



# Nicola Canford



SEEDS & SNACKS



## Roots of Empathy



Our K/1 class was excited to see Josie roll over during her last visit. The class was able to see how Josie loves to play and is showing how to persevere when something new comes along.

## Healthy Snacks

Mrs. Nelson-Smith came in and did a unit throughout January and February through BC Dairy on healthy foods and eating with Ms. Fosbery's class, where the kids got to explore different food groups, such as wheat, beans, berries and yogurt. Each session they would get to try a new food. They ended the unit by planting seeds.

## Curling

Mrs. Kim took a number of our classes curling today in town. The kids learned a lot and had a blast. K<sup>w</sup>uk<sup>w</sup>steyp to the curling club volunteers who took time from their busy lives to teach our kids.



CLURLING



## Science Fair



Our handball teams have been playing some after school games and have played great. K<sup>w</sup>uk<sup>w</sup>steyp to Mrs. Kim and Mrs. Thomas for coaching the handball teams this year.



## Science Fair

Students participating in Science Fair this year worked very hard and showed great perseverance as this was all done in their free time as part of the Science Fair Club. Congratulations to Mackenna, Ivan, Talan, Jolene, Sage, Tinashe and Red for earning the opportunity to represent Nicola Canford at the Regional Fair at TRU in Kamloops



## Intermeidate Skating

Our intermediate students had a fantastic day of skiing at Harper Mountain. The staff are always so helpful and attentive. They went out of their way to make our day a great time. Kwukwsteyp Harper for working so hard for our students!



## Science World Visit

Division 2 & 3 participated in some great activities today with Hilary from Science World. In "Designing From Nature", students engaged in the design cycle as they tinkered to build and code a structure, inspired by how living things sense and respond! Kwukwsteyp to Science World for making this learning opportunity free and fun!





To celebrate the Year of the Horse, students created expressive ink paintings full of movement and elegance. In PopArt printmaking, students carved and printed two layers, creating bold colors and strong contrast.

## FEBRUARY 2026



A GREAT WEEKEND FOR OUR SENIOR GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM AT THE VALLEY'S CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT



JASON SIMON, RETIRED NHL PLAYER, DISCUSSED SETTING GOALS AND WORKING HARD TO ACHIEVE THEM.





Outdoor Education Adventures



March 2026

# Community Learning Centre

***This month was full of curiosity, creativity, and big steps forward! In Earth Science, students blasted off into a study of the universe, exploring the Big Bang Theory and building their own scaled models of the universe. They even channeled their inner artists to create colorful galaxy artwork, proving that science and creativity make a great team.***



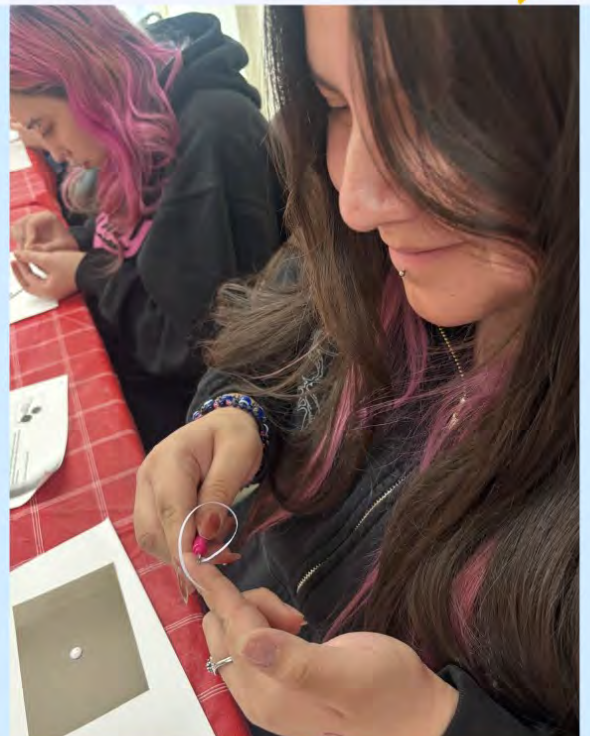
*History offered a rich blend of discussion, exploration, and hands-on learning this month. Our daily current-events discussions set the stage, helping students see how modern issues link back to historical events. Building on that foundation, students explored the causes and major battles of World War I. A visit to the local museum tied everything together, providing a meaningful, hands-on understanding of how global history connects to our own community.*





In Art, students tried paper quilling for the first time, thanks to the Nicola Valley Art Gallery. This detailed, twisty technique brought out some impressive patience and creative results.

We also kicked off our post-secondary exploration with a campus tour at UBCO. Students (and staff) braved the many campus stairs and cold, met counselors from the Indigenous Studies Department, and learned about programs and supports that could shape their future paths.



**All in all, it was a fun, busy, and inspiring month, full of learning, making, and exploring.**

# Merritt Secondary School

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February at Merritt Secondary School marked a month of new beginnings as students and staff launched into Semester 2. With new schedules in place, classrooms quickly filled with fresh learning opportunities and renewed energy as students began exploring new subjects and continuing their progress toward graduation.



The winter athletics season also wrapped up during February, with the remaining MSS teams completing their seasons. During the month, MSS students also had the opportunity to hear from guest speaker Jeff Martin, who spoke with students about the importance of inclusion, self-worth, and building a strong sense of belonging. His message resonated with many students and reinforced the importance of creating a supportive school community where every student feels valued.

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February was also a time of planning for the future. Course selection for the 2026–2027 school year is now underway, with MSS hosting a family information evening as well as daytime sessions for students to learn about course options and graduation requirements. Our Grade 12 students also had the opportunity to attend a post-secondary information session at NVIT, where they heard from representatives and two recent MSS graduates about what to expect as they transition to post-secondary education.





Our graduating students celebrated the start of their final semester with a trip to Fun Factor in Kamloops. While the annual tubing trip to Harper Mountain was not possible this year due to low snow conditions, the alternate activity provided a fun and memorable opportunity for the graduating class to connect and celebrate this milestone together.

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In addition, our MSS Band students were actively involved in supporting transitions for incoming students. The band travelled to each of the elementary schools to perform and introduce younger students to the program. MSS also hosted a Grade 7 Band Night, giving future students an opportunity to visit the school, see the band program in action, and build excitement about joining the music program next year.



Overall, February reflected both the excitement of new beginnings and the importance of looking ahead, as students continue to plan their academic pathways and prepare for the opportunities that lie beyond high school.



# DIAMOND VALE FEBRUARY 2026

## WORLD READ ALOUD DAY



We celebrated the joys of reading with staff and students dressing up their favourite book characters and participating in read-aloud activities throughout the day.

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Students have been learning about the significant contributions of Afro-Americans in North American History.

## SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

### Science Fair

Division 1 students participated in our annual school science fair and we are excited for Malaki, Tayler and Charlie who will be representing us at the regional event in Kamloops.



Students in younger classes came to visit the Science Fair and learn about the scientific process from their older peers.



### Science World Visit

Hilary from Science World spent the day working with our four older classes, who learned about designs in nature, coding, AI & chatbots.



## HANDBALL SEASON

Handball season is in full flow with after school games for our Grade 4/5 students against other district schools.



## GRANDFATHER TEACHING

To tie in with Black History Month, Family Day and Pink Shirt Day we have been celebrating differences, and 'sprinkling kindness', through the teaching of 'Love'.





# John Allison Elementary School

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Updates

## February 2026



*"Volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds." -William J Clinton*



\* Princeton Posse players spent an afternoon in JAE classrooms connecting with our kiddos.  
\* Ms. Ross' Kindergarten class enjoyed a round of Valentine Bingo. Sweet tarts anyone?





Our JAE PAC has purchased skates and helmets to support our skating program. Each year, they also ensure each kiddo has the correct size.

The Princeton Posse players joined our students on the ice. They supported students skating and stopping and played a few games too!





Kids who play outside grow in their character development; they become more adventurous, more self-motivated, and they are better able to understand & assess risk. K Fox



*"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted" (Aesop)*

**KINDNESS MONTH:** We practiced being kind to one another each & every day this month with kindness challenges. #spreadkindness



Pink Shirt Day and Buddy Class Activities.





**Our volunteers are truly the heart of John Allison Elementary School.** Their generosity, energy, and dedication enrich every part of our school community—supporting classrooms, events, and experiences that simply wouldn't be possible without them. \*Grade 2 students engage in **Guided Reading** with teachers, EAs and volunteers. **Princeton Leaders for Literacy** supports our **One-to-One Reading** with volunteers.



Thanks to our **Kitchen Kids** program all of our students get an opportunity to come "cook" in our staffroom with the **Kitchen Angels** who volunteer with our school. #feedingfutures

**VOLUNTEERING IS A WORK OF HEART**



A huge **shoutout** to our **parent volunteers** from Ms. Caron and Ms. Simmonin's class for volunteering their time to come and describe jobs in our **community**. These grade ones and twos had hands-on experience from a local artist, millwright, pharmacist, volunteer firefighter, Indigenous support worker and a flotation specialist!





**HANDS-ON LEARNING WITH LOCAL NATURALIST PAUL ZAKORA**— JAE Dad, and local naturalist, Paul Zakora is continuing his family's legacy of passion for wilderness education by sharing the nature collection first started by his father and passed down through generations. His hands-on approach invites students to explore, touch, and meaningfully engage with natural materials, fostering curiosity and a deeper connection to the outdoors. Thank you Paul for joining us at John Allison Elementary School and letting all of our students explore nature with you!





**Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” Benjamin Franklin**



- ◆ Thank you to our parent (and grandparent) **volunteers** who stepped onto the ice (and flopped down on the ice) to help our students **learn to skate**.
- ◆ Thank you Mrs. Francis and Mrs. Ross for hosting **Ready, Set, Learn** as we welcomed our pre-schoolers and incoming Kindergarten students with Teacher Erin to JAE.



Thank you to our **JAE PAC** who volunteer tirelessly and support a variety of activities at JAE. This month, our PAC brought us **Green Thumb Theatre**. Pictured above, you see our staff and students thoroughly enjoying the presentation of 500 Words.



# Merritt Bench Elementary

## March 2026

**February was a busy month at Merritt Bench!**

Below are pictures from Mrs. V's walking field trip. Students walked to Nicola Meadows where they delivered Valentine's to the residents there. It was a great experience for all involved. Joshua also played the piano for everyone.

Basketball season was busy and we want to thank coaches Mr. Cleaveley and parent volunteer Bethany Ryan for their coaching and mentorship. Both the boys and girls team came in 3<sup>rd</sup>.



**The grade 6/7 students demonstrated learning through engagement in the science fair. There were some great projects.**



Hundreds day was so much fun! Ms. Kane's class, Mr. Denton's class and Ms. Jones' class all collaborated with some of our big buddy classes in the gym to enjoy some activities around 100. Students built creations, engaged in a number spot dance, created 100's day necklaces and glasses. Fun was had by all!



**HAPPY**  
**100<sup>TH</sup>**  
**Day of**  
**SCHOOL**



Mrs. Vandenbrink's class engaged in some hands-on learning around the fur trade. Students worked on a class-wide project to demonstrate their learning.



Some grade 5, 6, 7 students went to Sun Peaks to ski! Thank-you to the PAC who helped fundraise for the bussing costs.



# SCIDES - South Central Interior Distance Education School



Our senior students have been busy working on their elective courses. The photos were submitted by one of our Foods 12 students, showcasing some of their delicious creations. Below are a few favorite shots captured by a Photography 11 student, Lenny Novak as part of his coursework. Great work, everyone—keep it up!



**At SCIDES, we're all about innovation, learning, and community—no matter where our students are!**





# Collettville Elementary School

*Pride ~ Respect ~ Community*

## Grade 6/7 Students Visit the BC Legislature



Collettville's Grade 6/7 students recently visited Victoria to deepen their learning about provincial government and British Columbia's history. The trip included a tour of the BC Legislature, visits to cultural sites such as Carr House, and a meeting with local MLA Tony Luck, who later recognized Collettville during Question Period.



# Collettsville Elementary School

*Pride ~ Respect ~ Community*

## Collettsville School-Wide Science Fair



Collettsville recently hosted a school-wide Science Fair with participation from students across Kindergarten to Grade 7. The event showcased a wide range of student inquiry and experimentation, and 13 Collettsville students have been selected to represent the school at the Regional Science Fair at Thompson Rivers University. It was great to see so many families celebrating our students' accomplishments over the last two months!

## Sun Peaks Ski Trip



Students in Grades 1-7 recently participated in a school-wide ski trip to Sun Peaks. The experience gave students the opportunity to challenge themselves, build confidence, and connect with peers while sharing a memorable day together outside the classroom.

# Vermilion Forks Elementary



## FEBRUARY AT VFE

Our school has enjoyed a rich mix of cultural and learning experiences this season, from engaging with Indigenous traditions through games shared by Tim Manuel to being inspired by Green Thumb Theatre's 500 Words, which encouraged creativity and empathy among students. Students also grew their skiing and snowboarding skills during an exciting day at Apex Mountain Resort, supported by skilled instructors and generous staff and volunteers. We capped it all off by celebrating French culture through lively Carnival games and activities that brought our community together.



## TRADITIONAL GAMES

Tim Manuel visited our school to share the rich traditions of Indigenous Peoples through a variety of traditional games. Students were fully engaged as they learned the cultural significance behind each activity while experiencing the joy and challenge of playing them firsthand. The visit created meaningful connections to Indigenous knowledge and fostered deeper respect for local traditions. We are grateful to Tim for offering our learners such an authentic and memorable experience.



## DRAMA PRESENTATION

Green Thumb Theatre's 500 Words captivated our students with its heartfelt story about Lance, a vocabulary-loving grade-six student, and Sylvia, a younger classmate whose vivid imagination helps her overcome her fear of reading. As the pair learns to create a story together, the play highlights themes of creativity, empathy, and the power of collaboration; messages that deeply resonated with our school. Students were especially drawn to the magical worlds Sylvia imagines and the gentle reminder that the "biggest" word isn't always the most important one. The performance was an energetic hit that left our school inspired and talking long after the final scene.

## APEX SKI DAY

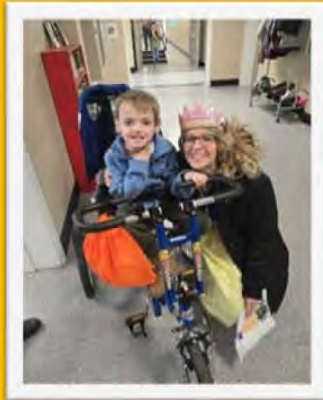
Our students had an incredible day on the slopes at Apex Mountain Resort, where they showed impressive growth in both skiing and snowboarding skills. Supportive instructors guided learners with patience and expertise, helping everyone—from beginners to more experienced riders—gain confidence on the snow. The friendly staff and dedicated volunteers made the day smooth, safe, and fun for all involved. It was a fantastic experience that left students proud of their progress and excited for their next alpine adventure.





## Merritt Central Elementary School

# World Read Aloud



### Annual World Read Aloud Day

World Read Aloud Day was once again a highlight at our school as we celebrated the joy and importance of literacy together. The day was filled with engaging activities including “Dress as a Book Character,” in class “Drop Everything and Read” and a whole school read-aloud by Ms. Omori. One of the most memorable moments was our buddy reading in the gym, where our intermediate students paired up with primary students to share stories together. It was incredible to see the older students step into leadership roles, demonstrating patience, kindness, and encouragement as they supported their younger buddies. Even students for whom reading may not be a preferred activity showed bravery and commitment, modelling the value of reading and learning.

This meaningful connection between our “bigs” and “littles” truly captured the spirit of the day and is one of the many reasons World Read Aloud Day continues to be a favourite theme day in our school community.

# ALL about ADST & Science



## Science with Purpose

During their science class with Mrs. Ang, Mr. Easterbrook's class brought their learning about material properties to life through a desert-hat design challenge. She planned and taught this hands-on lesson, guiding students as they selected materials with purpose, applied scientific reasoning, and proudly presented their creative final designs.



## Mr. Shea's ADST Cook Off

Teams faced off in a salad-making challenge, creating Asian and cucumber salads. Both groups impressed Mr. Shea with their creativity and flavour but the Cucumber Salad team claimed victory with a 9/10 score!



## Science World- Coding and Microbits Workshops

This month we welcomed Science World to MCES. It was a wonderful opportunity organized by Mrs. Preet for her class, Miss Matheson's class, and Mr. Gandy's class. Science World facilitated hands-on exploration using coding and Microbits, encouraging students to inquire, test, and think like young innovators.



## Science Fair

MCES hosted our annual Science Fair. With guidance from Mrs. Ang, Miss Matheson, and Mr. Gandy, students used their science blocks to learn about the scientific method and the steps involved in conducting an experiment. For those who wished to enter a project in the fair, Mrs. Martindale and Ms. Morrison offered a lunchtime Science Fair Club, providing students with dedicated time and support to prepare their work.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to the families who supported students at home as much of the preparation for science fair projects occurs outside of school, and your involvement and support made a meaningful difference. We would also like to express our gratitude to the judges who joined us from across the district. We are proud of all the hard work and bravery we saw from the students who participated.



## Try a Trade

Five of our Grade 7 students had the exciting opportunity to join peers from across the district at the Try-A-Trade event hosted at Thompson Rivers University. This hands-on learning experience introduced students to a wide range of skilled trades and potential career pathways. Organized by MSS Vice Principal Mr. Van Grootel, the event gave students the chance to explore real tools, real tasks, and real possibilities. Our students returned energized and inspired. Many shared that the plumbing and welding stations were their absolute favourites. This was ADST learning in the real world, and it opened their minds to future opportunities they may not have considered before.



# MCES Sports

## Basketball



### **BASKETBALL CHAMPS Go Hawks!**

This season was one to remember for Central's basketball program. Our teams showed what's possible when passion, positivity, and commitment come together. The boys capped off an incredible year as back-to-back, undefeated champions, pushing each other to improve every day and playing with heart, teamwork, and pride. More than wins, this group was defined by their mindset, sportsmanship, and the way they supported one another throughout the season.

Equally inspiring was the continued growth of our girls basketball program. Just a few years ago, there weren't enough players to form a team. This year, a group of athletes, many brand new to the game, came together, fell in love with basketball, improved week by week, and finished the season with only one loss. Their enthusiasm, resilience, and willingness to try something new made this a truly magical season. A huge thank you to Mr. Shea for the countless hours, dedication, and heart he pours into our athletic department. His commitment to developing not just strong athletes, but strong mindsets and great sportsmanship, has transformed opportunities for students and helped build a culture of confidence and pride at Central.

We are so proud of all our Hawks, on and off the court!

# Handball



## Handball Club Highlights

A huge thank-you to Ms. Martha and Mr. Shea for their incredible dedication in opening the gym for early-morning preseason sessions and providing consistent lunchtime practices. Their commitment gives our young athletes a strong foundation, not only in handball skills, but in learning what it means to represent their school with pride, respect, and teamwork. With high expectations and steady guidance from their coaches, players are growing into confident, considerate leaders on and off the court.

These beginner athletes played with fantastic energy, determination, and big smiles. Their progress has been impressive, and their enthusiasm is contagious. As the regular season wraps up, the team continues to build skills, strengthen teamwork, and show what true Hawk spirit looks like.

# MSS Band Concert



## MSS Jazz Band & Senior Concert Band Visit

We had the wonderful opportunity to welcome the MSS Jazz Band and Senior Concert Band to our school. It was inspiring to see former MCES students return as leaders, demonstrating the commitment, dedication, and skill that grow from practicing something you love. Their stellar performance brought energy to the gym and had our students fully engaged, many even moving along to the upbeat sound.

We are incredibly proud of our young audience for showing excellent audience behaviour and a genuine appreciation for the arts. We are equally proud of the MSS students who shared their passion for music and highlighted its importance in school and beyond. It was a joy to see so many past MCES Hawks shining in their element.

# 100th Day of School!



The 100th Day of School is always a highlight for our primary students, and this year was no different! Classrooms were buzzing with fun, hands-on math activities, including the ever-popular 100-Loop Fruit Loop necklaces. Teachers creatively integrated "100" into movement, reading, writing, and classroom challenges, giving students an engaging and joyful way to celebrate this milestone while strengthening their numeracy skills.

## Pink Shirt Day & Random Acts of Kindness Week



Throughout the week, classrooms engaged in meaningful activities that helped students understand and practice the true meaning of kindness, inclusion, and compassion. Teachers took this opportunity to move beyond the symbolism of the days and instead focus on real-time learning that showed students how their actions can uplift others.

Ms. Morrison supported students in learning how to include others during play by modeling, writing, and role-playing inclusive choices. Mrs. Preet guided her class in writing messages that recognized the unique value each person brings to our school community, encouraging students to share their thoughtful words with others around the building. Mr. Gagliano had students exchange Bucketfilling notes to highlight the impact of positive, caring interactions. Meanwhile, Mrs. Ang led gym activities that challenged students to include all peers, especially those they might not usually choose, helping them experience what belonging truly feels like.

Together, these activities created a powerful week of learning, reflection, and action. Students didn't just talk about kindness, they practiced it, lived it, and made our school a more welcoming place for everyone.