

## Superintendent's Report - October 2025



**Orange Shirt Day at  
The Rink Hockey  
Academy and the  
staff at SCIDES.**



**ORANGE  
SHIRT  
DAY  
SEPT. 30**





# Nicola Canford



## Drying Fruit

Nicola Canford has purchased a fruit dryer and we have students creating healthy snacks for our food program. It has been a delicious few weeks.

## Tea Picking

Our intermediate students were able to enjoy a day out on the land collecting Kece Tea. K<sup>w</sup>uk<sup>w</sup>steyp to Hank and Yvonne for facilitating this event for our kids.

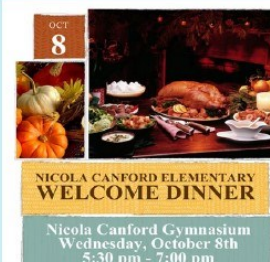


## Terry Fox Run



Students spent a few weeks learning about Terry Fox and the work that he raising money for cancer research.

## Welcome Dinner



Nicola Canford is hosting their annual Welcome Dinner on Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at the school. Students are harvesting our Garden to prepare some dishes for the event.





## Orange T-Shirt Walk

We were very honoured to be able to join in with LNIB's Orange Shirt Walk on Friday. K<sup>wuk</sup>steyp to Carole Basil and her team for organizing such a great event. And special thanks to Arnie for sharing his song with the kids

## Truth and Reconciliation Day

We were very privileged to have Hank Yamelst join us yesterday to share a little about his personal experiences in residential school and to drum for our assembly. The school and school grounds were covered with Orange hearts made by kids with messages of reconciliation and hope for the future.

C?eył x<sup>wu</sup>y' xeytem xe? ł k<sup>wuk</sup>wpi? ?e k skenteys

We will ask that the creator will help us.



## Sage Hearts

As part of their reconciliation efforts around Orange Shirt Day, students learned about residential schools and created orange attachment hearts. After filling them with sage, they carefully sewed the hearts together, engaging in meaningful, hands on activity to honour survivors and promote healing.





# DIAMOND VALE SEPTEMBER 2025

## CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING



Cross Country running has been popular for our younger students, and we've had a record number of primary students turning out for District runs.

## MEET THE TEACHER



Parents and students came out to enjoy some chilli, a school wide game and to meet the teachers. Some lucky students won some school swag!

## STEPPING INTO FALL

### Div 2 Teapicking

Ms. Foster's Grade 5/6 class paired up with a class from Collettville and spent an educational day learning about plants and picking tea.



### Teacher Pro-D

Our teachers were looking for some professional development around numeracy so this was our focus during Summer Institute. All teachers are now using the new Math Up program and classes are working on their problem solving skills, by engaging in a daily word problem of the day.

### Terry Fox Run

We paired up with Merritt Central and students ran from one school to the other and back. Diamond Vale raised \$210.



## NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Special assemblies were organized for this day and students learned about the legacy of residential schools and the impact they had on Indigenous families and communities.



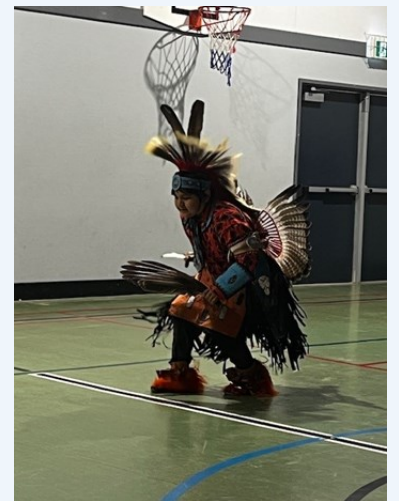
## GRANDFATHER TEACHING

This month we are learning about **Respect** and the importance of respecting ourselves and others, animals and the natural environment. We have placed particular focus on resources and avoiding waste.





In September, Merritt Bench students took part in the Terry Fox Run, raising over \$550 for cancer research—way to go, Bench Bears! Mrs. Shackelly organized a meaningful **Orange Shirt Day** assembly on September 29th, where students learned about regalia and enjoyed an incredible Powwow dance presentation. September was also full of movement, with **Cross-Country Running** and our **Bench Fitness Runs** keeping everyone active. In classrooms and on the playground, students have been learning how to navigate friendship and play, while also learning how to be supportive of one another. Our Kindergarten class explored colour mixing, and Griffin in Grade 5 showed wonderful leadership by helping Walter from our Kindergarten class on the swings during recess.







## Merritt Central Elementary School

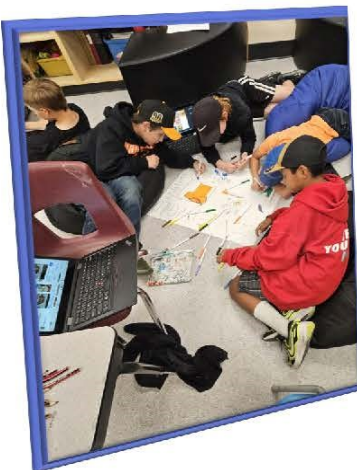


### Honouring Truth and Reconciliation at MCES

Our school community came together in a powerful way to honour National Truth and Reconciliation Day and Orange Shirt Day. We began the year by deepening our commitment to anti-racism through our *Cultural Language and Storytelling Initiative*, expanding Indigenous language instruction to all primary classes and embedding diverse cultural practices and storytelling into school-wide learning.



A heartfelt thank you to Ms. Martha, our long-standing Indigenous Support Advocate, whose leadership brought this important day to life. She organized a series of meaningful activities, including a visit from Elder Willard Wallace, who shared his gifts as a drummer and storyteller. Ms. Martha also helped connect our school with N'kwala School, who joined us in a powerful march to honour Survivors and remember those who never made it home. The events concluded with a BBQ, made possible with the support of Indigenous Student Advocate Mr. Miller.







## NŁE?KEPMXCÍN

## NSYILXCƏN



At our TRC assembly, our new nsyilxcən language teacher, Mrs. Michel, shared moving poetry by local Indigenous author Dennis Saddleman. Leading up to National TRC Day both Mrs. Michel and Miss Mansfield, our nłe?kepmxcín language teacher, shared stories and teachings with students across all grade levels. Mrs. Smith supported our student leaders in learning and sharing the “word of the week” and land acknowledgements, helping to bring Indigenous language into the heart of our school culture.

In classrooms, staff ensured students understood the significance of Truth and Reconciliation through thoughtful lessons and discussions. Together, students created a collaborative bulletin board reflecting how every child should feel at school, safe, valued, and loved.

We are proud of our students and staff for their deep engagement and commitment to reconciliation, and we are grateful to our Indigenous partners for their continued guidance and generosity in sharing their knowledge and stories.

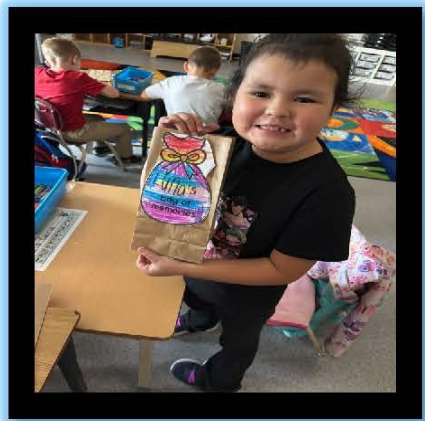
Mr. Easterbrook's grade 1/2 class enjoyed getting their feet wet with some on-the-land learning, exploring and play at the river.



The river is a great source of knowledge and medicine. Mrs. Ferris often utilizes the land learning opportunities that are in our back yard and the kindergarten class loves the opportunity to get outside.







Ms. Morrison's student displays her memory bag after a culture lesson.



Mr. Gagliano making connections with his students.



*At the recent Grade 1-7 cross country race at Nicola-Canford, our MCES Hawks showed incredible perseverance, determination, and team spirit. Whether it was their first race or they were seasoned runners, every student gave it their all and made our school proud. 1-2-3 Hawks!*

*A heartfelt thank you goes out to our dedicated coaches, Mr. Shea, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Martindale, who generously volunteered their lunch hours to train with our runners. Your time, encouragement, and leadership made this experience possible and meaningful for our runners. Way to go, Hawks!*



## StrongStart

Our StrongStart program is off to a beautiful start this fall! Mrs. Gage has created a calm, inclusive, and engaging environment where young children and their families can explore, play, and learn together. In the photos, you'll see children using play dough and fall-themed loose parts to create, imagine, and discover, activities that spark curiosity and support early development.

We're also grateful to be welcoming several new families from the community while Diamondvale School works through a temporary delay in launching their own StrongStart program. Mrs. Gage has gone above and beyond to ensure these families feel at home, offering a warm and supportive space for everyone.





Our dedicated librarian, Leanne Cleavelly, continues to inspire a love of reading, often putting in extra time to make the library a welcoming and engaging space. This month, she launched the Junior Librarian program, an exciting extracurricular that builds leadership and responsibility through hands-on tasks.

One recent challenge had students alphabetizing book sets, a deceptively simple activity that sparked real learning. As she shared, "This might become an event in the Junior Librarian Olympics! They were so engaged and many learned something new." One student's lightbulb moment said it all: "I got it! You have to look at the second letter!"

Our kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Ferris, is passionate about helping students learn through real-world experiences. She often partners with local businesses and community services to bring lessons to life and show students the value of the world around them.

This month, she took her class on a special visit to the public library. The children explored books, admired the train display, and took part in a fun activity led by one of the library helpers. It was a wonderful opportunity to discover all the great things our public library has to offer and to spark a lifelong love of reading and learning.





# COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE



CLC welcomed students back with a redesigned classroom space and a refreshed schedule designed to strengthen community and connection among students. We are very excited to welcome Nexpetko Joe to the CLC team. Nex, as she likes to be called, is the new CLC Indigenous Student Advocate and is eager to begin culture-based activities and support students in meaningful ways.

Our class proudly participated in the Terry Fox Run, showing great spirit and determination. We then jumped into a fun mini unit on baking and decorating, led by Tammy Meadows during her four-week stay with us. Her creativity brought energy to the kitchen, and students enjoyed learning new hands-on skills.

In honour of Truth and Reconciliation, students wrote heartfelt "I Matter" poems, participated in the Orange Shirt Day Walk with MSS, and had the privilege of hearing from Nexpetko's grandmother, who shared powerful stories about honouring and owning one's culture.

We're excited to announce that Kayla Dunlop has joined the Grad Committee as our first Grad Representative. She'll be attending meetings throughout the year and keeping CLC grads informed and connected with all the latest updates and events.

With our first field trip (tea picking) fast approaching, students are already looking forward to what October will bring!





# Collettville Elementary School

*Pride ~ Respect ~ Community*

## Student Leadership Council

Mme Berthelet and Mr. Sambrook are joining forces to help build a Student Leadership Council / Conseil des élèves for Collettville students in Grades 4-7.

The council will give students a clear, structured way to share their ideas, represent their peers, engage in the political process, and take action to help shape the school community. It's a chance for students to step into leadership and see their voices make a difference.



## Drumming Workshop



Malicounda Dance led each of our divisions through an engaging drumming workshop, focused on rhythm, listening skills, and coordination. It was a unique setting for our students to practice their French language skills.





# Collettville Elementary School

*Pride ~ Respect ~ Community*

## Cultural Connections & Learning on the Land



In honour of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, our ISA, Mme Dawn organized the entire student body in the shape of a heart, displaying our orange shirts in a beautiful symbol of solidarity. It was a touching moment for Elders, who were contained in the centre of the heart.

Displayed on the left and right are pictures from the Division 2 field trip to Sunset Main Road, where they picked Labrador tea (kécé? / keh-tch-uh) after learning about its properties and benefits the week prior.

## Terry Fox Run & Fundraiser

Our Collettville Community raised over \$850 this year for this important cause.  
Bravo!







# MERRITT SECONDARY

This fall has been a season of activity, connection, and community at Merritt Secondary School. From athletic competitions and cultural celebrations to meaningful acts of service and creativity, students and staff continue to demonstrate pride in their school and a strong sense of belonging within the Nicola Valley.



## ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Merritt Secondary honoured Orange Shirt Day with a powerful assembly led by Leadership students, followed by a whole-school awareness walk through the community and a shared lunch organized by our Indigenous Student Advocates. The day served as a meaningful reminder of the importance of truth, reconciliation, and every child mattering.

## YOUTH RESILIENCY CONFERENCE



Several MSS classes walked to Rotary Park to take part in the Youth Resiliency Conference. A highlight for many was the creative hoodie-decorating station, where students designed personalized, spray-painted hoodies to symbolize resilience and individuality.

## FALL ATHLETICS



Fall sports are in full swing with Grade 8, Junior, and Senior Girls' and Boys' Volleyball, as well as Field Hockey and Cross-Country. Students have shown tremendous commitment, teamwork, and school spirit while representing the Panthers both at home and on the road.





# John Allison Elementary School

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## UPDATES

September 2025



Welcome Back

#play #JOY #learn

@JohnAllisonElementary



How many laps did you do? TERRY FOX RUN 2025 #canadianhero







Our Visual Arts class made a collaborative board filled with paper cuttings of their favorite characters.

## HANDS ON LEARNING



The Outdoor Ed class walking the airport loops.



SEPTEMBER 2025







## CERAMICS CLASS



Our Ceramics class students have been getting creative.



The Terry Fox Run 2025 put on by the 11/12 Leadership crew!



Alana Monk shared an incredible story with our students about her cancer battle.



## COMMUNITY GUESTS



# VERMILION FORKS ELEMENTARY



## Archeological Dig

Mrs. Kunderman's class unearthed history in our own backyard—exploring artefacts and digging into the past during their playground archaeological dig



## Terry Fox Run

Students laced up and showed their spirit during our Terry Fox Run, honoring a Canadian hero and proving that every step makes a difference!



## National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Students take time on the land to reflect, listen, and honour the stories and truths shared on National Truth and Reconciliation Day

# SEPTEMBER AT VFE



September was a busy and energizing month at our school, filled with growth and connection.

From outdoor explorations and community events to classroom discoveries and team-building activities, students and staff came together to build a strong foundation for the year ahead.

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