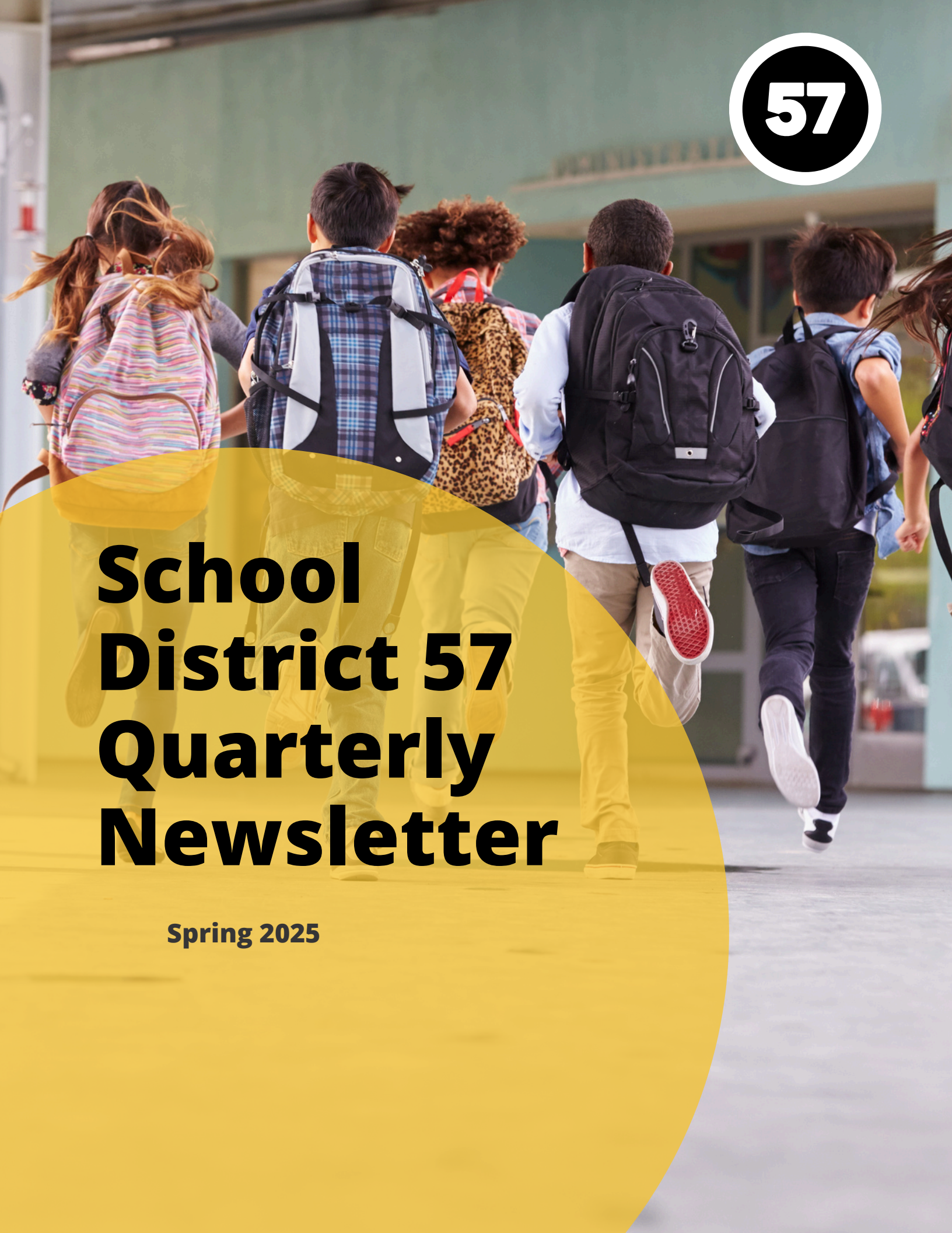


A group of diverse students are running away from the camera on a paved path. They are wearing backpacks of various colors and patterns. The background shows a school building with large windows and a green wall. A large yellow semi-circle is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

57

School District 57 Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2025

SCHOOL DISTRICT 57 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



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MESSAGE FROM DSAC

As the days grow longer and the snow begins to melt, our schools are buzzing with energy and excitement for the season ahead. Welcome to the second issue of the *School District 57 Quarterly Newsletter*, a publication created by the District Student Advisory Council (DSAC) to highlight the incredible achievements, initiatives, and stories from across our schools.

This issue is a celebration of the diversity of student experiences, featuring updates from DSAC, highlights from both elementary and secondary schools, and a look into the vibrant fine arts and athletics programs that continue to inspire creativity and teamwork. From student-led projects to outstanding performances on the stage and in sports, our district is filled with stories of passion, perseverance, and innovation.

The voices of students remain at the heart of this newsletter, and we are proud to showcase the efforts of young leaders who are shaping our school communities. Whether through advocacy, artistic expression, or athletic excellence, students across the district are making a difference.

You may also notice that the colors of this newsletter (yellow, red, black, and white) reflect the teachings of the Medicine Wheel, an important symbol in Indigenous cultures representing balance, interconnectedness, and the four directions. These colors remind us of the diverse perspectives, histories, and knowledge systems that contribute to our shared learning journey.

We invite you to explore this edition, celebrate the successes of our peers, and stay connected with the many exciting initiatives happening in our schools. Thank you for being part of our learning community!

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

After having had the opportunity to view the first edition of the SD57 Newsletter, I want to begin by extending my congratulations to all the students who had a hand in its creation. I know that many adults supported this student initiative, and I am pleased to see it come to fruition. After attending a recent District Student Advisory Council (DSAC) meeting with students to hear them critically review the first edition and seek to make improvements for a better, more readable version, I know this work is in the right hands.

As a school district we strive to be responsive to our students, families and community in an ever-changing world. Student perspective, sharing experiences and letting us know what is and what is not working for them, is the critical feedback we need as a system to keep striving towards excellence.

Even when the feedback is not necessarily within the ability of a public system to address, knowing what our students are thinking, what they are proud of, choose to highlight and ultimately what makes their school experiences valuable is all I can ask for as a system leader.

Kudos to all our student leaders, students overall, staff and families. It is truly wonderful to see your accomplishments celebrated and shared!



BOARD OF EDUCATION

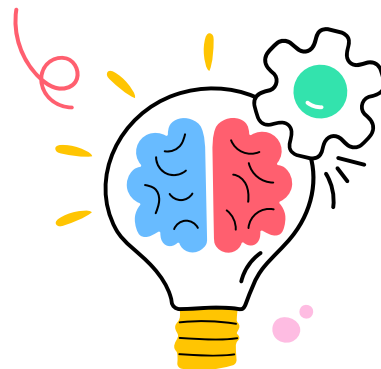
Understanding the role of Board of Education helps students and families stay informed about how schools are managed and how decisions are made. The work of the Board impacts students, teachers, and families, ensuring that schools provide quality education and a safe learning environment. In our District, there are seven trustees on the Board.

The Board:

- sets policies, approves budgets, and hires the superintendent who runs the district;
- listens to parents, students, staff, rights holders and the community to make sure schools meet local needs;
- advocates for funding, resources, and programs to support student success;
- helps improve education through thoughtful planning and prudent governance.

The Board welcomes District Student Advisory Council representatives who provide input on issues that affect students. Students can also share their ideas and concerns with teachers, principals, or trustees.

Trustees are elected every four years during municipal elections. This means that the composition of the Board changes after each election. The next municipal election will be on Saturday, October 17, 2026.





Building Connections at Giscome Elementary

Giscome Elementary recently hosted an exciting visit from four members of the District Student Advisory (DSAC), led by Dylan Clifford and Kelsey MacDonald. Joining them were Niko Santos (Duchess Park), Chayina Kitchen (DP Todd), Alaina Skelly (Shas-Ti Kelly Road), and Wajih Mansour (College Heights). This initiative aimed to build relationships, foster community, and amplify student voices, helping shape enriching school experiences while inspiring future leaders.

The day began with a circle for introductions, followed by outdoor playtime—a highlight for Giscome students, where nature and activity are integral to their learning. High school and elementary students connected over sports, cleared snow to play hockey, and visited the school's "sit spots," a cherished outdoor space for observing nature and finding calm. For many, this marked a transformation in how students engaged with their environment and each other.

The visit extended into the gym and a shared lunch, where relationships deepened over conversation and collaboration. One particularly shy student came out of their shell, energized by mental challenges like chess and physical activities such as dodgeball. Another student expressed gratitude, hugging staff and thanking them for the experience.

Vice-Principal Christine reflected on the success of the day: "This visit was not only meaningful for our students but also a reminder of why I stepped into administration—to empower teachers and bring their ideas to life." Dylan, Kelsey, and DSAC are excited to continue creating opportunities that amplify student voices and strengthen connections between schools.

A big thank-you to everyone involved, from DSAC and the administration team to staff and our amazing Educational Assistant, Marge Giesbrecht, whose delicious lunch was a highlight for many students. This memorable day showcased the power of collaboration, community, and the potential of student leadership.





DSAC Brings "The Power of Kindness" to École College Heights Elementary

DSAC visited École College Heights Elementary to deliver a powerful presentation on anti-bullying, focusing on The Power of Kindness. The session encouraged students to reflect on their experiences, understand different forms of bullying, and explore ways to foster a more inclusive and supportive school environment.

The presentation featured personal stories, including those from DSAC alumni Nikko and Lily, who shared how acts of kindness shaped their school experiences. Joining DSAC for this visit were Emily Wall and Cailyn McKeown of PGSS, further strengthening the message of student leadership and advocacy. The discussion also highlighted the lasting impact of bullying and emphasized the importance of standing up for others.

Students were challenged to take action through the Secret Kindness Mission, inspiring them to go beyond the classroom and create positive change in their communities. The visit concluded with a call to Be the Change, reinforcing the message that even small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

DSAC remains committed to empowering students across the district, and this visit was a reminder of the role we all play in creating a kinder tomorrow.





Edgewood Elementary Choir Shines on Stage at Coldsnap!

This winter, our school choir, led by the dedicated Mrs. Krauskopf, had an incredible opportunity to collaborate with award-winning musical artist Ginalina in preparation for a special performance at the annual Coldsnap Music Festival.

Students ranging in age from Grades 2-6 spent several weeks rehearsing with Ginalina over Zoom, guided by Mrs. Krauskopf. They built confidence and skills along the way. On performance day their enthusiasm was evident as they took the stage alongside Ginalina and her band, delivering a memorable show for the festival audience.

The partnership was more than just a performance, it gave our students a valuable experience in collaboration and commitment and brought our community together in celebration and the joy of music. We are so proud of our young singers for their hard work and courage, and we're grateful to Mrs. Krauskopf, parent volunteers, Ginalina, and the Coldsnap Music Festival for making this unforgettable experience possible.

Bravo to our Edgewood choir for a truly inspiring performance!





Nusdeh Yoh Host Northern Games

The Northern Games is a competition that focuses on developing agility, strength, and endurance. These attributes are required for surviving the harsh climate of Northern Canada. Additionally, the games test individual and the collective perseverance, and communities compete against each other for bragging rights. Some of the events include: one-foot high kick, the musk-ox push, leg wrestling, and the stick jump.

Nusdeh Yoh students have been learning the history and the purpose of the games, and the students have been working hard to develop their skillsets to compete against each other for bragging rights. Nusdeh Yoh students have been also been busy going to other elementary schools to teach other School District 57 students the skills and techniques need to succeed in the Northern Games. The teaching will culminate with Nusdeh Yoh hosting a Northern Games competition for other elementary schools.



Springwood's Grade 7s Take on The Challenge!

Springwood's Grade 7 students are once again taking part in The Challenge, an exciting annual event that brings energy and friendly competition to the school. Organized by Mrs. Turkington, this highly anticipated tradition is open to all Grade 7 students and offers them the chance to test their skills, teamwork, and perseverance in a series of fun and engaging challenges.

Thanks to the generous support of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC), students receive custom event shirts, prizes, and the necessary equipment to make The Challenge a success. Each week, teams go head-to-head in different competitions, with participants being gradually eliminated until a final winner is crowned. The event not only encourages friendly rivalry but also fosters camaraderie, resilience, and school spirit among students.

For Grade 7s, The Challenge is a highlight of the school year, eagerly anticipated as a rite of passage before they move on to high school. Staff also enjoy the shift in routine, as it provides a refreshing break from the winter months, filling the school with excitement and energy. Whether competing or cheering from the sidelines, everyone at Springwood benefits from the spirit of fun and teamwork that The Challenge brings!





Quinson Elementary's Land-Based Learning: Exploring, Connecting, and Growing

Our Land-Based Learning Assistance program, offers a unique opportunity for a small group of students to connect with the ancestral territory on which we learn and play. The program is rooted in meeting curricular competencies while engaging in the learning process on the land.

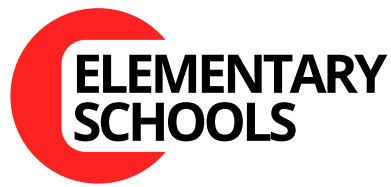
We have engaged in a number of adventures so far this year from gathering wild berries at Otway, learning about local flora, to trying our hand at fishing on the Nechako and Fraser rivers, gaining valuable skills and a deeper understanding of our local waterways. We've also been developing essential outdoor skills, such as fire-making in both fall and winter conditions, and crafting personalized walking sticks from foraged wood, a process that involves collecting, sanding, whittling, and painting. Exploring our local parks, we've learned to identify various tree species and understand their importance in our ecosystem. A particularly memorable experience was our visit to the trapline with Mr. Roberts and Mr. Tanner, where students gained firsthand knowledge of traditional practices and wildlife management. During the winter months, we embraced the snowy landscape, venturing out for snowshoeing adventures and ice fishing at West Lake. These activities allowed us to experience the beauty of our region in a different season and practice winter survival skills. We've also honed our observation skills by identifying animal tracks in the snow, learning about the diverse wildlife that surrounds us.

We've brought awareness to the accessibility of nature within our city. By utilizing the city bus whenever possible, we've demonstrated that engaging with the natural world is within reach for all students.

When the weather prevents outdoor activities, we have learned how to bake various delicious desserts and treats utilizing numeracy skills applicable to the world in which we live. These sessions provide a fun and collaborative environment for students to learn and practice practical skills.

This program is about more than just outdoor adventures; it's about fostering a sense of place, developing practical skills, and building a strong connection to our environment. We're aiming to create a positive and enriching experience for our students, encouraging them to become responsible stewards of our natural resources.





Future Doctors Bring Hands-On Learning to Peden Hill

Students in Ms. Hiller and Mrs. Ostritchenko's class were thrilled to welcome UNBC Medical Students—and a furry friend—for an exciting and educational visit!

Dr. Bear helped introduce students to what it's like to visit the doctor, guiding them through a hands-on "clinic" experience that mimicked a pediatrics ward. Rotating through different stations, students learned about the tools used in a doctor's office, what happens during a check-up, and key medical terms. They had the chance to use stethoscopes to listen to their hearts, test reflexes with a reflex hammer, and see how tongue depressors help during an exam.

One of the highlights of the day was an interactive station where a teddy bear arrived with a "broken" arm, allowing students to explore what happens during an X-ray. The UNBC Medical Students also emphasized the importance of handwashing and personal hygiene, including brushing teeth regularly to stay healthy.

This engaging and interactive experience gave students valuable insight into the medical field while making learning fun. A huge thank you to Ms. Hiller, Mrs. Ostritchenko, and the UNBC Medical Program for bringing this special day to Peden Hill!





Peer Mentoring Program Builds Bridges Between Shas Ti Kelly Road and Heather Park Elementary

A new peer mentoring program between Shas Ti Kelly Road Secondary and Heather Park Elementary is strengthening connections between students while fostering leadership, confidence, and a sense of belonging. Secondary school mentors are spending time with younger students, offering support in academics, sports, and social-emotional well-being while helping them develop essential core competencies.

This initiative is especially valuable in preparing elementary students for the transition to secondary school. Moving to a larger school can feel overwhelming, but having familiar faces among older students creates a sense of safety and belonging. These relationships ease anxieties and help younger students feel more at home when they take their next steps into secondary school life.

For the secondary school mentors, the program is an opportunity to build leadership, empathy, and responsibility. By guiding and encouraging younger peers, they strengthen communication and problem-solving skills—valuable skills that will serve them well beyond the classroom. One parent of a Shas Ti student noted that she was happy her son had a chance to give back to his elementary school community.

More than just a support system, this program is building a culture of care and mentorship, strengthening the bond between both schools and creating a legacy of connection that will benefit students for years to come.





Pinewood's Mighty Moose: A New Logo, Cultural Celebration, and Student Growth

Pinewood Elementary has a new logo and we are known as the Mighty Moose. Clayton Gauthier is creating a carved cedar mural of our logo and students are helping with the project. The completed artwork will be on display at school.

Our school has developed criteria to go along with Mighty Moose.

Management – time, emotions, interactions and yourself

Identity – personal strengths, abilities, values, choices, understand relationships and different cultures

Growth Mindset – learning is continuous, ask questions and put forth best effort

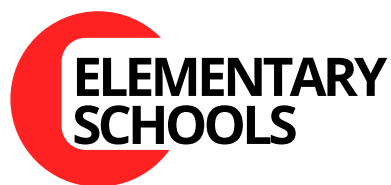
Helpful – help yourself, others and the environment

Thinking – creative, critical and reflective

Yet – positive attitude, it takes time to learn, I can't do this...yet

Students are actively involved in celebrating Indigenous culture through drumming and singing at assemblies, school events and for our morning announcements. Many of our students are learning about Dakelh culture and language, including sharing the land acknowledgment in Dakelh.





Bridging Generations: Polaris Montessori Students Connect with Simon Fraser Lodge Seniors



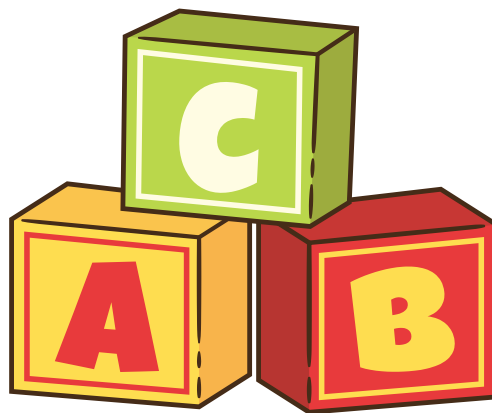
Polaris Montessori students are making a difference in their community through The Intergenerational Program, a long-standing initiative that fosters connections between students and senior residents at Simon Fraser Lodge. This heartwarming program allows children from kindergarten to grade 7 to engage with seniors, sharing stories, learning from one another, and creating lasting memories. Through these interactions, students witness firsthand the positive impact their presence has on the residents while recognizing the value of giving back to their community.

Every second week, a group of students travels to Simon Fraser Lodge to participate in a variety of activities, including making crafts, singing, and simply spending time with the residents. Singing familiar tunes like *You Are My Sunshine* helps spark joyful memories for seniors, creating a shared experience filled with warmth and nostalgia. The students prioritize building meaningful relationships and bringing joy to the seniors—though they also admit that the snacks, especially Oreo cookies and juice, are a much-loved bonus!



Community service is a fundamental pillar of Montessori education, and Polaris Montessori has proudly been a part of The Intergenerational Program for over 30 years. Students not only provide companionship to seniors but also gain valuable life lessons from their wisdom and experiences. They leave each visit with a deeper sense of gratitude and appreciation for the connections they've built.

Students hope that this cherished program will always remain a part of Polaris Montessori School's curriculum, ensuring that future generations continue to strengthen bonds across ages and make a meaningful difference in the lives of seniors at Simon Fraser Lodge.





100 Days Smarter: Van Bien Students Celebrate a Century of Learning and Fun!

Every year the 100th day of school is a big celebration in early primary classrooms everywhere. This special day, often referred to as "100's Day," is packed with engaging activities that blend learning and fun, making it a favorite among students and teachers alike.

One of the highlights of 100's Day is the opportunity for students and grown ups to dress up as if they are 100 years old. With creative costumes featuring gray wigs, glasses, and vintage clothing, children delight in imagining what life might be like at a century old. This playful activity not only sparks their imagination but also fosters a sense of community and excitement in the classroom.

Math learning is at the heart of 100's Day celebrations. Teachers design a variety of hands-on activities that help students grasp the concept of 100. From counting collections of 100 objects to creating art projects with 100 items, these activities reinforce important math skills in a fun and interactive way. Students might also engage in exercises like writing 100 words or solving 100 math problems, which enhance their numeracy and literacy skills.

Overall, 100's Day is a wonderful blend of creativity, learning, and celebration, making it a memorable event for young learners and a valuable addition to the school calendar.





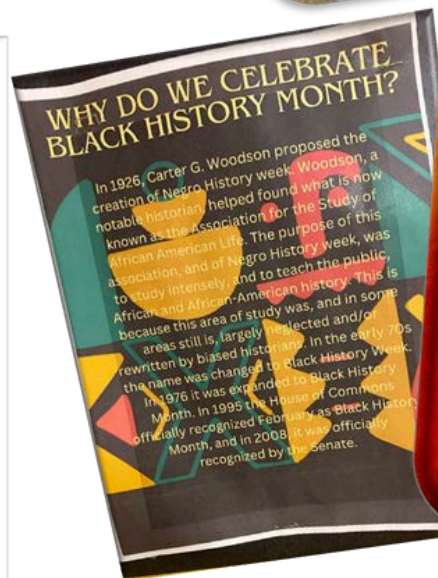
Hands-On Learning and Cultural Celebrations at Mackenzie Secondary School

Semester one was filled with hands-on learning for BC First Peoples students, connecting history, culture, and tradition. From harvesting beaver while studying the fur trade to crafting moccasins, baskets, and toboggans, students engaged deeply with Indigenous knowledge.

They also raised salmon, learned the Tse'Khene language, and took part in ice fishing, bannock-making, and birch syrup production.

Meanwhile, Mackenzie Secondary School recognized Black History Month with a student-led question-of-the-day scavenger hunt, historical figure portraits by Art 9-12, and a special luncheon featuring traditional dishes.

With drum-making, ribbon skirts, and a cultural camp ahead, the learning—and the celebration of diverse cultures—continues!





Artistic Excellence at McBride Secondary

McBride Secondary is located in the heart of the Robson Valley, a region renowned for its stunning landscapes and vibrant community of artisans, crafters, and artists. With such a rich creative culture surrounding them, it is no surprise that our students consistently demonstrate exceptional talent and enthusiasm for the visual arts.

Under the guidance of their dedicated Art Teacher, Mrs. Zahn, students in grades 8 through 12 are immersed in a diverse range of artistic techniques and traditions. Throughout the school year, they have the opportunity to explore various mediums, including the intricate craft of Pysanky egg decorating, the delicate and precise art of paper quilling, and the expressive techniques of pastel drawing. Additionally, students refine their skills through felting, weaving, and watercolor painting, gaining hands-on experience with both contemporary and traditional art forms.

The creativity and craftsmanship displayed by our students are evident in the remarkable pieces they produce. Their artwork is proudly showcased in hallways and display cases, transforming the school into a dynamic gallery that reflects their passion and dedication. This ongoing engagement with the arts not only nurtures their technical abilities but also fosters self-expression, patience, and a deep appreciation for the artistic traditions of their community.

We are incredibly proud of the artistic achievements of our students and the outstanding work they continue to create. Their talent and dedication are a testament to the rich artistic heritage of the Robson Valley. Well done, McBride Secondary artists—keep inspiring us with your creativity!





Alternate Community Programs

Open Mic Night Brings Music and Community Together in Prince George. Prince George youth with a passion for music now have a stage to call their own. ACP Open Mic Night, held on the first Tuesday of every month, is providing young musicians a welcoming space to showcase their talents, connect with like-minded peers, and build a strong sense of community. The event, hosted at Alternate Community Programs (ACP) in the Center for Learning Alternatives Building on Westwood Dr., runs from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM and is open to all youth who want to perform, whether they are seasoned musicians or first-time performers.

Organizer John Giannis says the idea was born from a vision to bring youth together through music, fostering unity, personal growth, and a deeper appreciation of local talent. "It's more than just a performance opportunity—it's about connection, where young musicians can meet others who share their passion, support one another, and develop confidence in their craft." A full house band setup is provided, including microphones, amplifiers, and various instruments, though participants are welcome to bring their own gear. Parents and guardians are encouraged to attend, offering young performers a supportive audience.

The year will culminate in a special showcase event, where selected youth will have the chance to perform on a larger stage in front of a broader audience—an exciting opportunity to highlight the incredible talent emerging from the community. As the event continues to grow, it is quickly becoming a hub for young artists looking to share their music, find inspiration, and be part of a thriving creative community in Prince George. For those interested in performing or attending, more information is available by contacting John Giannis 250 564 5674 ext2043 or jgiannis@sd57.bc.ca





Cultural Connections: CHSS Students Experience Life in Tokyo Through Exchange Program

At the beginning of February, 16 CHSS students from Grades 10-12 and 2 staff members travelled to Tokyo for our annual two-week exchange. The sister school exchange between CHSS and Daito Ichiko has been running since 2003, resulting in fourteen short-stay exchanges and thirteen year-long exchanges in both sides of the Pacific.

Upon arrival in Tokyo, the CHSS students were introduced to the home stay families with whom they would share their lives for the coming weeks. By staying in homes instead of hotels, our students get to experience Japanese home life and to truly immerse themselves in the culture and language.

Over the two weeks, students spent several days on campus at Daito Ichiko, participating in classroom activities such as Japanese language classes, PE, music, cooking class, and calligraphy, and clubs such as tea ceremony, cheer dance, judo, and kendo. At the PTA-run Culture Day, members of the Daito PTA dressed Canadian students in yukata and jinbei and students played traditional festival games. Students had various opportunities to practice their language skills with games and group activities designed to practice communication between Canadian students studying Japanese and Japanese students studying English.

Outside of school time, our group visited the Meijiingu Shrine, a sumo demonstration, bustling Shibuya and Harajuku, a traditional onsen hot spring, sea-side Odaiba, and Tokyo Disneyland. On their free time, students sought out a variety of experiences: bonsai gardens, sports activities, amusement parks, art installations and museums, visits to rural areas, karaoke, and numerous parks, temples, and shrines.



This program is such an eye-opening experience for small-city Canadian kids – spending two weeks in a sprawling metropolis like Tokyo where they ride the metro to commute to school, live in homes a fraction of the size of Canadian homes, and tasting food that is very different than the cuisine of Northern BC. Our students returned to Canada with a fresh outlook and understanding the world, an itch to continue travelling, and a new sense of confidence and maturity.

Six weeks later, our counterparts from Japan will arrive in Prince George. And we will welcome them to our school and our homes with the same hospitality that they showed us.



College Heights Claims Victory in Spirit Game with 4-1 Win Over PGSS

On December 20, 2024, Prince George Secondary School and College Heights Secondary School played in the 20th annual Spirit of Hockey and Community Cup game.

Through a fun and action-packed hockey game, the event truly showcases school spirit and how our schools give back to the community. The game took place at the CN center in front of the two secondary schools and their feeder elementary schools.

This year, one of the focuses of the game was to highlight and acknowledge the Indigenous history of hockey and the local territory. The game was opened with a drumming version of O'Canada sang in Dakelh by PGSS and Blackburn students, and the ceremonial puck drop was delivered by Chief Dolleen Logan of Lheidli T'enneh and Superintendent Jameel Aziz.





Valemount Secondary Welcomes Spring with Connection and Music

Valemount Secondary School is embracing the changing seasons with exciting events that foster community and connection.

On February 28th, VSS hosted its annual Grade 7 Welcome Day, giving elementary students a chance to experience high school life in a fun and engaging way. Traditionally, this event features snow sculptures, but with the warmer weather washing away the snow, the school adapted with a variety of activities. This year, students created original art pieces using foraged natural materials, with standout works including The Skeleton, symbolizing death and nature, and The Teepee, representing meditation and the release of negative energy. Students also participated in nature walks to gather materials and enjoyed roasting marshmallows and Bannock-dogs over a fire, making the event a great success.

Looking ahead to May 10th and 11th, the Valemount Secondary music class will bring joy to the community with a special performance for local preschoolers and K-3 students. Expanding on last year's well-received preschool concert, this year's lineup includes "Let It Go," "Shake Your Sillies Out," "Chicken Dance," and "Stand by Me." The event aims to entertain and engage young students while strengthening the bond between Valemount Secondary and its future learners. With meaningful traditions and a commitment to inclusivity, Valemount Secondary continues to create memorable experiences for students of all ages.



**SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**


THE WIZARD OF OZ COMES TO DUCHESS PARK!

After the successful show run of the Addams Family Musical last spring, the Duchess Park Theatre Company is proud to bring the beloved musical *The Wizard of Oz* to Duchess Park Secondary this April! Based on the 1939 film with Judy Garland, the story centers around young Dorothy Gale from Kansas who ends up in the land of Oz courtesy of a tornado. After accidentally antagonizing the Wicked Witch of the West, Dorothy is eager to get home and must travel to the Emerald City in order to ask the mysterious wizard for help in getting home. Along the way Dorothy encounters the now iconic characters such as the Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, Glinda the Good Witch, citizens of Munchkinland and even flying monkeys! OH MY!

The Duchess Park theatre program has continuously grown over the past three years under the leadership of Jackie Friesen and Shelby Meaney. The high quality of the productions are due to not only the huge amount of talent and dedication shown by the students and production team but also to our amazing community sponsors! The *Wizard of Oz* Musical production includes 70 students in the cast and crew and 18 staff members who all have been working hard on the show since the first week of September!

The show runs April 8th to 12th with five evening shows (Shows @7pm, Doors @630pm) and one half price matinee on the Saturday April 12th at 1pm (Doors @1230pm). Tickets went on sale the first week of February, and the popular Dinner Theatre option where the Culinary Arts department provides dinner beforehand, sold out in 24 hours! Regular tickets to this family friendly show are available to purchase at the school, at lunch and afterschool, every Tues/Wed/Thurs and an hour before the shows start. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students/kids. Shows do sell out, so please follow our Instagram page @duchessparktheatre for ticket updates! Come join us at Duchess Park this April and let us take you on a journey to OZ!

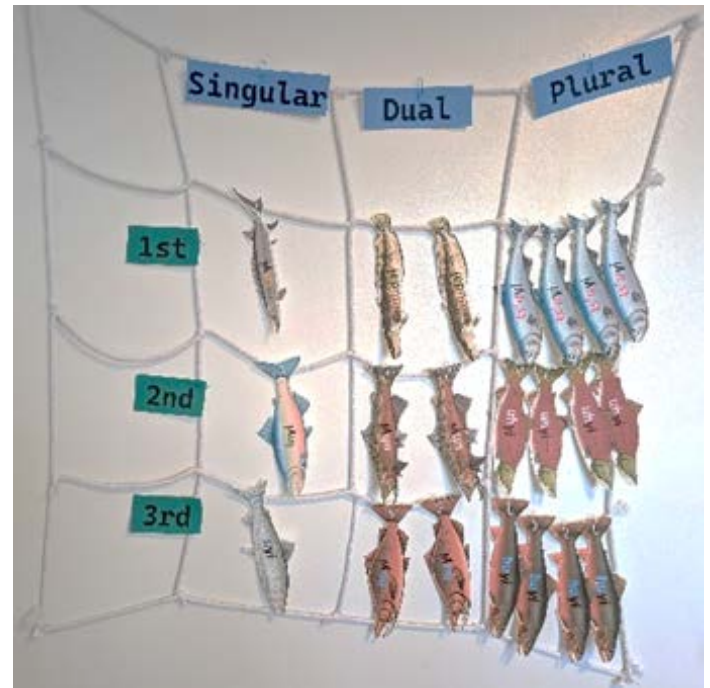




Learning Dakelh is fun!

Students learn the Dakelh language through puppets, cultural storytelling, land based activities, cultural crafts, games, songs and drumming etc. We help educators to create lesson plans which are culturally relevant and accessible to learners of all ages. We also involve Elders in our Dakelh lesson plans as we believe that the Elder's presence in the school is very powerful.

Want to incorporate the Dakelh Language into your classrooms? Connect with Cherie Chai from Indigenous Education to book a demo lesson or discuss a lesson plan. Email: cchai@sd57.bc.ca



CURRICULUM AND INNOVATION

Math in the Wild: Grade 2/3 Students Discover Numbers, Patterns, and Shapes in Nature

Earlier this year, a Grade 2/3 class embarked on a learning adventure at Rainbow Park, where they discovered that math is all around them! With curiosity leading the way, students identified numbers, patterns, and shapes in their surroundings, using their senses to explore math in nature.

Even before reaching the park, students noticed house numbers along the street and excitedly practiced reading them aloud. They quickly spotted a pattern—odd numbers on one side, even numbers on the other. Once at the park, they found a spray-painted number on the pathway. Was it a 6 or a 9? This sparked a creative activity where some students arranged leaves, sticks, and rocks to form their own numbers and even built equations!

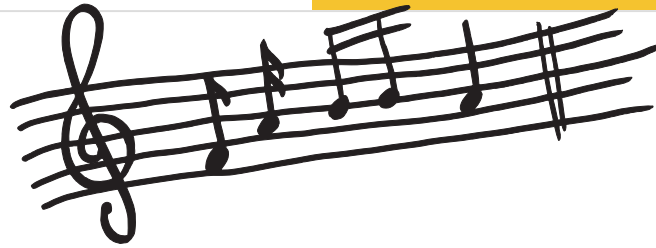
The exploration didn't stop at numbers. Engaging their senses, students described the crisp scent of late fall and observed that most trees had lost their leaves. Estimating the number of leaves covering the ground, they confidently guessed there were over a million! They listened carefully, noticing the absence of birds but the satisfying crunch of leaves underfoot. They felt the damp, slimy texture of fallen leaves and the cool moisture on the playground equipment.

Encouraged to keep asking questions, students made even more discoveries. They wondered how many footprints surrounded the teeter-totter, spotted patterns in pine cones, and questioned why some were larger than others. It was a morning of curiosity, hands-on learning, and the exciting realization that math isn't just in textbooks—it's everywhere!





FINE ARTS



Duchess Park Shines at Winter Fine Arts Night: A Celebration of Creativity, Music, and Performance

On Wednesday January 15th the Art Department at Duchess Park Secondary hosted their annual Winter Fine Arts Night. Starting at 530pm, the canyon of the building was a flurry of activity as the incredibly creative work of many art students was being viewed and enjoyed by our guests. Art students stood by their passion projects as onlookers enquired about the 2D, 3D, photography and media arts on display. Projects from the textiles class were also on display and were a new and well-received addition to the evening, inspiring conversations between the guests and artists. While pursuing the amazing art, our guests were treated to music provided by our extra-curricular Guitar Club, many of whom had only picked up a guitar for the first time a few months ago. A special performance by Sophia brought many of our guests to a standstill with her awe-inspiring talent.

As the doors to the Duchess Park theatre opened for the evening performances, the Duchess Park Drum Group guided our guests towards the theatre with their passionate performance. The second half of the evening started with the drama portion of the program with nine Drama 10 students taking the stage, some for the first time in front of a full audience. The drama segment featured a mime to music performance followed by four scenes that showcased the strong theatrical talent present at Duchess Park.

Following an encore musical performance by the multi-talented Sofia Laquindanum from the guitar class, our award-winning band took the stage under the direction of our Band Director, Mr. Jon Campbell. Playing three different songs, our brilliant band was able to not only send our audience home on a high note (pun intended) but also demonstrate why they have been invited to compete at Nationals this May in Toronto.

It was an evening of inspiring art featuring incredible student talent, with many of them taking part in more than one genre. Our next Fine Arts Night is our Spring edition, and we welcome everyone to join us at Duchess Park in June! You can follow Instagram pages @duchessparkmusic and @duchessparktheatre for more information and updates regarding the next Fine Arts Night and the success of the band at Nationals! See you in June!





Fine Arts Night Brings Community Together at Shas Ti Kelly Road

On January 17, Shas Ti Kelly Road Secondary transformed The Den into a vibrant café-style showcase for its Winter Fine Arts Night. The event was a true celebration of student talent, featuring live music, stunning artwork, intricate woodwork and metalwork projects, and delicious food prepared by the school's culinary arts students.

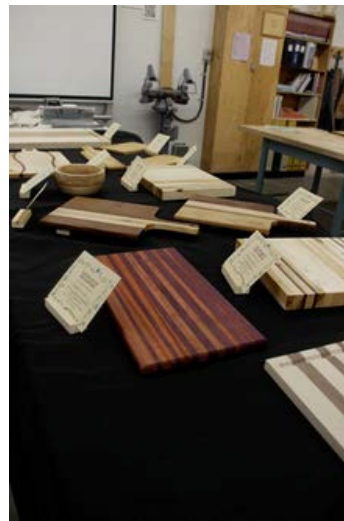
With soft lighting and the warm hum of conversation, the atmosphere felt more like a cozy community café than a school event. Guests sipped coffee and sampled handmade treats while enjoying performances from talented student musicians. Meanwhile, the walls and tables displayed an impressive range of student-created art, from paintings to sculptures, alongside beautifully crafted woodworking and metalworking pieces that highlighted both creativity and skill.

A special highlight of the evening was the participation of Glenview Elementary, one of our Family of Schools members. Their involvement helped strengthen the bond between elementary and high school students, fostering a sense of connection and continuity within our school community. Younger students had the chance to see the possibilities that await them at Shas Ti Kelly Road, inspiring them to explore their own artistic passions.

Fine Arts Night was more than just an exhibition—it was a coming-together of students, families, and staff to celebrate the incredible work happening in our school. Events like these remind us of the power of the arts to bring people together and showcase the talent and dedication of our students.

Thank you to everyone who participated, attended, and supported this wonderful evening! Special thanks to the incredible teachers who make these events happen for our students and community!

Come join us on June 12 for Spring Fine Arts Night!



C FINE ARTS



Polar Performing Arts Graduate Giving Back to Students at PGSS

The Polar Performing Arts (PPA) students at PGSS are excited to have PGSS graduate and Polar Performing Arts Alumni, Jenna Magrath, doing zoom sessions with our classes to give back to the PGSS student community, and promote positive physical and mental wellness.

Jenna's current research interests include the promotion of safe and healthy dance environments for aspiring dancers in the performing arts. Having Jenna share her passion and expertise with our current PPA students has been supportive, beneficial and inspiring for our current student artists.

Jenna is a MSc student at the University of Toronto and holds a BA in Contemporary Dance and a BKin (Honours) from the University of Calgary. Jenna's current research focuses (that she has presented/published internationally) are safeguarding against harm and maltreatment in dance.

She also has previous research experience exploring strategies utilized in community dance classes for older adults and individuals with Parkinson's. With more than 10 years' experience performing as a dance artist with performance and choreographer credits across Western Canada, it has been a pleasure to welcome Jenna, who attended PGSS as a Montessori and Project Based Learning student, back into our PPA classes.





ICEMAN 2025

Students from Duchess Park Secondary and DP Todd Secondary braved the frigid -20°C morning to compete in the annual Prince George Iceman, a unique multi-sport winter event that has grown exponentially over the years, drawing participants of all ages and skill levels. Known for its wacky, unpredictable, and always exciting atmosphere, the Iceman challenges athletes in skiing, running, skating, and swimming—turning a northern winter into something to be embraced rather than endured. DP Todd's junior boys team secured an impressive 3rd place finish, while the junior girls claimed 2nd. In the junior relay mixed category, Duchess Park teams placed 4th and 5th. A special shoutout goes to both schools for also fielding staff teams, demonstrating true school spirit. A big thank you to Nicole Therrien for organizing Duchess Park's participation and to Jenkin Wilson for leading the DP Todd teams.





Duchess Park Captures 2025 Prince George Girls City Basketball Championship

The 2025 Prince George Girl City Basketball Finals saw an intense showdown between Duchess Park Secondary and College Heights Secondary, with Duchess Park securing the championship title with a 60-49 victory.

College Heights put up a strong fight, led by standout performances from Lorenn Caceres, who scored a game-high 18 points, and Summer Toor, who added 15. Duchess Park's balanced attack was led by Zahra Ngabo with 15 points, Mercedes Black with 11, and key contributions from Naiha Manhas and Magdelana Malfair, who each scored 9.

The 2025 City All-Stars were also announced, recognizing top performers across the league. Representing Duchess Park were Zahra Ngabo, Mercedes Black, and Magdelana Malfair. College Heights players Lorenn Caceres, Kaileigh Kennedy, and Summer Toor earned All-Star honors, along with Mila Johnson and Colby Konig from Cedars Christian School, Brooke Macdonald from Prince George Secondary, and Alaina Skelly from Shas-Ti Kelly Road Secondary.

A huge thank you to Dave and Louis Holmes for their efforts in organizing the City Finals and ensuring another successful season of girls' basketball in Prince George. Congratulations to all the athletes for an incredible season!





Duchess Park Wins Prince George Girls Basketball Zones

In a thrilling rematch of the City Championship, the Duchess Park Secondary Senior Girls faced off against the College Heights Secondary Senior Girls in the Basketball Zones. Duchess Park secured a hard-fought 55-47 victory, led by standout performances from Zahra Ngabo, who scored 19 points, and Magdelana Malfair, who added 12. College Heights kept the game competitive with strong contributions from Lorenn Caceres and Kaileigh Kennedy, who each scored 12 points, and Summer Toor, who chipped in 11.

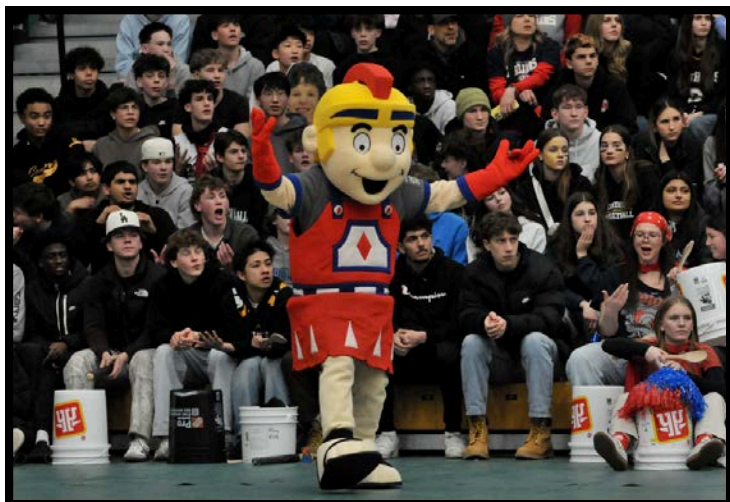
Zahra Ngabo was named Zones MVP for her outstanding performance, while Magdelana Malfair earned recognition as the tournament's Top Defensive Player. The First All-Star Team featured Mercedes Black (Duchess Park), Emily Clarke (Duchess Park), Lorenn Caceres (College Heights), Kaileigh Kennedy (College Heights), and Olivia Young (College Heights).

Duchess Park's dominance extended to the Junior Girls division, where they captured the Zones title with a commanding 53-30 win over Cedars Christian School. Anja Sales led the charge with 17 points and was named Zones MVP. Ava MacNeil and Ana Mackenzie earned First All-Star honors, while Zariya Manhas was recognized as the tournament's Top Defensive Player. At the BC Championships, the Duchess Park Senior Girls delivered an impressive performance, finishing 4th in the province, while College Heights secured a strong 6th-place finish. The Duchess Park Junior Girls also represented the district at the BC Junior Girls Championships.

Congratulations to all teams on their achievements, and well done on an incredible season!



C SPORTS



DP Todd Claims 2025 Prince George Boys City Basketball Championship

Eleven years. That's how long it had been since the D.P. Todd Trojans last won the Prince George Boys City Basketball Championship. The 2025 Finals featured a hard-fought battle between DP Todd Secondary and College Heights Secondary, with DP Todd emerging victorious with a 63-54 win.

DP Todd was led by standout performances from Jake Samis, who scored a game-high 20 points, and Markus Sale, who added 12. College Heights put up a strong fight, with Tolu Bankole contributing 15 points and Dillon Piddocke leading the team with 16.

Following the final, the 2025 City All-Stars were announced, recognizing the league's top players. Representing DP Todd were Mathew Stubley, Jake Samis, and Markus Sale. College Heights players Tolu Bankole, MJ Kim, and Alex Lucareli also earned All-Star honors. Additional selections included Harsh Cheema, Kabir Bhathal, and JB Burguillos from Prince George Secondary, along with Colby Van Camp from Shas-Ti Kelly Road Secondary.

Congratulations to all the athletes on an outstanding season of basketball in Prince George!





Prince George Teams Shine at Boys Basketball Zone Championships

The Prince George Secondary School (PGSS) Polars put on a dominant performance in the Boys AAAA Zone Final, defeating North Peace Secondary School (NPSS) 99-71 to claim the championship title.

PGSS was led by an outstanding 27-point performance from Harsh Cheema, while Kabir Bhathal added 16 points and Conor Burbee contributed 14. The Polars' high-powered offense and strong defensive play secured their victory and the right to represent the zone at the next stage. With this win, PGSS advances to the BC Boys AAAA Provincial Championships, where they will compete against the best teams in the province.

In the Boys AAA Zone Final, College Heights Secondary emerged victorious over Duchess Park Secondary with a 63-52 win. College Heights was led by Caleb Fuller, who had a standout game with 17 points, while Tolu Bankole contributed 13 points and Dillon Piddocke added 12 points. Tolu Bankole was named Zones MVP, while Caleb Fuller earned the Top Defensive Player award. Ismael Andrew-Cisse, Dillon Piddocke, Julian Victorino, and Finn Thielmann were named First All-Stars for their strong performances throughout the tournament.

A big congratulations to DP Todd Secondary, who finished second in the Boys AA Zones after a hard-fought tournament. Although they will not be heading to provincials, their strong performance was highlighted by Jake Samis, Matthew Stubley, Urijah Zurowski, and Markus Sale, all of whom were named First All-Stars.

The Shas-Ti Junior Boys put together an impressive performance to claim the Junior Boys Zone Championship. Their strong teamwork and skill throughout the tournament secured the title and capped off a fantastic season, while Duchess Park finished as the runner-up.

A huge congratulations to the Duchess Park Junior B Boys on their dominant 71-40 victory over Cedars to win the district championship! Their impressive performance throughout the season culminated in a well-earned title victory.

Congratulations to PGSS, College Heights, DP Todd, Shas-Ti Kelly Road, and Duchess Park on their strong seasons, and best of luck to the teams representing Prince George at provincials!



SCHOOL DISTRICT 57 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



MESSAGE FROM DPAC

The SD57 District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) is led by dedicated parent volunteers and funded to provide parent education, resources, and support to Parent Advisory Councils (PACs). Collaborating with district staff and education partners, DPAC advocates for processes that enhance student success. We firmly believe that engaged and empowered parents are integral to achieving positive outcomes for students.

The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) is the collective voice of parents in our province. They host events and training meetings, facilitate committees, and assist with advocacy for families navigating the public school system. The annual Parent Education Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) is being held in Prince George! Don't miss this opportunity to network with parents from across BC. The BCCPAC executive is guided by our votes to work on various initiatives. SD57 DPAC is hosting a social event on Saturday May 24 at 7:00 p.m. at UNBC. Please join us!

Our DPAC meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., both in person at the Van Bien Training Centre and online via Microsoft Teams. Each meeting features insightful presentations on topics relevant to parents. For more information, please contact us at info@sd57dpac.ca.

SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

COVER COMPETITION

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