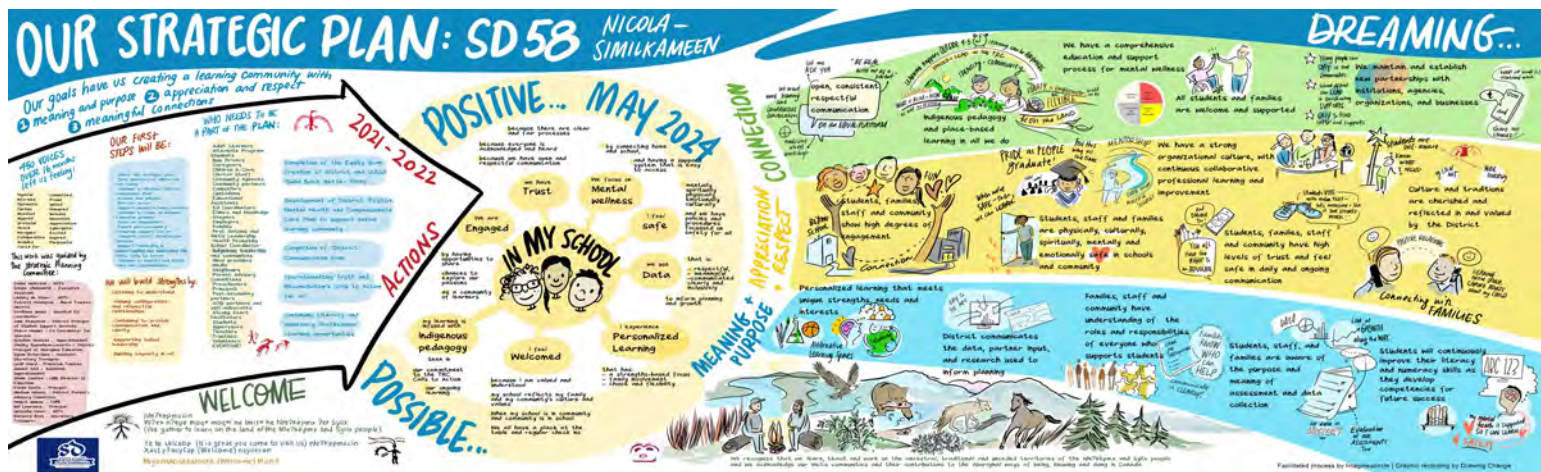




Superintendent's Report - June 2026

COMMUNITY
LEARNING
CENTRE

PSS
RAPIDS

SCIDES

The
Bridge

Class of 2026

Congratulations

to the graduating students of Merritt
Secondary, Princeton Secondary,
Community Learning Centre, The Bridge
and SCIDES!

"You're off to great places. Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So ... get
on your way." — Dr. Seuss, "Oh, the Places You'll Go!"





— June 2026 —

Community Learning Centre

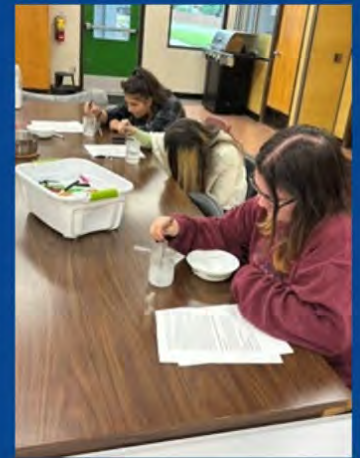


Students wrapped up their series of post-secondary visits with a trip to NVIT. They really enjoyed touring the campus, especially the nursing classroom, where they got hands-on with the simulation mannequins and even checked their vitals. The visit wrapped up with a lunch provided by NVIT and a special moment as Kayla, who will be attending in the fall, was gifted an NVIT hoodie.

In Science, students have been busy exploring the phases of the moon and how they connect to tides. They also took part in some great hands-on learning with mineral precipitation and crystal growth experiments. By simulating different environments, students were able to see how crystals form and better understand processes happening on Earth.

There have also been lots of great experiences in the Arts. Students learned about woodburning (poker art) and then got to try it out during a visit to the Nicola Valley Art Centre. In addition, Nex taught them about pictographs as a storytelling form. Students then got to see some in person during a field trip before trying their own hand at it. Another big highlight was making ribbon skirts with guest teacher Kaylee, a former MSS graduate. The students did an amazing job, and many of these skirts will be worn proudly at upcoming grad events.

Speaking of grad, we're excited to share that 13 CLC students will be participating in this year's graduation ceremonies. Of those, 2 have earned honour cords, and 3 achievement cords have been handed out. Congratulations to all of the graduates, we're very proud of everything they've accomplished and hope they are too!





MERRITT BENCH SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT JUNE 2026 BOARD MEETING



NVIT Visit

Grade 5 students had the opportunity to explore NVIT and learn about post-secondary opportunities. This was a great learning opportunity for grade 5 students that was also a lot of fun!



Talent Show

The Merritt Bench Talent show was a great success. Thank-you to Mrs. Ottens and all student participants for helping to put the show together.

We saw students demonstrate strengths in science, dance, singing, air band, guitar, piano and more!



Project Based Learning

Mr. Denton's class participated in some project based learning where they planned, designed a Taco Truck. Their culminating activity was a "taco fiesta", you can see Oliver enjoying his tacos in the picture below.



Battle of the Books

Picture to left is the Merritt Bench Battle of the Books Team!





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

May 2026

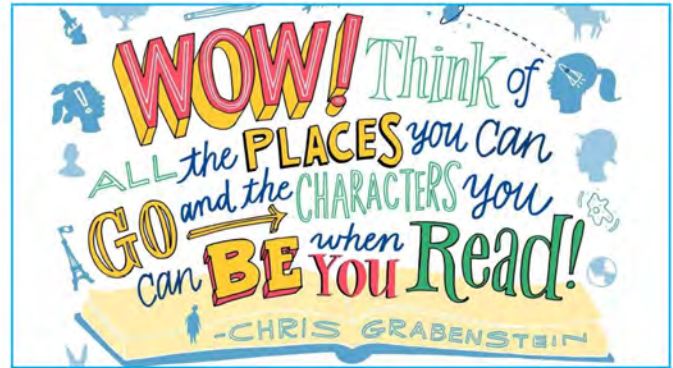
Our JAE school garden gives students hands-on experiences that build skills in science, nutrition, and caring for the environment. They help children practice responsibility and teamwork while learning how plants grow.

Gardening also encourages healthy eating by connecting students with the fresh vegetables they've grown themselves. Time in the garden supports well-being too, offering a calm, welcoming space for all learners. We're excited for another productive year in the garden with our students.





Our Kindergarten and Grade 1 students have been busy building the foundations of reading, and it's been wonderful to watch their confidence grow. Our students have explored alphabet sounds and they are blending these sounds together to read simple words, and discover the joy of decoding their very first books. From playful phonics games to shared reading time, every activity helps strengthen early literacy skills and fosters a love of stories.



BC Wildfire Service fire fighters class presentations #MerrittFire Zone





GRADE 2: BIRD PUPPET CREATION, CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT, STORY WRITING & PRESENTATION



With the grade 2 imaginations at work, their bird puppets came to life. Students named, created personalities, and wrote about the nests where their birds were born. The puppets can dance and sing, and each of them has their own favourite song. Students wrote a story about their bird and shared it with class. They participated in drama, creative writing, imaginary play, problem solving, creative and logical thinking, and oral language skill development all while having fun and making a new friend.



Our birds got to go for a walk & play on the JAE playground.



Princeton teachers learned about traditional **#indigenous** **#ribbonskirts** & **#ribbonshirts** in **Professional development**. Thank you Renee Goreas for being a key leader in this authentic indigenous learning. * Teachers then collaborated with Mrs. Unrau, our Indigenous Student Advocate, to share this learning with our students.



Stepping into Kindergarten

Ms. Ross and Ms. Francis welcomed our 2026-2027 Kindergarten students to John Allison Elementary.

*** PLAY * JOY * LEARN ***



Question: Do you know the difference between a fiddle and a violin?

In her program **"Celtic Traditions Across Canada"** Kierah explained that the fiddle and the violin are physically the exact same four-stringed instrument. The difference lies in the style of the music played and techniques used. Kierah demonstrated different styles of playing and explained what to listen for.



BUTTERFLY RELEASE: Our grade 2 students witnessed **metamorphosis** as caterpillar larva gained their chrysalis and adult butterflies finally emerged.



HANDS-ON SCIENCE: Ms. Schneider's grade 3 class has been busy growing beans, peas, jewel mix flowers, and radishes! Students have been observing and recording changes as their plants grow and they learn about plant life cycles. Through this hands-on activity, they also explored how plants support humans, animals, and the environment. The students have shown great curiosity and responsibility while caring for their plants, and they have loved watching their hard work grow a little more each day!



We've Got Spirit – Yes We Do! JAE students showed their school spirit in a big way as they arrived in style for Wacky Hair Day! From sticky up-py hair to colourful creations to birds nest designs, it was a fun-filled day full of laughter and personality.

WACKY HAIR DAY



Our Lost and Found is Growing! Our days often start off cool and warm up by the afternoon. As a result, many students arrive at school bundled up in extra layers, which are sometimes forgotten later in the day. Our Lost and Found is quickly filling up! We encourage families to stop by and take a look to see if any items belong to your child. Thank you for helping us reunite these belongings with their owners.



Grade 3 Students Demonstrate Leadership

The coin jar, the pink cash box, and those bright, proud smiles say it all! Knowing they would soon be moving on from JAE, these girls wanted to give back and support classrooms in a meaningful way. The students began planning their initiative back in September. They brought their ideas to life by selling gently used toys, creating and selling handmade bracelets, and even setting up a table in Tulameen. Community members supported their efforts by donating to their cause. Our Grade 3 students have truly shown what it means to be leaders in our school community! Together, they raised \$430 to be shared amongst our teachers to help them purchase extras for their classroom. Thank you for your initiative and generosity!

Strong Start Butterfly Project:

This spring, our Strong Start students engaged in a hands-on learning experience as they raised and released butterflies. It was a joy to watch our youngest learners observe the life cycle up close and celebrate this special moment of growth and change.

A big thank you to Teacher Erin for creating this meaningful opportunity and helping our littles connect with nature in such an engaging way!



Thank you JAE PAC for hosting ***A Birdy Told Me So***, a musical ventriloquist production that told the story of how **Kellie** met her bird puppet **Magrau** and their adventures growing up and learning together. Kellie and Magrau find the true meaning of the motto **"Never give up!"** & shared this with our students.



SCIDES - South Central Interior Distance Education School



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



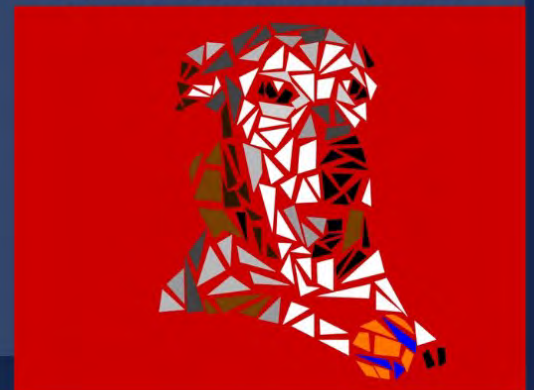
Pictures of two students
holding prizes for their
great efforts in Mrs.
Grimshire's STEM
Challenge.



Skimboarding
and "beach
baseball" were
activities
enjoyed by
Lions Peak
students.



Two different art styles – the
Pointillism technique and Digital Art –
are from Lions Peak students.





National Day of Awareness
and Remembrance for
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women, Girls,
and 2-Spirit People

MAY 2026



Field Trip to Secwepemc
Residential School.
Soapstone Carving.





AEL class choosing and
planting seeds to be put
into flower boxes in our
courtyard



Ms. Cheung's Art Class
Fashion Design
with Indigenous
Cultural Expression



Collettville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community

District Track Meet



Our students competed with determination, sportsmanship, and pride at the District Track Meet. Bravo, les Chats Sauvages!



CVE & MSS Collaboration

After an incredible year of collaboration between the Collettville Grade 6/7 class and the MSS FIM students, we wrapped up the year with a fun game of California Kickball and popsicles. A big thank-you to Mme Warren, Mme Berthelet, and all of the French Immersion students for their dedication.





Collettville Elementary School

Pride ~ Respect ~ Community

Battle of the Grades



The MSS French Immersion leadership students organized another friendly “Battle of the Grades” competition for our intermediate students. Events like this strengthen connections across the French Immersion program and help students envision future leadership opportunities as they continue their educational journey.

On behalf of the Collettville Staff, we wish everyone a restful summer and look forward to welcoming you to École Merritt Central Elementary in the Fall.

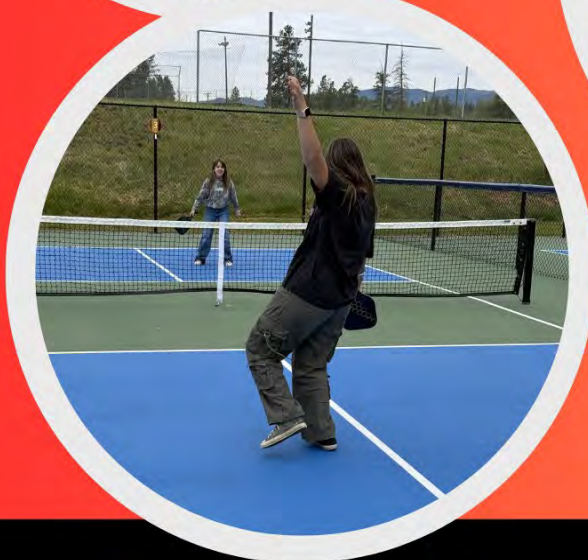
Vermilion Forks Elementary



FINISHING UP THE YEAR

As the school year wraps up, VFE has been buzzing with activity! We welcomed future students with a Grade 3 transition visit and brought literacy to life during our whole-school Amazing Literacy Race through downtown Princeton. Students also showed their talents at the district Track and Field Meet.

Our Grade 7s celebrated the end of their elementary years with a memorable trip to Camp Sunnybrae, while visiting Grade 12 graduates returned for a full-circle moment as we encouraged them in their next chapter. The month concluded with fun and active pickleball and swimming lessons, an exciting way to celebrate a year of growth, connection, and achievement at VFE.



Vermilion Forks Elementary



Nicola Canford



Track Meets

Our Intermediate classes were able to compete in our school track and field competitions as well as send a team to the district track meet this month. Kids had a great time.

Tree Planting

Division 2 and 3 had a great time at Harmon Lake today tree planting and participating in some science activities. Kwukwstep to the team of forestry workers and volunteers for the great learning opportunities they arranged. They always do such a great job!



Literacy Game Night



We had a fun time at our annual literacy game night tonight at Nicola Canford. Kwukwstep to Toni Stewart from Literacy Merritt for organizing so many great games and giveaways.

Culture Camp



Our Language students had a fantastic day at the District Culture Camp. The activities were great and the kids loved them. It was so good to spend time with our local elders and learn from them.



Shackan Greenhouse

Our Division 1 language class got to visit the Greenhouse out at Shackan to learn about the work they are doing on reserve and purchase some plants for the school garden. A special thanks to Shackan for hosting us and for providing such a great start to our school garden.

School Garden

It is so great to have our garden up and running. Thank you to our Garden Club for all of your hard work. The pumpkins and kale are planted. The irises are blooming and the fresh rhubarb tastes delicious! Another great start for the NC garden club. Kwuk^{www}steyp to Mrs. Nelson-Smith for all her help.



GARDENING



Merritt Raceway

It was a great field trip to the Merritt Raceway this month. The kids enjoyed the races and interacting with the racers and their cars. It was a special treat to see Kinley and Quinn race each other. It was a good reminder to the support our local races here in Merritt.





Merritt Central Elementary School



Annual safety Walk



On May 5, our school participated in the district's Annual Safety Walk, a day that honours Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse relatives. This important day serves as an opportunity to remember those who are missing, honour stolen lives, and raise awareness of the ongoing need for safety and advocacy.

At the elementary level, learning was approached in an age-appropriate and child-sensitive way, with a focus on personal safety and awareness. Classes engaged in *Kids in the Know* lessons, exploring topics such as street safety, being aware of surroundings, safe use of technology, and the "Run, Yell, Tell" strategy. Students also participated in body safety learning, reinforcing that their bodies belong to them and identifying safe and unsafe touch.

Students and staff took part in a walk through the downtown core, promoting visibility and community awareness. We extend our appreciation to Ms. Martha for her leadership in organizing the event and supporting classroom learning, and to Mrs. Martindale, Mrs. Smith, and the schools EAs for coordinating supervision and ensuring student safety along the route.

Kamloops Rugby Club



We are proud to celebrate an outstanding rugby season, led by the dedication of Mrs. Martindale, Mrs. Tolmie, and Mr. Shea. This year brought many highlights, including our school finishing as league champions for the first time, an incredible accomplishment for our team.

Mrs. Martindale and Mrs. Tolmie also supported a group of students in attending the first-ever Elementary Rugby Festival in Kamloops, providing a memorable experience for our novice athletes and further building their skills and enthusiasm for the sport.

Our athletics program continues to offer meaningful opportunities for students, fostering leadership, confidence, teamwork, and healthy living. The season concluded with a fun and inclusive celebration organized by the coaches, filled with games, laughter, and a strong sense of connection, reflecting the positive relationships built throughout the season.

District Rugby Tournament



Rugby Wrap Up





Students Teaching Students

One of Mr. S's most engaging and student-centred units invites students to become teachers by sharing a personal skill with their peers. Students select something they are confident in, ranging from complex skills such as roping, hip-hop dancing, or using a sewing machine, to simpler activities like creating pipe cleaner flowers or hula hooping. This unit places student voice and choice at the centre of learning while providing authentic opportunities to develop leadership, communication, and confidence. It is particularly noteworthy that all students are highly engaged, including those who are not typically drawn to traditional classroom tasks.

In addition to the pride students take in presenting their own skills, they also demonstrate enthusiasm and curiosity in learning from one another, fostering a strong sense of community, respect, and connectedness within the class.

Future Voters



Students in Ms. Morrison's class recently participated in an engaging mock election experience, bringing learning about community and citizenship to life. Grade 1 "mayoral candidates" prepared and delivered speeches to their classmates, building confidence and communication skills.

The class then took part in a full mock election, using voting cards and a booth to cast their ballots, providing a hands-on understanding of the voting process. This authentic experience supported student voice, critical thinking, and meaningful engagement.

A special thank you to Mayor Mike Goetz for his surprise visit on election day, which added excitement and helped connect classroom learning to the broader community.

Merritt Central & Collettville Transition Events



In preparation for joining as one school community in the fall, Merritt Central and Collettville have hosted a series of intentional transition events to build student and family connections and promote a strong sense of belonging.

Highlights included a Literacy Merritt sponsored Family Games Night with a school-wide scavenger hunt and literacy activities, a well-attended family picnic with outdoor games and shared lunch, and a wrap-up evening barbecue. These events provided meaningful opportunities for students to connect with new peers and for families to build relationships within the school community.

We extend our appreciation to staff and community partners for their contributions, including Miss Martha, Ms. Dani, and the Collettville PAC. These experiences have played an important role in supporting student well-being and fostering a positive, unified school culture ahead of the transition.



Merritt Speedway



Students from Mrs. Ferris, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Easterbrook, Mrs. Tourand, and Miss Matheson's classes enjoyed an exciting visit to the Merritt Speedway. Throughout the day, students had the opportunity to watch live races, ask questions of drivers, and even sit in the race cars, creating an engaging, real-world learning experience.

The visit sparked curiosity, excitement, and meaningful connections to the community, making it a memorable day for all involved. A sincere thank you to Mr. Bergmann from Nicola Canford and the Merritt Speedway team for making this opportunity possible for our students.

Track Meet



Our school and district track meets were a great success, made possible through the time, effort, and collaboration of many. We extend our sincere thanks to the district maintenance crew for preparing the track, lining the field, and setting up equipment, an enormous undertaking that we greatly appreciate.

A special acknowledgment to Mr. Shea, who dedicates weeks to preparing our intermediate students through a focused "boot camp" approach, working alongside classroom teachers to build skills, confidence, and readiness for competition. We are also grateful to Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Martindale for their extensive behind-the-scenes organization, including event registration, materials preparation, results tracking, and announcing. Thank you to all staff, including teachers, EAs, and ISAs, who supported supervision and ran stations, as well as Mrs. Nelson-Smith for her support at the finish line and MSS students for their assistance with timing and events. We also appreciate Mrs. Chhabra and her team for coordinating the concession. Our school track meet was a positive and energetic event, and we were proud to have many students represent our school at the district meet with strong sportsmanship, enthusiasm, and athleticism.

Tree Planting



As part of Forest Week, MCES Grade 5 students had the opportunity to participate in the Annual Tree Plant, co-led by the Merritt Forest Week Committee and the Ministry of Forests. This year, we were grateful to send two full classes. Students explored engaging learning stations on aquatic ecosystems and wildfire preparedness, led by Ministry partners and the BC Wildfire Service. A special highlight was planting their own trees, giving students a tangible way to contribute to the environment. The experience was both inspiring and educational, reinforcing the importance of caring for the land.

Mr. Shea's grade 6/7 Class Struts their stuff for their ADST Fashion Show



Mr. Shea's ADST class brought creativity and innovation to life through a student-led Fashion Show. As part of their design learning, students planned, created, and modeled their own wearable pieces, applying the ADST design process from idea generation through to final product. The runway event provided an engaging opportunity for students to showcase their work while building confidence and communication skills. The project highlighted student creativity, problem-solving, and pride in their learning, making for a vibrant and memorable celebration.

BOYS GROUP



Since the end of February, a group of MCES boys have been participating in a weekly Boys Group led by community Knowledge Keeper Tim Manuel and supported by ISA Jody Miller. Through this program, students have had regular opportunities to connect with the land while learning about self-awareness and emotional well-being. The sessions focused on helping students identify their emotions and explore culturally grounded strategies for self-regulation. Students were also introduced to the teachings of the Coyote Brotherhood, strengthening their understanding of identity, responsibility, and connection to culture. This meaningful program has supported student well-being and fostered a sense of belonging and growth.

Battle of the Books



The annual Battle of the Books, organized by SD58 librarians, was once again a highlight of the school year. MCES was proudly represented by two teams, The Croutons and The Butterfingers, who demonstrated strong teamwork and enthusiasm for reading.

A special thank you goes to Leanne Cleaveley for her exceptional leadership. As both our teacher-librarian and the district coordinator, this event required extensive planning, preparation, and commitment to students. Leanne supported not only our school but also Diamond Vale, while coordinating the event across the district. We are incredibly grateful for her dedication. She truly is nothing short of amazing.



Our Strong Start program continues to thrive under the leadership of Mrs. Gage, who creates a warm and engaging environment that inspires curiosity and connection for our youngest learners and their families. She thoughtfully supports families by sharing resources and strategies that extend learning beyond the classroom, while intentionally building oral language as a key foundation for early literacy.

This month, students demonstrated strong collaboration during play-based learning, particularly through shared experiences at the sand table and during playdough exploration. These opportunities supported communication, creativity, and social development. Students also explored the life cycle of butterflies, deepening their curiosity about the natural world.

We are grateful for Mrs. Gage's dedication and the meaningful impact she has on early learning at MCES.



DIAMOND VALE MAY/JUNE 2026

VISIT TO MERRITT SPEEDWAY



Students in Grades 2-6 had the exciting opportunity to visit the Merritt Speedway. During their visit, they were welcomed into the pits where they met the drivers, explored the race cars up close, and learned more about the sport. The experience concluded with students enjoying the thrill of watching a live race.



ARTS FESTIVAL

Maud Lewis was the featured artist for our Arts Festival this year. Staff and students learned about the life and artwork of Maud Lewis and created their own pieces inspired by her unique style. Our hallways were transformed into an art gallery filled with beautiful creations by both students and staff.



We were privileged to enjoy a performance by Kierah, who introduced us to Celtic Traditions Across Canada. Kierah played the fiddle/violin and taught students about the history of Celtic music and how it has become a part of Canada's cultural heritage. Primary students also had the opportunity to attend a performance by the talented Salmon Arm Secondary School band.

Our Arts Festival culminated in a celebration of the performing arts within our school community. 'Diamond Vale's Got Talent' showcased the talent, creativity, and confidence of our students and was a wonderful way to celebrate the arts together.



KAMLOOPS RUGBY FESTIVAL

Our partnership with the Kamloops Rugby Club continued, with students from our school rugby team participating alongside schools from Kamloops and the surrounding region in the inaugural Kamloops Elementary Rugby Festival.



SPIUS CREEK HATCHERY

Mrs. Kaur's class partnered with the Spilus Creek Hatchery by caring for their own aquarium in the classroom. This hands-on experience gave students the opportunity to observe the life cycle of salmon firsthand. The project concluded with a visit to the Spilus Creek Hatchery, where students learned about the natural habitats of fish and other aquatic animals before releasing their salmon into the water.



MERRITT SECONDARY

May was a busy and rewarding month at Merritt Secondary School, filled with opportunities for students to connect with their community, engage in meaningful learning experiences, and showcase their talents both inside and outside the classroom.

MSS students participated in the annual Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S+) Awareness Walk, joining community members in recognizing and honouring those who have been impacted by violence. This event provided an important opportunity for learning, reflection, and solidarity while reinforcing our ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.



Students across several subject areas participated in a variety of enriching field experiences throughout the month. Science students attended a forensic science-focused learning experience at Thompson Rivers University, while Physics students travelled to Vancouver for a hands-on learning excursion that included data collection and activities at Playland as well as a visit to the TRIUMF particle accelerator facility. Additional science students travelled to the Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory in Penticton, where they explored cutting-edge research and applications in astronomy and astrophysics.

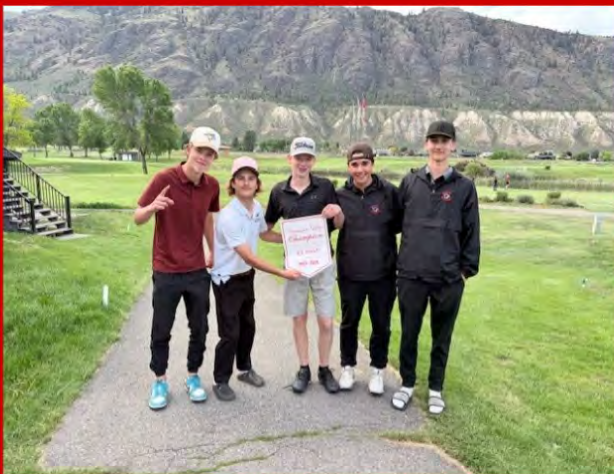
The Arts and Humanities also provided meaningful opportunities for student learning and engagement. The Drama class attended a theatrical production at the Sagebrush Theatre in Kamloops, while English 12 students completed their short story writing projects and shared their work with elementary students. This opportunity allowed students to celebrate their accomplishments as writers while fostering connections with younger learners in our community.



Students in Grades 10–12 attended the Youth Resiliency Conference at Shulus Arbor, where they participated in workshops and activities focused on personal wellness, leadership, culture, and resilience. These experiences supported students in developing skills and perspectives that will serve them well both in school and beyond.



Athletics and extracurricular programs continued to achieve impressive results. Both the MSS Ultimate Frisbee Team and Golf Team qualified for the Provincial Championships, reflecting the dedication and commitment of our student-athletes and coaches. The MSS Electric Go-Kart Racing Team also represented the school at a provincial competition in Golden, BC, earning an impressive third-place finish overall against teams from across the province.



May was also an important month for welcoming future Panthers to MSS. Grade 7 students visited the school as part of our transition activities, providing them with opportunities to become familiar with the building, staff, and school culture before beginning high school in the fall.