



Coyote Connections

WEEK OF: Jan. 26 – 30

Monday – Jan. 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I” Completion Day – No Regular Classes • Strategic Plan Public Engagement Session @ 6–9pm in GESS Library
Tuesday – Jan. 27 A/B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of Semester 2 and Term 3
Wednesday – Jan. 28 C/D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Lounge: ALL SUBJECT academic peer support @ lunch – rm. 136
Thursday – Jan. 29 A/B	
Friday – Jan. 30 C/D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Laird’s last day at GESS • Pizza \$2/slice



**FINAL YEARBOOK PURCHASE
DEADLINE IS FAST
APPROACHING! GET YOUR COPY
BY FEBRUARY 6TH!**

#yearbook

Jan 25 – **This Saturday** Skate with Rink at Winfield Arena
↳ Grad Fundraiser by Donations (info on pg. 3)
Feb 6 – Yearbook Order **Final Deadline**
– Wellness Clinic – Public Health Nurse in the am
– Grade 8 Tour & Course Information in the pm
– Report Cards posted to MyEd Portals – End of Day
Feb 9 – Gr. 9 & 10 Course Selection Assemblies in the theatre
Feb 10 – Gr. 11 Course Selection Assembly in the theatre

Hello parents and guardians,

My last day at GESS is officially January 30th before I’m off to KSS. This past week has been wonderful, connecting with students and families that I’ve been lucky to serve over my last three and a half years. Thank you for the kind words, the support, and I wish you the very best. I always say to staff who move on:

“Once a Coyote, always a Coyote.” That’s doubly true for me. As a student teacher twenty-four years ago, I started my career at George Elliot working with the likes of Mr. Shaw, Mr. Vicaretti, Mrs. Davidson, and Mr. Wellwood, and it’s been a privilege to spend time in these halls once again with such outstanding educators in your amazing community. Take care.

Mr. Laird



GESS Vision Statement: Love. Learn. Thrive.





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GESS would like to send out a big thank you to our local fire department. Our Grade 10 Careers class received life saving skills training on CPR, AED, and Naloxone taught by the Lake Country firefighters.



thank you



This semester, Mrs. Erickson's English 12 students explored the question, "What makes a good life?" Through monthly visits to The Lake Country Lodge and Bella Vita Daycare, students gathered perspectives from different stages of life. This past week they welcomed daycare children and their parents into the school foyer, sharing their learning through puppet shows, LEGO displays, and storybooks in a joyful celebration of storytelling and connection.



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GRAD ANNOUNCEMENTS

LAKE COUNTRY BOTTLE DEPOT FUNDRAISER:

Have refundables? Donate them to the 'GESS GRAD' account at the Lake Country Bottle Depot. There's no need to sort them! Proceeds go towards prom for this year's grad class.

Please visit the [grad website](#) for more details on grad events and general grad information.

GRAD PHOTOS FEBRUARY 12-23

BOOK NOW

VISIT WWW.ARTONA.COM AND CLICK 'BOOK NOW', OR SCAN THE QR CODE.

THERE IS AN INITIAL \$60 FEE THAT CAN BE REFUNDED IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO PURCHASE PHOTOS.

ALL GRADS MUST HAVE THEIR PHOTOS TAKEN FOR THE COMPOSITE.



ORDER GRAD GEAR NOW

VISIT THE 'GRAD GEAR' TAB ON THE GRAD WEBSITE (GESGRAD.WEEBLY.COM) FOR THE LINK.

WHEN READY, ORDERS CAN BE PICKED UP FROM RM. 301. THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE TO ORDER!

ORDERS CLOSE MIDNIGHT
SUNDAY, JANUARY 25



FEBRUARY PARENT & GUARDIAN SYMPOSIUM (COPAC PARTNERSHIP)

SD23 is pleased to collaborate with COPAC on a Parent Symposium designed to deepen two-way engagement and amplify family voice. This event will take place on Saturday, February 28, 2026 (8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.) at the Board of Education Learning Centre on Hollywood Rd., and is open to all Parents & Guardians.



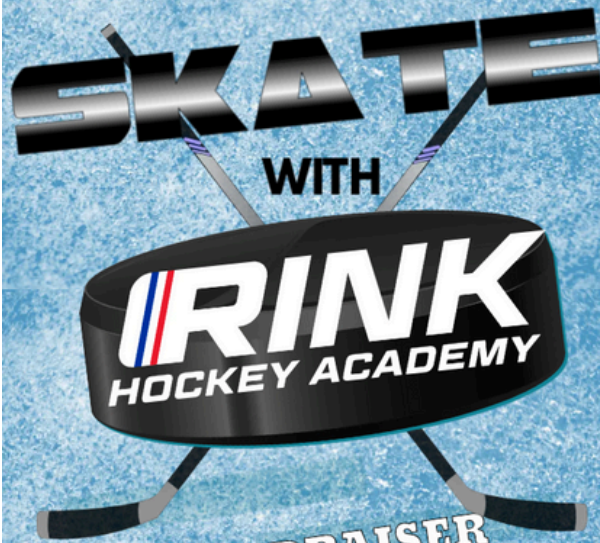
HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

This month's newsletter includes:

- Farm to School winter learning activities
- Ways to reduce food waste
- Indigenous school food story telling
- Handwashing tips
- Colour-coded weather alerts
- Level1: Foundations of Physical Literacy
- Overdose response in schools
- Substance use prevention standards
- Protecting youth online
- MDI webinar

Please use this [link](#) to access the IH Health Promoting School Newsletter for January (scroll to the bottom of page)

2026 GESS GRADS PRESENT



GRAD FUNDRAISER BY DONATION

Winfield Arena

Jan 25 @ 3:00-4:30pm

Made With PosterMyWall.com

September 2026 School
Registration Applications
begin **February 2 @ 7 AM.**
For more information,
please visit **THIS LINK** on
the GESS website.



Do you CARE about kids and climate?

Become a Mentor!

Support local middle + high school
students designing real climate
solutions in our community.

"Mentoring a grade 11 student as part of the CARE program was one of the most rewarding things I've done. I watched him bring his idea to life while building skills in planning, collaboration, and community outreach. It's inspiring to see young people leading climate action – and to know I played a small part."

Jude Brunt
Community Engagement, Purpur
Board Director, Habitat for Humanity

- 10-30 hours over 3 months (Feb–May)
- Support youth with your diverse experience + passion – from carpentry to caregiving to tech to entrepreneurship to art and beyond
- No teaching experience needed
- Help turn climate anxiety into climate action

CARE is a practical, hands-on student and community education and engagement program delivered in Vernon and Central Okanagan school districts. Students explore and create real-world climate solutions that support local and global climate goals.

To support their learning, CARE matches each student team with a community mentor. THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN!

83% of CARE Mentors felt more
positive about our future after
volunteering with young people!

CONTACT FOR MORE INFO:
kasey@freshoutlookfoundation.org

climateactionrippleeffect.org

SIGN UP TO
VOLUNTEER
https://bit.ly/CARE_Community



HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE AWARDS

Planning to attend Okanagan College next fall?
You may be eligible for an entrance award.

Students graduating from a secondary school within the Okanagan College region (Revelstoke to Princeton) entering Okanagan College in September 2026 may be eligible for the following awards: [Link below with the QR code](#)



HOW TO APPLY:
Eligibility criteria and details about how to apply online are available by visiting okanagancollege.ca/awards

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
Online Applications will be accepted until **March 8, 2026**.
Students and school staff will have until **March 15, 2026** to provide required documentation of transcripts and reference letters.

Questions? Contact
250-762-5445 | 1-877-755-2266 (toll-free)



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WEEK OF: Jan. 26 – 30

2026/2027 School Year Calendar

Days in session	189 (3 summer Pro Days August)
Number of days of instruction	182
Number of non-instructional days	7
Schools open	Tuesday, September 8
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Wednesday, September 30
Administrative Implementation Day	Friday, October 9
Thanksgiving Day (schools closed)	Monday, October 12
Early Dismissal #1 (1:30pm), Parent/Teacher Open House	Thursday, October 15
Teacher Professional Day	Friday, October 23
Remembrance Day (schools closed)	Wednesday, November 11
Winter vacation period (schools closed)	Monday, December 21 – Friday, January 1
Statutory holiday (schools closed)	Friday, January 1
Schools reopen after Winter vacation	Monday, January 4
Teacher Professional Day (Support Staff In-Service Day)	Friday, February 12
Family Day	Monday, February 15
Early Dismissal #2 (1:30pm), Parent/Teacher Open House	Thursday, March 11
Spring vacation period (schools closed)	Monday, March 15 – Thursday, March 25
Schools reopen after Spring vacation	Tuesday, March 30
Good Friday (schools closed)	Friday, March 26
Easter Monday (schools closed)	Monday, March 29
Early Dismissal #3 (11:45am), for Grade 12 Capstones	Thursday, May 13
Victoria Day (schools closed)	Monday, May 24
Administrative Day (students do not attend)	Wednesday, June 30

2027/2028 School Year Calendar

Days in session	189 (3 summer Pro Days August)
Number of days of instruction	182
Number of non-instructional days	7
Schools open	Tuesday, September 7
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Thursday, September 30
Administrative Implementation Day	Friday, October 8
Thanksgiving Day (schools closed)	Monday, October 11
Early Dismissal #1 (1:30pm), Parent/Teacher Open House	Thursday, October 14
Teacher Professional Day	Friday, October 22
Remembrance Day (schools closed)	Thursday, November 11
Winter vacation period (schools closed)	Monday, December 20 – Monday, January 3
Statutory holiday (schools closed)	Monday, January 3
Schools reopen after Winter vacation	Tuesday, January 4
Teacher Professional Day (Support Staff In-Service Day)	Friday, February 18
Family Day	Monday, February 21
Early Dismissal #2 (1:30pm), Parent/Teacher Open House	Thursday, March 16
Spring vacation period (schools closed)	Monday, March 20 – Thursday, March 31
Schools reopen after Spring vacation	Monday, April 3
Good Friday (schools closed)	Friday, April 14
Easter Monday (schools closed)	Monday, April 17
Early Dismissal #3 (11:45am), for Grade 12 Capstones	Thursday, May 18
Victoria Day (schools closed)	Monday, May 22
Administrative Day (students do not attend)	Friday, June 30

