

Superintendent's Report - December 2025

After School Program—Nicola Canford

***The After School Program
has been at Nicola Canford***

- *We offer 2 days/Week for intermediate students and 2 days a week/primary students
- *We are thankful for the opportunity to offer Taekwondo and Dance this session.
- *Students also enjoyed Nature Art and Canvas painting



IMPORTANT DATES

December 19, 2025	Friday	Last day of school before Winter Break.
Dec. 22, 2025 – Jan. 2, 2026		Winter Break.
January 5, 2026	Monday	Schools reopen after the break.

Nicola Canford



Buddy Class



Division 1 and Division 6 did a fantastic job of sharing their learning on our Character teaching of Forgiveness at the assembly this month.

Student Leadership

Nicola Canford student leadership met this month, reviewed the suggestions in our suggestion box and planned a PJ and Movie Day to celebrate a successful Christmas Concert. Thanks for all your work Student Council. It was a great time for the whole school.

Drumming

At Nicola Canford we love to welcome Paul Joe (Skiellst) on Wednesdays to lead our drum club during the lunch hours. We also love that he visits the Kindergarten class after lunch to give them the opportunity to try drumming out in their classroom.



Roots Of Empathy



Mrs. Cunningham brought Baby Joise into Division 5 this week. Roots of Empathy is a classroom program that brings a baby and parent into the classroom to help children learn about emotions and develop empathy.



Remembrance Day

Our students did a great job honouring our veterans this November, at our school Remembrance Day Ceremony. Kwukwsteyp to Travais Oppenheim who came to represent indigenous veterans and Hank Yemelst who came to support our drumming club and drummed for our moment of silence.

Shulus Ceremony

Nicola Canford students were very proud to be a part of the Shulus Remembrance Day Ceremony. Our students helped lead the singing of O Canada, drum during the ceremony and lay the school district wreath. I was very proud of their contribution to the community event.



Volleyball

Volleyball season was great for our kids and we were able to field two teams. Both teams played well at the tournament and had a great time. Kwukwsteyp to Ms. Kim for all of her hard work coaching the teams!





John Allison Elementary School

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

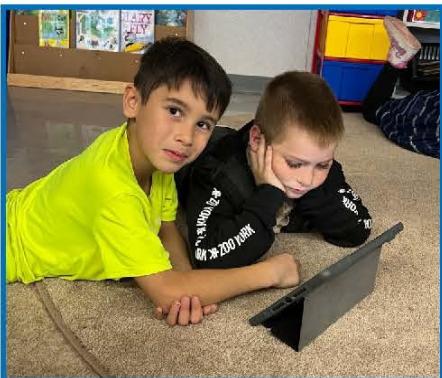
November 2025



Grade 3 Remembrance Day art—inspired by artist Christi Belcourt, the pointillism represents the intricate beadwork prevalent in Indigenous Art. Thank you to Ms. Wilschek's Grade 3s for leading our Remembrance Day Assembly, to the PSS and VFE band, and to Legion member Doreen Paulson. #poppies #inflandersfields #lestweforget #remember



Remembrance Day Assembly



Grade 3 Literacy Centers includes Raz Kids, a program that supports students reading and comprehension.

Grade 2 picture prompt to inspire their own book ending— Where did the baby bird land when it fell out of the nest?

Primary Science: Kindergarten & Grade 1 students learn about the four seasons, seasonal changes and weather patterns.



PLAY * JOY * LEARN

** Shh! The Librarian is reading to us!*

HANDS ON LEARNING

*Gr. 2 ADST and oral language: students built winter animal shelters, then sketched them & described them to a partner.

*Our Indigenous Student Advocate and volunteers helped our grade 3s make bannock

OUTDOOR PLAY & LEARNING

*Grade 3 students participated in a nature walk and collected flat river rocks to build inuksuks.



LEARNING ON THE LAND



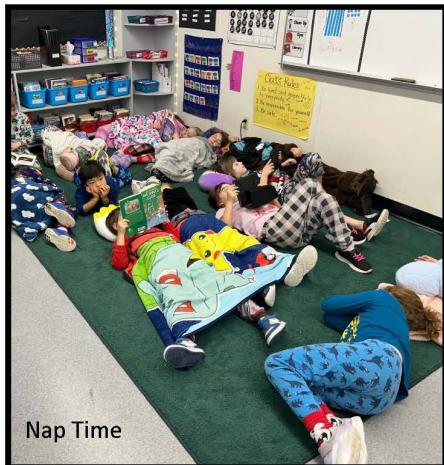
LUNCH PROGRAM & KITCHEN UPDATE

Chef Rebecca has been busy preparing and cooking our lunches at PSS before delivering them to JAE. In the meantime, we continue to work on creating a functional kitchen space.

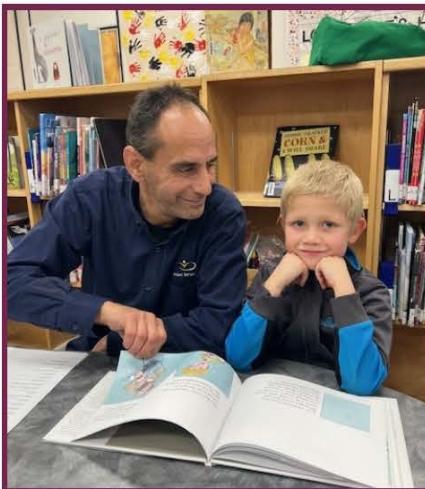
We have had financial support from BC Feeding Futures, Canada's National School Food Program, the Breakfast Club of Canada, and locally from the Drax Community Fund. Stay tuned for photos of our progress!



The first snowfall always brings so much excitement! This day was extra special—it was pajama day and we enjoyed our first snow of the season. It doesn't get any better than PANCAKES and PAJAMAS and SNOW! To top it off, our grade 3s made a special request for nap time! I don't think sleeping was involved though.



The COME READ WITH ME workshop for parents and students was hosted by Dierra Maynard, **Princeton Leaders for Literacy**. Thank you to Ms. Caron and Ms. Ransome for setting up stations to support the event.



Let it Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!

Snow flakes, snowmen, and snow forts are snow much fun! Our students have really enjoyed playing outdoors, and of course, they have managed to get very very wet!

Parents are reminded that outdoor winter activities require **boots, snow pants, warm coats, mitts, and a toque or other headwear**. They are encouraged to label their children's clothing and check our lost and found for any items they are missing.

While our ability to provide these items is very limited, if they need help purchasing winter gear, they are encouraged to contact **Katrina at 250-295-6727**.

1. I put on my snowpants.



2. I put on my boots.



3. I put on my coat.



4. I put on my hat.



5. I put on my mitts.



DIAMOND VALE

NOVEMBER 2025

REMEMBRANCE DAY



Classes learned about the significance of Remembrance Day and on November 10th we had a whole school Remembrance Assembly including drumming, a singing group, letters from troops, and wreaths.

VOLLEYBALL



Miss. Forman and Mrs. Edwards took on coaching roles and we had two teams develop their skills and participate in the weekly playdates and district tournament.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

PEACE Program

Mrs. Price's class took advantage of an opportunity to work with Nicola Family Therapy for three sessions and learned about safety planning, healthy relationships, emotional expression and self-care.

Warren Hooley

Warren Hooley is an Indigenous facilitator and community builder who came in to work with our Grade 6/7 boys for a half-day on managing emotions during the adolescent years.

Gr 6/7 Team Building

This class has been developing their team building skills through play.



SPIRIT DAYS

Every Friday is school spirit day. We either wear our Diamond Vale swag/colours or choose a theme. In November, we had a Wacky Sock Day and Tinsel Day.



GRANDFATHER TEACHING

This month we are learning about **Honesty**. A person who is honest can stand tall like Sabe and develop the trust of those around them.



Collettville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community



Exploring Democracy: Grade 6/7 Trip to the Legislative Assembly

Mrs. Berthelet and Mr. Sambrook are excited to take 34 students to Victoria this March for a tour of the Legislative Assembly and surrounding civic and cultural sites.

Thanks to a School Travel Program grant of up to \$11,100, students will explore a key democratic institution firsthand and deepen their understanding of active citizenship.

Guided in French, it's an excellent opportunity for students to put their French language skills into action and bring the social studies curriculum to life!



Preparations Underway for *Battle of the Books*

Our competitors are buzzing with excitement after picking up the first six books for this year's Battle in May.

A big thank-you to Mme Mackay-Smith for championing our readers—this initiative is a fantastic way to spark enthusiasm for reading and build key literacy skills. We can't wait to see how our teams rise to the challenge!





Collettville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community

Building Community: Holiday Luncheon for Students & Staff

For the second year in a row, Collettville is bringing students and staff together for a Holiday Luncheon.

Sharing a meal offers a meaningful moment to connect, reflect, and express gratitude for the sense of community that makes our school such a welcoming place.

A huge thank-you to our Lunch Coordinator, Mrs. Hedrick, whose planning, preparation, and hard work make this event possible. We are so fortunate to have her on our team!



School Wide Science Fair Initiative



After the Winter Break, every class at Collettville will take part in a school-wide Science Fair. Students will investigate questions, test ideas, and share their discoveries, each in a way that fits their developmental level. It's an engaging, school-wide celebration of curiosity, creativity, and scientific thinking.



Merritt Bench Update



A lot of focus and learning in the first half of the month was around the importance of Remembrance Day. We are thankful for the collaborative efforts of students, staff, and community members who came together to create and participate in a touching assembly on November 10th.



Mr. Denton's class has been up to some great ADST activities. One was a LEGO challenge activity, where they pulled a "disaster card and had to build their creation based on the card/scenario pulled". The second was a mini-golf Project-Based Learning activity where students designed and built a mini-golf course, applying concepts like science, math and ELA. The culminating activity was to create a mini-golf hole in partners and then host a mini-golf tournament for the grade 4/5 and library 6/7 classes.





MERRITT SECONDARY

November at Merritt Secondary School began with a moving Remembrance Day ceremony that brought our school community together in reflection and gratitude. Students and staff contributed to a thoughtful program that honoured veterans and highlighted the importance of remembrance within our learning community.



POST-SECONDARY VISITS

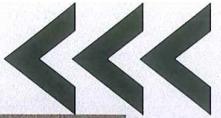


Our Indigenous student advocates played a significant leadership role this month by organizing two post-secondary exploration trips for MSS and PSS students, one to Vancouver and one to Vancouver Island. These experiences provided students with first-hand exposure to a range of post-secondary pathways, including UBC Vancouver, the NVIT Burnaby campus, Douglas College, the University of Victoria, and Camosun College. Students also had the opportunity to attend an Indigenous Fashion Week event in Vancouver, which offered a vibrant celebration of Indigenous creativity, culture, and entrepreneurship.

THE SPIRIT OF GIVING & CHEER

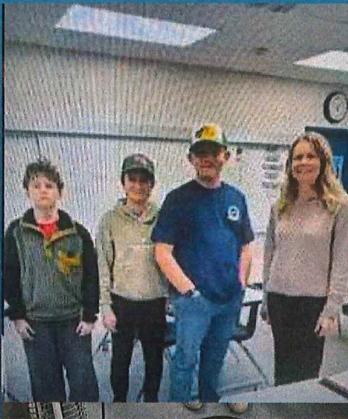
Throughout the month, MSS students continued to demonstrate their commitment to community through acts of service and generosity. Our annual Teen Toy Drive and Food Drive were both strongly supported, reflecting the spirit of giving that characterizes our school. In addition, MSS participated in the City of Merritt's submission to the HGTV Canada Home Town Takeover competition. Students and staff recorded a spirited schoolwide cheer to contribute to the community's application as Merritt advanced into the third round of this national contest.





Ms. Cheung's amazing Art students

PSS OPEN HOUSE
A GREAT TURNOUT



AEL 11/12 clean up at the Swan Lake loop

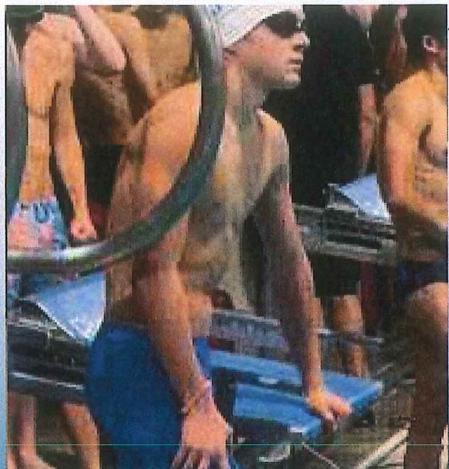


NOVEMBER 2025

PSS
RAPIDS



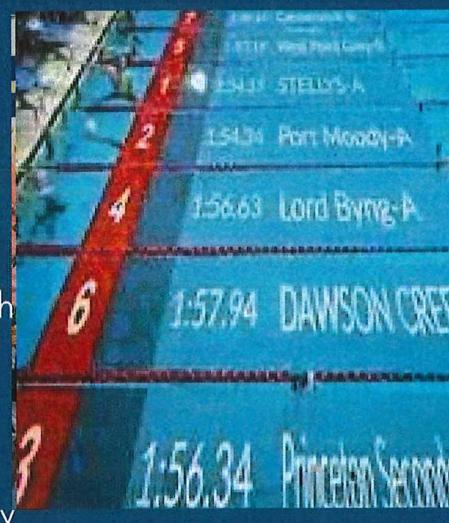
PROVINCIALS



Princeton Secondary School Swim Team in Richmond for Provincials



School Board Trustees along with PSS Student Trustees laying a wreath at the Remembrance Day Ceremony





Merritt Central Elementary School



On November 10, our school came together to honour and remember the veterans who sacrificed so much to protect our safety, rights, and freedoms. We are grateful to live in a country where we enjoy the gift of freedom.

Our student-led ceremony began with a powerful entrance: Indigenous student dancers and our colour guard marched into the steady beat of our school drum group, setting a tone of respect and unity. Students and ISA, Martha Chillihitza, shared greetings and land acknowledgments and nleʔkepmxcin and nsylx̱cən, blessings. Leading up to the event, classes learned about the meaning of Remembrance Day and in our annual traditional fashion, created beautiful wreaths to honour veterans and fallen soldiers.

I read *Why We Remember*, a heartfelt book written and illustrated by students from Graysville School in Manitoba. Brave students recited the Act of Remembrance, the Commitment to Remember, and "In Flanders Fields," reminding us why November 11 matters. We also recognized Indigenous Veterans Day (November 8) through a video highlighting the vital roles Indigenous soldiers played in defending our freedoms.

The ceremony closed with a moving performance of *Soldier Boy* by our drum group, led by Derrick Sheena, a moment that touched everyone present. This day was a beautiful example of how student voice can lead the way in creating meaningful traditions. As a school, we are proud to honour the past, teach the present, and inspire the future. Lest we forget.

Space Day in Ms. Morrison's Class

Ms. Morrison turned her Grade 1 classroom into a space adventure! Students walked into a room where desks became rocket ships, planets hung from the ceiling, and constellations lit up the scene.

Throughout the day, students completed fun "missions" that blended literacy, numeracy, ADST, and art, earning astronaut badges along the way. After finishing all their tasks, the Grade 1 crew officially graduated from astronaut training, a celebration of creativity and hard work!



Mrs. Ferris' Class Enjoys Literacy Snacks



Mrs. Ferris' class combined reading and tasty treats for a memorable literacy activity! Students read the beloved story *If You Give a Moose a Muffin* by Laura Numeroff and then rolled up their sleeves to make their very own "moose muffins."

After reading, students discussed the story, visualized the events, and explored new vocabulary. Then came the fun part decorating muffins! The classroom was filled with laughter and the sweet smell of muffins as students worked to design their own moose muffin. I wonder what their next Literacy snack will be?

Snow Days lead to Outdoor Fun, Cooperation and Creativity

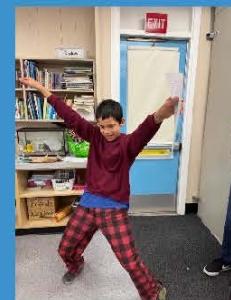


Mr. Shea Makes French Fashionable

Mr. Shea's Grade 6/7 class turned French learning into a creative celebration! After practicing vocabulary, colors, and clothing, students showcased their skills in a lively French Fashion Show.

They wrote short scripts describing their outfits and walked the "runway" in imaginative costumes, showing off both creativity and pronunciation.

This fun activity proved that learning a new language can be interactive and full of personality. Bravo to Mr. Shea and his class for making French Fantastique!



Indigenous Professional Development

Our staff is grateful to our community members Cora Tom, Christy Whitiker, and Judy Chilhitzia who joined us for an after-school session on culture and language. Their generosity made this learning experience truly meaningful.

A highlight was learning from our *nsyilxcən* language teacher, Matty Michel, how to introduce ourselves in *nsyilxcən* following Syilx traditions, a beautiful way to share identity and connect with the land. We also explored the symbolism behind ribbon skirts and shirts, which have become powerful expressions of identity and resilience. The colors, patterns, and ribbons carry deep meaning, reflecting connections to culture and personal stories.

This session inspired our staff to bring language and cultural knowledge into classrooms, fostering stronger relationships and a more inclusive environment. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who made this possible.



Volleyball Season was a Smash



This year's volleyball season was incredible! Under Mr. Shea's leadership, with support from Mr. Miller and Ms. Melissa, our school proudly fielded two competitive teams and for the second year in a row, we brought home the District Championship!

Our players showed amazing commitment, practicing daily at lunch and even scrimmaging with the MSS Grade 8 girls' team to sharpen their skills. After the big win, the team celebrated with games, dancing, and pizza a well-deserved reward for their hard work.

The season wrapped up with the Students vs. Staff game, a fun tradition that reminds us it's not about being the best athlete, it's about having fun, trying something new, and enjoying the spirit of play.

Thank you to everyone who played, supported, and cheered us on. Here's to another year of teamwork, sportsmanship, and MCE pride!



Mini Playgrounds in Action!

Mrs. Tolmie's Grade 5/6 class brought creativity and problem-solving to life with their ADST project: designing and building mini playgrounds! Students worked in teams to plan, construct, and test their designs, using everyday materials to create fun and functional structures.

This hands-on challenge encouraged collaboration, critical thinking, and innovation skills that go beyond the classroom. The results? Imaginative playgrounds that showcase what happens when learning meets creativity!

Great job, Grade 5/6 designers!



Mrs. Cleaveley is a Champion for Student Engagement at MCES

At Merritt Central Elementary, Mrs. Cleaveley's dedication to students shines far beyond the classroom walls. Her commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for learning and connection shines in the way she opens the school library during her own lunch breaks. Instead of taking time for herself, Mrs. Cleaveley transforms the library into a hub of creativity and collaboration.

Through clubs like Train Club and Junior Librarians, Mrs. Cleaveley fosters an environment where students can explore their interests, work together, and develop essential skills. These activities encourage peer collaboration, critical and creative thinking, and a love for reading, all while being fun and engaging. Students not only learn new skills but also build friendships and confidence in a welcoming space.





NOVEMBER



COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE

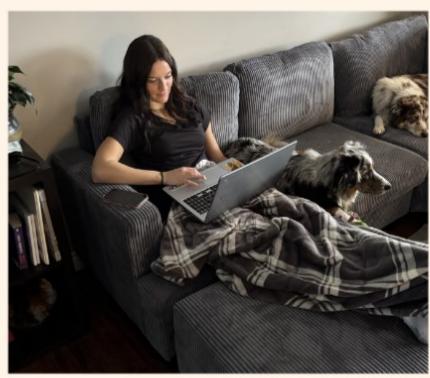
November was full of fun, learning, and creativity! We began with exciting field trips, including bowling for some friendly competition, visiting the Shulus Memorial to honor the fallen soldiers for Remembrance Day, and exploring the Kamloops Wildlife Park. There, we discovered local species like the painted turtle, burrowing owl, and even a rubber boa snake (some of us were brave enough to touch it!). Afterward, we enjoyed exclusive access to the park, spotting buffalo, colourful foxes, grizzly bears, a cougar, and even our mascot, the Raven.

Our electives kept us busy with macramé, painting, and cooking delicious soups—like butternut squash, creamy bacon and potato, and beef and potato. We also welcomed special guests: a tradesman from Take a Hike, who taught us to make copper bracelets, and Nex's brother, Roi, who showed us how to bead feathers. Roi also gifted each student an eagle feather from his own collection.

We ended the month by setting up the Christmas tree and decorating our space, filling it with holiday cheer. Here's to a joyful December ahead!

November 2025

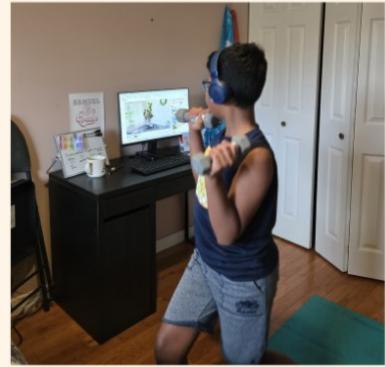
SCIDES



A Student working with her friends



Gr. 3 & 7 students walking in the Accursed Mountains in Albania



Physical Education



Science



Baking Cookies



A dedicated group of SCIDES distance education students is hard at work from their homes. Though physically apart, they remain connected through virtual classrooms, collaborative projects, and shared goals. Despite the challenges of studying remotely, they continue to support one another, proving that a strong learning community can thrive anywhere.



VERMILION FORKS ELEMENTARY



Science Experiments

Ms. Williams' class worked collaboratively to show their knowledge in Science. Experiments included rainbow rain, elephant toothpaste, and lava lamps.



NOVEMBER AT VFE



The snow has arrived at VFE, bringing lots of new outdoor activities to enjoy at recess. Students are learning how to look out for one another while having fun, working together on large snow-building projects, and practicing how to wrap up outdoor play and transition smoothly back into learning time.

Our school lunch program continues to be very popular, with nearly 40% of students ordering lunch on any given day. This program, along with Backpack Buddies, allows us to support families experiencing food insecurity and strengthen our connection with the broader community.

Our after-school Homework Club is also running well, with 10-12 students attending twice a week. Thanks to grant funding accumulated over the years, and the support of a dedicated teacher and EA, students receive guidance and time to complete work they may not have been able to finish during the school day.

