



## Merritt Central Elementary School



### Kindergarten Shows What they know about Responsibility

This month, kindergarten students focused on developing responsibility in meaningful and engaging ways. They proudly demonstrated responsibility at home by bringing their animals for show and tell, teaching us how to care for horses, goats, and even participating in puppy training. Students also showed responsibility at school by working together to sweep up the winter gravel from our playground, helping make our outdoor spaces safe and welcoming. These learning experiences are thoughtfully planned and facilitated by our kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Ferris, who excels at creating engaging, hands-on opportunities for students to learn, practice, and showcase their learning whether out in the community and on the land, or by bringing rich, real-world experiences directly into the classroom.



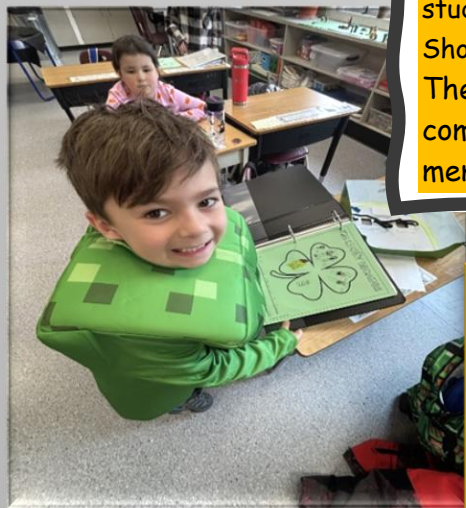
# Saying Goodbye to Bus Driver Lockhart



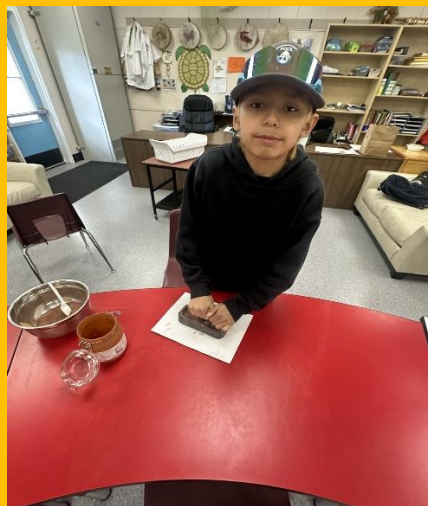
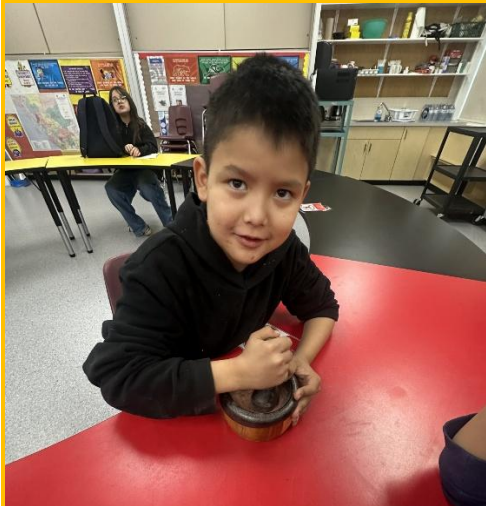
Ms. Martha organized a meaningful recognition event to honour Mr. Lockhart for his many years of dedicated service to our school community. Mr. Lockhart served for many years as both a custodian and a school bus driver, supporting regular routes as well as field trips and special events. Although he has not been our custodian in recent years, he remained a familiar, trusted, and caring presence for the many students who rode his bus. The ceremony was guided by local Indigenous cultural customs from the Nt̓eʔkepmxc̓ín and ns̓yilxc̓ən Nations and included a circle dance, reflecting the strong sense of respect, community, and gratitude held for Mr. Lockhart. The event honoured his pride in his work, kindness, and lasting impact on students and staff.

# Leadership & Spirit Week

Thanks to Mr. Gagliano, Mrs. Tolmie, and our Leadership students, the final week before Spring Break was filled with school spirit, creativity, and fun. The week kicked off with Green Day, a spirited salute to St. Patrick's Day, which fell during the break. Students and staff then enjoyed Switch Day, with students dressing as teachers and teachers as students, followed by Character/Meme Day and Show Off Your Culture/Formal Dress Day. These theme days brought our school community together and created many silly memorable moments.



## Connecting School and Community



Students worked alongside Ms. Martha to crush tulemen, learning firsthand about caring for their ancestors and respecting traditional practices. Through this hands-on experience, students deepened their understanding of cultural responsibility while contributing to the construction process of the new Upper Nicola Community Centre, set to open in September 2026. This meaningful work connected students to land, history, and community through learning by doing.

## *Arts and ADST Exploration in Mr. Gagliano's Class*



# Handball



Merritt Central proudly celebrated becoming Handball Champions following a season focused on learning, growth, and sportsmanship. As handball serves as an introductory sport for our younger intermediate students, the season provided many opportunities for skill development and important learning experiences. Early challenges led to meaningful conversations and growth, and over time the team demonstrated remarkable improvement not only as athletes, but as inclusive, respectful teammates. Under the guidance of Ms. Martha and Mr. Shea, the teams rose to the occasion and secured victory in the final tournament. In keeping with school tradition, staff celebrated the teams' success with a playful staff-versus-students' game at the conclusion of the season. Thank you to the coaches for their dedication of time and energy, and to the families and community members who came out to cheer on and support our Grade 4/5 students.

# Strong Start



Mrs. Gage consistently makes learning engaging and fun in Strong Start by creating a rich, welcoming environment for children and caregivers. Through thoughtfully selected exploratory resources, she supports age-appropriate development while nurturing curiosity, creativity, and imagination. Her programming includes opportunities that promote both physical and mental well-being, offering meaningful ways for children to learn through play while also providing caregivers with resources and learning to support their children's growth. Mrs. Gage's dedication helps make Strong Start a vibrant and supportive space for families in our school community.

