

SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE



DECEMBER 2024

Again this month we celebrate the intentional actions being taken across a number of school communities throughout Rocky Mountain School District leading to positive outcomes for learners.

STUDENT LEADERS AT WINDERMERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At Windermere Elementary School, monthly school assemblies are playing an important role in creating a strong culture and sense of belonging among learners. They are a special time when the entire school gathers together to showcase and celebrate student and staff accomplishments, encouraging school spirit within the learning community.

Aligning with their School Success Plan, the Windermere staff is committed to creating opportunities for students to demonstrate leadership, citizenship and responsibility. Instead of adults planning and facilitating the events, students work in committees to plan, organize, and facilitate assemblies and other activities and events throughout the school year.



Learners from Windermere Elementary School are leading the way when it comes to planning and hosting school assemblies.



Student leaders highlight success stories at their monthly assemblies, including at times their appreciation for supportive adults at the school.

At the most recent assembly it was engaging to hear from students on such topics as school news, Ktunaxa and Secwepemc language learning, Mme. Anakin's awesome athletic accomplishments, and appreciation for Miss Aldene's breakfast program!

Ki'su'k kyukyit (thank you) to Mrs. Niddrie and her committee, Sawyer, Nora, Haley, Mateo, Kennedy, Declan D, Tillie and Lux for their hard work!





ON THE LAND LEARNING DAY – INDIGENOUS LEARNING NETWORK

In support of our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and the 94 Calls to Action, Rocky Mountain School District has recently established an Indigenous Learning Network made up of passionate Educators, Administrators, and Indigenous Education Support Workers (IESW). Specifically aligning with Calls 62 and 63, the goal for the network is to share resources, knowledge, and experiences to build capacity in relation to Indigenous Education, supporting the quality of programming district wide.

Recently as part of this learning and commitment, the Indigenous Learning Network had the opportunity to attend an 'On the Land Learning Day' on the Steven's Property on the Shuswap Reservation near Invermere. Participants learned about traditional medicines, smudging, the pit house, the sweat lodge, and berries. Some were even fortunate enough to be able to visit their traditional Sun Dance grounds and learn a bit about this sacred ceremony. Some members from the Columbia River Youth Dancers also joined the group for a very special performance of some of their dances and regalia including the hoop dance, jingle dance, grass dance, and fancy dance.

Also sharing in the learning on November 12th were several members of the Board of Education including Trustee King, Trustee Thurgood-Sagal, Trustee Smith, Trustee Oakley and Trustee Stimming.

The Indigenous Learning Network looks forward to another 'On the Land Learning Day' in April 2025 with support from Akisqnuq First Nation.



'On the Land Learning Day' took place at the Stevens' property on the Shuswap Reservation on November 12.



Several local Elders and Knowledge holders support the learning.



Columbia River Youth Dancers perform during 'On the Land Learning Day'.





STUDENT LEADERSHIP AT SELKIRK SECONDARY SCHOOL

Selkirk's Student Focus Group has been engaging in important dialogue this Fall related to the school's core purpose as well as the progress being made towards achieving the School Success Plan goals. Grounded in the concepts of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the group has divided into four key areas based on the school values of Belonging, Generosity, Independence, and Mastery. Through an inquiry lens, each group has been working on an action item for school improvement within their area, and students will engage staff in their work at the school's December staff meeting.



Student Leaders at Selkirk Secondary School engage in discussion centred around the school's mission, vision and values.

Some members of this group recently traveled to Invermere to join other secondary students on the District Student Agency Forum where they shared stories of their work at the school level.

Huge thanks to the great group of student leaders along with their supporting adults Leadership Teacher Jaimee Pichette, Youth Care Workers Corey Millner & Robyn Wardle, and Principal Dolgopol!

DISTRICT TECH LEADERS BUILD CAPACITY

With the goal to build staff capacity to support the implementation of the District Technology Plan, Rocky Mountain School District established a Tech Leaders Network in Spring 2021. School champions participating in the Network collaborate twice annually, returning to their respective schools to share information and support the skill development of their colleagues. Ultimately, their efforts lead to the promotion of digital literacy and digital citizenship skills with students district wide.



In the past, focus areas have included district & external tools, Apple iPad tools, Artificial intelligence (AI), coding, and much more. Current focus areas include AI, cybersecurity, innovative instructional practices, and learning about the impacts of technology use on mental wellness.

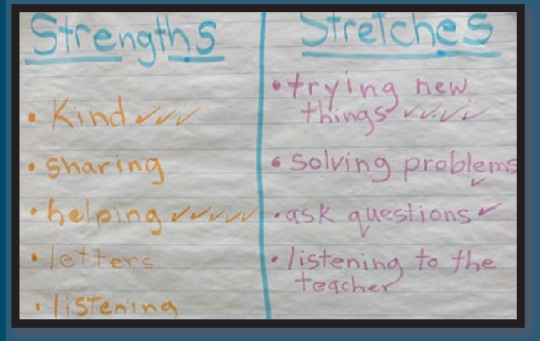




STRENGTHS, STRETCHES AND SEESAW AT ALEXANDER PARK

Classroom teachers at Alexander Park have integrated student voice into their learning opportunities, working with their learners this year to co-create 'Strengths & Stretches' charts. By seeing their strengths and stretches recognized and used for instruction, teachers believe this will help learners feel more connected to the learning they do every day.

In several classrooms, strengths and stretches are also being used to support student reflection and self-assessment of BC's Core Competencies. For some classrooms they may appear as learning conversations on Seesaw, an online platform connecting families to their children's learning. Aligning with the schools' goal of involving families in their children's learning experiences, these collaborative dialogues are expected to become more fulsome over the course of the school year.



Sample Seesaw Narrative:

Teacher: Which strength do you think you are good at?

Student: Being kind.

Teacher: How are you being kind?

Student: Helping others by helping clean up.

EARLY LITERACY SCREENING & INTERVENTION IN RMSD

Last April the BC Government committed \$30M of funding over three years to provide support for K-3 literacy screening and interventions with a specific focus on the use of evidence-based tools.

In Rocky Mountain School District, consultations with schools and district specialists took place this Fall to better understand the tools and practices being used locally to support students' literacy skill development and identify students at risk for reading difficulties.

A report was generated focused on eight facets of literacy, and it was determined that a wide variety of tools are being used throughout the district to understand the literacy skills of early learners. More discussions will take place in the coming months as the district develops an approach to early literacy screening and interventions aligning with provincial funding criteria.



Plans are underway for the use of provincial funding in support of early literacy screening and intervention.

