



Superintendent's Message:

Fall 2026

Dear KCSD Community,



As summer draws to a close, I hope you have had the opportunity to enjoy time with family and friends, recharge, and create lasting memories. It is with great excitement and optimism that I welcome everyone back for another year of learning, growth, and connection across the Kootenay-Columbia School District.



This year marks Year 2 of the KCSD Strategic Plan 2025-2030, and I am incredibly proud of the momentum we have built together over the past year. The strategic plan serves as a roadmap as we strive to ensure every student is supported, valued, and equipped to pursue their dreams. As we continue this important work, our focus remains on three key priorities:

- Belonging
- Indigenous Student Success
- Numeracy



Throughout the coming year, we will place a special emphasis on strengthening our Enhancing Student Learning School Plans. The school plans are aligned with the KCSD Strategic Plan and provide an opportunity for school staff to look at their unique context and come together in support of the goals that are most meaningful for each of our schools. This time for staff to work together is also anchored in our focus in belonging as staff builds connections and community in support of their school.



I would also like to highlight an important event for our district and community. Trustee elections will take place this October. School Trustees play a vital role in setting the direction of our district, providing governance, and ensuring that student success remains at the center of decision-making. I encourage all community members to learn more about the role of trustees and the election process.



As we begin this new school year, I want to thank our dedicated staff, supportive families, engaged Trustees, and community partners for your ongoing commitment to support every student's success. Together, we are creating compassionate learning communities aligned with the vision, mission, and commitments of the KCSD.

Wishing everyone a wonderful start to the school year.



Katherine Shearer, Superintendent



Summer Professional Development

The District Leadership Team (DLT) participated in the Summer District Leadership Days on August 26 and 27. Team members engaged with Shane Safir, acclaimed author of *Pedagogies of Voice*, *The Listening Leader*, and *Street Data*. With more than 20 years of experience as a teacher, administrator, and coach in public education, Shane is widely recognized for her passionate commitment to equity, student voice, and transformational leadership. Her insights challenged and inspired participants to deepen their listening practices and strengthen their impact as educational leaders. The District Leadership Team will be participating in several learning sessions with Shane throughout the 2026-2027 school year as they explore opportunities for student voice.



During the District Professional Development Day on September 2, staff from across the district came together to learn from Dr. Dustin Louie about fostering a sense of belonging and supporting Indigenous student success. Dr. Louie is a prominent First Nations scholar, educational researcher, and Director of the Indigenous Teacher Education Program at UBC.

In the afternoon, staff worked collaboratively in school-based teams on School Enhancing Student Learning School Plans, identifying priorities, goals, and strategies to support student success throughout the 2026-2027 school year.

Health and Safety - Wildfire Smoke Events

KCSD follows guidance from Interior Health and industry-recognized ASHRAE standards to support the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff during periods of poor air quality.

As wildfire smoke continues to affect our region, KCSD schools are prepared to respond when air quality declines. During wildfire smoke events, school HVAC systems are placed in Wildfire Smoke Mode to reduce outdoor air intake and increase indoor air filtration. MERV 13 filters are being installed to capture fine airborne particles and improve indoor air quality.

Staff and students can help reduce the impact of wildfire smoke by keeping doors and windows closed when smoke is present. To minimize smoke entering school buildings, everyone is encouraged to use designated entrances with vestibules, such as the main entrance, whenever possible.

Schools receive regular air quality advisories and guidance to support decisions regarding outdoor activities which include recommendations for reducing exposure, particularly for individuals who may be more sensitive to poor air quality.

Together, these measures help create safer and healthier learning and working environments during wildfire smoke events.

Health and Safety - School Zones

As students return to school this Fall, we remind all drivers to exercise extra caution around schools, playgrounds, and bus routes. The start of a new school year means increased foot traffic, more cyclists, and school buses making frequent stops throughout our communities.

School Zone Safety Reminders

- Observe all posted school zone speed limits.
- Watch carefully for children crossing streets, especially before and after school and during lunch hours.
- Yield to pedestrians at marked and unmarked crosswalks.
- Avoid using mobile devices while driving.
- Be patient during busy pick-up and drop-off times.
- Never pass a stopped school bus when its flashing lights are activated.



Transportation

Welcome back from the Kootenay-Columbia School District Transportation Department! We're excited to welcome riders back for another fantastic school year.

Need Transportation or Have Changes to Your Route?

If you require school bus transportation or if your transportation needs have changed, please register [here](#). Please note that late registrations will be processed as quickly as possible, but due to high volumes, delays are expected from late August through early October.

Bus Passes

Bus passes for registered students will be available and distributed at your school. All students must present and scan their pass each time they ride the bus.

Be on Time:

- Arrive at your bus stop 10 minutes early.
- Buses may leave up to 5 minutes before the scheduled time.



Delays or Cancellations

If a bus is delayed by 20 minutes or more, or is cancelled, notifications will be sent via School Messenger (email and phone).

➡ Make sure you have opted in to [School Messenger](#) to receive these important updates.

Questions?

We're here to help! Email us at: transportation@sd20.bc.ca

Home - School Communication Guide

Strong relationships between families, school staff, and students are built through open, respectful, and effective communication. To support this important partnership, we are pleased to introduce **Stronger Together: Home-School Communication Guide**, a new resource developed collaboratively by representatives from the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC), Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1285 (CUPE), Kootenay-Columbia Teachers' Union (KCTU), Kootenay-Columbia Principal/Vice-Principal Association (KCPVPA) and KCSD senior staff.

Grounded in our shared commitment to student success and belonging, this guide outlines common values and expectations for home-school communication and provides practical information for families and staff. The resource includes shared values and commitments, communication practices, a concerns resolution flowchart, strategies for helping your child succeed, and links to additional supports and resources.

We are grateful to all of our partner groups for their contributions to this work and invite families and staff to explore the guide as we continue to strengthen relationships and work together in support of every learner.



[**Click to view!**](#)

Indigenous Education Council

The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) supports the Board in providing equitable education and support services for Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) students and improving Indigenous student outcomes. The IEC advises on the integration of Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous education funding, and the inclusion of local cultural content, protocols, and language.

The IEC helps ensure Indigenous voices are reflected in decision-making and supports the district's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities.

We are excited to work alongside the IEC as we advance the KCSD Strategic Plan 2025-2030, with a particular focus on Indigenous Student Success. Throughout the year, the Council will meet regularly to provide advice and recommendations to the Board of Education.

We are pleased to welcome the following members:

- Jared Basil, Ktunaxa Cultural Framework Ambassador, Social Sector-Ktunaxa Nation (Co-Chair)
- Marion Louie, Education Manager, Lower Similkameen Band (Co-Chair)
- Jennifer Lewis, Wellness Manager, Okanagan Nation Alliance
- Chenoa Paccagnan, Director of Education and Employment, Shuswap Band (Kenpesq't)
- Myrt Servatius, President, Kootenay South Métis Society
- Trina Williams, Head Start Program, Yaqan Nukiy School
- Indigenous Parent Representative TBD



KCSD Learns

During the 2026-2027 school year, KCSD Learns will continue to provide learning opportunities aligned with the KCSD Strategic Plan 2025-2030 and Literacy priorities, supporting numeracy and literacy instruction while integrating Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being.

Parents play an essential role in their child's education. Supporting your child's learning at home helps build a strong partnership between you, your child, and their teacher.

To create success in supporting your child's learning at home:

All Students:

- Set up a work area in your home with your child, where your child puts their work and books
- Establish a time that works best for everyone to focus on learning at home
- Have supplies available to use when learning at home
- Show interest in their learning
- Check in with your child on their homework (grades 4-12)
- Celebrate progress
- Volunteer on PAC

Secondary Students:

- Start talking more about post secondary options and career choices



Visit the links below for ways to support your child's learning at home:

[About Early Literacy](#)

[Literacy at Home](#)

[Math at Home](#)

[Communicating Student Learning](#)

2026 Trustee Elections

School Trustee elections will take place on Saturday, October 17, 2026, as part of British Columbia's General Local Elections. School Trustees play an important role in public education by setting district policies, approving budgets, establishing strategic priorities, and advocating for student success and well-being. Trustees serve a four-year term and help ensure local voices are reflected in decisions that impact students, families, and schools.

Key Election Dates

Nomination Period: September 1 to September 11, 2026

Campaign Period: September 19 to October 17, 2026

General Voting Day: October 17, 2026



CLICK HERE 

for additional details, including candidate information, important deadlines, and election updates.

School Meals Program

Through BC's [Feeding Futures](#) and the [National School Food Program](#), KCSD provides school food supports for students who could benefit from access to breakfast, lunch, or snacks during the school day.

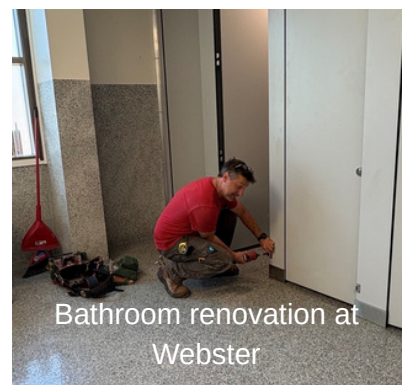


Families may need a little extra support for many different reasons, and we want accessing food at school to be easy and welcoming. If school meals or snacks would be helpful for your child, please reach out to your school directly.

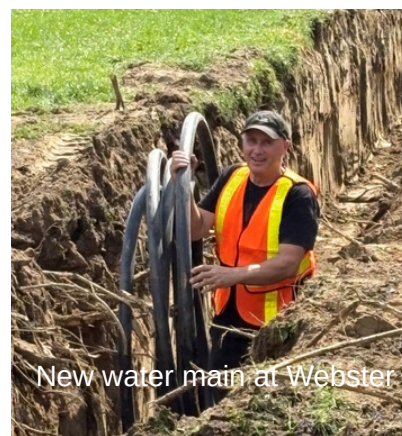
Summer Projects

Our hardworking Operations Team has been making the most of a busy summer season. Here are just a few of the projects they've been working on:

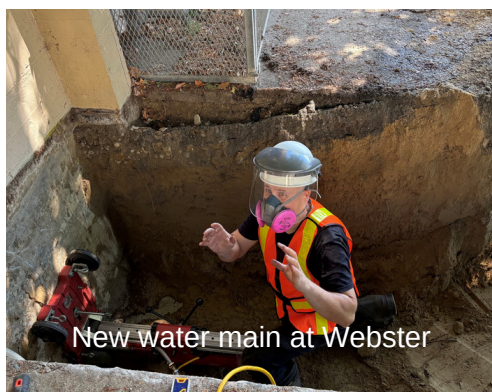
- Deep clean of all sites by our custodial team
- Furnace replacement at the Willi Krause Fieldhouse
- Roof drain replacement and truss repairs at Fruitvale Elementary
- Paving projects at Fruitvale Elementary, KCLC Castlegar and Twin Rivers
- Boiler replacement at JL Crowe
- Field improvements at Fruitvale Elementary, including Grounds staff support for the PAC's new ball field installation
- Access control system upgrade at Kinnaird Elementary
- New roofing at RSS equipment room
- Duct cleaning at RSS
- New lighting in the music room at Stanley Humphries
- Water main replacement at Webster Elementary
- Painting at Webster Elementary
- Stage refinished at RSS and drama room floor painted at Crowe
- Three washroom renovations at Webster Elementary
- Replacement of all roof top HVAC units at Robson Community School
- Mechanical upgrade at Waneta Operations Centre
- New cabinets at Glenmerry Elementary in the Student Support room
- Fire alarm, fire extinguisher and sprinkler testing throughout the district
- Upgraded AED's installed across the district



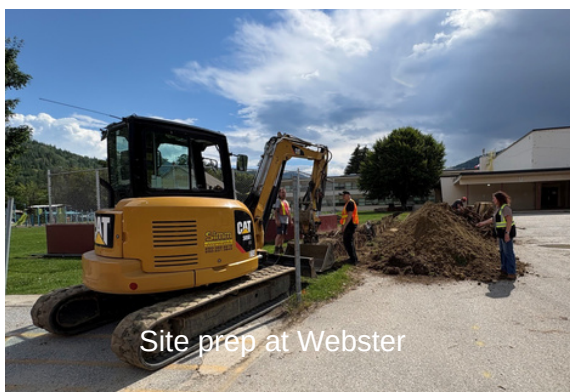
Bathroom renovation at Webster



New water main at Webster



New water main at Webster



Site prep at Webster



Staff toured the new Kalesnikoff facility

Summer Projects



New cabinets at Glenmerry



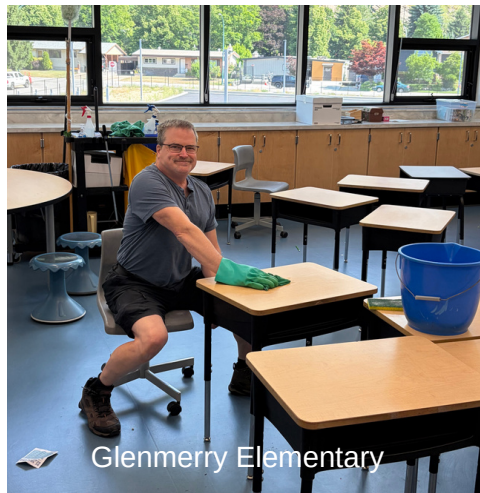
Bathroom renovation at Webster



Traffic control training



Stump removal at Webster



Glenmerry Elementary

A big shout-out to our amazing custodial, maintenance, grounds, and trades teams! Their efforts over the summer have helped ensure our schools are clean, safe, and ready for the return of students and staff. We are incredibly fortunate to have such a committed team!



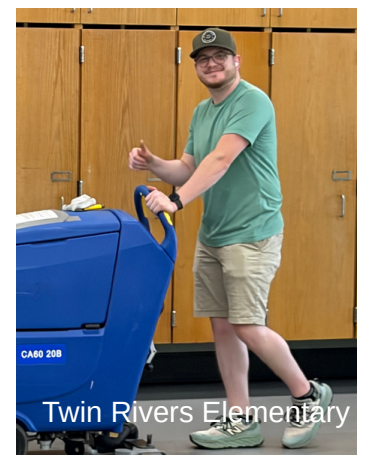
Castlegar Primary



Webster Elementary



Webster Elementary



Twin Rivers Elementary

