

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Connecting Our Priorities



May 2026 Highlights

WELCOME TO THE MAY STRATEGIC FOCUS

Welcome to the May edition of *Strategic Focus – Connecting Our Priorities*. This publication showcases the collective efforts of our schools, staff, students, and community partners as we continue to bring our [District Strategic Plan](#) to life. Across our District, meaningful learning experiences, strong relationships, and innovative practices are supporting student success and well-being.

Inside this edition, you will find highlights connected to the priority areas:

- Intellectual Development – Highland Park Elementary School Glow Gallery; A.L. Fortune drumline; A.L. Fortune and Pleasant Valley bands; and Indigenous Graduation
- Human & Social Development – celebration of Principals and Teachers; Red Dress Day; and the Indigenous Day of Learning
- Career Development – Food Safety Course and Career programs
- Community Partnership Development – Doughnuts with a Grown-up; new playground at Parkview Elementary; international student activities; and Safer Schools Together
- Organizational Development – Hosting an international student and 2026-27 school registration
- Effective Governance and Leadership – May Regular Board meeting and B.C. School Trustee elections resources

Stay connected and informed by visiting our District website (www.sd83.bc.ca) for important dates, news, and resources.

REMINDERS

- June 23 Regular Board Meeting
- June 25 Last Day of School Before Summer Break
- June 26 Administration Day (no school for students)
- September 8 Inservice Day for All Staff
- September 9 First Day of School for Students (3-hr early dismissal)
- September 21 School-based Pro-D
- September 30 National Day for Truth & Reconciliation (no school)

Check out the 2026-27 School Year Calendar on the District's website: [2026-27 School Year Calendar](#).



2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

July	August	September
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April	May	June
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Statutory Holiday (or in lieu day)	Early Dismissal Day (K-12)
School Vacation Period	Conference Day (Elementary/Middle Only)
Professional Development Day (K-12)	Summer Transition Day (Secondary only)
Non-Instructional Day (K-12)	

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Each student will develop their literacy skills, numeracy skills, and competencies to become their most capable self.

HIGHLAND PARK ELEMENTARY'S GLOW GALLERY RETURNS

During the week of May 4, 2026, for the second year in a row, Highland Park Elementary transformed learning into something truly magical with its annual Glow Gallery. What began last year as an inspired idea by Jenny Daughtry grew into a school-wide celebration of creativity, community, and the fine arts.

Last year's "Under the Sea" theme was a huge success, and this year they were thrilled to bring the event back with a brand-new theme: "Enchanted Forest." Led by Jenny Daughtry, with invaluable support from Peter Byrnes, the vision came to life as every classroom from Kindergarten to Grade 5 contributed glowing artwork.

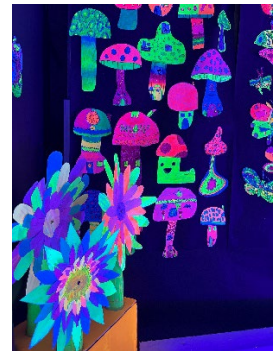
Using neon and fluorescent materials—including paint, oil pastels, paper, and highlighters—students created vibrant pieces that shone under black lights. An empty classroom was transformed into a magical gallery space by Jenny, Peter, and Nadine, complete with glowing art and music that immersed visitors in the enchanted experience.



The Glow Gallery was a highlight of their recent Student-Led Conferences, giving students the opportunity to proudly share their artwork with their families. Each individual piece mattered, and together they formed a stunning collective display that celebrated both creativity and collaboration.

This event represents many hours of dedication and teamwork, and most importantly, it reflects the strong sense of community at Highland Park Elementary. We are so proud of the students, staff, and families for supporting the arts and making the Glow Gallery such a memorable experience for everyone involved.

A heartfelt thank you to *Shepherd's Hardware in Armstrong* for generously providing supplies that helped make this glowing experience possible!



A.L. FORTUNE DRUMLINE, A.L. FORTUNE BAND, PLEASANT VALLEY SECONDARY BAND

The **A.L. Fortune Drumline** competed at the **BC Provincial Drumline Championships in Vancouver**, on May 2, 2026. This was a massive provincial event with 20 ensembles and approximately 400 student musicians in Grades 9–12, competing across four categories.



The **A.L. Fortune Junior Drumline** earned an impressive 3rd place out of 10 ensembles in the Concert Class with their show *"Capes, Webs and Wonders."* The **Senior Drumline** also achieved exceptional results, placing 3rd out of 5 ensembles in the Intermediate Class with their show *"90's Hour."* These podium finishes reflect the students' dedication, teamwork, and growing excellence in marching percussion performance.

The **Pleasant Valley Secondary School Band**, involving 28 student musicians, enjoyed an incredible **three-day music trip to Victoria**, from April 30 - May 3, 2026. The journey included a performance in Falkland, travel through Westwold and Kamloops, and a scenic ferry ride to Vancouver Island. While in Victoria, students performed for an enthusiastic audience at Wishart Elementary School, toured Royal Roads University—including a special private castle tour led by a PVSS graduate—and enjoyed a harbour tour, a visit to Long & McQuade, and a group dinner. On the final day, students explored Beacon Hill Park before delivering an impressive performance at the Legislative Building, earning a private behind-the-scenes tour of the parliament buildings with Keith Baldry of Global TV. This unforgettable trip combined music, travel, and unique learning opportunities, leaving students with lasting memories and a strong sense of accomplishment.



The **A.L. Fortune Secondary Band** also participated in an enriching **music and cultural experience trip to Squamish**, from May 10-13, 2026, with 45 students taking part. The trip featured performances at elementary schools in and around Squamish, offering students the opportunity to share their music with younger

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A.L. Fortune Drumline, A.L. Fortune Band, Pleasant Valley Secondary Band continued

audiences. Beyond performance, students experienced the stunning Sea to Sky Gondola, visited Shannon Falls, Brandywine Falls, Nexen Beach, and took part in the popular Train Wreck hike. Time spent exploring Whistler Village and North Vancouver allowed students to connect socially, explore local landmarks, and enjoy shared meals. This trip blended music, travel, outdoor adventure, and community building.



INDIGENOUS GRADUATION 2026



On May 27, 2026, the Splatsin Community Centre in Enderby was filled with celebration, culture, and community as K'wátsktnéws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw School District No. 83 hosted its annual Indigenous Graduation Ceremony. Families, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, staff, and community members gathered to honour the achievements of this year's graduates in a meaningful and culturally grounded event.



One hundred and thirteen graduates were recognized from five schools, including A.L. Fortune Secondary, Eagle River Secondary, Pleasant Valley Secondary, Salmon Arm Secondary, and Salmon Arm Storefront. The evening began with the graduates' procession, accompanied by the Welcome Song performed by 18 future graduate drummers along with Knowledge Keeper Lauren Felix and the Indigenous Education Department Drum Team.

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INDIGENOUS GRAD 2026 continued



Masters of Ceremony Tori Jewell and Chelsey Hill, SD83 Indigenous Education Workers, led a program that brought together cultural protocol, community voices, and student celebration. Opening words of gratitude and welcome were shared by Quelmúcw Education Council Chair Nerissa Joseph and Knowledge Keeper Virginia Woolridge from Skwłāx, alongside remarks on behalf of Chief and Council and the Board of Education.

Amanda Krebs, Board of Education Vice Chair, congratulated the graduates and shared that they are the first graduating class to do so under the newly gifted name, *ǂwskaltktnéws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw*.



Valedictorian speeches from each of the five schools highlighted personal stories of perseverance and growth, while also expressing heartfelt thanks to staff and family members.



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INDIGENOUS GRAD 2026 continued



Cultural elements were woven throughout the evening, including an Honour Song led by the Knowledge Keeper Laureen Felix and the Indigenous Education Department Drum Team as well as the Passing of the Eagle Staff, symbolizing leadership and the responsibility of hosting the event in the following year.



The ceremony concluded with congratulatory closing remarks delivered by Assistant Superintendent of Indigenous Education and Student Supports Chelsea Prince and District Principal of Indigenous Education Kristen Crawford, followed by the Travelling Song, sending graduates forward in a good way.



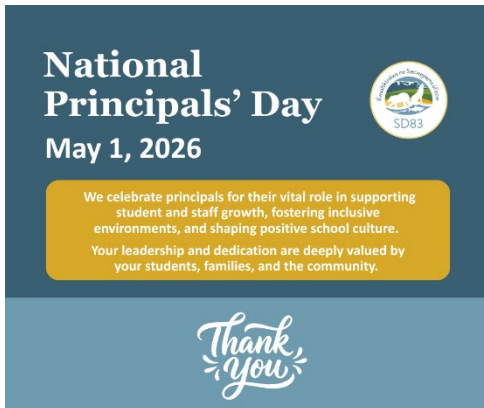
Special thanks are extended to Abundant Specialty, Amy Sampson & Andrea Martin, Cahoots Kitchen, Diane Jewell, H2O4U, Ihana Images, Joanne Buffalo, Laureen Felix, Nico's Nurseryland, Splatsin Community Centre, S'Wichcraft, and Tori Jewell & Chelsey Hill, along with the Indigenous Education Department and Drum Team, whose generosity and dedication helped make the celebration possible.

The 2026 Indigenous Graduation Ceremony was a powerful reflection of pride, connection, and achievement. Congratulations to all graduates—your hard work, resilience, and perseverance are celebrated, and your communities stand proudly behind you as you move forward on your journeys.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Each student will feel welcome, safe, and connected to peers and adults in their school.


NATIONAL PRINCIPALS' DAY



National Principals' Day
May 1, 2026

We celebrate principals for their vital role in supporting student and staff growth, fostering inclusive environments, and shaping positive school culture. Your leadership and dedication are deeply valued by your students, families, and the community.

Thank you



May 1, 2026, marked National Principals' Day, recognizing the dedication and leadership of principals across the District. Principals play a vital role in supporting student and staff growth, fostering caring and inclusive school environments, and shaping positive school culture. Their work includes mentoring and guiding school communities while maintaining a high level of accountability. Appreciation is extended to all principals for their ongoing leadership and service to students, families, and the broader community.

TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY

May 5, 2026, was recognized as Teacher Appreciation Day, highlighting the vital role teachers play in the growth and success of students across the District. Teachers inspire curiosity, creativity, and a love of learning, and continue to shape the lives of young people through their commitment, care, and passion for education.



Teacher Appreciation Day
May 5, 2026

thank you

We celebrate teachers for inspiring curiosity, creativity, and a love of learning, and for continuing to shape the lives of young people through your commitment, care, and passion for education



RED DRESS DAY

Red Dress Day was acknowledged across the District on May 6, 2026, in recognition of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people. Kriger reflected that while Indigenous women represent approximately 4% of the population, they account for 16% of homicide victims, 11% of missing women and girls, and are 12 times more likely to go missing, reinforcing the importance of awareness and action.



J.L. Jackson Secondary hosted its annual Red Dress ceremony, which included student participation, traditional drumming, the Secwépemc welcome song, and reflections on the significance of the day, honouring those lost and reinforcing the District's commitment to remembrance, awareness, and reconciliation.

INDIGENOUS DAY OF LEARNING

The Indigenous Day of Learning brought together educators and local First Nations communities for a day of shared learning, cultural connection, and land-based experiences. The event was made possible through the leadership and collaboration of the Quelmúcw Education Council and local Nations, who organized workshops and welcomed staff into their communities.

A few highlights from the Indigenous Day of Learning include:

Splatsin welcomed staff from M.V. Beattie and A.L. Fortune for canoe trips to pictographs and land-based grounding and meditation at Mara Lake Provincial Park. Learning focused on cultural landmarks, connection to the land, and practices that can be incorporated into classroom settings.



Shihiya School hosted staff from South Canoe, Rancho, and North Canoe, offering story-based language and culture lessons combined with physical activity. Sessions demonstrated how storytelling and movement can support the teaching of Indigenous language and culture in schools.

Skwlāx community welcomed staff from Carlin Elementary Middle, Sorrento, Silver Creek, Salmon Arm West, and the District Education Support Centre. Participants engaged in activities including language learning, storytelling, traditional medicines, crafts, sweat lodge teachings, and games, along with a community meal and closing song.



Neskonlith Indian Band hosted North Shuswap Elementary staff for learning focused on traditional plant use, including harvesting and mat-making, along with storytelling around the fire.

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INDIGENOUS DAY OF LEARNING continued

Adams Lake Band hosted staff from Hillcrest Elementary, Bastion Elementary, and South Broadview Elementary at Switzmalph (Pierre’s Point). Activities included canoeing, storytelling, medicine pouch making, plant walks, language learning, and berry harvesting.



The day highlighted the strength, knowledge, and generosity of local First Nations communities. It also reinforced the importance of approaching this learning with openness, respect, and a willingness to deepen understanding of the lands, cultures, and perspectives that shape our region.

CHILD CARE PROVIDER MONTH IN B.C.



May 2026 is [Child Care Month in B.C.](#) and Friday, May 8, 2026, was Child Care Provider Appreciation Day. Child Care Month is a time to recognize and celebrate the essential work that child care providers do to support children, families and communities. Their dedication, expertise and compassion create safe, nurturing environments where children can learn, grow and thrive. This month highlights the profound impact their work has on early learning and on the long-term well-being of families throughout the province. We are deeply grateful for their ongoing commitment, resilience, and professionalism in a field that is both challenging and incredibly meaningful.

Thank you for everything you do. Your contributions strengthen the foundation of our communities every single day. You can read [Minister Beare’s statement for Child Care Month.](#)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Each student will develop the skills and competencies necessary to be successful in a career or community pathway of their choice.

FOOD SAFETY COURSE

Salmon Arm Secondary hosted a successful Food Safe Level 1 course for students on Saturday, May 2, 2026.

Foods teacher, Elizabeth Woolnough, led the one-day training that equipped participants with essential food safety knowledge and certification, supporting both employability and workplace readiness. A total of 22 participants completed the course, with a 100% pass rate.

This course was funded by the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia through the Agriculture Workforce Development Initiative and delivered by Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC.



CAREER PROGRAMS

The Career Programs Department's annual work plan is always aligned with our [District Strategic Plan](#). While the mission, vision, and values contained in the plan are equally important to us, preparing students to become educated citizens who contribute to a dynamic sustainable, and diverse world - our vision - is central to our work.

As we enter the time of year where students in our high schools are engaging in the course planning and course selection process for next year, it is a very appropriate time for us to highlight the pathways available for students to successfully transition to post-secondary programs, employment opportunities, or community living. To that end, we have refreshed our [Career Programs website](#) to provide parents with a clear view of the many pathways available to students.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We will strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships in gap areas.

DOUGHNUTS WITH A GROWN-UP



On May 5, 2026, families gathered at North Canoe Elementary School for a special morning event organized by school staff and the PAC. The event was designed to give families an opportunity to begin the school day together in a warm and welcoming environment, while celebrating student learning and community connection.

Families were invited to arrive before the morning bell to enjoy doughnuts from Askews Foods, along with coffee and tea, while spending time with their children.

Student learning and projects were displayed throughout the gym, allowing students to proudly showcase their work and giving families the opportunity to explore classroom learning together.

The morning also featured tables and seating areas for families to gather, PAC raffle baskets, student art displays, and a lost and found display. Soft lighting and music helped to create a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere as staff connected with families and community members.

The event supports North Canoe's School Learning Plan goal of fostering a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

Staff shared that they were pleased with the turnout and appreciated the positive feedback received from families who attended.

The school hopes events like this will continue to strengthen relationships between home and school while creating meaningful opportunities for families to connect, celebrate learning and spend time together!



NEW PLAYGROUND AT PARKVIEW ELEMENTARY

On May 6, 2026, students at Parkview Elementary School were welcomed to an exciting new addition to their school grounds with the official opening of a new playground. The playground, which features modern play structures, slides, and nature-inspired designs, was opened for use and is already generating excitement among students.

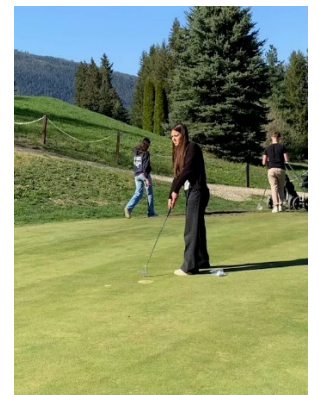
The playground was made possible through generous community support, with the District of Sicamous donating the play structure and the Parkview Parent Advisory Council (PAC) raising funds to cover installation costs. The school community also extends sincere thanks to the SD83 Operations Department for their work in preparing the ground for the play structure. Additional funding was provided through the generosity of the Shuswap Community Foundation, the Sicamous Legion, and a Parkview family.

The project reflects the strong partnership between families, staff, and the broader school community in enhancing outdoor learning and play spaces for students. School staff expressed appreciation for the dedication and fundraising efforts of the PAC, noting that projects like this would not be possible without community involvement.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES

International Students from Armstrong and Salmon Arm gathered at Club Shuswap in Canoe for a fun and memorable day of par 3 golf. A total of 21 students, along with three chaperones, took part in the outing. With sunshine and warm weather setting the tone, the group enjoyed a fantastic day filled with laughter, learning, and friendly competition.



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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES continued

For many students, the event was their first introduction to golf, which made it a lasting impression. Several participants discovered a new interest in the sport and have since begun golfing in their free time.

The day wrapped up with pizza and refreshing drinks on the patio, followed by prizes for participants. It was a great opportunity for students to relax, celebrate, and connect with one another.

Overall, it was an excellent day for everyone, combining outdoor activity, community-building, and plenty of fun.



On May 7, 2026, they joined their peers in the Rocky Mountain International Student Program (RMISP) for an unforgettable day at Skybridge Park in Golden, B.C.

The group spent the day connecting with fellow International Students while exploring everything the park has to offer. Highlights included the Skybridge, valley zip line, and the tree top climb and zip line. Students also embraced the adrenaline rush of the canyon drop swing and raced down the mountain on the mountain coaster, where riders control their own speed.



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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES continued

Some students tested their aim at the axe throwing centre, while others challenged themselves on the rock-climbing wall, all set against stunning views of the valley and surrounding mountains.

It was a fun, safe, and action-packed day, providing International Student Program participants with an opportunity to build friendships, create lasting memories, and experience one of B.C.'s most exciting outdoor adventure destinations.

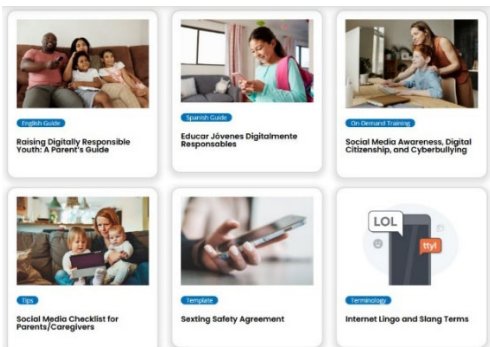


SAFER SCHOOLS TOGETHER

A recent Safer Schools Together online session and Q&A for parents focused on the supports and processes in place when concerns or worrisome behaviours arise at both the school and district levels. The [Safer Schools Together](#) website offers a dedicated resource section with guidance and tools for educators and parents. Families are encouraged to follow the “Report, Don’t Repost” approach by sharing concerns directly with schools rather than circulating unverified information. Student safety remains the District’s highest priority.

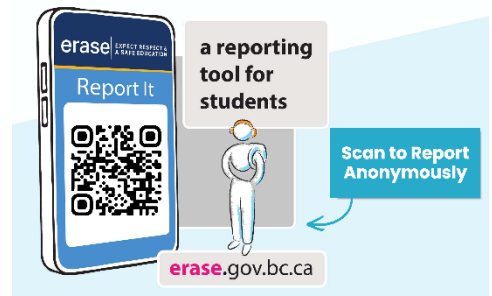


Safer Schools Together



Report

Don't Repost



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We will develop and enhance procedures and practices that will assist in meeting the Strategic Priorities.

HOW TO BECOME A HOST FAMILY



The Rocky Mountain International Student Program is seeking host families for September 2026. Hosting an international student is a unique opportunity to experience a new culture, share different perspectives and build lifelong global friendships - without leaving home!

Our families often say the experience also enriches their family life and allows them to show off the beauty and great lifestyle in their communities.

Families receive a monthly stipend to help cover hosting expenses, and 24/7 support from our team of Homestay Coordinators. All that's needed is a private bedroom, and a warm, welcoming home where a student

can feel included in everyday life. Please contact our homestay team at info@rminternational.ca / 250-427-2245 / www.rmisp.ca/homestay or join one of our upcoming virtual information sessions to learn more!

To learn more about our International Student Program and hosting opportunities, families are encouraged to visit the SD83 webpage: [International Student Program - SD6 - K̓w̓s̓altk̓n̓é̓ws̓ ne Sec̓wepemc̓úl'ec̓w̓](#).

2026-2027 SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Registration for the 2026-2027 school year is open for students entering Kindergarten and for new students joining SD83 in Grades 1-12.

[Registration](#) must be completed at your child's catchment school, which is determined by your physical address, or at a Program of Choice school such as South Canoe for Outdoor Learning.

To access our catchment School Locator tool or learn more about our Program of Choice schools, visit the [District Registration webpage](#).

If you have a child starting Kindergarten in September 2026, watch our [Kindergarten Information Session video](#) to learn more.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The Board of Education will work to represent the interests of all students by actively advocating for student learning and well-being through Strategic Planning Policy and responsible Stewardship.

MAY REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The Board of Education of School District No. 83 (K̓w̓salk̓t̓kn̓éws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw) held their Regular Board Meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

At the meeting, the Board approved the A.L. Fortune Secondary and J.L. Jackson Secondary field trip requests. The J.L. Jackson Secondary French Immersion and Core French teacher is preparing for an international field trip to France for senior French Immersion students in March 2027. The A.L. Fortune Secondary School is preparing for a Grade 10-12 international field trip to Berlin, Prague, Krakow, Auschwitz, Budapest, and Vienna during Spring Break in March 2028.

Read more about the field trips and a summary of the Board meeting in the [From the Board Report - May 19, 2026](https://www.sd83.bc.ca/documents/2026-05-19-From-The-Board) (<https://www.sd83.bc.ca/documents/2026-05-19-From-The-Board>).



B.C. SCHOOL TRUSTEE ELECTIONS RESOURCES

School trustee elections will be occurring in October 2026. Whether you are considering running for school trustee or know someone who might be, BCSTA has developed a comprehensive suite of candidate resources, covering everything from the nomination process and legal obligations to the day-to-day responsibilities of a school trustee. Visit bcsta.org/elections to explore the full set of resources and share them widely. Every prospective candidate who steps forward is investing in their community and in B.C.'s students.



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

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TO PUBLIC EDUCATION**
British Columbia School Trustee Elections

**VOTRE CONTRIBUTION À
L'ÉDUCATION PUBLIQUE EST PRIMORDIALE**
Élections des membres des commissions scolaires de la Colombie-Britannique