

Superintendent's Report to the Board September 2024



A Message from the Superintendent

Ama sah / Good day,

The 2024/2025 school year is off to a fine start in Coast Mountains School District. To date there are 4,356 students registered in schools across the district with learners welcomed back to schools at 19 sites on September 3, 2024. I'd like to acknowledge the work and effort that went into a successful school start-up. Over the summer months, the Maintenance, Information Technology, Custodial and Finance Departments carried much of the load while other employee groups were on a well-deserved break. We thank them for their efforts.

As we welcome students to school in the 2024-2025 school year, we do so with new structures in place to support the learning and well-being of students in schools. As you know, there is new legislation related to students' use of cell phones in schools. This legislation has been rolled out in schools through the School Code of Conduct. Not all schools are managing this legislation in the same manner. I would encourage all elders, parents, caregivers and rightsholders to familiarize themselves with their respective School Code of Conduct. I'd like to acknowledge parents and caregivers for their support in this matter.

Monday, September 30 is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation across Canada – a day set aside to actively honour the survivors of Canada's residential schools, as well as remember those children who did not return home. Many local events are planned throughout the northwest, and I encourage you to participate if you are able. For more information about the ongoing impacts of the residential school system, visit the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at <https://nctr.ca>.

District Staff is finalizing the September 2024 "Enhancing Student Learning Report" which is a review of the Board of Education's Strategic Plan – "Engage, Ignite, Empower – 2022-2027." This report will be available on the district website in early October. As we enter the third year of implementation, our work is driven by the Board of Education's mission and values and guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning. Goal #3 states, "We will facilitate well-being across the district." The Ministry of Education has revised and updated the "ERASE" website ([erasing-barriers - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/erasing-barriers)). Erase helps students, adults and school staff build safe, caring and inclusive communities.

I am pleased and excited to announce that the Ministry of Education and Child Care is adding 89 new classrooms, which is equivalent to 2,185 new seats, to 10 school districts across the province. Suwilaawks Community School in Terrace will receive four-classroom prefabricated additions to the school which will increase the capacity by 95 students. The new classrooms are expected to be ready as early as next school year.

I would like to thank the Board of Education for the opportunity to work with them over the past several months as the district transitions to the new Superintendent, Ms. Tracey MacMillan. Tracey will join the CMSD82 team on October 1, 2024. I know that Ms. MacMillan is excited to get in the canoe with you and continue paddling in the same direction.

Welcome to the 2024/2025 school year.

Sincerely,

Janet Meyer
Interim Superintendent



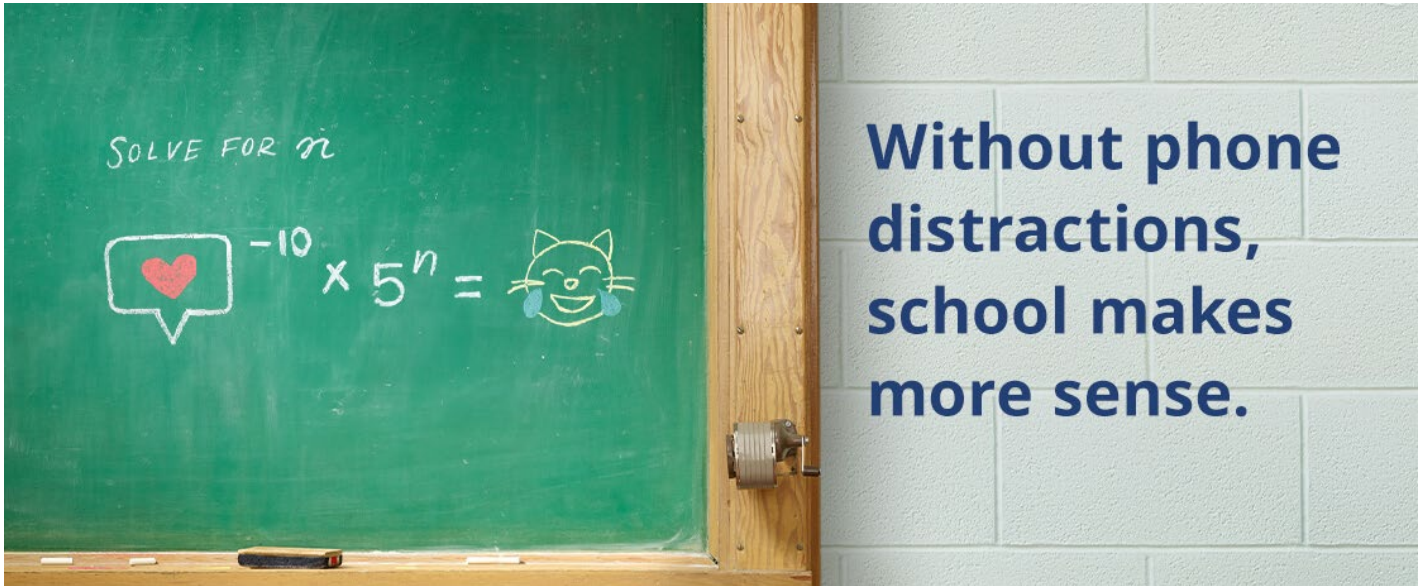
Coast Mountains School District is in service to diverse First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and their caregivers who live, learn, and play on the traditional lands of the Gitksan, Haisla, Nisga'a and Ts'msyen peoples.

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[Personal Digital Device \(Cell Phone\) Restrictions in Schools - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca)

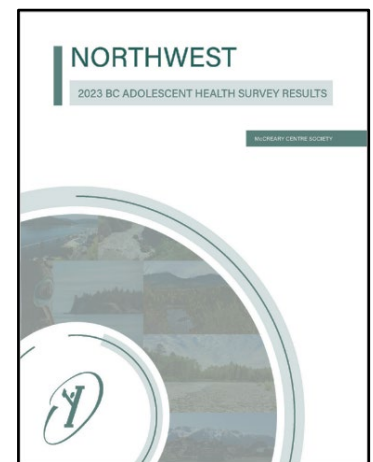


Northwest BC Adolescent Health Survey Results

The McCreary Centre Society is a non-government, non-profit organization committed to improving the health of BC youth through research, evaluation, and community-based projects. Founded in 1977, their vision is that all youth are supported to be healthy and connected. The results of the 2023 Adolescent Health Survey results are available and they showed some encouraging trends with fewer youth aged 12–19 engaging in sexual activity and decreases in alcohol and other substance use.

However, it was not all good news for the region as McCreary Centre Society's Executive Director and co-author of the Northwest report, Dr. Annie Smith explained: "We know that economic well-being is a key component of adolescent health. So, it was concerning to see that students in the Northwest were not only more likely to be going to bed hungry because there wasn't enough money for food than youth across BC, but they were also more likely to be going to bed hungry than local students 5 years earlier."

Additionally, results showed that declines in mental health seen in the region before COVID-19 have continued. There was a decrease in the percentage of youth who rated their mental health as good or excellent (51% vs. 70% in 2018 vs. 78% in 2013), and an increase in those who had self-harmed and seriously considered suicide. There was also an increase in youth who missed out on accessing needed mental health services in the past year (23% vs. 18% in 2018 vs. 11% in 2013). Smith noted, "The decline in youth reporting positive mental health is something we are seeing across the province not just here. It shows us that we really need to focus on ensuring young people are getting access to the services and supports that they need; as well as to information which can help them to manage the stress in their lives."



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Northwest BC Adolescent Health Survey Results

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We can also support them to make healthy choices about things like sleep, time outdoors, and screen time which can all really impact mental health. Positive news for this region is that we do see most local youth are able to identify caring adults in their life, and have adults they can turn to when they have problems.”

The 2023 BC AHS was completed by around 38,500 young people aged 12–19 in 59 of BC’s 60 school districts, including all districts in the Northwest. This report is one of 16 regional reports of the 2023 BC AHS results. It shares data provided by students in Grades 7–12 in the Northwest Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA). Northwest HSDA is comprised of six school districts: Bulkley Valley, Coast Mountains, Haida Gwaii, Nisga’a, Prince Rupert, and Stikine. The HSDA also includes students in Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

For more information, please visit: [2023_bcahs_northwest.pdf \(mcs.bc.ca\)](https://mcs.bc.ca/2023_bcahs_northwest.pdf)

Parental monitoring

Youth were asked how much they felt their parents (or guardians) monitored what they were doing in their free time and online. Parents were more likely to know what youth were doing with their free time than their time online.

In the past 30 days, how much youth felt their parents knew what they were doing ...

| | Never/ rarely | Sometimes | Most of the time/always |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| With their free time | 18% | 18% | 64% |
| Online | 43% | 19% | 38% |

Youth were less likely than those 5 years earlier to feel their parents were monitoring their free time (64% vs. 71% in 2018) and their time online (38% vs. 43%) most or all of the time.

As might be expected, youth in higher grades were less likely to have their time online monitored by their parents compared to those in lower grades (e.g., 28% in Grade 12 vs. 47% in Grade 8 vs. 57% in Grade 7).

SUMMARY OF NORTHWEST FINDINGS

- Youth were more likely to be living in multi-generational homes, and to have care taking responsibilities than those in previous years.
- They were less likely to report positive mental health, and were more likely to experience food insecurity and victimization than youth 5 years earlier.
- The percentage who had used alcohol and engaged in sexual activity decreased.
- Youth felt less connected to family, school and community than in previous years. They were more likely than youth across BC to feel connected to land and nature, and to have an adult in their community who cared about them.
- Youth who felt supported and connected reported better health and well-being.

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Acknowledging the Passing of Chief Don Roberts



Don Roberts, the long-standing elected Chief Councillor of the Kitsumkalum First Nation, passed away September 15, 2024 after a lengthy illness.

Roberts, whose hereditary title is Sm'oogyet 'Wiidildaldit Na'algyax Gaax, Waap Łagaax Gisbutwada, passed away with his wife Arlene at his side.

Re-elected just last year to his ninth two-year term as Chief Councillor, Don is credited with being the driving force behind treaty negotiations with the provincial and federal governments, which, this June, resulted in an initialing of a final agreement.

On behalf of Coast Mountains School District 82, we wish to extend our sincerest condolences to the Kitsumkalum First Nation and to Chief Robert's family.

Kitselas First Nation Chief Councillor Glenn Bennett remembers Chief Roberts:

"He was a fierce representative of his community. He worked very tirelessly at the treaty table to ensure that his people's interests were at the forefront of the negotiations between Canada and B.C.," he said."

NTETC Working with College on New ECE Program

CMSD82's Northwest Trades & Employment Training Centre (NTETC) is currently working with Coast Mountain College to offer Early Childhood Educator (ECE) as a dual credit option for Semester 2 of this school year.

Certification by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development allows students to work with young children in an early childhood setting (ages birth to 5 years), under the supervision of a qualified Early Childhood Educator.



Following completion of one of the online courses, ECE 104 Health, Safety or Nutrition & ECCE 167 Guiding Young Children, students may apply for the Early Childhood Education Assistant Certificate with the [Early Childhood Registry](#). This allows students to work within the childcare system while continuing to complete the BC ECE Basic Certificate Program or other program of study. The online courses provide the opportunity for Kitimat and Hazelton students to also participate.

The School District will cover all costs of the program, which includes tuition and textbooks. NTETC is also looking into a Work Experience Placement Program that will place students in local daycares to obtain two high school courses. Reference the program mapping shared on the following page which is subject to change as the process is developed.

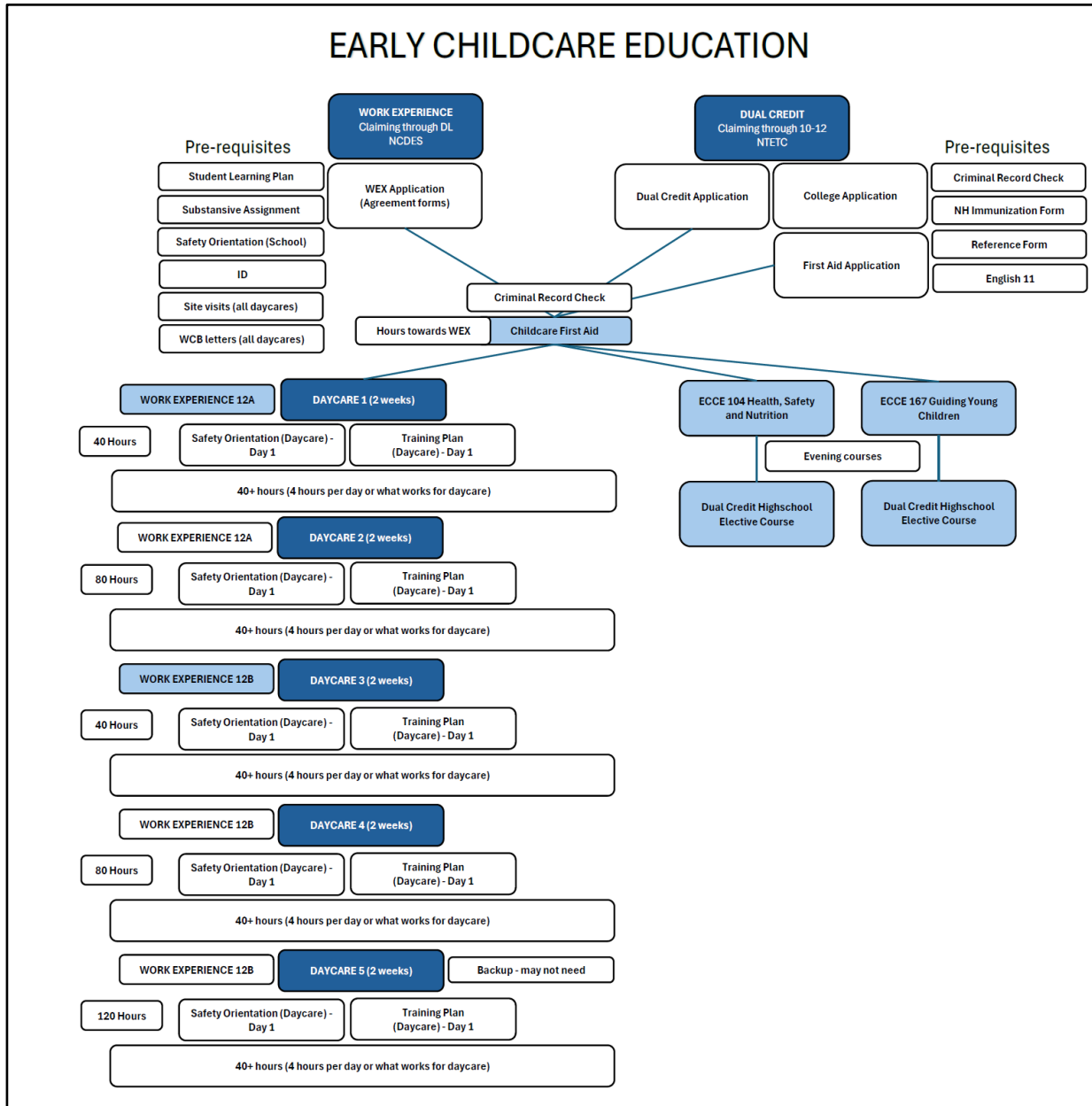
For more information about the new ECE Program and program planning, please reach out to Dan Hamel, NTETC Principal at dan.hamel@cmsd.bc.ca.

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NTETC Working with College on New ECE Program

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Upcoming Dates

- September 23-27 – National Week for Truth & Reconciliation
- September 25 – Hybrid Board Meeting (Terrace)
- September 27 – District In-Service Day (schools are not in session)
- September 30 - National Day for Truth & Reconciliation (schools are not in session)
- September 30 – Orange Shirt Day