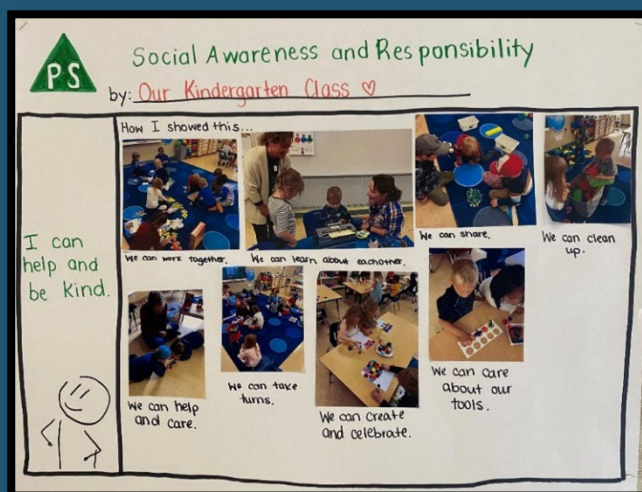
NOVEMBER 2024

This monthly update features stories of success from schools around the district, as well as highlights related to the implementation and impacts of the Board of Education's Strategic Plan in Rocky Mountain School District. Thank you for taking the time to read and celebrate the successes of our students and staff.

EILEEN MADSON PRIMARY SCHOOL: SOCIAL AWARENESS & RESPONSIBILITY

This year EMP staff have been collaborating to work on their Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion school success goal, and strategies have included:

- Weekly reference to Social Awareness and Responsibility "I Can" statements in class.
- The use of POPEY (Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years) student self-reflection tools.
- The use of student exemplars with their classes to illustrate what Social Awareness & Responsibility looks like.



The kindergarten team worked together to create ways for this goal to be more accessible for their younger students. Using a scaffolded approach, they focused on:

1. **Making the goal visible:** Posting the goal in student friendly language and discussing it regularly with their students.
2. **Noticing and naming actions:** Helping students notice and name actions that contribute to the goal.
3. **Posting pictures:** Displaying their goal poster with photos of students demonstrating the goal in action.

This scaffolded approach allowed Kindergarten students to then find personal ways to also demonstrate this important school-wide goal. The kindergarten teachers noticed that students were successful in demonstrating this goal and were all able to capture their personal experience using a POPEY self-reflection tool after the whole group scaffolded approach.

The EMP staff are committed to making progress on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion objectives through these collaborative strategies across all grade levels.





ROCKY MOUNTAIN ALTERNATE EDUCATION GOLDEN, OPEN DOORS & KIMBERLEY ALTERNATE SCHOOLS

With the school’s commitment to fostering personal growth and responsibility, students and staff are excited to share the work being done through the Circle of Courage framework which focuses on four essential areas: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The Circle of Courage promotes personal awareness and accountability, equipping students with the skills to set meaningful goals and building a sense of belonging within their community.

Rocky Mountain Alternate Education students are actively participating in activities and discussions that align with this framework. Through practices like mindfulness, self-reflection, and team-building exercises, they have been enhancing their personal responsibility and awareness. This process has not only supported individual growth but is also contributing positively to the overall strength of the school community.



Golden Alternate School students participate in monthly Circle of Courage workshops led by Indigenous Youth Worker Margo McMullan.



Kimberley Alternate School students are on the land with Mike Honeyman looking for Trilobite fossils at Fort Steele



Open Doors students and staff participate in a team building activity at Valley Ziplines with the support of Columbia Valley Youth Network.





ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOOD PROGRAMMING

District Food Coordinator Eric Larocque has visit all schools around the district this fall to learn about food programming initiatives. It was evident that a great deal of foundational work has been taking place related to food delivery, often addressing identified challenges such as geographic distances, logistics, and rising food costs.

Based on our local Southeast BC context and aligning with the provincial Feeding Futures program, an action plan has now been drafted for future food programming in RMSD. Core aspects of the plan include:

- Small, incremental steps, with a priority on centralized ordering and plug-and-play breakfast model.
- Realistic goals, with strategies that are already proving successful in some schools, like transitioning from highly processed snacks to healthier options like baby carrots.
- Sustainable changes, like the standardized breakfast model, designed to be simple and easily replicated across schools and even with new staff.



As part of their food programming initiatives, schools offer several healthy food options as students arrive in the morning, as seen here at Lady Grey Elementary School.



As students arrive at Windermere Elementary School, there are always nutritious items up for grabs as part of breakfast programming, including homemade energy bites, clementines and yogurt tubes. On a typical day, about 75 learners access a grab-and-go snack.

Moving forward, goals for the School Food Program include:

1. A **current inventory and programming overview document** that will support the school district in assessing the current state and in determining what can be achieved with existing resources,
2. A **centralized ordering system** for schools to help reduce back and forth travel to grocery stores, and
3. A **Food Programming Framework and Long-Term Vision** that will prioritize a universal breakfast program with a more formal structure, including zone leaders who are passionate and recognize the significance of providing access to food in an inclusive and non-stigmatizing manner.





STUDENT VOTE AT GOLDEN SECONDARY

On Wednesday October 18th, learners at Golden Secondary School participated in this year’s Student Vote, a precursor to the provincial election on October 19th. This educational event was organized by Mr. McPherson & Mr. Archibald’s Law 12 class, who took the lead in setting up and managing the voting stations, as well as counting the final ballots.

Students in grades 8-12 were invited to cast their votes, following comprehensive learning opportunities related to the candidates, their respective parties, and their platforms. Instruction included use of the Vote Compass website, which helped students gain a deeper understanding of the political landscape in the province.

For some grade 12 students, this learning was particularly significant as they were eligible to vote in the official BC election, and the experience aimed to encourage them to participate in the democratic process on Election Day!

Once the Student Vote ballots were counted, the results were forwarded to the provincial Student Vote organization and were released after the official BC election, allowing students to compare their choices with the actual provincial outcomes. This initiative not only educated students about the voting process but also underscored the significance of civic engagement.



Learners at Golden Secondary School recently cast their ballots as part of the provincial Student Vote program in support of civic engagement.



Cybersecurity will be a discussion topic with Rocky Mountain School District Tech Leaders in November.

CYBERSECURITY PREPAREDNESS

In support of the district’s strategic efforts to enhance digital citizenship, RMSD is taking steps to sustain a strong cybersecurity posture with regular network assessments, on-going system maintenance, and appropriate administrative measures, including the proactive education of students and staff related to potential internal and external threats to security. Cybersecurity will be a topic of discussion with Tech Leaders later this month.

Also, like many other organizations, the district recently completed a vulnerability assessment, working alongside a third-party vendor, and has been actioning recommendations to remediate identified concerns.





STUDENT AGENCY FORUM

As part of RMSD's focus on enhancing student voice, choice and leadership, secondary student leaders and school champions from around RMSD met recently in Invermere to share and learn more about student agency. Participants took an inquiry approach to the day, considering how to best gather information about students' experience at their schools, supporting their ability to plan local initiatives that improve the overall experience for classmates within their school community.

The day began with a shared communication exercise using Lego blocks to break the ice, followed by discussion about surveys, suggestion boxes, and interviews to gather student voice and perspectives. The group further discussed

Spirit Days, their involvement in school timetables, and their participation in school staff meetings to create a feedback loop. The Student Agency Forum will convene twice more this school year to share the progress of their work, network with other student leaders, and plan further iterations of their projects. Thanks to school-based champions Evelyn Morett, Corey Millner, Jaimee Pichette, Lainey Wilson, and Heather English, as well as Steve Wyer and Trent Dolgopol, for their support of the day!



Student leaders from Selkirk Secondary School participate in the recent Student Agency Forum.

TAKE ME OUTSIDE DAY AT LINDSAY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Aligning with the school's focus on regulation, well-being and relationships, students and staff at Lindsay Park Elementary School recently took part in Take Me Outside Day. Working in collaboration with learners from Selkirk Secondary, there were opportunities for students from both schools to connect in meaningful ways through literacy, the practice of regulation strategies, and active learning. Students were highly engaged and modeled flexible thinking, while Selkirk students were wonderfully attentive to the needs of the younger learners. Specifically, Lindsay Park students noted the Selkirk students were kind and chose great games that aligned with stories!

With an emphasis on skill building, Lindsay Park students identified ways to stay focused outside, like using a leaf as a fidget tool, or focusing on a sound and its echo (*from Little Beaver and the Echo*). Highlights for students also included games and fun play with leaves.



Selkirk Secondary School students read a book to Lindsay Park Elementary School learners recently on Take Me Outside Day.