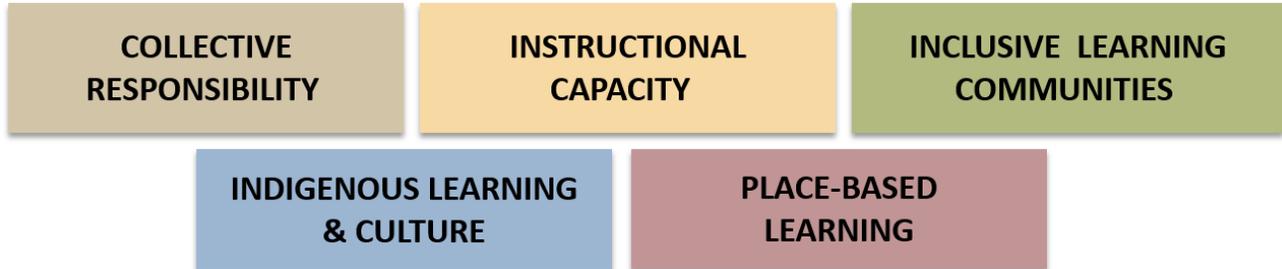




Walking Together in the 2025-2026 School Year
in Cariboo-Chilcotin School District No. 27

Being Good Ancestors For



District Key Focus Areas for Enhancing Learner Success 2024-2027

Superintendent Report to Board of Education January 26, 2026

Starting 2026 in a Good Way

Schools were intentional about welcoming students and staff back to their learning communities following the break. Ceremony and opportunities for connection were part of the return at sites. Some examples can be found in focus area posts including this post from Peter Skene Ogden Secondary:



Focus Area Post - Safe, Caring & Inclusive Learning Communities:

“We were honored to begin the new school year with a traditional smudging ceremony, led by Debbie Dixon from 100 Mile Elementary. Debbie shared some Indigenous wisdom to help us start off the year with a renewed sense of optimism. This smudge helps us welcome 2026 with open hearts, clear minds, and a collective spirit of learning and healing. PSO reaffirms our commitment to reconciliation, inclusivity, and respect for Indigenous cultures.”

Recruitment for 2026-2027 School Year



Focus Area Post - Instructional Capacity:

“Teacher recruitment efforts are year-round now as we try to attract new staff in a competitive market. Director Grant Gustafson and Principal Dwayne Benvin have just returned from a recruitment fair at the University of Windsor. More than 200 potential candidates attended and our team engaged with a number of them. Many of the candidates engaged with our focus area posts and were taken with the beauty of the region as well as the community and practice

illustrated by the posts. There were some promising candidates, and the team will be connecting personally with each of them to explore fit and encourage applications.”

Community Building Through Sport



Focus Area Post – Collective Responsibility:

“In partnership, the Williams Lake Mustangs hosted a school game for SD 27 students. Grade 4-7 students from across the district were invited to attend the game. Classes connected the event to curriculum in numerous ways. Over the year, Mustang players come into schools and motivate students in a variety of ways. Students were given the opportunity to cheer on these young role models and pay them back for their efforts in schools. It was a great event full of energy. The spirit of the community and district was on full display.”

Outdoor Learning In All Seasons

Focus Area Posts - Place-Based Learning:



Winter at Scout Island

“Marie Sharpe students have a weekly opportunity to explore and learn at Scout Island nature Center. Martin Kraus supports the learning there by sharing many resources and hands-on activities for the students in and around the nature house. The students and staff also enjoy the time and freedom to explore outdoors: fort building using natural materials, sand and snow play, toys as well as creating musical instruments are just some of the creative ways students are engaging with the environment. We are grateful for this partnership and the ongoing privilege to learn and play on Scout Island.”

Cross-Country Skiing & Biathlon Experience at Tatla

“From January to March—weather permitting—our students head out every Friday for cross-country skiing. These weekly outings allow students to build skills, develop confidence on the trails, and experience firsthand the joys of winter recreation in our community. Recently, we were fortunate to spend the entire day on the trails for a special learning experience focused on the Olympic sport of biathlon. Students participated in cross-country ski lessons and were introduced to electronic biathlon rifles—an innovative, safe, and eco-friendly technology designed to make the sport more accessible. These camera-

based systems simulate biathlon-style target shooting without using any projectiles (think Nintendo Duck Hunt!).

We are grateful to Sport Canada, Biathlon Canada, and Biathlon BC for sponsoring these rifles and supporting training to help bring biathlon to more communities.”

AED Update

Focus Area Post - Collective Responsibility:

“In British Columbia all school districts are required to have an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) at all sites by the end of the school year. Staff and students throughout SD 27 will notice the district is well ahead of this requirement with AEDs appearing at all sites.

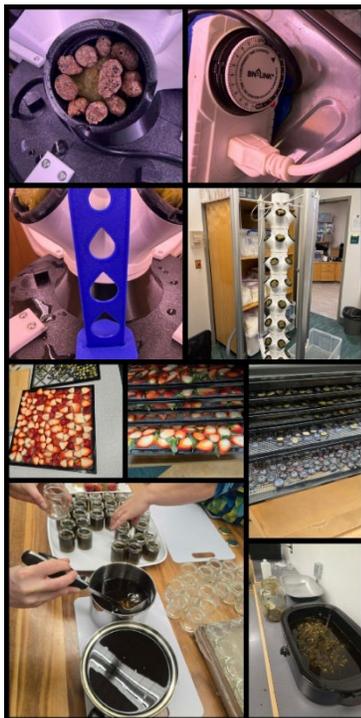


Completing this task was a joint effort benefiting from support from IUOE (Operations), CCTA, and district staff. District Principal Kelvin Parent led the initiative selecting the AED model and creating the deployment plan. Kelvin collaborated with Rob Cook, LCS teacher and active paramedic / first responder, to select the AED, select installation locations, and create a training plan. Rob and Kelvin are currently exploring options for students from Rob’s EMT course to provide the training district wide. Kelvin and Rob worked with staff from Operations led by Shane Mennie.

Over the break Shane’s team transported and installed close to 30 AEDs across the district. This is a great example of collective responsibility in action that has the potential to save lives.”

Learning About Medicine with the First Nations Resource Centre

Focus Area Posts – Indigenous Culture and Learning:



Medicine Monday

“With the new year here, we decided to fire up the vertical Oasis growing towers!! Freda Alphonse planted 8 different medicines and we will see if folks can guess which ones they are in a month or so!! These growing towers are places in schools around the district with a variety of seeds to utilize. We cannot wait to see what other schools are growing.”

Medicine Series Professional Development Day

“Teachers from far and wide came together to learn about plant medicines from Freda Alphonse and William Magnus Lulua. Participants made a Cough and Cold tea blend, a Tummy Tamer tea blend, a Sleepy Time tea blend, a Many Plant salve, and dehydrated tea ingredients for future use. The kits utilized included: Dehydrator Kit, Medicine Kit, Salve Kit, the Filet & Cutting Kit. Tons of laughter and good medicine was put into these items and will be distributed by the participating schools to knowledge keepers and elders.”



Medicine Bath Salts

“Medicine Baths have been part of cleansing since time immemorial. We thought it would be fun to create a seasonal medicine bath mix. By combining traditional medicines along with epsom salts we created a Flu Season Medicine Bath! This medicine bath is designed to support folks to clear up aches and pain, including headaches, and combat illness by detoxing and cleansing, and lastly to promote restful sleep. Once packaged and labelled it will be ready for distribution to elders and knowledge keepers. We utilized the Medicine Grinding Kit available at the resource center.”



Growing Leaders

Growing Leaders: Cariboo-Chilcotin PVP Leadership Development Program is an 18-month learning journey designed to identify, develop, and support aspiring school leaders. The program blends district-aligned learning, real-world practice, and mentorship to build the skills, confidence, and readiness needed for future formal leadership roles. A small cohort will be selection based on principal sponsorship and teacher application. Intake is open now with successful candidates starting on March 2 for the first session.

Upcoming Events



Inclusive Calendar

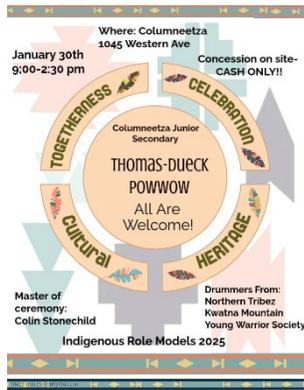
The district calendar feature of the website has been updated to reflect a strategy of the BC K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan. It includes dates of significance and celebrates holidays of the diverse cultures, races, places of origin, ethnicities, religions, economic statuses, gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientations, disabilities and abilities of the local school community and greater British Columbia. It is a living documentation that can have new observances added over time.



Family Literacy Week

District Inclusive Calendar Date:

January 27- February 1, 2026 is [proclaimed](#) as Family Literacy Week in BC. Schools will be engaging with families in different ways to promote and celebrate literacy. The theme this year is "[Make Mealtime Family Learning Time](#)," encouraging families to turn mealtime into opportunities for connection and learning. Check with your school to see what they have planned.



Thomas-Dueck Pow Wow

District Inclusive Calendar Date:

Thomas-Dueck Pow Wow

January 30, 2026

Columneetza Junior Secondary School

Planned by the pow wow committee this very special event provides a rich opportunity for the school community to learn about and celebrate local First Nation culture. All are welcome.

Key Focus Areas of our District Plan for Learner Success



Schools continue to contribute powerful images and descriptions to help share the story of how the key focus areas of the District are coming to life across the Cariboo-Chilcotin. These examples may be viewed on the [district website](#) as [focus area posts](#).

This work is embedded in daily life in our schools and across departments. There is significant cross-over of the themes as all members of the school district community act for greater collective responsibility, instructional capacity, inclusive learning communities, Indigenous learning and culture, and place-based learning. Please take a few moments to explore our stories and celebrate our success with us.

Collective Responsibility

- Common information
- Professional conversations
- Collaborative relationships
- Intentional action

Instructional Capacity

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Assessment
- Collaborative Professional Development

Inclusive Learning Communities

- Safe, welcome environments
- Meaningful engagement in learning
- Connection to caring adults
- Student voice

Indigenous Learning & Culture

- Local cultural learning
- Language
- Equity of outcomes
- Belonging, Mastery, Independence, Generosity

Place-Based Learning

- Time outdoors
- Time in nature
- Learning on and from the land
- Local learning