

We are grateful to live, work, and play on the unceded, ancestral territories of fourteen First Nations representing the Dakelh, Nedut'en and Wet'suwet'en peoples. We are working diligently towards creating equity for our learners through conscious Acts of Reconciliation.

Hadih/Hadi/Hadeeh and Welcome to Dugooos Ooza

As we move further into the spring season, May brings both celebration and purposeful momentum across our district. This month, our strategic focus highlights two key areas within our workplan: engaging our workforce through recruitment, orientation, and support, and continuing to expand a strong culture of inquiry across our system.

This is a particularly busy and important time in our staffing cycle as we look ahead to the 2026-2027 school year. We have begun by filling several key leadership roles and are very pleased to welcome Krista Veitch from Northlands School Division as our new Assistant Superintendent, Barb Ziler as Director of Instruction for Curriculum Services, Steven Little in his new role as Principal of Lakes District Secondary School, and Shannah Ernest, who joins us from the Calgary Board of Education as Principal of BESS. Our first round of teacher postings is now underway, and we will continue to fill remaining principal, vice-principal, and teaching positions as required. At the same time, recruitment and onboarding of support staff continues. We are grateful for the strong interest in joining Nechako Lakes and for the collaborative efforts across the district to ensure high-quality staff are in place to support our students and communities.

Our commitment to inquiry continues to deepen and gain recognition. This month, a large team from across Nechako Lakes participated in the Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education (NOIIE) symposium, showcasing the breadth and impact of inquiry work taking place throughout our district. It was a privilege to welcome Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser, the provincial leads for NOIIE, to Nechako Lakes, where they visited schools, connected with inquiry teams, and explored the many ways educators are working together to improve outcomes for students. Their reflections affirm that the work underway in our district is making a meaningful difference locally and contributing to learning across the province and internationally. We are proud of this collective effort and encourage continued sharing of our learning. Learn more about our inquiry projects at [Case Studies 2024-2025 - Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education](#)



May also provided important opportunities for reflection, recognition, and community connection. Schools and sites across the district honoured Red Dress Day, recognizing and remembering Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and reaffirming our shared responsibility to advance reconciliation through education and awareness.

Students from across the district participated in *The Brain* at Nadleh Whut'en—an impactful and immersive learning experience focused on mental health, substance use, and well-being. Over two incredible weeks, the Nadleh and Stella communities welcomed well over 1,000 Elders, students, staff, partners, and community members. In addition to the core learning, participants engaged in a wide range of meaningful and engaging activities, including youth gatherings, cultural games such as lahal, film experiences, karaoke, and dedicated evenings for Elders, women, and men. Student voice was central, with reflections highlighting both the depth of learning and its personal impact—for example, students noted how what we “fuel our brain with will affect us in the long run,” and shared increased understanding of the effects of substances, emotions, and even sugar on brain development. Ongoing survey work with students, along with follow-up feedback from staff, will help us better understand and strengthen

this experience for future communities. We extend our deep appreciation to the Nadleh and Stella communities for their leadership, generosity, and hospitality, as well as to our partners, including Carrier Sekani, who supported students each day. Experiences such as this demonstrate the power of coming together to support learning, wellness, and positive change for our youth.

Education Week was celebrated throughout the district, with schools and sites recognizing the many contributions of staff who support student success each day. I extend sincere appreciation to our Board of Trustees for their ongoing recognition of this work and their commitment to celebrating the people who make a difference in the lives of our students.

Looking ahead, we are excited to support the upcoming Rural and Remote Education (RRED) program in partnership with UBC. This innovative teacher education program begins with a three-week in-person session this summer in Vanderhoof and continues through online learning over the winter. It is already fully subscribed, with a waitlist of interested participants. The program will return to Vanderhoof each August, creating a sustainable pathway for aspiring educators in the North. We are currently seeking homestays or short-term rental accommodations to support the adult learners joining us this summer. Opportunities such as RRED are essential in strengthening our workforce and enabling northern residents to access teacher education while remaining connected to their home communities.

As always, I am deeply appreciative of the care, dedication, and collaboration demonstrated across our district. Together, we continue to make meaningful progress in supporting the success, well-being, and sense of belonging of all learners in Nechako Lakes.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita McClinton

(she/her)
Superintendent



Trustee Davis delivering tokens of appreciation for staff at Decker Lake

Strategic Plan Updates: GOAL 1: Honour Diversity

Whole School Drumming at BESS - April 30

Members of the senior team had the opportunity to share lunch with staff and students at Babine Elementary Secondary School while in the community for principal interviews. Prior to lunch, we were honoured to experience a meaningful cultural gathering, where students joined in drumming and

singing alongside their culture and language teacher, Margie Alec, and Principal Jessie Kennedy. This school-wide practice takes place daily and reflects a strong sense of community, connection, and cultural pride within the school.



Potlatch at DLES



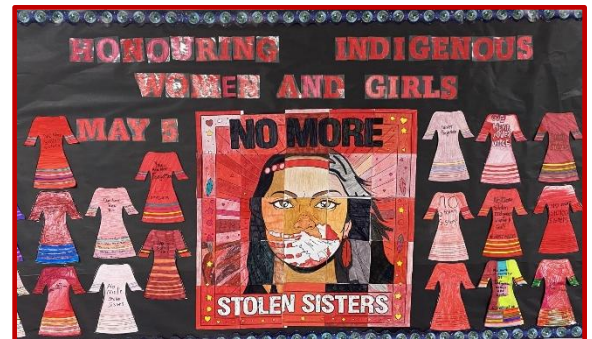
DLES hosted a mock potlatch in April. Mrs. Helen Michelle from the Nee Tahí Buhn band and the Frog clan hosted the potlatch. DLES Huskies and staff members gathered in their team colours to represent the Bear, Beaver, Caribou and Frog clans. Huskies went home with lots of treats, and a better understanding of the potlatch system.



Red Dress Day Honoured Across the District



Top Left: Miss Jane Elliott, a Kindergarten student at DLES, wore a red dress on May 5th to honour the lives of *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two – Spirited People* on National Red Dress Day. Remaining photos: WL McLeod honouring the lives of *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two – Spirited People* on National Red Dress Day, including a beautiful class project from Miss Shawna's class.



Accessibility Design Competition: Celebrating Creativity, Inclusion, and Student Voice



Across the district, the Accessibility Design Competition became a powerful celebration of creativity, inclusion, and student voice—an opportunity for learners to reflect on what accessibility truly means and to express those ideas through art. The result was an inspiring collection of thoughtful designs that captured the spirit of belonging, empathy, and connection.

At William Konkin Elementary School, students in Ms. Vaishali Arora’s Grade 3 ADST class embraced this opportunity with enthusiasm and care. Through their work, they demonstrated a deep and meaningful understanding of accessibility—not simply as a concept, but as a lived value rooted in kindness and inclusivity. Their designs reflected a collective commitment to recognizing and celebrating the diverse ways in which people experience the world.

We are delighted to share that this year’s winning design was created by Rylan, a Grade 3 student whose artwork beautifully communicates the message that *everyone can play together*. Rylan’s design stood out for its clarity, warmth, and powerful reminder that inclusion is at the heart of community. Through simple yet meaningful imagery, the design invites us all to consider how we can create spaces where everyone feels welcome and valued.

In addition to this individual achievement, Ms. Arora’s entire class was recognized with the class prize of accessibility tools in honour of their outstanding collective contributions. Many of their designs will also be featured on the district’s accessibility website, showcasing thoughtful representations of friendship and a celebration of both seen and unseen disabilities. Their work serves as an important reminder that accessibility is not only about removing barriers—it is about fostering understanding, compassion, and connection.

This initiative would not have been possible without the leadership and vision of Karie and Vaishali, who created the space for our young learners to shine. Their commitment to student engagement and inclusive learning has empowered students to think deeply, create meaningfully, and contribute to an important district conversation.

We are incredibly proud of Rylan and all of the students who participated. Their creativity and dedication are truly inspiring, and their work reflects the values we strive to uphold as a district. We look forward to seeing how their ideas continue to shape a more inclusive and accessible community for everyone.

Making Nets at Sinkut View



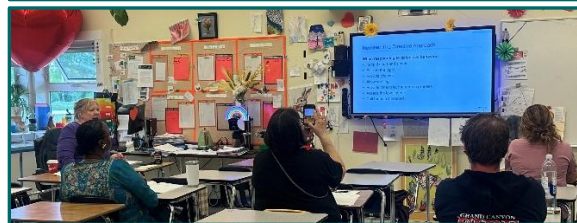
Elder Linda and knowledge-keeper, Sharon shared their talent, knowledge and stories with students



Strategic Plan Updates: GOAL 2: Engage our Workforce

A CUPE Day of Learning

On a bright morning in early May, the halls of FLESS began to fill with friendly greetings, warm coffee in hand, and a shared sense of purpose. It was May 8, 2026—the second CUPE Pro D Day of the year—and once again, colleagues from across the district gathered for a day of learning, connection, and inspiration.



took many forms. There were powerful conversations about support and understanding through POPFASD with Trina Chivilo. Others stepped outdoors or into community spaces, discovering the greenhouse with the Master Gardeners of Prince George and Stella't'en First Nation, or taking part in land-based learning with the Chuntoh Education Society.



In another space, concentration and creativity filled the room as participants carefully threaded beads in Beading 101 with Rebecca Broadbent—a session that had filled almost as quickly as it was announced. Nearby, others prepared for real-world emergencies with Irwin Safety, practicing childcare first aid and CPR skills.

For the third year in a row, the Pro D Committee had worked hand in hand with District staff and the BLTNU to shape a day that truly reflected the needs and interests of CUPE members. Months of planning had gone into building a

schedule that offered something for everyone—sessions aligned with the district's Strategic Plan, opportunities for professional growth, and moments to nurture wellness and creativity.

As participants chose from eleven different sessions, the energy in the building grew. Some logged into online learning, exploring Kimochis with Wendy Kelemen or diving into math thinking with Lena Miller and Kendra Jacobs. Others gathered in rooms filled with conversation and hands-on learning—learning Nonviolent Crisis Intervention with Cheryl Petersen, exploring connections in clerical work with Bev Stanga, or engaging with Carl Larson in Project CUPE.

Across the building and beyond, learning



Throughout the day, the voice of keynote speaker Lisa Baylis resonated strongly, reminding everyone of the importance of self-compassion and courageous compassion—messages that stayed with participants long after the session ended.

There were small challenges, as there always are in a day with so many moving parts. A technical hiccup at FSJSS briefly disrupted access to CPI de-escalation strategies before one session began. But like all strong teams, the group adapted, supported one another, and carried on with the day's purpose intact.



What stood out most, though, was not any single session—it was the spirit of the day.

Conversations in hallways, shared laughter, new connections made, and familiar ones strengthened. The satisfaction survey comments, already beginning to roll in, reflected this clearly: appreciation, gratitude, and a recognition that these days matter.

Behind it all was a dedicated team—the Pro D Committee, District staff, and community partners—working together to ensure that professional development was both meaningful and accessible. Their efforts showed in every detail, from thoughtful session design to the seamless coordination across departments.

As the day drew to a close, participants left not only with new knowledge, but with a renewed sense of connection to one another and to the work they do every day.

It had been, in every sense, a day of learning.

Compassionate Systems Learning

There was strong engagement in the recent hybrid Compassionate Systems Leadership Pro-D Day, with 20 participants joining both in person and via Teams. The session brought together one principal, one vice-principal, senior team representation, and a diverse group of 17 teachers from across the district, including the Southside, Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, Fort St. James, and eBus communities. Both elementary and secondary perspectives were represented, enriching the dialogue and shared learning.

Participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to reflect on systems thinking and their role within it. One thoughtful reflection shared at the close of the session captured this well:

"I am going to share my sentence: I have appreciated the reminder that systems are human. I will take this reminder to heart, and my work will be to remember that I do not have an us vs them relationship with the system but am a part of it and its functions. Many thanks."

This reflection highlights the importance of collaboration, empathy, and shared responsibility in our ongoing work to support students and one another.

Outdoor Professional Learning at Clear Creek

On Friday, the Outdoor Education Collaboration Group at Nechako Valley Secondary School hosted a gathering at Clear Creek, welcoming teachers from across the district for an orientation to this rich outdoor learning space. Throughout the day, participants explored the site and engaged in demonstrations of practical, place-based learning activities that can be adapted for a wide range of subjects and grade levels.



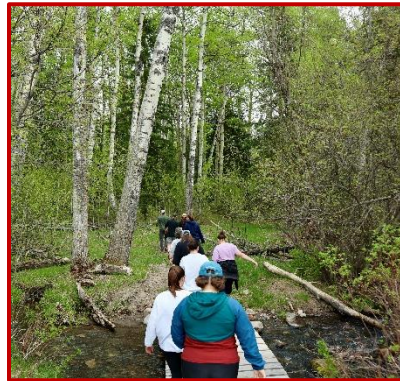


The session provided a meaningful opportunity for both presenters and attendees to learn alongside one another, sharing ideas and deepening their understanding of how outdoor environments can enhance student engagement and learning. Photos from the day capture the spirit of collaboration and enthusiasm that defined the experience.

There is a shared sense of excitement about the continued use and development of Clear Creek, as well as other outdoor learning spaces across the district, in support of authentic, connected learning opportunities for students.

Submitted by:

Emily Brooks, Lorn Kennedy, Sophie Hadley, Dane Philipenko, Vaughn Mueller, Will Kalin, Casey Litton, Joel Mueller, Monica Young, David Peterson, Marilou Nightingale



Francois Lake Elementary School Candyland



Under the skillful guidance of Mrs. Winifred Comeau, an experienced teacher on call, the primary class at Francois Lake Elementary has embarked on a truly creative journey in their Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies class. Their project began with the design of a cardboard town, which they named "Candyland." Fueled by excitement and imagination, the town quickly expanded beyond the limits of the original table, spilling over onto the window ledge and earning a new name—"Window Ledge Town."

Learners have embraced the opportunity to explore planning and construction, with some finishing their pieces while others continue to add intricate details that may take weeks to complete. Throughout this process, they have demonstrated remarkable teamwork, making decisions

together on everything from the town's name and necessary services to rules and even the layout of the main road. Their collaborative spirit, sense of inquiry, and creative drive have led to the development of a vibrant, detailed community—showcasing both their skills and their passion for learning.

This project highlights how our students are learning to be thoughtful planners and creative thinkers and perfectly exemplifies our commitment to



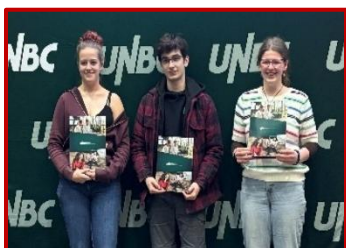
engaging our workforce and nurturing a school culture that inspires passion-based teaching, learning, and leading.

Submitted by,
Wendy Kelemen, Principal



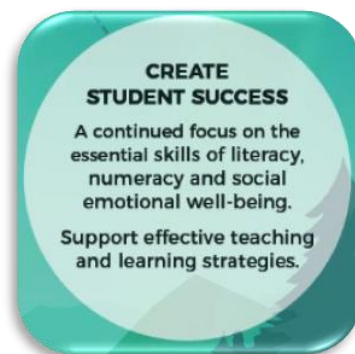
Strategic Plan Updates: GOAL 3: Create Student Success

UNBC Achievers and Scholars Celebrated



NVSS: Nicole Wiebe,
Nikoloz Poladashvili,
Olive Roberge

In April I had the opportunity to see our UNBC Achievers and Scholars receive their certificates and spend the day at UNBC having tours and participating in activities including university lectures. I hear the statistics lecture was a real hit! I missed the photos in last month's report, so am including them this month. A huge congratulations to all of our students who were recognized by UNBC and received scholarship money in the form of tuition credits.



FLESS: Bowen Webb, Cohen Barrett, Maddie Hedstrom, Laiken Hendriksen, Austen Wakefield



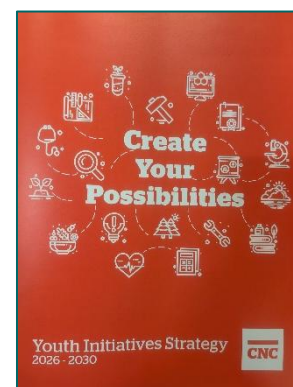
LDSS: Zane Wipfli, Ava Miller, Agrim Arora, Caiomi Benoit, Sapphira Cuerrier, Hadasa Finstad, Aliana Petersen



FSJSS
Alpha the Timberwolf (lol!),
Wyatt Olesiuk, Jaxon Lam,
Brandon Voltz

CNC Unveils Youth Engagement Strategy

On April 28, the College of New Caledonia announced its new 2026–2030 Youth Initiatives Strategy, marking an important milestone in strengthening supports and opportunities for young people across the region. Students from School District 91 were invited to participate in the day's events, with 24 students from Fraser Lake Elementary School travelling to Prince George to





represent the district and engage in a series of hands-on learning activities at the College along with our Careers Coordinator, Mr. Carpenter. I was pleased to attend the announcement and assembly, where the strong partnership between CNC and School District 91 was acknowledged. It was meaningful to see our district's contributions recognized, particularly the input provided throughout the development of the strategy. SD91 actively engaged with CNC during the creation of the

Youth Initiatives Strategy, building on a strong and well-established relationship. This collaboration positions both organizations to expand opportunities for students, with a shared commitment to providing more integrated and meaningful learning experiences for learners across the district.



Project Chef 2026



Students from NVSS, FSJSS, LDSS, and FLESS came together for a day of hands-on and collaborative culinary creation and exploration. Each team, prior to the event, working with a set budget developed a three-course meal to prepare, cook, and present. Teacher leads provided an extra pair of hands and on the sport culinary advice as the teams strived to prepare their respective meals within a 3-hour window. Students were also able to lean on the expert advice provided by Chef Preston Kittle-Jago from the Village of



Fraser Lake who was able to join and interact with the respective cooking teams. Finally, once the meals were prepared/presented and provided constructive feedback, each team was able to consume the fruits of their hard work and sample portions from the other teams.



Submitted by:

Mr. Darren
Carpenter,
Career
Coordinator



Grassy Plains Elementary School Cardboard Arcade



Our recent Cardboard Arcade Challenge was a huge success, bringing excitement, creativity, and community spirit into our gymnasium. Inspired by *Caine's Arcade*, students worked with partners to design and build interactive arcade games using recycled cardboard and other materials.



Our Day of Play welcomed families and friends into the school to experience the students' creativity and hard work firsthand. This hands-on, school-wide learning opportunity supported ADST outcomes in a meaningful cross-curricular way while helping students strengthen their communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and design skills.

The project was a highly engaging learning experience for all students and showcased the incredible creativity, teamwork, and enthusiasm throughout our school community.

Submitted By: Ginger Moyah, Principal



Regional Robotics Competition

The Regional Zone 01 Robotics Competition was recently hosted at Evelyn Dickson Elementary School (EDES), bringing together teams from across the district for a day of engaging, hands-on STEM learning. Participating schools included David Hoy Elementary, W.L. McLeod Elementary, Evelyn Dickson Elementary School (EDES), Nechako Valley Secondary School (Grade 7/8 wing), Fraser Lake Elementary Secondary School, Mouse Mountain Elementary, Grassy Plains Elementary Secondary School, and Francois Lake Elementary.





Through the leadership of Career and Trades Programs, in partnership with Z1R, the district has seen significant growth in robotics opportunities, expanding from two to eight school-based clubs over the past three years. In the months leading up to the competition, student teams developed their problem-solving and coding skills as they prepared their robots to complete a series of complex challenges. The event showcased the excitement of STEM learning in action, with students working collaboratively, thinking critically, and demonstrating perseverance in a dynamic and interactive environment.



Madagascar at McLeod

W.L. McLeod Elementary School's recent production of *Madagascar: A Musical Adventure Jr.* was a tremendous success, showcasing the enthusiasm, creativity, and dedication of students and staff. Students fully embraced the opportunity to bring this lively production to the stage, and their excitement and pride in performing were evident throughout.

The production provided meaningful opportunities for students to develop confidence, collaboration, and performance skills, while celebrating the joy of the arts within the school community. Photos from the day highlight students in their vibrant costumes, capturing the anticipation and energy leading up to the performance.



Excellent Showing at Wrestling National Championships



School District 91 athletes demonstrated outstanding achievement at the national level, with strong results at the National Championships held in Grande Prairie from April 23-26. Hunter Sprake (pictured at left) of Lakes District Secondary School earned a silver medal in the U17 division, highlighting an exceptional performance.

Nechako Valley Secondary School was also well represented, with six wrestlers competing and achieving impressive results. Jon Ruiter, the district's lone Grade 12 competitor, delivered a strong performance in the U19 65kg division and was eliminated on the second day after competing against the eventual silver and bronze medalists. Elaina Ruiter and Alysson Good placed 5th and 4th respectively in their U15 divisions, while Linden Alden achieved a 5th place finish in the U17 60kg category.

Kaleigh Jackson earned a bronze medal in the U17 69kg

division, and Vera Himmelright had an remarkable competition, earning both a bronze and a silver medal across the Freestyle and Greco-Roman events in the U17 64kg division.



These results reflect the dedication, skill, and perseverance of our student-athletes and coaches, and represent a strong showing for Nechako Lakes on the national stage.

Submitted by:
Travis Himmelright, Coach

Strategic Plan Updates: GOAL 4: Enhance Connections

Decker Lake Elementary School at Foundry

Mrs. Benoit took her Grade 6/7 class to the Foundry to learn about programs and services available to youth in Burns Lake and surrounding communities. DLES Huskies enjoyed meeting staff members and participating in activities.



ENHANCE CONNECTIONS
Create opportunities and assist schools to engage in valuable learning activities with community partners.

and what you fuel it with will affect you in the long run,” and “I’d tell my friends about how drugs, emotions, and sugar affect the brain.” These insights highlight the depth of learning and the lasting influence of the experience on students’ thinking and decision-making.

School District 91 supported the initiative by engaging schools across the region and coordinating transportation to ensure broad student participation. The experience not only deepened student learning but also reinforced the importance of community partnership, cultural connection, and shared responsibility in supporting student well-being.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Nadleh and Stellat’en communities for their leadership, generosity, and hospitality, and to all partners who contributed to making this impactful experience possible.



Grade 5/6 students from Sinkut View experience the Brain Dome

Enhancing Connections at Francois Lake Elementary School



I wanted to share some exciting news regarding our efforts to enhance connections and create meaningful opportunities for our learners. The intermediate students at Francois

Lake Elementary have contributed their artwork to be displayed at the 2nd Annual Spring Artisan Market, taking place on May 9th in Burns Lake.

This wonderful community event

will be open to all families, providing a space for

everyone to admire the creativity and dedication shown by our students.

The students truly went above and beyond, crafting beautiful masterpieces that reflect

both their artistic talents and their strong sense of community. Their teacher, Mrs Wilejto, played an instrumental role in fostering this creativity, guiding the class through an outdoor escapade where they



explored and incorporated natural materials into their art panels. We are incredibly proud of the intermediate Francois Lake Falcons for channeling their artistic skills in such a collaborative and meaningful way. Projects like this not only strengthen our curriculum but also highlight the value of

service learning and community engagement. A note of gratitude to Mrs. Cherise Wilejto for incorporating this project into her teaching plans.

Submitted By: Wendy Kelemen, Principal



Connecting Food in North



After about 18 months of planning, the Connecting Food in the North networking event (CFIN) took place on April 28th in Smithers at the Hudson Bay Lodge on the unceded territory of the Gidimt'en clan. The event brought together about 70 people from throughout the Highway 16 region:

- 4 distribution pathways and partners
- 8 First Nations schools/fnha
- 19 regional food producers/processors
- 15 school district representatives from across Highway 16
- 7 health authority representatives from Northern Health and First Nations Health
- 11 non-profit reps
- 2 government reps from Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- 1 agricultural consultant

The CFIN came out of funding

from the Ideas Lab, hosted by the Public Health Association of British Columbia with funding from the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. School District 52 and 91 put in the proposal for the funding. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, through FeedBC contributed additional funds.

The funds made it possible to work with the host venue to design a menu which would use regional food. This was highly



appreciated, with the food receiving high praise from attendees. Additionally, goodie bags were handed out with samples of food items from regional producers:

- Wildflower honey from Bulkley Valley Hive and Honey, Smithers
- Beef jerky from Copper T Ranch, Fraser Lake
- Freeze-dried oyster mushroom soup from Smithereens Mushroom, Smithers
- Freeze-dried haskaps from Haven Ridge Farm, Vanderhoof
- Granola from Riverside Kitchen Co, Smithers
- Sunflower microgreens from Skeena Greens, Terrace



The conversations provided context and understanding for all. It became understood that large distributors are not interested in small, regional producers. This is frustrating for the regional producers who would like to move their product and are trying to find avenues. There is interest by all to look at regional resources and to collaborate. Themes of the day are highlighted by the end-of-day prompt to use one word to describe the day:

What is one word that would best describe the day?



Attendees voiced appreciation for the financial support to be able to participate. Much of the grant was for travel bursaries to support attendance of persons from across the Highway 16 corridor. Food producers and processors are busy, and to attend, means taking time away from the farm/ranch. The support to do so is appreciated.

Next steps include forming a working group to continue the work of the procurement grant, which is an extension of this event. Majority of participants are interested in an ongoing community of practice and opportunities to further connect in person. Submitted by: Robyn Turner-Klopper, Food Program Manager



Employee Recognition

We extend our sincere appreciation to the many staff, community members, and parents across Nechako Lakes School District (SD91) who generously volunteer their time in support of students and schools. Whether through coaching sports teams, leading clubs, or contributing to youth service organizations, their commitment reflects a deep dedication to student well-being and connection beyond the classroom. This spirit of volunteerism strengthens relationships between schools and communities, enriches student experiences, and highlights the collective care and commitment that support young people in meaningful and lasting ways.

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