

### **Superintendent's Report - January 2023**

#### Happy New Year!

We are excited to be back from what we hope was a restful and happy break for everyone. The new year always brings promise and excitement and it is a time of incredible learning and opportunity for children, families and staff. We are looking forward to seeing our Strategic Plan come to life in every school and classroom as they work towards their goals on behalf of kids, families and community.

It is time to celebrate so much while still recognizing that individual families and communities continue to face unprecedented challenges. Our focus on Mental Health initiatives and the support being offered through the family affordability grant are meant to ease difficulties for whomever. We remind everyone to reach out in any way or to whoever they choose within the schools if further support or assistance is needed anytime.

In the spirit of bringing the Strategic Plan to life this month's Superintendent report is looking different. An important part of our Strategic Plan is the development and implementation of a new District Communication Plan. With this in mind the update will be expanded to include monthly information from our schools and programs. We hope this updated version does justice to the fantastic work people are doing across the district

We recognize that we learn, teach and work on the ancestral, traditional territories of the Nłe?kepmx and Syilx people and we acknowledge our Metis communities and their contributions to the Aboriginal ways of being and knowing.

Stephen McNiven
Superintendent of Schools



# John Allison Elementary





December was a month of celebration with crafts, baking, singing and community visits to Ridgewood and other schools. Ms. Caron's class went to PSS (thank you to librarian Mrs. Atkinson for organiz-

ing) to bake cookies and read with the Princeton Posse. The Kindergarten and grade one classes went to sing to the residents of Ridgewood Lodge. Kindergarten students made cookies and did reading with Grade 4 students at Vermilion Forks. Our parent community was grateful that we were able to have a Christmas concert again at PSS. January brings a renewed energy and focus on learning.

#### **Vermilion Forks Elementary**





Vermilion Forks welcomes back Myrna Coates to the band program and we are very thankful for her services to keep our music program going.

A very special thank you for the following donations from:

Valley First \$10,000 Vancouver Sun \$14,000 Community Foundation of South Okanagan \$10,000

These funds are to support our afterschool program and this year our morning program.

These funds will help pay for food, supplies and staffing costs (students often bake / cook their snacks as part of the learning process). We have expanded the afterschool club to include four 'special' Friday theme days.

#### École Élémentaire Collettville • Collettville Elementary

Collettville students have made the best of the ice-covered fields. They cleared mini rinks and played mini hockey. The games included refs and scoreboards to give a true feeling of the game.







### Diamond Vale Elementary School



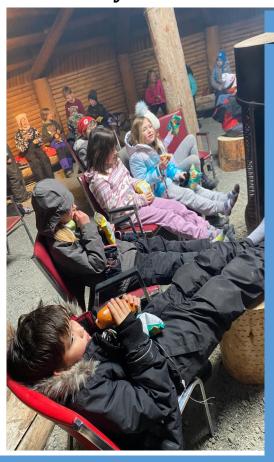


Our Grade 2 and 3 students visited Douglas Lake pit house, to participate in drumming, storytelling and to learn about the pit house itself.

We hosted a full house for our first concert in three years and we were grateful for the support of PAC in organizing a Breakfast with Santa and the Christmas Store for students.

We have been using our Enhancing Learning Time to support reading at the Grade 2 & 3 level. Four days a week students participate in small reading groups, at their reading level.

Frisbee Rob also paid us a visit and talked to the students about kindness and not giving up.





Merritt Secondary Leadership students are running a basketball camp. This happens every Wednesday from 8:30 am to 9:30 am.





board games were abundant!

PSS Rapids swim team made it to provincials In Richmond. They wound up in 2<sup>nd</sup> place for single A schools. Congratulations!

As we counted down the last week prior to Winter Break, the PSS Student Council helped bring out the Christmas spirit in the building. Dress up events included: Ugly sweater, Red and Green, Christmas Characters and Pajama day. Activities included: Door decorating contest, Pancake breakfast and Card making. Of course Christmas movies, candy canes and







Our Primary classrooms are going skating every Friday for the month of January. Our Intermediates will be heading off on a Ski Trip in February.

We have started our Science Fair prep and it looks like every Grade 4-7 school in the district will be hosting their own Science Fair this year.



Battle of the Grades, a school-wide turkey lunch, a Talent Show and Winter Formal dance all took place in the last week before the Break. Our Leadership class, under Mrs. Thompson undertook all of these fun events.



### **Indigenous Education**



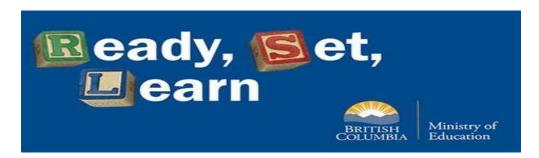
We will be having our first study session of the year. The Metis Study Session will be on January 19. This will take place the House of Honour from 3:30 to 6:00 pm. This is open to all School District Employees.



## Early Learning and Child Care



We have a keen SEY2KT (Strengthening the Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions) group working on developing some community and school-based activities for our Kindergarten students at Merritt Central. Some of the work, while focused on Central, will also spread to other schools with support from the Aboriginal Infant Development, Infant Development and Literacy Merritt community partners.



On the Princeton end, I will be meeting with Erin Williams, our Strong Start Facilitator to see how we can enhance our Ready Set Learn programming in Princeton. Erin is a huge asset who has some creative ideas on how we can move forward with making Ready Set Learn a success for our children who will be transitioning into Kindergarten.

#### **Inclusive Education**

Our parent newsletter will be going out this month. The newsletter will go out three times a year to keep families informed of what is happening locally and provincially.

New to the district will be vision screening for grades 3 to 6 students in Merritt and Princeton. This will happen in late winter or early spring.

There is lots of training that will be going on in the next while for our teachers, Education Assistants and First Nations Support Workers. An few examples are: CPI, POPFASD and CBIEP.

Also, we just supported school teams in getting POPARD in 2 schools in Princeton and Merritt which supports students, families and school teams.



#### Together we are better.

