

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN: SD58 NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN

DREAMING...

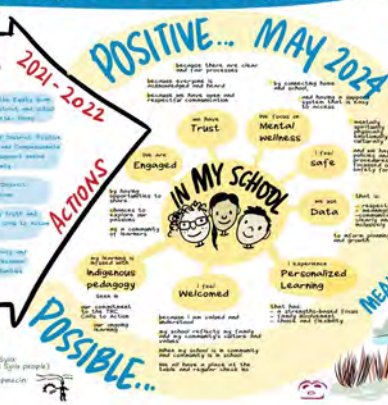
Our goals have us creating a learning community with meaning and purpose, appreciation and respect, meaningful connections.

OUR FIRST STEPS WILL BE:

- 1. We will build a strong foundation of trust and respect.
- 2. We will build a strong foundation of meaningful connections.
- 3. We will build a strong foundation of professional learning and improvement.
- 4. We will build a strong foundation of personalization and differentiation.
- 5. We will build a strong foundation of community and engagement.

2021-2022 ACTIONS

WELCOME POSSIBLE...



Superintendent's Report - May 2026

District 3 Year Calendar



District Calendar (Three Years)

DESIGNATION	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Days in session	189	189	191
Minimum number of days of instruction	183	183	185
Professional Development/Non-Instructional days	5	5	5
Administration Day	1	1	1
Minimum hours of instruction:			
Secondary	952	952	952
Elementary	878	878	878
Kindergarten	853	853	853
Summer Professional Development Days	Monday, August 31 to Wednesday, September 2	Monday, August 30 to Wednesday, September 1	Monday, August 28 to Wednesday, August 30
Schools open for students	Tuesday, September 8	Tuesday, September 7	Tuesday, September 5
Truth & Reconciliation Day	Wednesday, September 30	Thursday, September 30	Monday, October 2 (observed)
Thanksgiving Day	Monday, October 12	Monday, October 11	Monday, October 9
Professional Development Day	Friday, October 23	Friday, October 22	Friday, October 20
Remembrance Day	Wednesday, November 11	Thursday, November 11	Monday, November 13 (observed)
Last day of school before Winter break	Friday, December 18	Friday, December 17	Friday, December 22
Schools reopen after Winter break	Monday, January 4	Tuesday, January 4	Monday, January 8
Professional Development Day	Friday, February 12	Friday, February 18	Friday, February 16
Family Day	Monday, February 15	Monday, February 21	Monday, February 19
Last day before Spring Break	Friday, March 12	Friday, March 17	Friday, March 16
School Reopens after Spring Break	Tuesday, March 30	Monday April 3	Tuesday, April 3
Good Friday	Friday, March 26	Friday, April 14	Friday, March 30
Easter Monday	Monday March 29	Monday, April 17	Monday, April 2
Victoria Day	Monday, May 24	Monday, May 22	Monday, May 21
Last Day of Classes	Tuesday, June 29	Thursday, June 29	Thursday, June 28
Administrative Day	Wednesday, June 30	Friday, June 30	Friday, June 29

Approved - February 11, 2026

We would like to acknowledge that we are, on the traditional ancestral, unceded, territory of the Nt'a?ka'pmxux Nation and Sylix Nation.

Tel 250-378-5161 Toll-Free 800-778-3208
1550 Chapman Street, Merritt, BC V1K 1B8 sd58.bc.ca



John Allison Elementary School

PO Box 40 - 499 Corina Avenue Princeton BC, V0X 1W0
P 250-295-6727 F 250-295-6920

Superintendent's Report

April 2026



EASTER ACTIVITIES— egg hunt in the JAE garden, and Easter nests with Kitchen Kids.

Anti-Racism: Learning to Celebrate Everyone

SD58 schools, including JAE, had a virtual visit from Germaine and Joel from **Inspirational Republic** in Ontario.

They helped us learn what words like *racism*, *micro-aggressions*, and *allyship* mean in ways that made sense for kids. Most importantly, they reminded us that every person is unique and worth celebrating. We talked about how we can be kind, stand up for one another, and make our school a welcoming place for everyone.



Breakfast CLUB of Canada

National Volunteer Week, is the perfect occasion to highlight the invaluable dedication of those that volunteer in our schools.

April 19—25 was National Volunteer Week and the **The Breakfast Club of Canada** acknowledged the work being done by Erin Williams at JAE.

Erin Williams

John Allison Elementary School, Princeton, British Columbia

Erin Williams' dedication to the well-being of our students at John Allison Elementary School is exceptional. Each morning, Erin arrives early to ensure that every child who walks through our doors has access to a nutritious start to their day. Her commitment ensures that our kiddos are fed, cared for, and ready to learn. As our Strong Start Teacher and the heart of our school's breakfast program, Erin plays a vital role in supporting both preschool and primary students.



Her consistent presence, warm approach, and genuine care have a profound and positive impact on our school community.



Buddy Reading: Growing Together Through Stories
 PSS Leadership students created an opportunity to give back to their school community by reading with our Grade 1 learners. The older students showed great leadership as they helped younger readers explore new books, build confidence, and enjoy the fun of sharing stories together. #passionproject #studentleadership #community #literacy



Learning at JAE—Our primary students are building their numeracy skills through hands-on measuring centres and strengthening their literacy with guided reading practice.



Egg Drop STEM Challenge: Our Grade 2 students took on an exciting hands-on engineering challenge as they designed and built protective structures to keep a raw egg safe during drops from a variety of heights. Working in small teams, students brainstormed ideas, tested materials, and refined their designs—putting real problem-solving and critical-thinking skills into action.



#recess #hula hoops



Farewell to Our “Home-Grown” Student Teachers
 Our Grade 2 students said goodbye to our wonderful student teachers, Ms. Kunderman and Ms. Skelding. We are grateful to Mrs. Ransome and Ms. Draude for welcoming them into our learning community and supporting their growth as future Princeton educators.



"Play builds brain pathways for thinking, creativity, flexibility, empathy, and many other life-long skills." - Heather Schumaker

*** PLAY * JOY * LEARN ***



National Bus Driver Appreciation Day On April 28, we celebrated our amazing bus drivers who help keep our students safe every day. Their friendly greetings, careful driving, and dedication to our school community make a big difference. Thank you to our JAE bus drivers for all you do to support our students and families.

Earth Day Used Book Fair Thank you to our JAE PAC for hosting, and to all our JAE families for donating books, to our Earth Day Used Book Fair. Together, we raised \$730 to support the purchase of new books for our library. **#literacy #usedbooks**

Thank s again, JAE PAC We are grateful to our JAE PAC for supporting our school by bringing Frisbee Rob back to Princeton. After an exciting school-wide presentation, he led engaging workshops for our Grade 1, 2, and 3 classes, inspiring students to stay active and have fun while learning new skills. **#frisbeerob**





April Spirit Day
 We've got spirit at JAE! Students dressed up in their **fancy** clothes for our April Spirit event and came together as a school community for a joyful sing-along during our assembly.



Sockeye Fry Release at Skaha Lake

Grade 2 students from JAE joined nearly 800 students from more than 25 South Okanagan and Similkameen schools for the *Okanagan Nation Alliance's* annual sockeye fry release on April 30, 2026, at Skaha Lake in Penticton. This event is part of a large-scale effort to release 5.35 million **sockeye fry** this spring to help restore salmon populations in the Columbia and Okanagan basins.





MERRITT BENCH SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT MAY 2026 BOARD MEETING



Traditional Games

Grade 6 students had the opportunity to go down to Merritt Central and participate in Traditional Games. Thank-you to the ISA team and staff who helped organize such a fun day.



Hands-On Learning

The K/1 class had some fun doing story workshop with Mrs. Bennie. We read the story A Face is a Poem, and then students made faces out of various loose parts. They then orally told us about the face that they made.



Guest Speaker

Michael Bortolotto came to the school and presented to our intermediate students and primary students separately about inclusion, friendship kindness, understanding and the power of a smile. It was an impactful presentation where Michael draws upon his own experiences growing up.

Rugby

Top picture - Rugby Canada came to do some activities with our grade 6/7 students. This helped build interest in Rugby. It has been great to watch students come out and play this year.

After School Program

The after school program is at Merritt Bench until May 15th. Participants have been participating in Taekwondo, dance, outside and arts and crafts.

Bison - Respect



We held a school assembly with focus on the teaching of Respect. Going forward Merritt Bench will be focusing on the Grandfather teachings to help us build our code of conduct and a common language for our school community.

Nicola Canford



Buffalo Jerky

Our language classes were able to make buffalo jerky this month and learn about the anti-microbial science in the traditional smoking and drying of meat. It was a delicious lesson.



Nicola Canford Ninja Warrior

Nicola Canford held our annual Ninja Warrior Competition this month. Students prepared all month for a chance to represent their house team in the finals. Congratulations to Eagles and Hawks who tied for first place and congratulations to all of our students for working so hard this month to practice the course.



Climbing Wall



Mrs. Ellingsen's class got to be the first students to try out MSS's new auto belayers this month. What a great time. Thank you so much to MSS for hosting.

Bake and Read



Our primary classrooms were able to visit MSS for Bake & Read. Students got to enjoy making cupcakes, crafts and reading books with MSS students. K^wuk^wsteyp to MSS for making this such a great experience.



REGIONAL SCIENCE FAIR

Regional Science Fair

Our Nicola Canford science fair champions joined with the rest of the district champions to attend the Regional Science Fair at TRU. We won multiple medals across the schools and got to take part in some truly engaging science activities. Great work Talan, Jolene, Red, Mackenna, Sage, Tinashe and Ivan. We are so proud of you.

Intermediate Skating

Mrs. Pattison's class hatched chickens this month and it has been a fluffy chick party! They have named each one and are caring for them over the next few weeks in the classroom. Students got to learn about the developmental stages of a chicken.



Hoop Dancing

What a treat to have Gary Abbott visit and teach kids some Hoop Dancing skills. K^wuk^wsteyp Gary for sharing his skills with our kids. They have been very excited to sign up on the days that he is available to come to the school.



— May 2026 —

Community Learning Centre

April was a busy month at CLC, highlighted by the after-school Grad Dress Glamorous Pop-Up Boutique, where students could attend with family and friends to enjoy a supportive and celebratory grad dress shopping experience complete with refreshments.

Students also participated in a two-part Earth Day experience at the Shackan Greenhouse, learning about indigenous plants, seed processing, and transplanting strawberry plants to take home. The second visit focused on seed harvesting and understanding their role in post-flood revitalization efforts.

Additionally, Natasha Robichaud from NVIT visited to support students in setting up BCEIDs and Education Planner accounts, helping them prepare for post-secondary applications.

The team congratulates Alyssa Sampson-Sargent as the first student to successfully fulfill all graduation requirements through the new CLC Outreach Program!

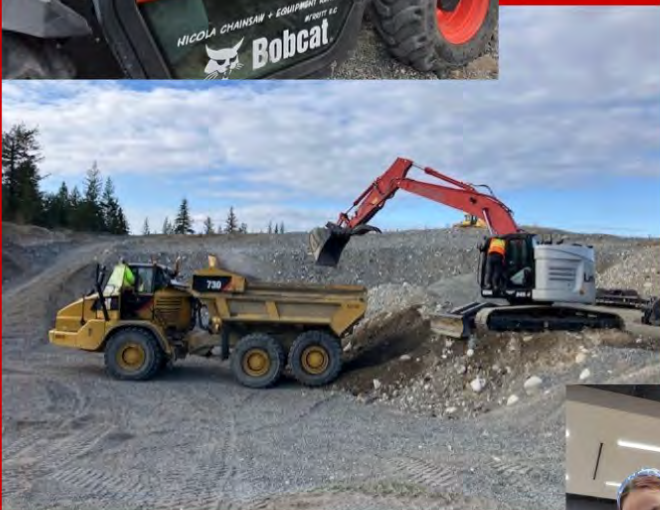
Overall, these activities reflect CLC's strong focus on experiential learning, community connection, and supporting students in their transition beyond graduation.



MERRITT SECONDARY

April was an active and engaging month at Merritt Secondary School, with students participating in a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities both in and outside the classroom.

A major highlight was the 3rd annual SD58 Rocks Heavy Equipment Operator Experience. Students from both Merritt Secondary School and Princeton Secondary School spent two days learning how to safely operate a variety of heavy equipment through hands-on training and guided practice alongside industry professionals. This unique program continues to grow through strong partnerships between Nicola Similkameen School District and local industry partners, providing students with authentic exposure to careers in the trades and resource sectors while building confidence, safety awareness, and practical skills.



MSS students also participated in the "Jill of All Trades" event at Okanagan College, where female students explored a wide variety of opportunities within the skilled trades through hands-on activities and mentorship.

As spring weather arrived, opportunities for land-based and outdoor learning also increased. Mrs. de Visser successfully secured a grant for water testing supplies, allowing several science classes to incorporate local environmental testing and field-based learning into their coursework. These experiences help students connect classroom concepts to real-world applications while deepening their understanding of environmental stewardship and scientific inquiry.



Our Woodwork program has also been exceptionally busy this spring. Students have been designing and building sheds from the ground up, with completed projects being sold to reinvest funds back into the program. These projects provide valuable hands-on experience in carpentry, construction, planning, and teamwork while also helping sustain and expand opportunities for future students. A generous lumber donation from Gorman Brothers has further strengthened the program and supported student learning. Special recognition goes to Mr. McKibbin for his ongoing commitment to enhancing the Woodwork program and creating meaningful learning opportunities for students.



MSS teacher Damodar Paquette was recognized provincially by Junior Achievement British Columbia as one of seven "Champion Teachers" in British Columbia for his outstanding work in Career Education. This recognition highlights the important work taking place at MSS to prepare students for future career pathways and opportunities.

The MSS Bike Team has entered competition season and continues to represent the school at events throughout the region while also preparing to host a local race in Merritt.



April also provided meaningful opportunities for student learning through guest speakers. MSS welcomed Jeff Gerber, who spoke with students about the importance of belonging and connection within schools and communities. Students also heard from MSS alumnus Harlan Kingfisher, founder of Smudge the Blades and a well-known social media creator, who shared his journey and spoke about the power of sport, business, motivation, perseverance, and sobriety.





Merritt Central Elementary School



Jump Rope for Heart



Our school recently celebrated our annual Jump Rope for Heart event, bringing students and staff together to promote physical activity and wellness. The event began with a whole-school assembly led by Mrs. Smith, where students learned about the purpose of the campaign and the importance of heart health. Mrs. Smith highlighted key habits that support both physical and mental well-being, including healthy eating, hydration, exercise, sleep, and mindfulness.

Students enjoyed jump-rope demonstrations by both primary and intermediate classes, setting a fun and energetic tone. Following the assembly, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Cleaveley supported students by providing jump-rope skills, equipment, songs and chants, and encouragement, often joining students during recess and lunch. Several teachers also joined in by incorporating jump rope into PHE classes or jumping alongside students during breaks.

The event wrapped up with a fantastic finale, coordinated by Mrs. Smith, who organized a collaboration with MSS Leadership Big Buddies. These students ran a variety of activity stations including basketball, hula hoops, bean bag games, tag, sidewalk games, and jump rope creating a fantastic high-energy conclusion. It was a wonderful celebration of movement, leadership, and community.

Kamloops Rugby Club



Our school recently hosted a one-hour in-school rugby introduction session for Grade 6/7 students from MCEs and CV as an exciting start to the rugby season. The session gave students the opportunity to learn basic skills, experience the teamwork and energy of the sport, and explore rugby in a welcoming, hands-on way. All participating students thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



This session was made possible through a new connection with the Kamloops Rugby Club, helping to build enthusiasm and encourage student participation in elementary rugby. We are excited to be sending 24 student-athletes to the Rugby Festival in Kamloops this June, where they will have the opportunity to continue developing their skills and love for the sport alongside peers from other schools.

District Rugby



We are incredibly grateful for the dedication of our rugby coaches, who have built a thriving program for our students this year. With over 50 students across three teams, practices are running three days a week, and the commitment from both coaches and players has been exceptional.

A huge thank you to Mrs. Martindale and Mrs. Tolmie, who along with successfully convincing Mr. Shea to come on board (even though rugby is usually the one sport where he gets to enjoy a quiet lunchtime!) have created a positive, energetic environment for learning and growth. Their guidance is helping students develop not only strong rugby skills, but also a genuine love for the sport and excitement about continuing into high school.

Beyond the field, we appreciate how the coaches' commitment supports students in problem-solving social challenges, skills we are seeing transfer into students' unstructured time at school as well. We are truly fortunate to have such passionate and committed coaches supporting our learners.

Inspiring Republic



Anti-racism is a key focus of our Enhanced Learning goals at MCEs, as we work to foster a safe, respectful, and anti-racist school environment through inclusive language, storytelling, cultural education, and community connection.

Alongside other elementary schools in the district, we invited Inspiring Republic to deliver a virtual presentation focused on equity, respect, and belonging. Two separate sessions were offered to ensure the message was developmentally appropriate for students at different age and grade levels.

The message was powerful and left a lasting impression: we are all unique individuals who deserve respect, and no one should ever be judged or made to feel less because of their skin colour, race, or religion. Students were engaged, reflective, and thoughtful, helping reinforce our shared commitment to inclusion, kindness, and belonging.

Indigenous Games



Our school was proud to host the annual District Indigenous Games, welcoming Grade 6 students from across the district to the MCES athletic field for a meaningful day of connection, community, and culture.

A huge thank you to Ms. Martha, the lead organizer, who thoughtfully coordinated mixed school groups, ensured activities ran smoothly, brought in community members, supported group leaders, and made sure students and helpers were well cared for including providing Bannock for everyone to enjoy.

Students had a fantastic time participating in traditional activities such as Knobbyball, High Kick, Lahal, Big Drum, Rock Throw, and Hoop Jump, making this an awesome and memorable learning experience for all.



Vancouver Warriors



We recently hosted a lacrosse presentation for students in Kindergarten to Grade 7, and it was an engaging and memorable experience for everyone involved. Through an interactive presentation, students learned about the **Indigenous roots of lacrosse**, the history and purpose of the game, and the First Peoples' perspective on learning, along with the basic rules of play.

Students were highly engaged throughout, but a definite highlight was meeting **Curtis Dickson**, a Vancouver Warriors player and one of the top goal scorers in the league. For many students, meeting a professional lacrosse player made the learning feel especially exciting and meaningful.

The session also included a hands-on fitness component, where a group of students participated in lacrosse drills and games. The enthusiasm, movement, and positive energy were clear, and students left feeling inspired and eager to keep learning and playing.

tmxwulaxw Gathering



Miss Matheson's class went up to Chapperon Lake to be a part of the tmxwulaxw Gathering. The students joined Nkwala students and Upper Nicola band members to pay respect and offer good thoughts for the work that is being done as it relates to the Douglas Lake Commonage. Students learned and played traditional games, roasted fish and hot dogs over the fire, learned about the land, explored the local language, and discovered the role of food chiefs and the importance of being out on the land. It was a meaningful experience that helped students connect to the land, community and each other.

Regional Science Fair



We are incredibly proud of the hard work, curiosity, and innovation shown by our students who advanced beyond our school science fair to participate in the Regional Science Fair at Thompson Rivers University. This opportunity allowed students to engage in high-level scientific thinking alongside peers from across the region.

As an extra-curricular activity, much of the project work was completed at home or during students' unstructured time at school, and we are grateful to families for their ongoing support.

A huge thank you to Mrs. Morrison and Ms. Martindale for their guidance during Science Fair Club, helping students problem-solve, refine their thinking, stay on track, and ensure all regional paperwork was complete. We also extend our appreciation to district coaches Mrs. Dreger and Mrs. Kannigan for accompanying and supervising students on the trip to Kamloops.

Primary Run Club



A big thank you to Mrs. Smith and Ms. Martindale for finding a way to bring more outdoor physical activity opportunities to our primary students. While our district offers many great options for intermediate students, we were noticing growing interest from our younger learners.

Mrs. Smith and Ms. Morrison responded by creating Primary Run Club, a welcoming, low-pressure opportunity for students to join in on Thursdays and move with friends. The club encourages stamina, pacing, and a love of being active, while making it easy for students to participate at their own comfort level.

We are grateful for their initiative and commitment to meeting the needs of our "littles" and helping them build healthy habits early on.

Jason Simon Presentation



We were honoured to welcome Jason Simon, a former NHL player and proud member of the Aamjiwnaang First Nation, to our school for a powerful and motivating presentation. Jason shared his personal journey of growing up on reserve, experiencing bullying, and how hockey, training, and setting goals helped him stay focused, avoid trouble, and believe in his potential as a young person.

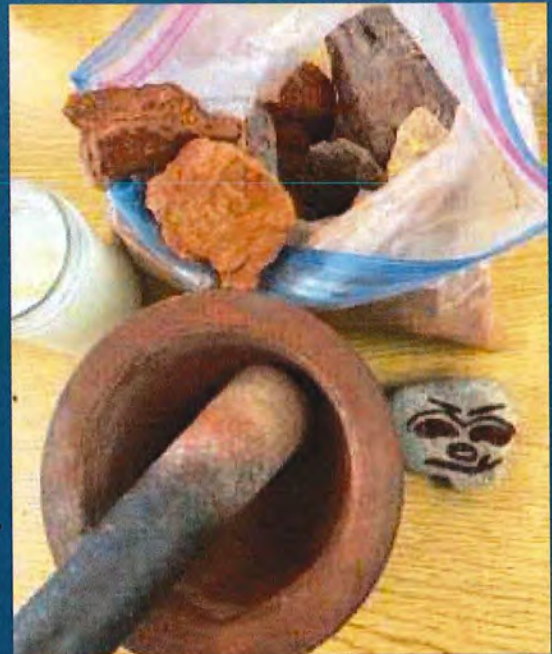
Jason went on to play professional hockey across multiple leagues, including the NHL with the New York Islanders and Phoenix Coyotes, and now travels across Canada speaking with youth about perseverance, resilience, and making positive choices. His message strongly resonated with students, who were highly engaged throughout the presentation.

We also had the pleasure of hosting Diamondvale and Collettsville, and it was wonderful to see outstanding audience skills, respectful listening, and engagement from students across all schools. A meaningful and inspiring experience for everyone involved.



Our Indigenous Professional Development Making Ribbon Shirts and Skirts

Princeton Secondary, John Allison, Vermilion Forks exploring the Canadian Geographic Indigenous People Floor Map of Canada



Our Indigenous Support Worker sharing her learning on pictographs and ochre painting



Lunchtime beading of Metis flowers



PSS OPEN HOUSE
A GREAT TURNOUT



Outdoor Learning
Academics and
Fresh Air



APRIL 2026



DIAMOND VALE APRIL 2026

TRADITIONAL GAMES



Our Grade 6 students joined with other Grade 6s from across the school district to participate in traditional games, including spear throwing, hoop jumping, drumming, lahal and knobbyball.



GUEST SPEAKERS

Inspiration Republic presented to both our intermediate and primary students on the topic of **anti-racism**. Students learned about the history of racism, allyship and about celebrating differences.



Jason Simon is a retired NHL player who spoke to our students on the importance of resilience, perseverance and self-care. Students eagerly lined up for autographs at the end of the presentation.

Vancouver Warriors brought their 'Sticks to School' program to our school. Students learned about the history of the sport, its Indigenous connections, the rules of the game and participated in some hands on learning.



KAMLOOPS RUGBY TRY-IT DAY

Kamloops Rugby Club helped us to kick off our rugby season, by offering a 2 hour try-it session for our Grade 6/7 students. Coaches were engaging and had even the hesitant active and playing within minutes.



GRANDFATHER TEACHING

Forgiveness was our teaching for this month. We learned that forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or saying what happened was okay. It means choosing to let go of anger so you can feel better and move forward.





Collettville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community

Collettville Trip to Quebec City & Montreal



Students in Grade 6 & 7 had the incredible opportunity to travel to Québec City and Montréal, experiencing the richness of Francophone culture firsthand through visits to iconic sites such as Château Frontenac, Parliament, and a traditional cabane à sucre. The trip marked an important milestone in their French Immersion journey, allowing students to confidently use their language skills in authentic and memorable ways.



Collettsville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community

School Transition Events

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

COLLETTVILLE + CENTRAL JOINT EVENTS

- 13 MAY** LITERACY GAMES NIGHT & OPEN HOUSE
5-6 PM AT MCE SCHOOL
- 15 MAY** FAMILY PICNIC
11:45-12:45 AT MCE FIELD
- 28 MAY** FAMILY BBQ NIGHT
4:00-5:30 AT MCE
- 22 JUNE** PRIMARY FUN DAY
9:00-2:45 AT ROTARY PARK
- 23 JUNE** END-OF-YEAR CELEBRATION
9:00-2:45 AT MONCK PARK

Do you have questions about the transition?
Send them to cvschool@365.sd58.bc.ca, and check out the "Q&A" section on our school website – cves.nssd.ca

Recognizing the importance of belonging and relationship-building during times of change, Collettsville and Central Elementary have organized a series of collaborative transition events for students and families. These experiences are intentionally designed to support student well-being, strengthen community connections, and create a positive foundation for the new dual-track learning environment.



Collettsville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community

Éloïz Concert



We were thrilled to welcome Éloïz, a talented French folk artist, to our stage for an unforgettable concert experience. Joining us in the audience were FSL students from MSS and PSS, along with the French Immersion students from MSS—such a great opportunity to come together and celebrate French language and culture! Éloïz delivered an amazing performance that had everyone energized. Students loved hitting the dance floor and were especially excited to meet her and collect autographs after the show.

Vermilion Forks Elementary



APRIL AT VFE

VFE had a vibrant April, highlighted by a fun-filled Spirit Week (like Freaky Friday and Crazy Hair Day) organized by our Leadership Group that brought energy and enthusiasm throughout the school. Our PAC once again demonstrated incredible support with a hugely successful Growing Smiles fundraiser, helping to strengthen our school community. With the arrival of beautiful spring weather, classes made the most of outdoor learning opportunities, including hands-on experiences like gold panning in Mrs. Mailloux's class (pictured below), bringing learning to life in meaningful and memorable ways.

