



# CMSD82 INNOVATES

## Quarterly Bulletin

**Issue Date:** February 27, 2018

Welcome to the **CMSD82 Innovates** quarterly bulletin which shares innovative initiatives and projects within Coast Mountains School District 82. We encourage you to share the **CMSD82 Innovates** bulletin with students, families and friends. This first issue covers innovative projects from schools across our district that you will find inspirational.

### **Bear Valley School Lockers for Literacy** (Eric Drew, Teacher)

Over the summer, the former public library space within Bear Valley School was transformed into a fantastic space for collaboration. With this new and vibrant learning space being the focal point entering our school, we realized that something needed to be done to “spruce up” the drab hallways and the unappealing orange and brown lockers. We conceived the idea to transform the eyesore lockers into literary works of art.



Grade 8-12 “Lockers for Literacy” transformed into an Avenue of Literature at Bear Valley School.

The intent of this project was two-fold. We wanted to introduce the redesigned curriculum in a fun and exciting way and we hoped to promote literacy and an excitement for books at the same time. The intention was to complete a bank of 13 lockers transforming these into “Literacy Lockers”.



The Literacy Locker Project results exceeded all expectations and proved to be a huge success!

Our Grade 8-12 students transformed this bank of lockers into an “Avenue of Literature”. The results exceeded all of our expectations and the project proved to be a huge success! Teachers collaborated on the design of the Literacy Locker Project that included a definition of learning outcomes and an agreement of teaching methods to be used. Student input was facilitated by the teachers on how the project would be executed and evaluated for secondary students as mentors and elementary students as both designers and participants in the Literacy Locker Project. All staff and students from Grades 3-12 have completed a Literacy Locker, although there are some lockers that need to be finished. An after-school Literacy Locker Club has been established to finish the transformation of the hallways of our school into Literary Avenues.

### **Uplands Elementary School’s Nature Playground** (Julia Nieckarz, Director of Instruction, Learner Support)

During my recent tenure as Principal of Uplands Elementary School, I had the privilege to be part of an amazing project and journey. With the knowledge that Uplands Elementary School’s north adventure playground was aging and in need for impending replacement, an urgency to create a new space was at hand. My passion ensured that students would have outdoor spaces in which to play and work. Kids learn best when they are having fun! A space that was exciting, inviting, and dynamic was needed that would blend in with our beautiful Terrace surroundings. A natural playground seemed to be the only option.



An aerial view of the Nature Playground.



Another aerial view of the new Nature Playground.

A natural playground is made from elements that can be found in nature such as boulders, logs, sand and trees. I decided to dream big, but had no idea how to go about building a playground. My dream came true with persistence, research, and most importantly the collaboration on this project with our staff and students and the most amazing volunteers and sponsors. Their dedication to dreaming big for kids was instrumental in making this project come alive! It was a huge undertaking and these highly motivated individuals encouraged so many others to be part of an incredible journey of making a beautiful play space for kids a reality.

**Cassie Hall Elementary School's Outdoor Kindergarten** (Steve Wallace, Principal)

In January of 2017, we decided that we wanted to adopt an "outdoor education" approach in our two classes, based on the model of European Outdoor Kindergarten. Many collaboration hours later, we came up with a plan that we thought would work for us and our students. Eight times during May and June 2017, we bussed two classes (which included 20 Kindergarten and 14 Grade One students) to a rural neighbourhood where they could experience programs based on the following themes: Garden, Forest, Stream/Pond and Farm. The children were involved in starting seedlings in late winter and growing them at school under lights and then they had the opportunity to plant all their seedlings into the garden on the property. Classes also hatched eggs and raised butterflies at school and then they returned the chicks and ducklings to the farm and released the butterflies in the garden. Direct instruction was interspersed with free exploration in all the themes. We visited a farm in the neighbourhood and had a chance to interact with a variety of farm animals. The children walked five minutes down the road to observe a beaver dam and frogs spawning in a small stream. We also walked to another property down the road to act out "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" on a bridge over a small ravine. Our First Nations Support Worker accompanied us to outdoor school and she shared her knowledge of local forest plants and their uses to Indigenous Peoples. We had the pleasure of bringing these same students back to the garden in September of 2017 to harvest their produce that they had planted and gather exhibits to enter into the Fall Fair, where many blue ribbons were awarded to the students for their hard work! We also brought back loads of produce to use in the kitchen at the school for our lunch program. We were able to start this school year by taking this year's Kindergarten students to the property for four Outdoor School sessions and we are excited to be returning again in April and we hope to have 10 sessions this spring!



Cassie Hall Elementary School students harvest the produce they planted in the spring.



Kindergarten and Grade One students from Cassie Hall Elementary School experience outdoor programs based on "garden, forest, stream/pond and farm" themes.

**Kitimat City High School's Reconciliation Skateboard Project** (Tom Hartl, Teacher)



Tom Hartl, Teacher (r) and one of his students (l) display the skateboards made by Kitimat City High School students while incorporating the importance of Residential School awareness.

In an attempt to find a project to fuse hands-on learning with life applicable English/English First Peoples values and other cross-curricular subjects, "The Reconciliation Project" was born. A colleague at Kitimat City High School had brought to the attention of staff an opportunity to apply for a \$5,000 grant from Northern Health. The main requirement was that the project had to be a "healthy community focused activity". With my passion for skateboarding it was a natural choice to choose to build our own skateboards. The only question was, how can we incorporate this with the new curriculum and the First Peoples Principles of Learning? After much brainstorming we came across Colonialism Skateboards, a brand based out of Saskatchewan. The company's mission is to bring Residential School awareness to a younger generation. This idea worked perfectly with our district's goal of seeking reconciliation in our communities. We reached out to the owner and operator of Colonialism Skateboards who was able to give us helpful suggestions of the direction we should take with the project. After students designed their board and pressed it, using a vacuum seal bag, they designed graphics that tell a story. The graphics could fall into three categories: an image/artifact from the time of Residential Schools, an image that represents a family member or community that went through Residential Schools, or an image that represents reconciliation to the student. With these guidelines students were able to come up with a variety of pictures that will be used to spread awareness and the message of reconciliation through our community. In the spring, the students will be teaching a group of fourth graders, from our community, how to skateboard using the boards. An opportunity to build relationships and share the meanings behind the images on the boards to help spread seeds of reconciliation amongst the younger generations of this community.



After students choose a design for their skateboard, a vacuum seal bag is used to press the board.

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