

Superintendent's Report to the Board

January 2026



A Message from the Superintendent

Ama Sah / Good Day,

The end of November and December was a particularly busy and joyful time across our schools. Students demonstrated their many talents through Christmas concerts, seasonal celebrations, drama productions, band performances, and full-scale musicals. I had the opportunity to visit several schools and watch students in action, and I am always amazed by the high quality of talent displayed by such young people. These events reflect not only creativity and confidence, but also the sense of belonging and pride that comes from learning together. I would like to congratulate our learners, as well as the teachers, coaches, and volunteers who dedicate many hours behind the scenes to ensure each performance comes together seamlessly.

As we begin a new year, I would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year. 2026 is shaping up to be a busy and exciting year for Coast Mountains School District, and I extend my very best wishes to students, staff, families, and partners for the year ahead. We are moving forward with the formation of a district Numeracy Working Group to begin the development of a district-wide Numeracy Framework. Teachers representing schools from Kindergarten through Grade 12 will be key members of this group. The goal is to strengthen numeracy skills across the district and to create a framework that is clear, user-friendly, and sustainable for many years to come. In addition, we are in the early stages of learning how best to support students and staff with the safe, ethical, and effective use of Artificial Intelligence. Information sessions for parents and staff will be offered over the coming months as part of this learning process.

As always, I would like to thank our students, staff, administrators, trustees, families, and community partners for their continued commitment to public education and to one another. The care, professionalism, and collaboration demonstrated across the district make a meaningful difference in the lives of learners every day. This work is guided by our district's *Engage, Ignite, Empower* Strategic Plan, which reflects our shared commitment to meaningful learning, strong relationships, and student success. The featured articles that follow highlight this work in action and offer a snapshot of how Engage, Ignite, and Empower are coming to life across our schools and communities.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Tracey MacMillan
Superintendent



Upcoming Dates:

January 30 – Non-Instructional Day
February 16 – Family Day
March 16-27 – Spring Break

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CMSD Educators Achieve CPR and AED Instructor Certification Through ACT Training

12 CMSD Staff members recently received training from ACT, a national charitable organization committed to helping secondary schools across Canada to deliver CPR (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) training to students through their PHE 10 curriculum. Their model is built on a train-the-trainer approach, enabling teachers to become certified instructors for their students. It was a fantastic day led by instructor Micah.

Participating teachers practiced their CPR skills on mannequins and AED training units.

The educators received CPR Level A certification and ACT instructor level- certification, allowing them to train students and issue course completion cards. They also received a full suite of teaching resources, including eLearning modules, PowerPoint presentations, teacher and student manuals, and ACT's CPR training video.



Pictured top left to right: Shawna Kumpolt, Tamara Stoney, Zach Fraser, David Griffin, Matt Lowndes, David Rodrigues, Kasondra Perrier, David Lewis, Emma LeBlanc
Pictured bottom left to right: Alycia O'Brien, Ryan McCann, Sue Dobbin

HSS Celebrates Opening Doors & Shaping Futures

The Careers Department at Hazelton Secondary School has been buzzing with exciting opportunities this fall! Senior students have participated in an incredible lineup of presentations and workshops designed to inspire and support their post-secondary dreams, including in-person visits from the University of Calgary, the University of Northern BC, Arrive Alive, Junior Achievement BC, and the Digital School of Art. Virtual sessions also connected students with the College of New Caledonia, UBC's Bachelors of Kinesiology program, British Columbia's Institute of Technology, UBC Indigenous Recruitment, Langara College, and Thompson Rivers University. The results are already showing—many of the students have celebrated exciting milestones, securing and confirming their post-secondary plans!



Pictured above: Students at Hazelton Secondary School take part in a series of engaging workshops and presentations designed to inspire and support their post-secondary pathways.

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The team continues to provide support with Band Post-Secondary Funding Applications, scholarships and bursaries, waiver codes, and setting up My Education Planner and BCeID accounts. The students are boldly exploring pathways, preparing applications, and confidently stepping toward their bright futures. The department couldn't be prouder of their achievements!

They extend heartfelt appreciation to Mrs. Muldoe for organizing and championing these opportunities that continue to open doors for the students.

Holiday Cheer and Community Spirit at Kildala's Craft Night

For the past 4 years, Kildala Elementary School has held an annual Family Christmas Craft Night. The event brings out many families to spend time together enjoying some Christmas cheer, creating masterpieces for their Christmas trees while sipping on hot chocolate and candy canes. This year's stations included Christmas Bingo, Reindeer headbands, a variety of Christmas Tree decorations and ornaments, Christmas cards, photo booth and a dance workout. This originally started as a way to get families back into the schools after COVID, in a fun and positive way, and now everyone just has so much fun that it is a yearly tradition! It helps to bring old and new Kildala families together and show them what the Kildala Community is all about!



Pictured far left: Jordyn and her mom Ashley hoping to win a prize at Bingo
Pictured middle: Bridget and Tessa with their beautiful tree ornaments
Pictured above: The Ayoola Family sporting their new Reindeer Headbands.

UBC Highlight on SD82 Teacher Excellence

Excerpt from UBC News Article

"From foster care to the graduation stage, Jonathan Alvaji's journey is a story of resilience, mentorship and second chances." [\[news.ubc.ca\]](https://news.ubc.ca)

"When Jonathan Alvaji walks across the stage at UBC's graduation ceremony on Nov. 26, he'll be thinking about the people who helped him reach the milestone he once thought impossible."

Source Attribution

Against the odds: How a former youth in care found his way from chaos to teaching as a UBC Education grad, UBC News, November 24, 2025.

Available at: <https://news.ubc.ca/2025/11/ubc-education-grad-youth-in-care-journey/>

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STEAM in Action: Uplands Grade 4/5

Students Spin Creativity Into Community Support

Director of Instruction, Phillip Barron was invited to attend an exciting demonstration of STEAM projects created by Grade 4 and 5 students in Karen Ting's classroom at Uplands Elementary. Last year, Uplands Grade 5 organized its first, class fundraiser for N. A. R. A., our local animal shelter. This year, Uplands Grade 4/5 is continuing that tradition while thoughtfully integrating a hands-on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math), lesson centered on spinning tops. Students began by constructing a simple, spinning top using only a rubber band, a Q-tip, and a wooden disk, then eagerly branched out to experiment with larger disks, mini skewers, and unique design variations.

Throughout the process, students demonstrated strong creativity, curiosity, and enthusiasm as they tested ideas, refined their designs, and shared discoveries with peers. As the class is currently learning about bar graphs in Math and Excel, students will further connect their learning by collecting and representing data related to their spinning tops. Funds raised through the school hot lunch program in October and November, were used to purchase all materials for this N. A. R. A. (Northern Animal Rescue Alliance) fundraising project, supporting meaningful, creative, and community-connected learning. The only ongoing challenge is convincing students to give up their epic spinning tops at dismissal—clear evidence of just how engaging, joyful, and successful this learning experience has been 😊



Pictured above Left: Grade 4/5 students at Uplands Elementary proudly showcasing their custom-designed STEAM spinning tops.

Pictured above right: Phillip Barron, Director of Instruction with Grade 4/5 students at Uplands Elementary as they demonstrate their innovative spinning tops.

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Strengthening Language Learning: Hanen Teacher Talk Pro-D Thrives in Terrace and Kitimat

Over the past few months, we've been offering and running the Hanen Learning Language and Loving It – Teacher Talk professional development day in both Terrace and Kitimat, and it has been very well received. We've had strong attendance from classroom teachers and EAs who are eager to build their communication-support skills. This Pro-D focuses on practical, evidence-based strategies that help school staff create rich language-learning environments particularly through responsive interaction, modeling, expanding language, and supporting play-based communication opportunities.



Pictured above: Teachers attending Teacher Talk on professional development days

With the growing number of non-speaking and minimally speaking students in our schools, these tools are more important than ever. Teacher Talk equips staff to recognize each child's communication stage, respond in ways that build connection, and intentionally support language, social engagement, and early Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) use across the school day. We're excited to see so many staff taking part and continuing to grow these essential supportive communication practices in our district. More opportunities to take part in the Hanen program will take place over the course of the years professional development days.

The program is designed to help all children, including those with typical development, language delays, or those learning a second language. Educators learn to become more responsive and intentional in their interactions, building on children's interests to foster development.

The core of the program is built around three main types of responsive interaction strategies:

- **Child-oriented strategies:** These help educators encourage children to initiate and engage in conversations (e.g., using "Observe, Wait, and Listen," being face-to-face, and following the child's lead).
- **Interaction-promoting strategies:** These focus on creating extended, balanced conversations by listening carefully and tailoring responses to each child's needs (e.g., using a variety of questions and balancing comments with questions).
- **Language-modelling strategies:** These help expand children's oral language skills by
- providing models of more advanced language (e.g., using a variety of labels and
- expanding on what the child says).



www.hanen.org

Strengthening School – City Connections



In November, Coast Mountains School District met with the City of Terrace's Education Liaison to strengthen collaboration in support of children, students, and families. The meeting included the Superintendent, School Board Trustees, and a City of Terrace Councilor, with discussion focused on shared priorities such as community services, recruitment and retention, infrastructure, and student and family well-being. These ongoing conversations reinforce the importance of working together to build strong, healthy communities where learners can thrive.

Pictured L to R: Trustee Karen Yonkman, Trustee Angie Maitland, City of Terrace Councilor Inder Dhillon, Superintendent Tracey MacMillan, Trustee and Board Chair Margaret Warcup.

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StrongStart BC

StrongStart BC is a free, school-based early learning program for children aged birth to five and their caregivers. It is designed to help families engage in rich early learning experiences while building strong connections to their local school community.

Key Features

- Drop-in, play based program led by a certified Early Childhood Educator (ECE).
- Caregivers attend with their children, participating in activities that support early literacy, numeracy, social development, and physical skills.
- Help families become familiar with the school environment, easing the transition into Kindergarten.
- Part of BC's broader early learning initiatives that support children from birth to age eight
- CMSD has 4 StrongStart locations: Cassie Hall Elementary, Ecole Mountainview, Thornhill Primary, and Kildala Elementary.

Seamless Day

Seamless Day is an innovative model that integrates before- and after-school care, all delivered within the school and supported by ECEs.



Key Features

- Provides consistent staffing, with ECEs working alongside the classroom teacher during the school day and offering care before and after school.
- Creates a continuity of relationships for children, reducing transitions and supporting emotional security.
- Helps families access affordable, high-quality childcare directly in their neighbourhood school.
- Supports BC's goal of expanding school-based childcare and strengthening early years-to-school transitions.
- CMSD has 3 locations: Suwilaawks Community School (pm only), Cassie Hall Elementary, and Ecole Mountainview.



Just B4

Just B4 is a licensed preschool program designed specifically for children in the year before they enter Kindergarten. It is operated by school districts and often shares space and staffing with StrongStart.

Key Features

- Designed for 4-year-olds to support learning, social development, and smooth transitions into Kindergarten.
- Operates in conjunction with StrongStart BC spaces, often using the same ECE who leads StrongStart in the morning.
- Families do not attend with their child as it is a licensed preschool program.
- Helps children become familiar with their school community before entering the K-12 system
- CMSD has 2 locations: Thornhill Primary and Cassie Hall Elementary.

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Are you a parent or caregiver in B.C. with a dependent child? You could save up to \$1,250/month on child care!

The Affordable Child Care Benefit helps families reduce the cost of licensed or registered child care.

Benefit amounts are based on:

- Your family income
- Your family size
- Your type of care arrangement

Use the Affordable Child Care Benefit Estimator to see how much funding you may be eligible to receive by visiting gov.bc.ca/ChildCareBenefit

Contact us

Child Care Service Centre
Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. PT

Toll-free
1-888-338-6622 (option 1)

Fax
1-877-544-0699

Mail
PO Box 9953 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9R3

More info

gov.bc.ca/ChildCareBenefit

Affordable Child Care Benefit

Helping families with the cost of child care

The Affordable Child Care Benefit is a monthly payment from the Government of B.C. that helps eligible families with the cost of child care. The amount you receive depends on your family's income, size, and the type of care your child receives.



Step 1

Eligibility

You might be eligible if:

- You are a resident of British Columbia
- You are a Canadian citizen, permanent resident of Canada, Convention refugee or a person in need of protection
- Your child attends an eligible type of child care
- You meet the income requirements, generally earning less than \$111,000
- You (and your spouse) have a qualifying reason for requiring child care:
 - Working or self-employed
 - Attending school
 - Participating in an employment program
 - Looking for work (only one parent or guardian)
 - Living with a medical condition that interferes with your ability to care for your child
 - Your child is attending a licensed preschool program
- Your child care is arranged or recommended by a Ministry of Children and Family Development or Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency social worker
- Your child care is arranged or recommended by a staff member authorized by an Indigenous authority to provide child and family services under Indigenous law

Step 2

Gather required documents

- Apply for funding before the end of the month in which you need child care. For example, for child care starting September 1, apply by September 30
- A copy of one piece of government-issued identification is required for each family member
- If you have a spouse, they must complete portions of the application too
- Your child care provider needs to fill in and sign the child care arrangement form
- Once you start, you will have 60 days to submit your application and supporting documents
- You may be asked to provide supporting documentation to support your reason for requiring child care

Step 3

Submit the application

Families can apply:

- Online through MyFamilyServices.gov.bc.ca
- By mail or fax - download and complete the form, then submit it

Step 4

Wait for approval and confirmation

Step 5

Benefit applied to child care fees

If approved:

- Your child care provider will submit monthly claim forms
- Families pay any remaining balance after the benefit is applied

Step 6

Renewal and updates



Benefits must be renewed upon expiry, usually every 12 months

Important

- Keep your contact information up to date and immediately report any changes that could affect your eligibility
- Not reporting changes could mean losing your monthly benefit or having to pay back money. Report all changes to basic information, income, or child care arrangements

Affordable Child Care Benefit

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Pictured above Left: Left to right Julia Jacobs, Principal, Trustee Karen Jonkman and Stacey Rodrigues, Vice Principal
Pictured above Middle: We thank Shawna Wilson, Executive Assistant to the Secretary Treasurer, for the preparation of the goodies.
Pictured above right: Superintendent Tracey MacMillan, Trustee and Board Chair Margaret Warcup and Trustee Ed Harrison

A Time to Say Thank You

December is a special time of year when we pause to thank and recognize the incredible staff across Coast Mountains School District. This year, District Staff and School Board Trustees had the pleasure of making special deliveries to each school as a small gesture of appreciation. These visits provided an opportunity to connect, share gratitude, and personally thank staff for the care, dedication, and commitment they bring to their work with students every day.

Regional Principal and Vice-Principal Meetings

Each January, Coast Mountains School District begins the new year with Regional Principal and Vice-Principal meetings alongside the District Leadership Team. These meetings create space for district staff to listen to regional perspectives and better understand the priorities and needs of schools and communities.

Principals and vice-principals are invited to share discussion questions that help shape the agenda and guide meaningful conversations. With several District Education Team members attending these meetings for the first time, the focus is on listening, learning, and working together in support of school-based leadership. Guided by the *Engage, Ignite, Empower* Strategic Plan, these gatherings reflect our shared commitment to collaboration and continuous improvement across the district.



Above: Principals, vice-principals, and district leaders come together to listen, learn, and share regional perspectives during January's Hazelton and Kitwanga Regional PVP

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Caledonia's Goings-On

The work that teachers do in classrooms directly with students is the foundation of a school. However, many other activities, opportunities and events at a school really makes it a community. At Caledonia, we are fortunate to have a robust range of curricular and extracurricular opportunities for students in the areas of fine arts, athletics, robotics, dual credit programs, clubs and student committees that enrich the school experience for our students. The following examples are just a small sample of the programs, opportunities, and experiences that Caledonia offers for students.



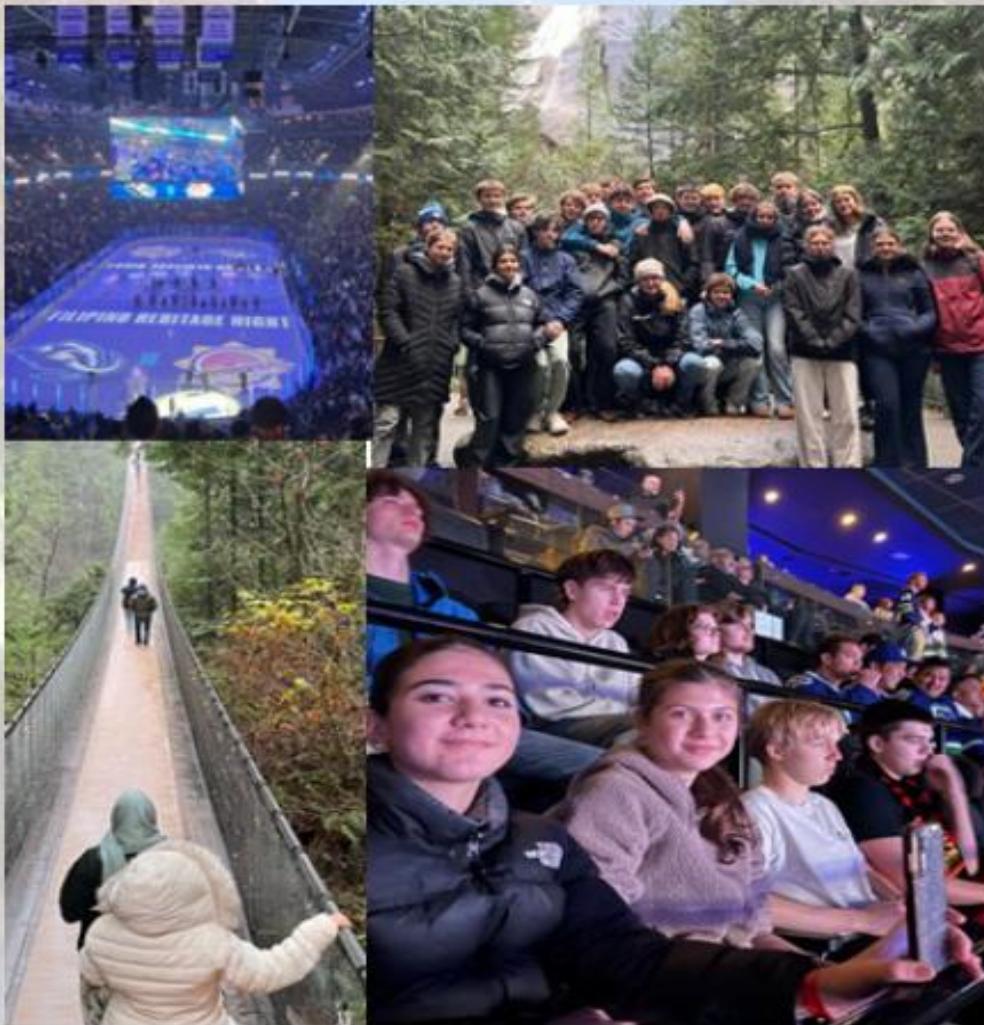
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International Student Trip to Vancouver

In December, our International Students travelled to Vancouver to experience more of our beautiful province. They spent 3 days exploring different parts of Vancouver and the lower mainland. Some of the highlights included a Vancouver Canucks game, a trip to Whistler including a ride on the Sea to Sky Gondola, a tour of historic Gastown, taking part in the "Flying Over Canada" experience at Canada Place, and a visit to the Capilano Suspension Bridge Park. Twenty-eight students took part in the trip.



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Dual Credit Students

This year, 25 Caledonia grade 12 students are participating in dual credit programs in partnership with Coast Mountain College and the Northwest Trades Education and Training Centre, which is part of School District 82. These students are training in their preferred trade while receiving credit for first year apprenticeship at the college and also receiving high school credits for their graduation. These dual credit programs offer our students a fantastic opportunity to fulfill graduation requirements while experiencing post-secondary training.

2025-2026

DUAL CREDIT CARPENTRY



NORTHWEST TRADES & EMPLOYMENT TRAINING CENTRE
GRADE 12
-TRADES FOUNDATIONS LEVEL 1
-GAIN HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS
-DISTRICT PAYS TUITION

COAST MOUNTAINS
SCHOOL DISTRICT
SKILLED TRADES

Caledonia Student Participates in BC Youth Parliament

Karson Waller represented Caledonia at British Columbia's Youth Parliament annual session at the end of December. He was one of ninety-seven students selected from across the province. At the event, he networked with other youth from the province and learned about the importance of democratic participation. Karson is a co-leader of Caledonia's Debate and Youth Parliament Club.



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Visit from Storybook Wedding from Prince George

On January 14th representatives from Storybook Wedding in Prince George came to Caledonia with dozens of gowns for our grads to try on for their upcoming prom in June. This is the first time this has been offered to our grads, and approximately 18 students from Caledonia and Centennial Christian School were able to try on and purchase prom dresses. This saves a big expense of having to travel to either Prince George or Vancouver to purchase a prom dress. Here are some of the happy grads who said "Yes to the Dress".



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Winter Feast

This year's Winter Solstice Feast, coordinated by the Caledonia Connections team and prepared under the guidance of Chef Job Daniels and Foods 11 teacher Saley Buhr, provided a meaningful opportunity to celebrate student success, cultural learning, and community partnership. Alongside the feast, we gathered to honour students for their academic achievements across Grades 10-12. This event recognized their dedication, resilience, and commitment to learning as we approach the midpoint of the school year.

The Terrace Nisga'a Society joined the event to provide drumming and support student well-being, bringing a meaningful cultural presence to the celebration and fostering a supportive, grounding environment for all students.

The entire school community was invited to share in a traditional meal prepared by the Foods 11 class and Chef Daniels, which included Nisga'a stew, fish and rice, and dessert, allowing students and staff to experience and celebrate Indigenous cultural cuisine



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Ongoing Considerations

In addition to celebrating success, we also recognize the ongoing areas of growth our district is working through, which are outlined below to provide transparency and context for our shared journey forward.



French Immersion (MGA and HSS)

French Immersion programming in Hazelton remains an ongoing consideration for the district. Currently, 28 students are enrolled at Majagaleehl Gali Aks (MGA) and 7 students at Hazelton Secondary School (HSS). Given these low enrolment numbers, sustainability of the program into future years is a significant concern.

On April 25, 2025, a formal notification letter was sent to Hazelton French Immersion parents and caregivers. This letter provided official notice of potential changes to the program beginning in the 2026–27 academic year. The district continues to engage with families, staff, and partners as we assess options moving forward, recognizing both the importance of program viability and the desire to offer diverse pathways for students.

A series of French Immersion community consultation meetings were held over the past several months. A final meeting took place on January 15th at Hazelton Secondary School. A report containing enrollment data and the information gathered during the consultations will be presented at the February 25, 2026 Board Meeting.

Recruitment and Retention Update

Recruitment and retention remain ongoing priorities for Coast Mountains School District. At this time of year, the district is actively recruiting to prepare for anticipated vacancies and is attending career fairs across Canada. There are not enough locally available qualified teachers to meet projected staffing needs, particularly in specialty areas such as Inclusive Education, French Immersion, Counselling, and Trades.

The district continues to post all vacancies widely and to work with post-secondary institutions to support practicum placements, which are an important pathway for future recruitment. While staffing challenges persist due to broader provincial shortages, the district remains committed to supporting schools and maintaining stability for students and families.

Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School (MEMSS) – Capital Planning Priority

Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School in Kitimat has been on the Board of Education's capital plan submission to the Ministry of Education and Child Care for more than ten years. While the facility remains safe for students and staff, it is an aging building requiring significant renewal.

The Board continues to advocate for major upgrades and/or replacement to ensure the school supports current and future learning needs. This long-standing capital priority has been outlined in detail in previous Ongoing Considerations sections of the Superintendent's Reports.

Gitxsan Language Immersion Program – Majagaleehl Gali Aks Elementary

The Gitxsan Language Immersion Program at Majagaleehl Gali Aks Elementary is a groundbreaking step in public education, bringing Gitxsanimx language and culture to life in the classroom. Led by teacher Angie Olsen, with support from Dr. Jane Smith and local Elders, learners experience a full-day immersion (Gitxsanimx language) grounded in authentic curriculum and strong community partnership.

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While this initiative represents a significant milestone in Indigenous language revitalization, its continued growth depends on the availability of qualified speakers of the language. The district remains committed to working closely with the Gitanmaax Band, the Gitksan Government Commission, and other local partners to build capacity and encourage language teacher training pathways. Meetings have taken place with the school-based team to initiate a working group to provide ongoing support for this program.

Individuals interested in contributing to the future of Gitxsanimx education are encouraged to connect with Majagaleehl Gali Aks Elementary or the District Office to learn more about opportunities to become part of this meaningful and growing program.

Inclusive Education (Funding Formula)

The district continues to advocate for an updated provincial funding model that more accurately reflects the growing complexity and diversity of student needs. Current funding structures are tied to formal assessments and diagnoses, which limits the district's ability to allocate additional Education Assistant support for students whose needs are emerging, but who have not yet been formally assessed.

As a result, while student needs continue to increase in both number and complexity, available staffing resources do not always align in a timely way. Despite these constraints, staff across CMSD continue to demonstrate creativity, collaboration, and a strong commitment to inclusive practices as they work to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students within existing resources.

Early Learning Programs

Early learning continues to be a critical foundation for long-term student success. However, insufficient provincial funding continues to impact program sustainability. The district remains concerned about the reduction of Seamless Day and Just B4 programming and the financial pressures on StrongStart operations. Advocacy for stable and equitable early learning funding remains ongoing.

Numeracy Framework

This year marks the launch of a district-wide Numeracy Framework which is an important next step in strengthening student achievement in mathematics. While no Ministry funding has been designated to support this initiative, the district has been notified that LNG Canada has made a substantial contribution to support this work. This external support will enable planning, foundational development, and staff leadership to move forward in a more meaningful and coordinated way.

The district remains committed to stewarding these resources responsibly and to building a numeracy framework that is sustainable, practical, and responsive to the needs of learners across CMSD.

Literacy Initiative

Our district-wide Literacy Initiative remains a cornerstone of learning improvement across CMSD. Sustained largely through the generosity of corporate sponsors, this work has enabled the use of research-based resources and professional learning to strengthen early and intermediate literacy outcomes. We continue to seek long-term funding stability to ensure the continuation of this essential work beyond sponsor cycles.