



Canadian Rockies Public Schools' Board Meeting Digest January 21, 2025

Student Leaders Drive Wellness Initiatives Across CRPS Schools

Canadian Rockies Public Schools (CRPS) is making wellness a collective priority, with student leaders at the forefront of meaningful change. On Jan. 21, 2025, Director of Learning Services **Mike Shoemaker** and Learning Services Coordinator **Fiona Watkins** presented to the board, sharing their insights into the first-ever CRPS Student Wellness Symposium, where student representatives from across the division gathered at the Rocky Mountain Resort to explore the question: "What is wellness, and how does it connect to inspiring hearts and minds?" Working alongside school wellness leads and Ever Active Schools facilitators, students reviewed school wellness data, identifying key areas for action. While findings revealed strong feelings of safety and belonging, they also highlighted concerning levels of anxiety and depression, particularly among female students. In response, school teams developed targeted initiatives, from mental health sticker systems to house-based wellness challenges aimed at boosting school spirit. The Healthy Schools

Certification process continues to guide these efforts, ensuring that CRPS fosters an environment where every student feels supported. Follow along at crps.ca as student leaders turn ideas into action! ■

CRPS Moves Forward with Joint Election Agreements

CRPS is set to continue its collaborative approach to elections, with the Board of Trustees approving joint election agreements with the Town of Canmore, the Town of Banff, and the MD of Bighorn. These agreements, aligned with section 3 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*, streamline election administration by delegating operational responsibilities to municipal governments while maintaining CRPS' oversight of key electoral functions. By coordinating efforts with local municipalities, CRPS ensures a more efficient process, reducing costs and administrative workload while enhancing accessibility for voters. As election day approaches on Oct. 20, 2025, these agreements pave the way for a seamless voting experience, reinforcing CRPS' dedication to responsible governance and community collaboration. ■

CRPS' Board of Trustees (left to right): Dale Craig, Arlene Rheaume, Luke Sunderland, Carol Picard, Brian Callaghan

Foundation to Oversee Development Funds

CRPS is moving forward with the creation of the Canadian Rockies Public Schools Foundation, a non-profit corporation designed to oversee the financial management of funds generated through the Lawrence Grassi residential development project. Under this structure, the foundation will lease land to a developer, with rental income flowing into the foundation to support its charitable purpose. Set up as an arm's-length entity from CRPS, the foundation will be incorporated under the Canada Non-Profit Corporations Act and seek charitable registration with the Canada Revenue Agency. This framework ensures long-term fiscal stewardship, enabling these funds to be managed responsibly while continuing to enhance public education across the Bow Valley. ■



CRPS Tidbits

Important Calendar Date:

The Board of Trustees' next regular meeting is set for Feb. 26, 2025, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Central Board Office in Canmore.

Honouring the Legacy of Philomene Stevens



CRPS mourns the loss of Stoney Nakoda Knowledge Keeper **Philomene Stevens** (May 7, 1953 – December 31, 2024), whose wisdom and generosity shaped countless students and staff. With quiet strength and deep cultural knowledge, Philomene fostered an enduring connection to Stoney Nakoda traditions, encouraging young people to embrace their heritage with confidence. Her presence in CRPS schools was more than educational - it was transformative. She had a gift for making every student feel seen, understood, and empowered. While her passing leaves an undeniable void, her teachings will continue to guide the division for generations to come. In the coming weeks, CRPS schools will share reflections on her profound impact through a special tribute series, Celebrating Philomene, on the division's website. Her spirit, woven into the fabric of learning, will forever remain in the hearts of those she inspired. Wachiyopabi, Philomene.

The First Step Toward a Bright Future

Families across the Bow Valley are invited to embark on an exciting new chapter as CRPS hosts its Kindergarten Open Houses. These welcoming events offer parents and caregivers a chance to meet dedicated educators, explore engaging classrooms, and discover the enriching programs designed to nurture young learners. From hands-on discovery to early literacy foundations, CRPS provides an inspiring start for every child. Open houses kick off at Elizabeth Rummel School on Feb. 6, followed by Banff Elementary and Alpenglow School on Feb. 27, and wrap up at Exshaw School on June 18, where families can explore programming from kindergarten to Grade 8. Each event is an opportunity to connect, ask questions, and envision the first steps of an incredible learning journey. To learn more, visit [CRPS' website](#). Let the adventure begin!

Student Voices Shape CRPS' Future

CRPS kicked off its 2025 Student Diaries initiative, Jan. 17, at Elizabeth Rummel School and Banff Elementary School. Running through to Feb. 5, this series of one-hour workshops, asks students from Gr. 2 to 12 to reflect on their learning environments using diary prompts such as how schools

can ensure everyone feels ready to learn, inspired to succeed, and prepared for the future. Their insights will continue to inform the development of CRPS' 2025-2029 Four-Year Education Plan, reinforcing the division's commitment to student-centred planning. By capturing the authentic voices of learners, CRPS continues to demonstrate its commitment to student-centred decision-making, ensuring its education plans reflect what matters most to those at the heart of education - students.

Career Exploration Opens Doors for Grade 9s

From Jan. 20 to 24, Gr. 9 students at Banff Community High School and Canmore Collegiate High School traded desks for workplaces as part of CRPS' Career Exploration Program. Partnering with over 50 Bow Valley employers, the initiative placed 88 students into hands-on job shadowing experiences tailored to their interests. From healthcare to hospitality, engineering to environmental conservation, students stepped into real-world roles, gaining insight into career paths and workplace expectations. Employers, including Alberta Forestry and Parks, Banff Mineral Springs Hospital, Lake Louise Ski Resort, and McElhanney Engineering, designed hands-on experiences that immersed students in meaningful work. With parents reinforcing learning at home, the program continues to showcase the power of collaboration, bridging the gap between education and career aspirations in tangible, lasting ways.

"Inspiring Hearts and Minds" - CRPS' Board of Trustees

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