

Community Report 2026



Photo by Kai M, Grade 12
Sutherland Secondary

North Vancouver  School District
the natural place to learn*

2026 Community Report

For Education Week 2026, the North Vancouver School District is introducing a refreshed, fully digital Community Report. This new format expands how we share stories of learning and teaching by making information easier to access, more flexible to engage with, and available throughout the year.

Moving to a digital approach also supports the school district's commitment to environmental responsibility while offering a more dynamic way to highlight the people, programs, and learning experiences that make NVSD unique.



Photo by Kai M, Grade 12, Sutherland Secondary.

2026-27 NVSD Wall Calendar

To complement the digital Community Report, NVSD is introducing a wall calendar that highlights learning and teaching across schools throughout the year. Featuring student photography and writing from across the school district, the calendar offers families and community members a practical, everyday resource that also celebrates the many ways students learn, create, and grow.

[Pre-orders](#) open March 12, 2026, with printed copies available later in 2026 ahead of the 2026-27 school year.



Photo by Silas M, Grade 11, Sutherland Secondary.

Secondary Photography Contest

In December 2025, NVSD launched its inaugural secondary school student photography contest. Designed to engage secondary students while promoting student excellence, participants were invited to respond to the theme "What makes your school great?"

The contest received an outstanding response from student photographers across the school district. Many of these students are developing their craft through photography and media classes in their schools, as well as through their involvement with school yearbook production.

A panel of judges convened to review the submissions and the following students were recognized in three categories:

Photography Excellence Award

- Silas M. (Sutherland Secondary)
- Kai M. (Sutherland Secondary)
- Parshan M. (Sutherland Secondary)
- Kas K. (Carson Graham Secondary)
- Makena V. (Windsor Secondary)
- Coen K. (North Vancouver Online Learning)

Emerging Photographer Award

- Kirsten R. (Handsworth Secondary)
- Jasmine A. (Windsor Secondary)
- Breanna C. (Windsor Secondary)
- Rory Z. (Carson Graham Secondary)
- Benjamin N. (Seycove Secondary)

Photographs recognized through the Photography Excellence Award category will be featured in the inaugural 2026-27 NVSD wall calendar, showcasing the talent of student photographers from across the school district. A special thank you to Kai M of Sutherland Secondary, whose submission is this year's Community Report cover image!



Photo by Coen K, Grade 11, North Vancouver Online Learning.



Grade 6/7 classes at Cleveland Elementary lead an autumnal harvest market.



Carson Graham Secondary's graduating class of 2025.



Grade 4-7 students from schools across the NVSD compete in track and field at Swanguard Stadium in Burnaby.

Vision

We provide world-class instruction and a rich diversity of engaging programs to inspire success for every student and bring communities together to learn, share and grow.

Values

Trust: We act with integrity. We are open and honest in our communication with one another.

Responsibility: We are accountable for our actions. We support positive change, continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence.

Respect: We relate to each other with care and appreciation. We honour diversity and recognize the exceptional in everyone.

Collaboration: We develop relationships and affiliations to achieve shared goals and consider each other in our decisions and actions.

Strategic Goals

-  **Student-Centred Education**
Provide equity-based education that supports the learning needs of all students
-  **Innovative Instruction**
Enhance innovative and effective approaches and curriculum to develop educated citizens.
-  **Welcoming and Inclusive Culture**
Enhance our welcoming, safe and inclusive culture and learning environment.
-  **Mental Health and Well Being**
Promote mental health and well-being through social emotional learning and trauma-informed practices.
-  **Truth, Healing and Reconciliation**
Champion truth, healing and reconciliation, and embed Indigenous ways of knowing.
-  **Environmental Stewardship**
Lead on sustainable practices and nature-based learning to address environmental challenges.



District Student Leadership Council presents during a Board of Education Public Meeting.

Message from the Chair and Superintendent



Antje Wilson



Dr. Pius Ryan

Dear Community Members,

On behalf of the North Vancouver School District (NVSD) and the North Vancouver Board of Education, we are pleased to share the 2026 edition of our annual Community Report. Published each spring, the Community Report offers a glimpse into the many ways teaching and learning come to life across NVSD.

In alignment with the school district's commitment to environmental stewardship, this year's report is presented in a fully digital format. Within its pages, readers will find stories that reflect vibrant learning communities. Through student and staff perspectives, this edition highlights academic growth, fine and performing arts, athletics, outdoor learning, and ongoing personal and professional development. Together, these stories illustrate how learning continues to flourish across the school district.

Public schooling is both a privilege and a profound responsibility. In a time shaped by local and global social and political complexities, modern technologies, and ecological considerations, we might ask ourselves: What kind of education for what kind of world? Embedded within this question are deeper reflections on how we nurture children and youth to grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically.

As we make decisions about resources and priorities, we remain focused on what matters most; supporting students and the learning that happens in classrooms every day. This includes continued attention to literacy and numeracy through updated strategies, assessments, resources, and professional learning to strengthen student learning outcomes.

Across the NVSD, educators work thoughtfully and collaboratively to support diverse learners at every stage of their development. Learning extends beyond the classroom through clubs, athletics, arts programs, and community engagement. These experiences foster resilience, teamwork, empathy, and a strong sense of belonging. They allow students to explore their interests, discover new strengths, and build meaningful relationships that shape who they are becoming.

We invite you to visit the Learn, Share, and Grow blog at www.sd44.ca, where additional learning stories are shared throughout the year.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of public schooling in North Vancouver.

Antje Wilson, Chair
North Vancouver Board of Education

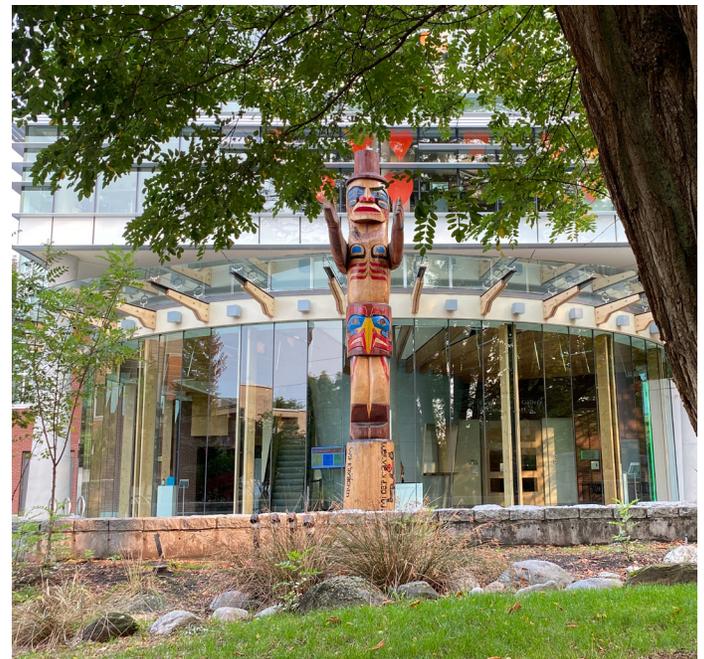
Dr. Pius Ryan, Superintendent
North Vancouver School District

The North Vancouver School District would like to thank the Coast Salish people, specifically the Skwxwú7mesh Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation, upon whose traditional territory the school district resides. We value the opportunity to learn, share and grow on this traditional territory.

North Vancouver Board of Education



Left to right: Linda Munro, George Tsiakos, Lailani Tumaneng, Daniel Anderson, Cyndi Gerlach, Antje Wilson, Kulvir Mann.



Welcome pole at the Education Services Centre.

Students dive into Fisheries & Oceans Canada career exploration

Featuring photos and words by **Reyna R, Grade 12, Mountainside Secondary**

On November 13 and 14, 2025, five North Vancouver School District students had the unique opportunity to participate in a hands-on career exploration with Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO) at Cheakamus Centre. This immersive two-day experience was made possible through a \$5,000 LEAP (Leadership Environmental Action Project) grant from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation.

The program was supported by Indigenous Support Worker Peter Skye and guided by DFO facilitators Alexander Fraser, Restoration Biologist, and Gillian Steele, Community Advisor. Cultural Educator Aura Lewis opened each day with a Land Acknowledgment and wove Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being throughout the experience.

On the first day, students learned about Pacific salmon biology and

habitat requirements, tested water quality using a Yellow Springs Instruments (YSI) Multimeter, and counted adult chum salmon in the Upper Paradise groundwater channel. After lunch at Cheakamus Centre, they visited the Gorbusha Intake, discussed environmental mitigation measures, and set gee traps for juvenile fish.

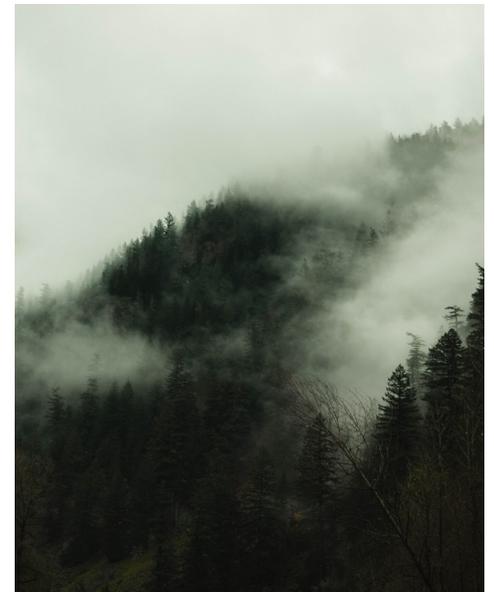
The second day began with collecting juvenile fish from the gee traps, dissecting adult chum salmon, and examining scales and otoliths to understand age and growth patterns. In the afternoon, students applied their new skills during a habitat assessment using a rapid assessment tool.

This program provided valuable scientific and ecological knowledge while emphasizing cultural learning and environmental stewardship. In just two days, students gained practical experience that connects classroom learning to real-world conservation efforts.

Reyna R, a Grade 12 student at Mountainside Secondary, shared:

“My favourite moment during the program was after we did the land acknowledgment on the second day. Cathy Jenkins [Project Manager, Cheakamus Centre] asked if we wanted some time to sit in nature, so we did that for 10 minutes and I got to listen to my music and take this photo.”

During the two days at Cheakamus, Reyna captured the photos in this article using a Nikon D3500 with an 18–55 mm lens, set at f/3.5.



Students dissect an adult chum salmon.



Students observe juvenile fish in a gee trap.

Boundary celebrates Terry Fox's legacy with annual run

On September 26, 2025, Boundary Elementary proudly hosted its annual Terry Fox Run, honouring the enduring legacy of Terry Fox and his journey of courage, determination, and hope.

After reconvening from lunch break, classes gathered on the gravel field for opening remarks, setting the tone for a meaningful and energetic event. From there, students embarked grade-by-grade on designated Primary and Intermediate routes through the community. Each step echoed Terry's dream of a world without cancer.

Grade 7 students played a key leadership role throughout the event,

cheering on younger participants and offering encouragement along the way. Positioned at various points along the courses, they held signs representing Canadian provinces, from Newfoundland to British Columbia, symbolizing Terry Fox's 1980 Marathon of Hope across the country.

Family volunteers and dedicated staff lined the routes, offering enthusiastic support and guidance.

Principal Kendra Arkininstall reflected on the Terry Fox Run, noting that every child gave their personal best. She was especially inspired by the determination of the younger students, who said, "I can do the harder, Intermediate course because



Terry did something way more difficult!"

As students crossed the finish line, they were welcomed with music and enjoyed playtime on the field; a celebratory end to an event filled with community, teamwork and inspiration!

Grade 8 retreats build belonging at Cheakamus Centre

On October 10, 2025, Sutherland Secondary's Grade 8 students stepped out of the classroom and into the natural beauty at Cheakamus Centre for a full-day retreat designed to foster connection, community, and a sense of belonging. This annual tradition marks a meaningful milestone in students' transition to secondary school, offering a chance to bond with peers, student leaders, and staff in a setting that encourages growth, exploration, and shared experience.

Throughout the day, students participated in a variety of team-building and experiential learning activities, all thoughtfully designed to support their social and emotional development. Vice Principal Shannon Smart shared, "The Retreat provides Grade 8 students with the opportunity to build connections and forge new friendships while extending themselves outside of their comfort zones with new and



challenging activities. The chance to do this outside in such a rich, natural setting, on the unceded traditional territories of the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, makes the event that much more meaningful."

Cheakamus Centre, with its stunning landscapes and commitment to land-based learning, offered the perfect backdrop for this transformative experience. Students engaged with the environment in ways that deepened their appreciation for nature and Indigenous perspectives, while also reinforcing the values of respect, inclusion, and community. By the

end of the day, laughter echoed through the trees, new friendships had formed, and a strong foundation was laid for a positive and inclusive start to the students' secondary school journey.

Now in its fourth year, the district-wide Grade 8 Retreats at Cheakamus Centre continue to grow in impact and reach. This year, over 1,300 Grade 8 students participated, supported by 300 dedicated student leaders. With an impressive 93% of Grade 8 students participating, engagement remains exceptionally high, reflecting the value and relevance of this initiative.

Argyle student named finalist in Apple's Global Swift Challenge for AI-powered cancer detection app

By Laura Ames, Principal

Argyle Grade 10 student Adam B. is a 2025 finalist in Apple's Swift Student Developer Challenge after developing app that uses AI to detect skin cancer.

In early 2025, Adam had heard of Apple's competition, which invites youth from around the world to create an app and submit it to Apple for development. Originally motivated by natural disasters happening around the world, Adam set out intending to make an app about disaster preparation, but quickly pivoted to creating a data model that could identify skin cancer with a photo. He used thousands of images to train an AI model, then the app went through a few iterations before the final version he submitted to Apple. The app now has a 93%

success rate at detecting cancer with an uploaded picture. "A few of my Mom's friends have died of cancer," shares Adam. "It would be meaningful to me if I could make a difference. If my app could at least help one person – maybe a get a mole checked out and maybe get it removed, that would make it all worth it."

Apple's contest is a call to students to "showcase their creativity and coding capabilities through app playgrounds, and learn real-world skills that they can take into their careers and beyond" (Apple, 2025). Adam finished in the top 350 worldwide. He received a certificate from Apple and a set of AirPods and he is determined to try again next year. The top 50 finalists are invited to visit Apple headquarters in California.



Superintendent's Celebration of Learning honours outstanding graduates

On June 2, 2025, the North Vancouver School District proudly hosted its annual Superintendent's Celebration of Learning, an event dedicated to celebrating exceptional graduates from each of the school district's secondary schools.

Students selected for this special recognition demonstrated excellence across academics, athletics, fine arts, and community service. Guests were welcomed with live music by the Argyle Secondary Jazz Band, and enjoyed a Greek buffet catered by local business The Banqueting Table. Professional photography services were generously provided by GradsBC.

The keynote address was delivered by Kaila Butler, a Canadian National Team hammer thrower, who shared her inspiring journey through the highs and lows of elite competition. Her message to graduates was powerful: embrace the journey, and see failure not as defeat, but as a valuable opportunity for growth.

In his closing remarks, Superintendent Dr. Pius Ryan encouraged students to recognize their potential to lead within their schools, communities, and beyond. He spoke about the responsibility that comes with leadership and the importance of choosing to make a positive impact on the world.



Dr. Ryan reminded graduates that while they cannot control everything, they can control their own actions and decisions. By acting with purpose and integrity, even small choices can lead to meaningful and lasting change.

Congratulations to all who received this well-deserved recognition. We wish you continued success in your endeavors.

Celebrating Heather Korlak: BC's Art Educator of the Year – Elementary Level

By Chloe Scott, Communications

On October 24, 2025, the BC Art Teachers' Association recognized Heather Korlak with the Art Educator of the Year – Elementary Level award, honouring her remarkable contributions to arts education and her steadfast belief in the power of creativity to transform learning.

Now in her sixth year with the North Vancouver School District and part of the Highlands Elementary community, Ms. Korlak brings with her more than 30 years of teaching experience from Manitoba and Quebec, where she worked in a wide range of classrooms, including those in Northern First Nations communities. This breadth of experience has shaped her inclusive, student-centred approach to teaching art. Additionally, she serves as a teacher with Artists for Kids after-school art programs.

Ms. Korlak's own artistic practice is rooted a milieu of mediums, including embroidery, children's book illustration, and watercolour. As an Expressive Arts Therapist with what she calls an "itch to create," she models for her students the importance of making art a daily practice. "I have set up my classroom to make art accessible at all times," she explained—a philosophy that ensures creativity is never confined to a single lesson block. Through art, Ms. Korlak's students are able to deepen their understanding of subjects like math, social studies, and science, using creativity as a bridge to explore and expand upon classroom concepts.

Ms. Korlak honours her students by ensuring their work is visible and celebrated. "I think it's important in your classroom to have the students' work up as a means of honouring their work," she said. Her classroom itself embodies her belief in the environment as the "third teacher." Copper artwork lines one wall, showcasing students' explorations of texture and technique. Current studies of Yayoi Kusama's art invite students to engage with pattern, repetition, and bold expression.

Her practice also extends beyond the classroom walls. Nature journaling, outdoor sketching at Fairmont Park, and the use of recycled and found materials are pillars of her teaching. These approaches help students see art as both natural and sustainable, while also grounding them in the world around them.

Ms. Korlak emphasizes artistic expression as a means of cultivating identity, confidence, and connection. She encourages students to see artistic expression as a language—one that allows them to communicate feelings and ideas that might otherwise remain unspoken. "Art enables one to feel successful as a learner," she noted, underscoring her commitment to nurturing the inner artist in every child.

Heather Korlak's receipt of this award comes as no surprise to her colleagues at Highlands Elementary School. "We are so proud of Heather's Art Award and the well-deserved recognition of her talent," shared Vice Principal Martine Borak, "Her artistic eye brings beauty into



our daily spaces and inspires our Highlands community to see art in new ways. She has also enriched my work with students by helping me weave creativity more deeply into daily learning."

Principal Deb Wanner echoed these sentiments, noting that "Heather is a master teacher and an outstanding educator, as well as a qualified Art Therapist. Her love of art, and her passion for supporting students with all subject areas is enhanced by her ability to integrate the arts into all areas. Heather instills confidence in her students and allows them to express themselves in many ways. We are delighted to congratulate her on her award as the BCATA's Elementary Teacher of Excellence in Art Education."

On behalf of the North Vancouver School District, congratulations Ms. Korlak! Your recognition as Art Educator of the Year is a testament to your vision: a classroom where art is accessible, meaningful, and joyful, and where every child can discover the artist within.

Windsor students qualify for BC Provincial Swimming Championships

Featuring words by **Jack S, Grade 9, Windsor Secondary**

Windsor Secondary's swim team is headed to the BC Provincial Swimming Championships on November 14 and 15, 2025, marking an exciting milestone in students' athletic journeys. On the team are two swimmers competing in the para category, Jack S. and Sian L. They are the first swimmers from Windsor to compete in this category. Their path to provincials reflects dedication, athletic talent, and love for the sport. With the support of their coaches, teachers, support staff and peers, these athletes have trained consistently with focus and determination.

Jack S. is a Grade 9 student who uses an assistive augmentative communication (AAC) device to communicate. At a swim practice at Ron Andrews Pool on November 5, Jack used this device to share:

"I love to be in the water. I have been swimming since I was little. I practice lots, and I am racing in the 50m freestyle and 50m backstroke. My goal is to finish the race this year and to keep practicing for next year. I am non-verbal, but I understand a lot. I can do a lot of things; it just looks different. My friends, teachers and family help me."

Jack and Sian train closely with Education Aide Hiroko Yamamoto, who is also the staff sponsor for Windsor's swim team. The Learning Services team at Windsor supports students in developing independence, confidence, and personal growth through a variety of experiences, including athletics. Participation in athletics is one of many ways students engage with their school community, and these swimmers' success highlights the importance of creating spaces where all students can pursue their interests and talents.



Jack's family reflected how, "Jack joining the school Aquatic Team and gaining a positive and authentic connection with his peers has been rewarding unto itself. Watching his growth and resilience has been truly inspiring and we could not be prouder of Jack. Thank you to the dedication and motivation from the amazing school team for supporting him on this incredible journey."

Competing at the provincial level means these athletes will represent Windsor alongside swimmers from across BC. It's a chance to showcase their skills, connect with peers, and experience the excitement of a major sporting event. Congratulations, Jack and Sian!

Grills and great company: Community BBQ at Carson Graham

By **Robert Olsen, Teacher**

On May 26, 2025 Carson Graham's Community Initiatives Leadership Class hosted a Community BBQ Dinner, serving 146 guests in need of food and connection. From sizzling grills to fresh garden salads, the evening was filled with warmth, great food, and even better company.

Over 50 students from Grades 10–12 lead a community dinner every month—planning, cooking, and serving alongside a professional chef. Students use reclaimed

food and produce from the school garden. Guests include newcomers, under-housed individuals, and families, many of whom also join in student-led English conversation circles.

This program, now in its 10th year, teaches students leadership through service, supported by community partners like United Way, Seaspan, the City of North Vancouver, Carson Graham PAC, and Save-On Foods through the NVSD Food Program. Students were recently recognized as an Outstanding Youth Group by the City of North Vancouver and the Lieutenant Governor.

Thank you to all who make these monthly community dinners possible!



Creating inclusive play spaces at Westview Ta na wa Ns7éyxnitm tlá Teltíwet Elementary

By Carly Roy, Principal

At Westview Ta na wa Ns7éyxnitm tlá Teltíwet Elementary, the playground is at the heart of the school community. It is a place where children and families gather before and after school, where friendships are formed, and where social relationships are developed and practiced. In order that the playground is a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging, it is fully accessible for all mobility needs, with accessible surfacing and play equipment. Now, with the installation of our new Communication Board, it feels more accessible for students who have communication accessibility needs as well.

Playground communication boards are large panels with symbol-based language. They offer an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tool in an outdoor setting. At Westview, we were fortunate to have our playground communication board installed in October 2025. The Communication Board has been an important component of our welcoming, safe, and inclusive school by providing:

- **Accessibility in all areas of the school:** While many students use AAC devices indoors, playground boards ensure communication continues in all spaces. Children with communication differences can join games, express needs, and share ideas, reducing barriers to inclusion.



- **Community awareness:** The communication board introduces our whole community (students, staff and families) to symbol-based language, making diverse communication methods familiar to all.

"It is really fun! The board is like buttons," explained Dave, Grade 2.

We have noticed strong curiosity and engagement from all of the students and families as we continue to build understanding around how we can use the communication board in play and interactions. The presence of the communication board has enhanced how students interact with each other. Not only has it benefitted students who use alternate communication forms, but access to visuals is a huge support for students learning English.

The installation of this board at Westview Ta na wa Ns7éyxnitm tlá Teltíwet has had a positive impact on our community that extends



beyond the playground. Parents see how all children are included in play. The communication board has been a topic of conversation around the school and with the Parents' Advisory Council (PAC), in classrooms, and of course, on the playground.

Our plan is to formalize education around the communication board in January 2026. In collaboration with the school district AAC Speech and Language Pathologists and teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, we will be delivering universal lessons to all classes about AAC, the communication board and how we can use it to support everyone in the community.

The presence of this communication tool on Westview Ta na wa Ns7éyxnitm tlá Teltíwet's playground sends an important message about accessibility and creating play spaces where all students can communicate their ideas and perspectives.

Indigenous students leading their learning: The Indigenous Literacy Program

Written by **Brandi Price, Indigenous Education Literacy Teacher**, with insights from **Jake T, Chanel T, and Max B, Grade 6, Sherwood Park** and **Mason O, William M and Avery P, Grade 7, Dorothy Lynas**

The Indigenous Literacy program for elementary students in intermediate grades is primarily student-led; our framework for learning is guided by the [First Peoples Principals of Learning](#): Learning involves patience and time. The program supports students to research collaboratively with their peers, focusing on subjects that are relevant to Indigenous culture and community. In addition, we hope that the themes we bring forward can spark an interest in readers to delve further into their own areas of interest, studies or projects.

Part of this work sees students writing their own articles for publication in school and school district communications. The writing process begins with planning. Students employ creative technologies such as the whiteboard on Canva as a space to “brain dump” and generate their thoughts, ideas and questions. This leads to meaningful discussions with

their peers that evoke their critical thinking skills and deepens their understanding of their chosen topic.

“We learn to research about the people of our land and their cultures” shared Jake T, currently in Grade 6 at Sherwood Park Elementary.

One example of a project that came through the Indigenous Literacy program is a study on sea wolves in the Heiltsuk territory. Students at Sherwood Park and Dorothy Lynas Elementary collaborated digitally to create an interactive article to be shared with the wider school district community. They shared video links to documentary-style videos such as [When the Wolves Return](#) produced by səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) and [Call of the Coastal Wolves](#) by Maxwell Hohn.

“In the Heiltsuk territory, the sea-wolves are learning how to use a net to get food. A trail cam(era) was set up that recoded footage of a sea-wolf pulling a buoy to shore to get the herring bait. The significance of this event teaches us that we have a lot to learn still about animals.”

In reflection of their group work, Max B, also a Grade 6 Sherwood Park student, noted “It was fun to



connect and collaborate with other Indigenous students.”

Indigenous youth are leaders, knowledge keepers, artists, and change makers who are shaping a path ahead for our communities. A central goal of the Indigenous Literacy program is to uplift student perspectives and highlight how young people can strengthen their cultural identity, build confidence, and connect with peers who share similar experiences and dreams through reading and writing. Their stories carry resilience, wisdom, and vision into our collective future, where every student’s perspective is valued. By highlighting achievements, creativity, and leadership, student writing can also challenge stereotypes and promote understanding among wider audiences. We look forward to continuing to share Indigenous students’ literacy work with members of the NVSD community.

Indigenous canning and food preservation

By **Tine Parker, District Administrator, Healthy Futures**

As part of the CUPE Local 389 professional development day held February 13, 2026, Courtney Kessel and Jessica Baker hosted an “Indigenous canning and food preservation” workshop for 30 school district staff members.



Participants learned how to sanitize, prepare fruits such as apples, pineapples and mangoes, and can these fruits. The workshop was energetic, educational, and the aroma smelled delicious. Multiple people dropped by to find out where the wonderful smell came from.

A huge thank you to Courtney and Jessica for their guidance and willingness to share their knowledge.

Sutherland staff walk the land together at Cheakamus Centre retreat

By Karen Birchenall, Teacher Leader

On September 18 and 19, 2025, Sutherland Secondary staff came together at Cheakamus Centre for a retreat filled with learning, connection, and community. Building on last year's professional development with Talaysay Tours, where Sutherland staff explored the land Sutherland Secondary is built on, this year's retreat continued a journey of truth, healing and reconciliation in meaningful ways.

The retreat began Thursday evening around a campfire (propane, due to the fire ban) where staff gathered to share legends, songs, dances and laughter. On Friday, learning deepened through a storytelling workshop, Indigenous games, walking the land, and a session on science and sustainability that explored the salmon life cycle through the lens of Two-Eyed Seeing—bringing together Indigenous and western ways of knowing.



In Walking the Land, staff learned about The Beetle Project, connecting environmental stewardship to local ecosystems. To conclude the day, staff came together in play, learning and laughing through Indigenous games that ignited the joy of community.

The retreat was a powerful opportunity for staff reconnect with one another, learn from the land, and carry forward the work of reconciliation and sustainability in the school community. Throughout the retreat, there was a strong sense of community building, with staff enjoying the chance to learn more about each other, especially during shared meals.

The retreat closed in a circle where everyone shared how this professional development would impact their teaching. It was clear that each person was leaving ready to make a change and bring this learning back into their classrooms.

Cedar heart learning and weaving: Boundary's Professional Day

By Kendra Arkinstall, Principal

On November 10, 2025, staff at Boundary Elementary came together for a Professional Day centered on learning, connection, and Squamish teachings. We welcomed Buckey and Anneliese from Squamish Nation, who guided us through the process of weaving cedar hearts. Buckey shared that he is a member of the Squamish Canoe Family and Anneliese shared that Buckey is her teacher of Cedar Weaving.

As we sat together weaving, we were reminded of what it feels like to be learners ourselves. The experience brought forward a mix of emotions: uncertainty, curiosity, and ultimately, learning.

For Kelly, an Education Assistant, the experience resonated deeply. She shared, "Getting a small glimpse into the teachings of the Squamish peoples reminded me that learning is about connection - being present, slowing down, and trusting the process. When I started making the cedar heart weaving, I caught myself doing the opposite. I often tell students to trust their gut, not overthink, and just let the learning unfold. Meanwhile, I was second-guessing my work and worried about making it "perfect."

The day closed with a teaching from Buckey that left a lasting impression: when children come to school, they enter a family. The teacher becomes one of their parents, classmates are brothers and sisters, and other

classes are cousins, aunts, and uncles. This perspective reminds us that we are all connected, and that through shared learning, we can build a stronger, more compassionate community.

We carry these teachings with gratitude, reminded that learning is not only about knowledge but also connection, heart, and growth.



Growing green: Montroyal students flourish with positive actions

By Nicky Mey, Vice Principal

At Montroyal Elementary, we believe that a positive attitude and behaviour, curiosity and engagement in learning, and leading with kindness and empathy are the cornerstones of a thriving school culture. This year, Montroyal students have risen to the occasion, demonstrating these values in remarkable ways.

In October 2024, we introduced the GREEN CARD system, a simple yet powerful initiative designed to recognize students making excellent choices—whether in their behaviour, care for the environment, leadership roles, work habits, attitude, engagement, or acts of empathy and kindness. When a student earns a GREEN CARD, they bring it to the GREEN MEANS GROW board in the front lobby of the school. There, any staff member present celebrates the student’s achievement and engages in a brief conversation about how they are positively contributing to school culture. Students can also choose to push a green button that

proudly announces, “YOU GOT A GREEN CARD, WAY TO GROW!”

We are proud to continue this work and to stand alongside students, staff, and families in building schools where everyone belongs. Beyond immediate recognition, this system allows us to compile data each month to identify trends and set collective goals for continued growth. By focusing on intrinsic motivation, we have created an environment where positive behaviour is celebrated in a meaningful way.

While we have intentionally not attached tangible rewards to the GREEN CARD system, in February 2025, we surprised Montroyal students with a special recognition—an extra 20 minutes of recess! This reward was a celebration of their collective effort, as students earned more GREEN CARDS in February than in January.

The benefits extended beyond students—staff also received an unexpected reward! With administrative staff and Education Assistants stepping in for



supervision, Montroyal’s dedicated teachers were gifted additional prep time, allowing them a well-deserved moment to recharge while students enjoyed their extra recess.

By fostering student agency, community engagement, and a culture of care, we are actively developing responsible, compassionate leaders who understand that growth is a continuous journey.

Montroyal’s GREEN CARD system is more than just a recognition program—it’s a movement that encourages students and staff alike to grow together. We are proud of all students for stepping up and showcasing their commitment to a positive school culture, and we look forward to seeing where this journey takes us next!



Dancing through the year at Handsworth

By Kalla V and Fiona E, Grade 11, Handsworth Secondary

At Handsworth, the dance program is an integral part of our vibrant school community. Dance provides a space for students to express themselves, perform, and step out of their comfort zone, and is open to all regardless of experience and skill.

Throughout the school year thus far, students in the Handsworth dance program have gathered to perform for the community. During the fall pep rally, they danced in support of our fall sports teams. They were featured performers of the half-time show during the Spirit Game of the annual No Regrets tournament. The dance program also performed an emotionally charged piece as part of the school-wide Remembrance Day Ceremony, honouring the sacrifices families make during times of conflict.



The most recent event that included classical, hip hop, and contemporary performances was the Winter Dance Show. The theme of the show was "Proudly Canadian." All the dances in the show were student-choreographed and were performed to songs by Drake, Tate McRae, Sarah McLachlan, Nelly Furtado, among other Canadian artists. The dancers put in many hours of work to create the choreography and bring the show together. In the end, this show was a raging success!

Dance is also featured in our annual Handsworth school play. Every year, we host an original, student-run, and written play – this year's production is titled *Fake*. It is a drama with

some comedic relief that includes many programs such as dance, drama classes from Grades 10–12, musical theatre classes, and singers. *Fake* will be performed April 29 through May 2, 2025. Tickets are on sale now!

Our last performance of the year will be *Hands Up*. This is a final show that provides students a chance to bring their vision of any dance they want to life. It also allows everyone to show off the new skills they have learned throughout the school year.

The dance program at Handsworth Secondary is a community where everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to create connections and memories that last forever.

Carson Graham's IB Celebration of Learning

Carson Graham Secondary hosted its annual International Baccalaureate (IB) Celebration of Learning on March 5, 2026, welcoming students, families, staff, and the Carson Graham Family of Schools (FOS) community for a full day of showcasing student achievement.

During the day, Grade 10 students presented their Middle Years Programme (MYP) Personal Projects, marking the culmination of their MYP experience. Carson Graham students, along with staff and visiting students from Carson Graham's FOS, explored the wide

range of creative and inquiry-driven projects on display.

The celebration continued into the evening, as Grade 10 students once again shared their Personal Projects, this time with the broader community. They were joined by Grade 12 IB Diploma Programme (DP) students, who presented their Capstone projects in the library, highlighting the depth of learning and research that defines the DP experience.

Adding to the evening's atmosphere, the IB Diploma Visual Arts Exhibition was showcased in the Agora, featuring an impressive body



of work from senior Visual Arts students. Their pieces offered an inspiring look into their artistic journeys within the IB programme.

The event was a meaningful celebration of student curiosity, learning, and accomplishment across the IB program.

Reflection on CERN virtual tour at Windsor

By Heitor M F, Grade 12

It was an honour to participate in Windsor Secondary's virtual tour of the European Council for Nuclear Research (CERN)'s particle accelerator in Switzerland. Witnessing the presentation was monumental; I can't recall a time when I felt closer to innovation than during the tour. Being able to hear about such a complex topic for those 70 minutes was the best way I could have started my day. The staff at CERN made what seemed like an unfathomable concept into something captivating and understandable, so much so that there were barely any moments when I felt lost in the conversation.

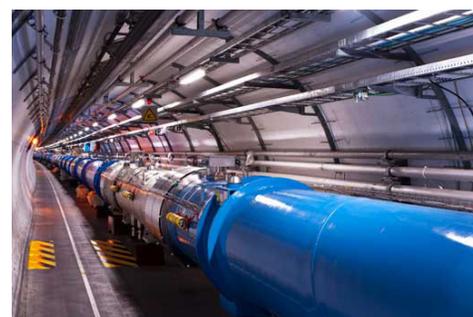
At the beginning of the tour, as we reviewed the individual tables and monitors and the responsibilities of each worker in the control room, I finally understood the true scale of this organization. Just seeing over five monitors at one desk was mind-blowing, and to see that throughout the tour, there were screens, dials, buttons, and instruments on every surface left me in awe. Learning about the history of the facility and its various iterations added greater significance to what we were part of. Seeing pictures of underground tunnels being constructed and recognizing the effort behind building the facility was incredible. When I work alongside famous people or large organizations, I get a sense of limitless potential, and CERN evoked that same feeling, even through a computer screen.

As we delved deeper into the heart of the machine, it was fascinating to see what lay within. Photos of the crew and facility were

scattered across the walls, and murals depicting CERN's history gave a more homely atmosphere (something I assume the staff have cultivated). It was also interesting to observe the design of the facility, helping us better understand the scope of our exploration. When we reached the furthest point they could show us, it was surprising to see that, although far from the accelerator, it had a magnetic field large enough for our guides to demonstrate its effect on paper clips. The staff were extremely kind and knowledgeable, showing us everything possible and providing plenty of detail, not to mention their openness to questions.

Experiencing even a small part of what CERN has inspired me to do further independent research, which helped me better understand Muons and why they are a favourite particle for physicists working in modern physics. I also explored their YouTube channel and learned about the Higgs field, which made me even more curious about the work happening at the facility. Physics has always been my favourite branch of science, and having the chance to tour one of humanity's greatest creations was truly an exceptional experience. If I find myself anywhere in Europe in the near future, I will be sure to visit CERN in person, as it would be a dream come true.

I wouldn't want to end without thanking our wonderful teacher, Eموke Madar. Her appearance in Windsor was a delightful surprise to me and everyone in her classes. Ms. Madar is clearly passionate about physics and teaching, traits that, if you ask any student who has ever been in her class, are qualities of the



greatest teachers. It was surprising to see her converse with the CERN staff in Hungarian, and later learning that it was through her own web of contacts that she organized this event for our school.

Windsor is saddened knowing she will be leaving in the middle of our school year, but we hope our paths cross again and that her future is filled with wonder and joy. Every time I walk to my period four Physics class, I am filled with excitement about what we will be doing and grateful for the opportunity to see Ms. Madar. I am not the only one who feels this way; I have spoken with many peers who share the same admiration for our fabulous teacher. On behalf of Windsor's students, I am truly grateful to have her as my teacher.

Exploring the skies: Aviation Career Exploration Program

By Jennifer Kinakin, Careers Coordinator

The North Vancouver School District's Career Pathways 44 is thrilled to share highlights from Elevate Aviation's very first Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) program in Vancouver! This initiative opened doors for 30 students from the North and West Vancouver school districts to discover the exciting world of aviation through hands-on experiences and engaging conversations.

Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) is an immersive, site-based program designed to spark curiosity and inspire students through hands-on learning. Over four full days, participants explored the fundamentals of aviation and discovered a wide range of career pathways—from pilots and flight attendants to aircraft mechanics, design engineers, Canadian Border Services roles, and airport operations specialists.

Students enjoyed exclusive access beyond the terminal, gaining a behind-the-scenes look at aviation operations. Industry professionals shared their experiences, career journeys, and practical advice, motivating the next generation to consider opportunities in this dynamic and growing field.

Program highlights included:

- **Harbour Air Hangar Tour & Aircraft Maintenance:** A hands-on experience where students engaged directly with maintenance crews and explored operational processes.
- **Cockpit & Cabin Exploration:** Students spoke with pilots, toured the cockpit, and experienced the comfort of Air Canada's AC847 first-class cabin.
- **Sustainability in Aviation:** A deep dive into YVR's Climate and Environment initiatives, including airside tours of emergency services, wildlife management, and environmental procedures.

ACE is an exceptional program that serves as a launchpad for future careers. By combining presentations, hands-on activities, and behind-the-scenes tours, students gain a realistic understanding of the aviation industry and the many roles that keep it soaring. Well done to all student participants, we can't wait to see where your career flies to!

Congratulations to all who received this well-deserved recognition. We wish you continued success in your endeavors.



Mid-year 'Robotics for All' challenge at Carson Graham

By Alysia Francis, Technology Teacher Leader

On February 24, 2026 Grade 5 and 6 teams from schools across the NVSD came together at Carson Graham to take part in a highly successful mid-year robotics challenge. Teams put months of problem-solving, design, and collaboration into action as they tested their robots in a fast-paced, friendly competition.

The event brought together multiple schools and was supported by



a strong group of high school volunteers who helped with scoring, organization, and team flow throughout the afternoon

and evening. Competing teams demonstrated resilience, creativity, and teamwork as they refined their designs between rounds and adapted their strategies in real time.

Events like this highlight the power of hands-on learning and peer collaboration, giving students an authentic opportunity to apply coding, engineering, and critical thinking skills in a supportive, high-energy environment. The momentum from this challenge is already building toward the final school district robotics event on April 22.

Finding belonging through sportsmanship at Windsor

By Cheryl T, Grade 12

I was in Grade 9 when I transferred to Windsor, and I soon enrolled in the volleyball team. It was that team that became the foundation of my sense of belongingness at the school, and it was the team's sportsmanship that bridged me to the Windsor community.

I was anxious as I stepped into the first practice because I did not know anyone and was scared of upsetting anyone. But soon, the butterflies in my stomach were replaced by a sense of comfort fostered by the supportive individuals around me. The team's constant high fives and words of encouragement gave me the courage to get up after failures, and the team taught me that a single mistake will not ruin the entire game and most definitely does not define a person. This quality is deeply embedded in our team and is what brings us together.

During a tough set when everything seemed to be going wrong, and game point was approaching for the opponent, we stayed calm by uplifting each other. When someone made a mistake, we would tell them they would get it "next time." Of course, it also requires extreme determination and resilience to carry on after a failure. But Windsor showed me many times that nothing is impossible when we face a problem as a team. Being part of the team means caring deeply for others and showing up mentally and physically to practices and games. Sportsmanship includes qualities like compassion and commitment, and that's what truly matters in school sports.

At Windsor, sportsmanship goes beyond cheering the loudest in the gym. We strive to build a community by uniting students through inclusivity, encouragement and positivity. On the court, that means

being a supportive teammate, a respectful opponent and being thankful to referees, coaches and anyone else who makes sport possible at Windsor. Off the court, it means carrying the same values into the classroom. It means being a supportive classmate, embracing failures as part of the learning process and keep pushing forward even when things are going out of plan. According to a very inspirational teammate of mine, "don't stress, let's just have fun and enjoy the process."



Schools 'Drop Everything and Read' on Canadian School Library Day

By Myriam Dumont, Vice Principal

October is Canadian Library Month, a time to recognize the vital role libraries play in fostering literacy, lifelong learning, and community engagement across the country. Within the North Vancouver School District, school library learning commons are vibrant hubs of learning, creativity, and connection.

On October 27, 2025, schools across the district proudly celebrated School Library Day with one of our most cherished literacy traditions: D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read). This district-wide event invited

students and staff to pause their day and immerse themselves in the joy of reading, reinforcing the importance of literacy and the shared experience of storytelling.

"I really like D.E.A.R. every year because our entire school becomes so quiet, and I love reading" shared Lucy, Grade 4.

"I liked that we stopped everything we were doing to read. When I read, it helps calm me down—and I love I Spy books" shared Cairo, Grade 1.

At elementary schools throughout North Vancouver, students and educators came together to



celebrate reading in creative and collaborative ways. From cozy reading corners to whole-school read-ins, the enthusiasm was palpable.

Shifting gender norms at Seycove

By Izabelle R, Grade 11

At Seycove, we see ourselves as an open, accepting, and inclusive community. Our school is made up of a diverse group of students, and that diversity is something we take pride in. But sometimes, small off-sided comments or subtle acts of bias that don't reflect our beliefs slip through the cracks. That's why in our PLP 11 Humanities class, we've been exploring the hidden ways gender norms shape our everyday experiences. We were then challenged to help build a school culture that genuinely includes, represents, and celebrates everyone.

For this learning, our cohort of 47 students was divided into three groups to examine the most visible gender identities in our school community: femininity, masculinity, and transgender/non-binary experiences. We looked at the history behind the expectations placed on each group, the stereotypes and limitations that have shaped them, and the impact those "boxes" continue to have today. Instead of stopping at

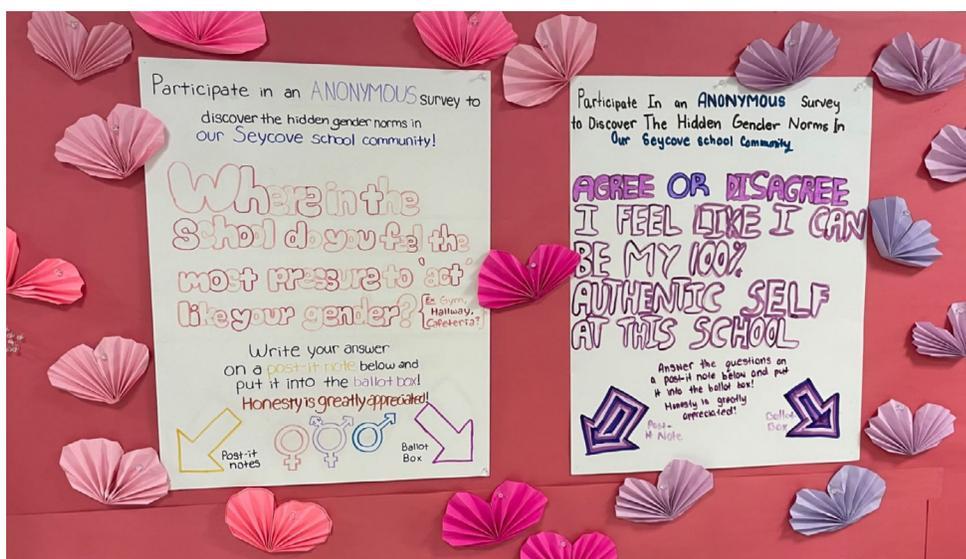
awareness, we focused on how to challenge those narratives and move toward healthier, more affirming representations.

After completing our research, we came together with our different perspectives as a class to drive deeper discussions about how gender norms affect all of us. Those conversations were honest, sometimes uncomfortable, and incredibly eye-opening. For me, these conversations were the most meaningful part of the entire project.

From there, we were ready to meet the challenge of the project, and address the driving question; "How might communities reduce the harm caused by rigid gender expectations and increase belonging and well-being for everyone?" Groups embarked on a variety of initiatives, all focused on making our community more welcoming and respectful of gender and norms. From surveys, to videos, to presentations, our class was dedicated to sharing our learning with as many people who wanted to listen.

We talked to Grade 8, 9 and 10 classes at Seycove, teachers, and neighbouring elementary schools, and put informational pamphlets all around Deep Cove and Parkgate. Through each conversation, poster, and presentation, we weren't just completing an assignment, we were actively working to reshape our community into one where everyone feels seen, respected, and free to exist beyond limiting expectations.

This project showed that learning driven by care and empathy can reach far beyond the classroom. By presenting our findings, creating interactive materials, and engaging others in discussion, we encouraged students, teachers, and community members to question outdated ideas about gender. These experiences highlighted that thoughtful, compassionate communication is the most powerful way to make people reconsider assumptions and connect with new perspectives. What began as a class project became an opportunity to inspire understanding and foster a community where everyone is seen, respected, and able to thrive



Empowering Indigenous youth through entrepreneurship

By Jennifer Kinakin, Careers Coordinator, with insights from Keiran M, Grade 11, Argyle, and Wesley B, Grade 12, Windsor

This year, students in Grades 10–12 participated in the Junior Achievement BC (JABC) Company Program for Indigenous Learners, an initiative designed to help youth turn their passions into business ideas while grounding their work in Coast Salish values and cultural identity.

The program brought together 11 students from Argyle, Windsor, Carson, and Esliha⁷an secondary schools. Guided and by JABC staff, business experts, and NVSD Indigenous support staff, students collaborated to develop business concepts, create plans, and deliver pitches. Along the way, they learned key skills such as marketing, teamwork, and presenting ideas, while connecting entrepreneurship to their interests in culture, arts, sports, trades, and community.

Students strengthened their resumes, explored new career



possibilities, and built valuable mentorship connections. While coordinating schedules across multiple schools and completing the work within nine weeks presented challenges, students became especially engaged when applying their learning to create and pitch their ideas.

The program concluded with a graduation ceremony and wrap-up event at the UBC Longhouse, where students presented their pitches alongside youth from other school districts.

Keiran M, a Grade 11 student from Argyle, shared “I enjoyed the real-life experience of doing a sales pitch in front of a crowd. For the future, I would recommend having one more



lesson on starting up a business and more about funding.”

Wesley B, a Grade 12 student from Carson Graham, shared “What I enjoyed most was being able to talk to others; both adults and students my own age. I learned how to run a business and work as a team and would advise any future students of this program to stick with the program and finish it because its worth it in the end and seeing the final product.”

Overall, the JABC Company Program for Indigenous Learners provided students with meaningful insights into entrepreneurship while strengthening their connection to culture, community, and collaboration.

Construction of Cloverley Elementary

The new Cloverley Elementary School has been under construction this school year and will open September 2026 for students in Kindergarten through to Grade 5. With a total enrolment capacity of 585, the school will grow to be a full Kindergarten to Grade 7 elementary school by 2028-29. The project scope includes funding for a Neighbourhood Learning Centre, child care space, greenhouse gas reduction measures, and mass



timber construction. We’re grateful for the continued support of the Ministry of Education and Child Care and Ministry of Infrastructure as we work to provide teaching

and learning facilities that meet the modern-day and future needs of students and staff. We can’t wait to welcome families to Cloverley Elementary!

Westview Elementary modular addition: Swift, sustainable, and student-centred

Westview Ta na wa Ns7éyxnitm tlá Teltíwet Elementary is welcoming four new classrooms this fall, thanks to an innovative modular addition designed to meet student needs quickly and sustainably.

Last summer, the school district's Facilities and Purchasing departments began exploring a new way to deliver this capital project, announced in June 2024. With construction costs on the rise and conventional builds often facing delays, the joint team sought an approach that would minimize

disruption for the Westview community.

In what may be a first for a BC school district, the solution was to construct the addition off-site using precision computer-guided machinery at a factory in Pemberton, BC. The modular components were then trucked to North Vancouver and assembled on-site like "Lego."

Between August 5 and 22, 2025, the structure was craned into place, and a [timelapse video](#) captured the rapid transformation.

Made entirely from BC mass timber, the addition meets high standards for energy efficiency, health, and seismic safety—and will be completed in less than half the time of traditional construction.

As Board Chair Linda Munro shared, "The new addition to Westview Elementary supports a healthy and vibrant learning community. We are excited by the innovative approach to building that will add more space and modern classrooms to better meet students' needs."

We're grateful to our partners and teams who are helping to bring this project to life.



July 14, 2025



August 18, 2025



December 16, 2025

Lynn Valley Elementary playground and classroom upgrades

The reconstructed playground at Lynn Valley Elementary opened in May 2025, providing students and the surrounding community with a safe, inclusive space to enjoy. The redesigned play area features a rubberized poured-in-place surface made from recycled tires, made possible in part by a \$30,000 Community Grant from Tire Stewardship BC. The Lynn Valley Elementary Parents' Advisory Council also played a key role in championing and fundraising for the project, with additional donations coming from the community.

The playground upgrade is part of a larger capital project by the North Vancouver School District. This project involves relocating playground equipment to make way for six additional classrooms at Lynn Valley Elementary. Work on the school's six-classroom addition is progressing, with completion expected in spring 2026. After students and staff move into the new spaces, the vacated classrooms will be renovated to support ongoing learning needs, followed by landscaping and final site improvements.

Together, these upgrades will enhance the school's learning environment and outdoor spaces for years to come.



Brooksbank students plant trees at Loutet forest

By Tine Parker, District Administrator, Healthy Futures with insights from Estelle, Paige, Chase and Taya, Grade 4

In May and June, 2025, Grade 4 and 5 students from Brooksbank, together with the City of North Vancouver staff, pulled invasive plants from Loutet forest for three long days.

With the summer behind us and the forest taking a break, October 21 was spent planting local plants in the area where invasive plants were pulled. Almost 60 students and their teachers, with City of Vancouver staff planted close to 100 plants. The students carried plants into the forest, dug holes and wished the



plants the best of luck.

“This October, my class planted native plants to the land. My class and I planted around thirty plants.”
– Estelle

“We pulled invasive plants out of the Loutet area last May. Then this October we planted native plants to the land. My partner and I planted a cherry tree!” – Paige

“We pulled invasive plants last May like ivy and holly. It was really fun! This October, I planted plants with Raheel.” – Chase

“This October we planted native plants at Loutet. I was partnered up with Rory and Mikayla. I don’t remember all of the plants, but I remember that we planted a Maple Tree!” – Taya

It is wonderful to see how students show great stewardship with support from the community to protect and help where we live.

Rediscovering *Brotherella roellii* at Cheakamus Centre

Featuring research by **Andrew Simon, PhD student in the Spribille Lab at the University of Alberta**

Brotherella roellii is an Endangered moss species endemic to Canada, found only in the lowland riparian forests of southern British Columbia. Once present in the United States, it is now believed to be extirpated from its former American range, making its Canadian populations especially important. In Canada, it is known to occur in Howe Sound, the Lower Mainland, and the Fraser Valley.

A recent rediscovery by University of Alberta PhD student Andrew Simon at Cheakamus Centre confirmed *Brotherella roellii* is still present at a site where it was first recorded in 1916 and last seen in 2006. Currently completing his research in the Spribille Lab at the University of Alberta, Andrew’s research focuses

on the environmental conditions that support rare mosses such as *Brotherella roellii*.

A preliminary assessment suggests the *Brotherella roellii* population located at Cheakamus Centre is healthy and possibly one of the most robust in the Howe Sound region, offering hope for its continued survival.

The moss is likely extirpated from at least one historical site in Squamish, underscoring the importance of protected habitats like those at Cheakamus Centre. As development fragments natural ecosystems, these refuges become critical for species like *Brotherella roellii*, which depend on shaded, moist environments and may be vulnerable to climate change.

Andrew’s current research focuses on the abiotic conditions that

support this moss, aiming to understand what limits its distribution. He and his team are also exploring ways to integrate this work into educational programming at Cheakamus Centre, helping to raise awareness about the region’s unique biodiversity and the importance of conservation.



Students and educators engage with art ‘From The Ground’ at the Gordon Smith Gallery

By Amelia Epp, Program Coordinator and District Visual Arts Teacher, Artists for Kids

This fall, the Gordon Smith Gallery has been filled with creativity and curiosity as both students and educators engage deeply with the exhibition *From the Ground*. Through hands-on workshops and immersive gallery experiences, participants are exploring how artists connect with the more-than-human world, uncover the visible and invisible in our environments, and expand our sense of time.

On the October 24, 2025 provincial professional development day, teachers from across the Lower Mainland gathered at Artists for Kids and the Gordon Smith Gallery for hands-on art workshops.

In the morning, two experienced intermediate teachers led practical sessions on teaching art in Grades 4–7, sharing strategies for lesson



Photo by Rachel Topham Photography.

planning, assessment, and classroom management. Participants developed ready-to-use lesson samples to bring back to their classrooms.

The afternoon was spent alongside artist Xinwei Che who introduced her creative practice and ceramics installation at the Gordon Smith Gallery. She then guided a clay and drawing workshop exploring geology and map making through collaborative, embodied art making.

Meanwhile, students from across the North Vancouver School District have been exploring *From the Ground* through the Artists for Kids Grade 5 Gallery Program, a full-day

experience that blends discussion, observation, and studio practice.

In the gallery, students explore how artists interact with nature, time, and unseen forces. A highlight for many is experimenting with droppers to soak tiny clay sculptures, an activity inspired by Xinwei Che's installation.

In the studio, students create layered collages inspired by Anna Binta Diallo's work, tracing maps and microorganisms, remixing found images, and adding texture with paint and pastel rubbings. These tactile, imaginative processes help students connect artistic techniques with broader ideas about place, identity, and transformation.

Sutherland ‘Active Travel Week’ recap

By Daylen Luchsinger, Vice Principal

From May 26–30, 2025, students and staff at Sutherland Secondary embraced movement and sustainability during Active Week. With funding from a City of North Vancouver Safe and Active School Travel mini-grant and additional support from ICBC, the RCMP, and MEC, the event celebrated the everyday impact of choosing active travel.

Led by a passionate group of student organizers, the week kicked off with a welcome event complete with music and freebies on Monday.

On Wednesday and Friday, the student “welcome wagon” greeted travelers with water, granola bars, and encouragement.

Over 200 students completed our active travel survey; 65% walked, 32% used transit, and a small but mighty group biked or scootered. Even more participated informally, creating a positive buzz around the school.

By focusing on all forms of active travel, not just cycling, the event helped more students feel seen and celebrated. Many proudly shared their active travel routines, capturing the spirit of fun and community our



organizers hoped to inspire.

Looking ahead, four out of five student leaders are returning to Sutherland in 2025/2026 and are keen to build on this success with more events in the fall. With staff support ready to go, we're excited to keep the momentum rolling.

Exploring electricity through hands-on learning

By **Maria Power, Teacher**

Understanding scientific concepts through traditional learning methods, such as reading textbooks and listening to lectures, can sometimes feel abstract for students. That's why experiential learning—where students engage directly with materials and concepts—has such a lasting impact. Recently, my Grade 6/7 class at Cleveland Elementary dove into the principles of electricity and electromagnetism in a hands-on, inquiry-based unit.

In each of the four lessons, the class began with an explanation of concepts, followed by a discovery activity where students had to solve a problem or figure out how to do something. Initially, students were provided the materials to build a simple circuit but were not given any instructions. They had to figure it out by trial and error, and experimentation.

We sourced broken things from various work and classroom communities, and received donations of everyday items like a blender, coffee machine, toaster oven, fans and even a drone!

Students then took them apart to discover how the objects were built, how they worked, and what provided the basic functions they were designed to perform. By dismantling these objects, students saw firsthand how motors, wiring, and electromagnets function. This hands-on approach made the concepts more tangible and relatable. It was also important that students reflected on the raw materials that go into the production of the appliances and how we dispose of them.

Most electric appliances used in the home rely on electromagnetism as the basic working principle. By providing the opportunity to students to make learning connections between static concepts such as electricity and how they are used in everyday life is always beneficial. Our goal through this activity was for students to become more aware, in a universal way, of how and where electricity is used. We wanted them to transfer and apply their learning to new and other situations, and measure and control variables through fair tests.

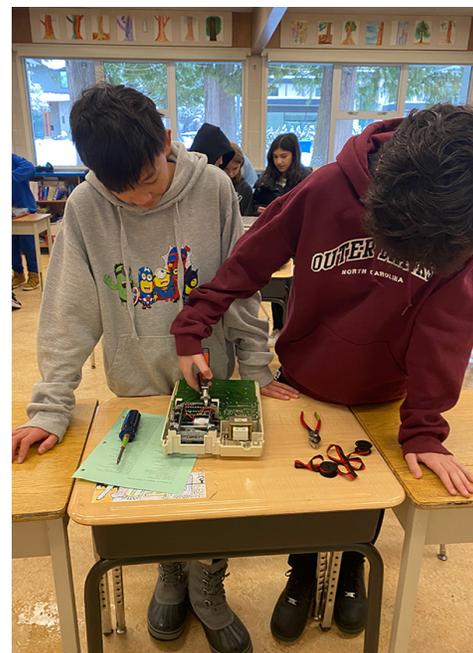
By utilizing a hands-on approach, students are more engaged and better able to stay on task and are fueled by the discovery. My class showed a lot of cooperation by helping each other and were very innovative, collaborative, and successful in finding ways around obstacles. The lessons were supported by teacher David Barnum, so between the two of us, we were able to check-in with groups twice as fast. Having additional teachers are such a gift in any non-traditional teaching and learning activities.

Long-term, experiential learning is more tangible and memorable. It extends far beyond textbook learning and what is in the curriculum. They also gained practical skills, such as using a screwdriver correctly, selecting appropriate tools, and understanding how electrical components function within common devices.

If this lesson were to be repeated, one area for improvement would be gathering a greater variety of tools, particularly screwdriver heads, to ensure students have the necessary equipment to fully dismantle

appliances. Additionally, streamlining the process of collecting broken appliances in advance would enhance the efficiency of the lesson setup.

This hands-on approach to learning about electricity and electromagnetism was a resounding success. By engaging with real-world applications, students not only gained a stronger grasp of scientific principles but also developed valuable problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. This lesson proved that when students are given the freedom to explore, experiment, and discover, their learning becomes more meaningful and impactful.



Curriculum Implementation Day 2025

By **Chloe Scott, Communications**

Each school year, the North Vancouver School District (NVSD) pauses its regular routines for Curriculum Implementation (CI) Day. CI Day is a district wide professional learning event with a significant purpose: to bring educators together to collaborate and strengthen their instructional practices, ensuring they can best meet the needs of students. CI Day plays a vital role in shaping the narrative of public schooling in our community. It is both a professional responsibility and a cultural moment; an opportunity for shared growth, innovation, and commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

This year's thematic focus was K-12 literacy. Superintendent Dr. Pius Ryan opened the day by sharing words from Richard Wagamese: "All we are is story." He reminded attendees that teaching is deeply human work rooted in relationships, vulnerability, and the ongoing creation of meaning. His message connected the day's activities to a larger narrative about what schooling is for, and how educators support young people in making sense of the world in a time of increasing complexities. He asked educators to consider their relationships with themselves and

others, with the digital systems that shape contemporary learning, and with the ecological world that holds our shared future. How are these relationships shaped through story?

Throughout the day, NVSD educators explored themes connected to K-12 literacy: the role of Indigenous traditional and personal experience stories as powerful pedagogical approaches, the importance of understanding students' lived experiences, and the need to look at the holistic child when thinking about achievement.

A highlight of this year's programming was a featured video presentation from Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald, who introduced the concept of storywork through the allegory of Old Man Coyote. "Traditional and lived experience stories have been a key part of Indigenous culture since time immemorial," Dr. Archibald shared. Her invitation to educators was to consider the "campfires" of their daily routines - the comfortable, familiar practices - and to reflect on what becomes possible when they step beyond them. In doing so, she reframed storytelling as an ethical and relational practice central to teaching and learning.

Elementary school educators heard from Dr. Hope Rigby-Wills, Keys

to Literacy Consultant, who spoke to evidence-based strategies to strengthen reading and writing instruction in classrooms. During breakout sessions, elementary educators focused on learning more about our school district's Literacy Assessment Portfolio, a resource designed by educators to support their colleagues as we implement literacy screening as per the Ministry of Education and Child Care's literacy initiative and mandate.

Tashi Kirincic, Coordinator of Inclusive Literacy Practices for the Delta School District, addressed all NVSD secondary school educators. Ms. Kirincic shared instructional routines and practical strategies to support all learners in unlocking content through a data-informed approach. The Secondary Teacher Leaders facilitated subject-specific conversations about how to use instructional routines to support literacy development.

Thank you to the 60+ staff who supported in the design, development and delivery of the day. From coordinating coffee, tea and snacks for over 2,000 staff, to ensuring the technical capacity of the two host school sites, this day would not be possible without the continued enthusiasm and dedication of all involved staff. A special thank you to Argyle and Handsworth for serving as hosts for the sessions.



The day began with a featured video presentation from Dr. Jo-ann Archibald.



Dr. Pius Ryan shared reflections on the work of the late Richard Wagamese.



Staff continued their learning in classroom breakout sessions.



Upper Lynn Intermediate Choir performs at Lonsdale Quay.



Students lead Remembrance Day assembly at Seycove.



Gymnastics team performs during pep rally at Windsor. Photo by Makena V.



Lynnmour students cheer during Grade 7 versus staff Hockey Day game.



Canyon Heights students participate in Indigenous drum circle.



Outdoor learning at Cheakamus Centre.