



Keynote, Indigenous Education

PR-0389 Representation Matters Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 10:00 am

Participants: 88 / 1000

Keynote Description:

Representation is an element of reconciliation – the path Indigenous and non-Indigenous are walking towards to heal a broken relationship caused by the impacts of colonialism.

Representation in young people's literature, art, and popular culture is about how we see ourselves and how we see each other. It is about how, in the ways we have been conditioned to perceive, the impacts can be positive or negative, with profound impacts in either outcome. But representation does not stop at how people of colour and marginalized groups are depicted and the ramifications of those depictions; it extends to other areas, including the life-saving normalization of mental health rather than mental illness for youth and the presence of diverse voices in real life that shatters stereotypes and writes a new story of empowerment, hope, healing, and stronger communities.

Keynote Biography:

Acclaimed Author & Graphic Novelist | Advocate for Indigenous Stories & Mental Health

David Robertson stands as one of Canada's most influential voices in literature and public discourse. A member of Norway House Cree Nation, he is a celebrated author, graphic novelist, and podcaster. His work offers profound insights into critical topics like Indigenous themes, mental health, and freedom of expression. Throughout his career, his extensive body of work has earned him widespread acclaim. This includes two Governor General's Literary Awards and numerous other honours. On the world stage, he is Canada's nominee for the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award. Furthermore, his significant contributions to the arts have earned him honorary doctorates from both the University of Manitoba and the University of Lethbridge.

At the heart of David Robertson's work lies a deep commitment to sharing Indigenous stories and perspectives. His celebrated novels, such as *The Theory of Crows*, explore profound human themes. Similarly, his powerful memoir *Black Water* delves into family, legacy, and cultural reconnection. He also created the award-winning podcast *Kiwew* to further explore these narratives. In every medium, he tackles essential conversations with honesty and grace. Consequently, his work reflects the resilience and love that anchor Indigenous communities.

As a keynote speaker, David Robertson translates these powerful narratives into unforgettable live experiences. He shares deeply personal insights drawn from his own life to connect authentically with his audience. With this platform, he educates and inspires people on crucial topics like Indigenous rights and mental health awareness. His presentations are not merely informative; he designs them to spark genuine dialogue and encourage empathy among colleagues.

Ultimately, this approach empowers teams, leaving them with a renewed sense of connection and shared purpose.

Beyond his own creative work, David Robertson actively builds a legacy for future generations. He serves as the editorial director for Swift Water Books, the first Indigenous-led imprint at a major Canadian publishing house. This leadership role cements his status as a vital and forward-thinking force for change in the arts

PR-0390 Breakout Session : Writing as Social Activism Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 2 / 100

Workshop Description:

The road to reconciliation is paved with Story. The phrase "Truth & Reconciliation" means the two are inextricably linked. While the definition and understanding of what reconciliation means and what it entails are up for discussion — at its most basic, albeit still complex form, it is the act of building community — truth means what really happened, and what is still happening, on Turtle Island. For too long, our stories, as Indigenous peoples, have been told by others.

Only recently, within the last fifteen years, we have been able to reclaim our truth and share it with others through Story. This storytelling resurgence has created a revolutionary change that has ripped apart the fabric of what we thought this country was, and has stitched together a new understanding of Canada. Every form of writing — from blog posts to novels — is distinct, but shares the goal of knowledge transfer. Story ought, as well, to motivate the reader to utilize the knowledge they have been gifted with to take meaningful action so that we can do better than has been done in the past. This is the work of social change: understanding what has been so we can clearly understand what can be.

Professional Development, Art

PR-0348 Enhancing Indigenous Content Through Micro Inclusions. Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

Augmenting classroom practice with small, subtle Indigenous inclusions to extend and normalize Indigenous culture and content. This will be a cooperative workshop sharing what we are already doing in our classrooms and then expanding on what is possible. All grades and subject areas welcome and encouraged!

Presenter Abstract:

Jim has been presenting educational workshops for 3 decades at the local, provincial, and national level. Jim created the first Indigenous Visual Art course in the province over 20 years ago. This course has now been designated as a provincial Indigenous Graduation Credit. In 2023, Jim was awarded the Premier's Award in Teaching Excellence in Indigenous Education.

Professional Development, Counsellors

PR-0396 COESCA - Elementary Counselor LSA Meeting Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm



Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

A meeting of Elementary Counsellors from participating districts, allowing for collegial discussions of the current state of their role.

Professional Development, Drama

PR-0395 Drama LSA Meeting and Workshop

Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

Participants: 1 / 50

Workshop Description:

Membership to ABCDE: Learn about the benefits and resources available through the Association of BC Drama Educators, including workshops, festivals, and support for Drama programs. Show Discussions: Share and discover new play ideas, musicals, and show formats that have worked well in our schools. Let's discuss how to adapt these for different grade levels and settings. Lesson Plan Sharing: Bring your best Drama lesson plans and activities! We'll exchange tried-and-true teaching strategies that engage students of all grades, from improv exercises to performance projects. Collaborative Planning: We'll have dedicated time to collaborate and share expertise, assessment strategies, and creative projects. Whether you're looking for feedback or inspiration, this will be a great chance to learn from each other.

Presenter Abstract:

Lee Schwartz is the Drama/Theatre Production Teacher at GESS.

Professional Development, Early Learning

PR-0368 Play, Wonder, Learn!

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

This Pro-D session brings together Kindergarten and early primary teachers to celebrate, reflect on, and dive into all things little...the joys, complexities, and big ideas that shape our work with young learners. Throughout the session, we'll explore several BIG topics in early learning, including play-based pedagogy, developmental foundations, early literacy and numeracy, meaningful assessment, and creating rich, responsive environments. A few focused mini-presentations will highlight practical strategies and inspiring examples from classrooms across the region. Participants are invited to bring one amazing share...a practice, resource, provocation, routine, or story that has made a real difference in their classroom. These shared sparks will help guide collaborative conversation, peer learning, and professional inspiration. Most importantly, this session aims to build a strong, connected community of early learning educators. Together, we will create a space where ideas flow, questions are welcomed, challenges are supported, and our collective passion for early learners continues to grow. Come ready to learn, laugh, share, and leave feeling inspired by the power of early years education.

Presenter Abstract:

Tracy is an experienced early learning educator with a deep passion for Kindergarten and the early primary years. With over 15 years of Kindergarten classroom experience and a strong commitment to play-based, inclusive, and developmentally responsive practice, she brings a grounded and joyful perspective to teaching and learning in the early years. Tracy has supported educators across districts through mentorship, collaborative planning, Queens Diploma Programs, and professional learning focused on the Early Learning Framework, UDL, Play Today, and meaningful assessment. She is dedicated to building strong communities of practice where teachers feel connected, inspired, and confident in their work with young learners. Tracy's sessions blend practical strategies, current research, and a genuine love for the little learners who make this work so important.

PR-0373 Learning in the Primary Years

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

This workshop aims to get participants into the new Ministry document called Learning in the Primary Years. Themes are SEL, play-based learning, outdoor learning, assessment, and more.

Presenter Abstract:

I am the president of the BCPTA and the local president in SD51. I am a BCTF-trained facilitator. I am a long-time primary teacher who has been on Ministry teams to design new curriculum and revise foundational documents in the early years.

PR-0380 Analyzing Play in the Early Years

Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

Why play? Because play is young children's work and as such, is a critical element of the primary classroom. In this hands-on workshop, primary teachers will explore the possibilities for play, both inside and outside the classroom. The workshop explores how learning through play can help to develop self-regulation and executive functioning skills. The workshop facilitators are experienced Kindergarten and primary teachers with years of experience teaching the Primary years from a play-based perspective.

Professional Development, ELL



Central Okanagan Teachers' Association

PR-0329	Supporting Newcomers (ELL) 8-12	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 6 / 35

Workshop Description:

Whether you teach English learners daily or have just a few multilingual students in your class, this workshop is designed to share ways to welcome and support newcomers. We will briefly cover supports that boost the academic vocabulary of Language Learners, ways to make content comprehensible in different subject areas, and share videos and strategies endorsed by our colleagues and newcomer students.

Presenter Abstract:

Janis & Tamara are two language teachers excited to share from Langley, BC. Janis is the District ELL Coordinator and an executive of BCTESOL who works with students from K-11. She has a passion for co-planning and creating assessments. Tamara is the ELL Department Head and teaches at Aldergrove Secondary. She admires the resiliency of her students and is constantly field testing methods to boost their literacy skills.

PR-0333	Supporting Newcomers (ELL) in K-7	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

How do we welcome and support newcomer students in the classroom? We will share small adaptations that can help these students transition smoothly into your classroom while growing their language. This will include September start-up and mid-year arrival strategies.

Presenter Abstract:

Janis Sawatzky is the Langley School District ELL Coordinator with Instructional Services, bringing over a decade of experience teaching K-11 across various roles. She is a certified trainer in the SIOP model and the "What's Different About Teaching Reading to ELLs" program from the Centre for Applied Linguistics. Becky Wilson is the District ELL Coordinator for SD22 and has experience in both elementary and secondary classrooms. She holds a Master's degree in Elementary Education, is a certified SIOP trainer, and has served on the BCTESOL Executive. She opened the district's Welcome Centre, helped bring the Settlement Workers in Schools program to the community, and supports ELL and classroom teachers working with newcomer students.

Professional Development, French Immersion

PR-0335	Responsive Writing Instruction in French Immersion Through Mentor...	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

This session is designed for M-9e French Immersion teachers who want to explore their responsive writing instruction. Together, we will examine the critical role of oral language in supporting language learners and its connection to mentor texts. The use of mentor texts invites choice, deepens engagement, and helps students see themselves as capable, purposeful writers. We will discuss how and when to intentionally use mentor texts to model craft writing techniques, genre, process, language structures, and purpose. The session will also unpack what it means to "read like a writer" in a French Immersion context, to develop as a writing teacher. While it is encouraged that participants attend the morning session, Responsive Writing Instruction Learning Alongside Matt Glover, it is not required.

Presenter Abstract:

Phoebe Cseresnyes is a French Immersion teacher and member of the Learning & Innovation team who is passionate about early literacy and supporting multilingual learners.

PR-0366	French Immersion Resources and Initiatives	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 8 / 35

Workshop Description:

We invite all French Immersion educators (K-12) to come explore the resources, French oral language games, and initiatives offered by the BC French Education Network to support the important work being done in the classroom. Participants will learn about the various asynchronous learning options available to them and leave with many French oral language strategies and activities to implement in the classroom. In addition to providing ideas to develop French oral language skills for students, this session will provide opportunities for educators to continue on their own French oral language journey.

Presenter Abstract:

Colombe currently works alongside the student teachers in the French Pathways at UBC Okanagan. Her 40 year career as a French administrator, educator and councilor has allowed her to build a wealth of knowledge around French education. Joanne Brunel, being a French educator for over 35 years, has had a varied career. Her years spent in the classroom, as classroom support, as a member of the SD 23 Instructional Leadership Team, as a member of the SD 23 Early Learning Team as SD 23's French Coordinator and currently as one of BC's French Educator Network Facilitators has allowed her to gain insight into the various effective practices that are being offered to French language students across the province.



Professional Development, Home Economics

PR-0375	BC Food Safe Level 1	Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

FOODSAFE Level 1 is a food handling, sanitation, and work safety course. The course covers important food safety and worker safety information, including foodborne illness, receiving and storing food, preparing food, serving food, and cleaning and sanitizing. We will learn everything and complete the test all in one full-day session.

There is a \$30 fee, payable by the attendee, to cover material and examination costs.

Presenter Abstract:

I am a Foodsafe level 1 instructor and Foods and Science teacher at RSS. I am excited to help you learn about food safety in a fun and engaging manner.

Professional Development, Inclusion

PR-0377	Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Students and Staff	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

In this workshop participants will have the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the experiences of queer staff and students and their unique needs and challenges within the context of regressive political movements and ideologies organizing against SOGI education. We will touch on tangible steps to take to ensure queer folks in your schools feel safe, seen and supported.

Professional Development, Indigenous Education

PR-0334	Living Our Teachings: Métis Culture, Heritage, and Belonging	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 2 / 35

Workshop Description:

This workshop explores Métis culture through storytelling, artifacts, and traditions that highlight resilience, identity, and heritage. Participants will engage in circle discussions and reflect on family narratives while learning about the Métis sash, flag, and cultural practices. The session emphasizes the importance of cultural pride and its positive impact on mental wellness, especially for youth. This interactive experience fosters belonging, understanding, and practical ways to integrate Métis teachings into schools and communities.

Presenter Abstract:

Dave Lafontaine is the District Principal of Indigenous Education for School District 22 (Vernon, BC), where he has served for the past five years, leading initiatives that foster cultural understanding and support Indigenous students. A proud Métis leader, Dave is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation and cultural engagement in education. He also serves as Treasurer of the Kelowna Métis Association, actively promoting Métis heritage and community involvement. Dave's work emphasizes the importance of identity, resilience, and belonging, drawing on his own family stories and cultural traditions.

PR-0353	First Peoples Courses: A Circle Discussion	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

This breakout session provides a collaborative space for teachers to share successes and effective practices in teaching a First Peoples-oriented course. Participants will highlight strategies that center Indigenous voices and approaches that support student engagement and well-being. The session emphasizes learning through storytelling, place-based experiences, and community connections. Teachers will have the opportunity to discuss challenges they have navigated and how they adapted their practice with care and reflection. Through shared dialogue, participants can gather practical ideas to bring back to their classrooms. The session is grounded in respect, reciprocity, and a commitment to ongoing learning. By learning from one another, teachers will strengthen their confidence and capacity to teach First Peoples content in meaningful and authentic ways. Teachers enrolled will be asked to bring something to write with, a favourite lesson, and an open mind.

Presenter Abstract:

Allie is a teacher at Kelowna Secondary School with a passion for both teaching and learning through a First Peoples lens. It is through her teaching journey that she has understood the reciprocal relationships that are created in a classroom, as she has come to be a teacher who bases her pedagogy on fostering connections between students and their sense of place. As a teacher who understands the apprehension that can come with teaching through a First Peoples lens, Allie would like to offer a space for all teachers to come together and share the successes, the stretches and the joys that come with teaching a First Peoples course.

Professional Development, Inquiry



PR-0337	From Curiosity to Impact: Empowering Student-Led Inquiry Through ...	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm	Participants: 0 / 35
Workshop Description:			
Ready to move beyond research projects? This session explores how to guide students from the provocation cycle and topic selection to meaningful action, where their inquiries address real problems and create authentic impact based on what matters to them. Discover practical strategies for empowering students to forge their own community connections with experts and stakeholders. This creates conditions for student agency, efficacy, and essential BC curricular competencies to grow through purpose-based learning and assessment. Please bring an existing inquiry or an inquiry idea you are considering, as the session includes dedicated time for collaboration and development.			
Presenter Abstract:			
Janine and Kristi have been learning and dabbling in inquiry for the past 10 years, alongside teachers across the district.			

Professional Development, Languages

PR-0360	French Language Educator	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm	Participants: 2 / 35
Workshop Description:			
Gather with your French colleagues in person; do Pro.D online. Come to check out the asynchronous learning library of videos available for free from the Southern Interior and Northern regions of BC and ACPI. Choose from a list of videos created by professionals from across the country! www.bcsifrenched.ca Share out a couple of takeaways with our group. Bring your laptop and headset.			
Presenter Abstract:			
Dena is a French Immersion teacher, as well as plays a role in ELL Learning Assistance and Classroom support.			

PR-0365	Core French Resources and Initiatives	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm	Participants: 2 / 35
Workshop Description:			
We invite all Core French Educators to come explore the resources, French oral language games, and initiatives offered by the BC French Education Network to support the important work being done in the classroom. Participants will learn about the various asynchronous learning options available to them and leave with many French oral language strategies and activities to implement in the classroom. In addition to providing ideas to develop French oral language skills for students, this session will provide opportunities for educators to continue on their own French oral language journey.			
Presenter Abstract:			
Colombe currently works alongside the student teachers in the French Pathways at UBC Okanagan. Her 40 year career as a French administrator, educator and councilor has allowed her to build a wealth of knowledge around French education. Joanne Brunel, being a French educator for over 35 years, has had a varied career. Her years spent in the classroom, as classroom support, as a member of the SD 23 Instructional Leadership Team, as a member of the SD 23 Early Learning Team as SD 23's French Coordinator and currently as one of BC's French Educator Network Facilitators has allowed her to gain insight into the various effective practices that are being offered to French language students across the province.			

PR-0370	Second Languages Sharing Session	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm	Participants: 4 / 35
Workshop Description:			
Join our group of Second Language teachers in a sharing session! We will be sharing ideas for games and activities that focus on using Comprehensible Input and TPRS methodologies. We will share some of our ideas that have been successful, and you will have the opportunity to share your own, which is highly encouraged!			
Presenter Abstract:			
Second Languages LSA Co-Presidents Bio Linnea Kelliher has been teaching Spanish at RSS for 15 years. She learned about the TPRS methodology when completing her PGP early on in her career, and her language classroom was forever changed! Bio Leigh Ferreira has been teaching French on and off for the past 15 years. Although she has taught at multiple schools, the majority of her career has been in Rutland. She currently teaches French and English at RSS. She was recently introduced to TPRS and CI methods and has implemented strategies and techniques that have made a significant impact and improvement in language acquisition, specifically orally, in her classroom.			

Professional Development, Literacy

PR-0327	Understanding the BC K–4 Early Learning Progressions	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm	Participants: 7 / 35
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Workshop Description:

The BC K–4 Early Learning Progressions are a newly released Ministry of Education resource that describes what proficient learning looks like across key foundational skills in the early years. In this session, educators will be introduced to the purpose and structure of the progressions and how they are intended to support classroom practice. We will walk through selected examples from the document, unpack what proficiency looks like, and discuss how the progressions can support instructional planning and professional conversations. Participants will also be guided toward free, open-source resources that align with the progressions and can be used immediately in K–4 classrooms.

Presenter Abstract:

Jordan is Academic Lead, Literacy Learning at Dyslexia Canada. With previous work as a teacher and instructional coach, she supports evidence-based literacy practice across English and French contexts. Jordan is the French Project Lead for ONlit.org and a passionate advocate for all children meeting their right to learn to read.

PR-0332 A Conversation with Matt Glover: Responsive Moves That Grow Write...

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 6 / 35

Workshop Description:

In this prerecorded Zoom session, centered around SD23 educators' questions, Matt Glover invites participants into a thoughtful conversation about what it means to teach writing in ways that truly honor student agency and engagement. He explores how responsive structures, such as conferencing, choice, and intentional planning, create the conditions for writers to do meaningful work. Throughout the session, he highlights practices that support all learners, including multilingual language learners, without overscaffolding or doing the work for students. Participants will examine how careful, responsive teaching moves help writers grow independence and confidence. The session will be structured around the video while stopping to make sense of the learning in our own contexts. This morning session is connected to the Responsive Writing Sessions in the afternoon, but it is not required to attend both.

Presenter Abstract:

Phoebe, Tess & Reanna are members of the instructional leadership team.

PR-0336 Responsive Writing Instruction: Mentor Texts, Agency, and Engagem

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

This session focuses on using mentor texts as flexible tools to support responsive teaching and student agency in writing. The use of mentor texts invites choice, deepens engagement, and helps students see themselves as capable, purposeful writers. In this session, we will discuss how and when to intentionally use mentor texts to model craft writing techniques, genre, process, and purpose. The session will unpack what it means to "read like a writer" to support your development as a writing teacher. While it is encouraged that participants attend the morning session 'Responsive Writing Instruction Learning Alongside Matt Glover', it is not required.

Target Audience, K-9 instructors

Presenter Abstract:

Nicole Crane is on the Learning and Innovation Team and works alongside educators who are curious about growing their practice. She enjoys infusing the arts into writing workshops through materials, mentor texts, and experiences. Reanna Lamb is part of the Learning and Innovation Team and the Indigenous Education department. She is passionate about empowering learners to believe in themselves and their identities as readers and writers.

PR-0338 Responsive Writing Instruction Through Conferencing

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

Writing conferences are one of the most powerful ways to move writers forward. They allow us to teach the writer, not just the writing. In this session, educators will explore practical ways to design and lead effective writing conferences as part of the writer's workshop model. While it will be helpful if participants attend the morning session, it is not required. Participants will have opportunities to watch modeled conferences, rehearse language, and plan conferences for their own students.

Target Audience : K-9 Instructors

Presenter Abstract:

Joy Richardson is a Grade 8 humanities teacher at Springvalley Middle School and Tess Perry is a member of the learning and innovation team.

PR-0341 K-3 Illustration Study

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 9 / 35

Workshop Description:

During this session, we will explore what an illustration unit of study might look like in a primary classroom during writing workshop and why illustrations matter in the development of young writers.

Presenter Abstract:

Nicole Crane is on the Learning and Innovation Team and works alongside educators who are curious about growing their practice. She enjoys infusing the arts into writing workshops through materials, mentor texts, and experiences.



Central Okanagan Teachers' Association

PR-0359 Writing Modern Monsters: Creatures, Mythology, and Folklore Works Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 15 / 35

Workshop Description:

From sparkly vampires to teenage werewolves and witches, modern monsters come in all shapes and sizes. This interactive workshop examines the origins of famous creature stories, exploring the things that go bump in the night, and how to look at old myths with a modern edge. Warning: Many monsters have been created in this workshop.

Presenter Abstract:

Andrew Buckley is a storyteller, educator, and keynote speaker with over 20 years of experience in creative writing and marketing. His humorous and satirical writing style persists despite polite requests to stop, as he creates engaging speculative fiction across traditional and self-publishing platforms. Known for his distinctive voice that seamlessly blends humour with compelling narratives, Andrew has established himself as a versatile creator across multiple platforms, including novels, comic books, screenplays, podcasts, and immersive storytelling experiences. He is the creator of *Deadly Dinner Parties*, an interactive mystery series designed to bring murder, intrigue, and laughs to your dining room table. His engaging presentation style and deep understanding of storytelling mechanics make him a sought-after speaker at schools, colleges, writing conferences, and comic conventions worldwide. At the time you're reading this, he's likely busy working on several new projects and attempting to bend time and space to allow for more hours in the day. Andrew is represented by Terrie Wolf of AKA Literary Management.

PR-0367 Readers Matter: Teaching Strategies that Support Reading Identity... Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 5 / 35

Room 137 at Kelowna Secondary will be available for individuals to view the presentation.

Workshop Description:

Students at all grade levels need strong foundational reading skills, but cognitive skills alone are not enough if we want students to choose to read. How students feel about themselves as readers and how they feel about reading greatly impacts their motivation, engagement, and achievement. We need to nurture the affective side of reading, inspiring students to develop positive reading identities. Hannah will share practical ways to: Understand and assess your students' reading identities, Respond to students who feel negatively about themselves as readers so they become both competent and confident, Respond to students with positive reading identities so they continue to grow, and Integrate cognitive and affective instruction to address both reading and the reader.

Presenter Abstract:

Hannah Schneewind has been a classroom teacher, a national and international literacy consultant, and a literacy advocate. Hannah is the co-author of *Trusting Readers: Powerful Practices for Independent Reading* (Heinemann, 2020) and of the upcoming *Readers Matters: Powerful Practices for Inspiring Confident Reading Identities* (Stenhouse, 2026).

PR-0372 Literacy for Middle School: A Top Down Approach Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm

Participants: 5 / 35

Workshop Description:

I began my career teaching high school before spending several years in middle school English, and that shift completely changed my perspective. In middle school, I constantly asked myself: What skills truly need to be strong before students enter high school, and what can we let go? Now that I'm back in the high school classroom and seeing reading and writing skills at an all-time low, that question feels more important than ever. In this workshop, we will look at middle school literacy through that lens and focus on the practices that genuinely matter. You will learn how to streamline your approach, build essential skills with confidence, and reduce stress for both you and your students. Join me as we rethink what effective middle school literacy can look like.

Presenter Abstract:

Sarah Irving is a Social Studies Teacher and Department Head with six years of experience teaching Grades 6–12 in English, Careers, and Social Studies. She has received the Maxwell A. Cameron Memorial Award and the Fitzpatrick Political Studies Excellent Award for her leadership and dedication. Passionate about efficient and effective teaching, Sarah brings a friendly, practical, and student-centered approach to supporting educators.

PR-0392 Readers Matter: Teaching Strategies that Support Reading Identity... Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

Participants: 10 / 60

This full-day session is available to all attendees in **Vernon at Kalamaka Secondary School**.
Lunch will be provided.

Workshop Description: Morning Session :Students at all grade levels need strong foundational reading skills, but cognitive skills alone are not enough if we want students to choose to read. How students feel about themselves as readers and how they feel about reading greatly impacts their motivation, engagement, and achievement. We need to nurture the affective side of reading, inspiring students to develop positive reading identities. Hannah will share practical ways to: Understand and assess your students' reading identities, Respond to students who feel negatively about themselves as readers so they become both competent and confident, Respond to students with positive reading identities so they continue to grow, and Integrate cognitive and affective instruction to address both reading and the reader **Presenter Abstract:**Hannah Schneewind has been a classroom teacher, a national and international literacy consultant, and a literacy advocate. Hannah is the co-author of *Trusting Readers: Powerful Practices for Independent Reading* (Heinemann, 2020) and of the upcoming *Readers Matters: Powerful Practices for Inspiring Confident Reading Identities* (Stenhouse, 2026). **Afternoon Session:** "Integrating Reading Identity into Literacy Instruction", lead by Allison Jmayoff and Deanna Michaud. Allison and Deanna are 'Early Learning Success Teachers' with the Vernon School



Central Okanagan Teachers' Association

District. They lead professional development sessions and have extensive experience working in Early Years classrooms. Currently, much of their work focuses on literacy and using formative assessment to inform responsive instruction, in collaboration with classroom teachers.

PR-0393 Readers Matter: Teaching Strategies that Support Reading Identity...

Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 12:00 am

Participants: 4 / 1000

This Session is for those viewing the session virtually.

Workshop Description:

Students at all grade levels need strong foundational reading skills, but cognitive skills alone are not enough if we want students to choose to read. How students feel about themselves as readers and how they feel about reading greatly impacts their motivation, engagement, and achievement. We need to nurture the affective side of reading, inspiring students to develop positive reading identities. Hannah will share practical ways to: Understand and assess your students' reading identities, Respond to students who feel negatively about themselves as readers so they become both competent and confident, Respond to students with positive reading identities so they continue to grow, and Integrate cognitive and affective instruction to address both reading and the reader.

Presenter Abstract:

Hannah Schneewind has been a classroom teacher, a national and international literacy consultant, and a literacy advocate. Hannah is the co-author of *Trusting Readers: Powerful Practices for Independent Reading* (Heinemann, 2020) and of the upcoming *Readers Matters: Powerful Practices for Inspiring Confident Reading Identities* (Stenhouse, 2026).

Professional Development, Mentorship

PR-0385 New Teacher Mentorship - A Focus on Assessment

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 4 / 100

Workshop Description:

This session is intended for Teachers in New Contracts

Please join us for a mentorship session focused on assessment, collaboration, and connection with experienced mentor teachers from across our district.

This will not be a "stand and deliver" session. Instead, it is designed as a carousel-style experience where you will rotate through small-group conversations with mentor teachers. Each mentor will bring their own assessment practices, tools, and resources to share, and you will have time to ask questions, explore materials, and engage in authentic professional dialogue.

Our mentor teachers represent a wide range of experience, from primary through secondary, and across a variety of subject areas. This diversity allows you to gather ideas that are practical, adaptable, and grounded in real classroom experience.

This session is an opportunity to:

Collaborate with experienced educators
Discuss assessment strategies that support student learning
Explore a variety of resources and approaches
Build professional connections and community
Whether you are looking for fresh ideas, reassurance, or practical tools to strengthen your assessment practices, this session is meant to support you through meaningful conversation and shared expertise.

We look forward to learning alongside you.

Presenter Abstract:

This mentorship session is facilitated by April Smith and Lynn White, members of the COTA Mentorship Committee alongside Evan Allardyce, COTA's Professional Development Chair. Together, they are working to build support and guide mentorship opportunities that strengthen professional learning, collaboration, and assessment practices across our district.

April and Lynn bring many years of classroom experience and a shared passion for thoughtful assessment, reflective practice, and meaningful mentorship. Their role in this session is to create the conditions for connection, conversation, and collaboration.

While they will be facilitating the flow of the session, the true expertise in the room comes from the mentor teachers. It is their lived classroom experience, practical strategies, and shared resources that will shape the learning. This session is designed to honour teacher voice, highlight professional wisdom, and celebrate the collective knowledge within our teaching community.

PR-0387 Mentor Teacher PD Session: Join Our Mentorship Team

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

We are inviting experienced educators to join our mentorship team and support colleagues in the first five years of their teaching journey. This professional development session will introduce the goals of our mentorship program and provide an opportunity to connect with passionate teacher-leaders. During the session, participants will plan to:

Collaborate with teachers in their first five years of practice
Discuss assessment strategies that meaningfully support student learning
Explore a variety of instructional resources and mentoring approaches
Build professional connections and a strong sense of community
If you're interested in sharing your expertise, growing as a mentor, and making a positive impact on new educators, we'd love for you to join us.

Presenter Abstract:

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Central Okanagan Teachers' Association

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While they will be facilitating the flow of the session, the true expertise in the room comes from the mentor teachers. It is their lived classroom experience, practical strategies, and shared resources that will shape the learning. This session is designed to honour teacher voice, highlight professional wisdom, and celebrate the collective knowledge within our teaching community.

Professional Development, Music

PR-0344	Building Ownership and Musicianship Through Small Ensemble Skills	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 1 / 35

Workshop Description:

Discover how chamber music strategies can transform full ensemble rehearsals into spaces of deeper student engagement and growth. This session offers practical ways to build ownership, listening, and collaboration by embedding small ensemble skills, such as score study, interpretive decision-making, and peer reflection, directly into band rehearsals. Walk away with simple, adaptable techniques that help students move beyond the notes on the page and perform with confidence, expression, and shared artistry.

Presenter Abstract:

Dave McGarry is a high school band director who explores ways to build student ownership, collaboration, and musicianship in the ensemble setting.

PR-0381	Rhythmic Art as a teaching tool	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 0 / 35

This session is at the Rotary Centre for the Arts
Lunch will be provided on-site.

Workshop Description:

This interactive workshop is designed for teachers looking to build confidence and creativity in using rhythm and percussion in their classroom. Teachers will learn how to apply basic music concepts in a cross-curricular setting. Participants will explore fun, practical strategies for teaching rhythmic concepts through a variety of hand drums and percussion instruments and learn how to extend to body percussion. No prior musical experience is required—just a willingness to tap, clap, and play! Teachers will leave with ready-to-use lesson ideas, rhythm games and cultural songs that support students' language engagement, motor skills development, and cross-curricular learning. Whether you're teaching music directly or integrating rhythm into literacy, math, or physical education, this session offers hands-on tools to bring the power of percussion into your teaching practice. Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and footwear and bring a water bottle.

Presenter Abstract:

Angela is a bilingual award-winning educator and performing artists, she has presented Freedom Art Song Writing Programs and Rhythm Art Programs through western Canada, Central and Chile South America. Released two albums with her band Barfoot Caravan and is Educational Program Coordinator at the RCA which enables her to continue to work within the arts. "Through the pathway of the arts, learning is interactive and connects us to experience and people!"
Angela

PR-0384	Music Tools for the Classroom Routine	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 1 / 35

This session is at the Rotary Centre for the Arts
Lunch will be provided on-site.

Workshop Description:

A hands-on, practical workshop for teachers who want simple, effective ways to integrate music into daily classroom life. Participants will explore easy-to-learn songs, rhythms, and movement-based strategies that support transitions, focus, self-regulation, and student engagement—no musical background required. Kira Hickerson-Johnson, MTA, will guide teachers through adaptable, ready-to-use tools they can implement immediately.

Presenter Abstract:

Kira Hickerson-Johnson, MTA (Music Therapist Accredited), is a Vernon, B.C.-based music therapist serving the North and Central Okanagan Valley, with additional online services. She specializes in working with young children, children on the autism spectrum, and individuals receiving end-of-life or bereavement support. Kira brings warmth, creativity, and evidence-informed practice to every session, helping participants engage, connect, and thrive through music.

Professional Development, Novice Teachers

PR-0399	New Teacher 101	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

This session is about situating yourself within the Education system. What does it mean to be a professional? This session is about you as a member of the



teaching profession. Who is available to you as you begin this career? What supports and structures exist for teachers in our district and in our province? What standards are we expected to hold up? We know that getting yourself up and running in your classroom with your students is your top priority as a new teacher. We want you to know that there is a whole network of people and structures to support you as a professional. You are not alone – we are here to help you and to answer your questions.

Target Audience: Early career teachers *Please note that this session is NOT for Teacher Candidates and Interns

Presenter Abstract:

April Smith is an experienced classroom teacher who has been actively involved in the union at both the local and provincial levels for most of my career. Her goal is to support teachers as they navigate 'the system' of education. April is a teacher who is passionate about working for teachers.

Professional Development, Numeracy

PR-0357	Math Bootcamp	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

Come prepared to fly over the mathematics teaching and learning landscape; enjoy the view; and reflect on your next move in your own math journey.
Target Audience, K-7 Instructors

Presenter Abstract:

Kim is a returning presenter at this conference. She's held various roles in her 25+ years in education, including several years as a math coach and math intervention teacher in California. She is passionate about mathematics teaching and learning!

PR-0402	Beyond the course: How Assessment Shifts Our Numeracy Practice	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 5 / 35

Workshop Description:

Our district is committed to student agency—so, what does this look like in numeracy, day to day, in response to the students in front of you? This Pro-D supports K–9 educators in moving from understanding the district numeracy assessment to using it as an embedded part of classroom practice. Grounded in the agency framework, participants will explore how assessment can surface student understanding, strengthen engagement, and inform next instructional steps. We will discover how the assessment goes beyond proficiency—supporting identity and belonging, encouraging curiosity and risk-taking, and making student thinking visible in ways that meaningfully shape instruction. Through hands-on learning, teacher stories, and targeted breakouts (whether by grade or topic), educators will leave with practical strategies, tangible takeaways, and a clear next small step, whether you're curious, unsure where to start, or ready to deepen your practice.

Presenter Abstract:

Jenn and Robbi are passionate educators who are committed to helping build agency, joy, curiosity and community in numeracy classrooms. They have been engaging in collaborative learning about numeracy assessment through their work as teachers, and as members of the development team over the past 3 years.

Professional Development, Other

PR-0378	Assertive Communication: Positive Interactions	Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

This workshop teaches the key principles of communication by exploring the differences between passive, aggressive, and assertive communication styles. Participants will develop skills through a variety of exercises, role play and practice, in order to effectively communicate in their classroom, schools, union work, or personal lives.

PR-0379	Professional Boundary Issues: Teacher/Student Relationships	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

Sometimes the standards of conduct between students and teachers are ambiguous. Teachers place themselves in jeopardy when boundaries are crossed. This workshop helps school staffs and TTOCs identify the boundaries and provides them with support and resources. Reference will be made to the BCTF Code of Ethics.

PR-0397	COTLA LSA Meeting - Secondary	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 2 / 30

Workshop Description:



This is a meeting space for the Central Okanagan Teacher Librarian Association LSA.

PR-0398	COTLA LSA Meeting - Elementary	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm	Participants: 3 / 30
Workshop Description: This is a meeting space for the Central Okanagan Teacher Librarian Association LSA.			
PR-0400	Collaborative Conversations for Secondary LATs	Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 2:30 pm	Participants: 7 / 35
Workshop Description: This is a meeting space for COTA Secondary LAT's only			

Professional Development, Physical and Health Education

PR-0345	Cultivating Curiosity in the Classroom with BCAITC	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm	Participants: 1 / 35
Workshop Description: Are you looking for hands-on learning activities to explore food and farming in BC with your students? Join BC Agriculture in the Classroom for an engaging learning session highlighting BCAITC programming and free resources for your classroom use. Participants will get time to explore digital and physical resources for use in K-12 classrooms during the session, and receive take-away learning kits to bring to their classrooms. Participants are encouraged but not required to bring a laptop or electronic device for the session.			
Presenter Abstract: Amy is the Education Specialist with BC Agriculture in the Classroom. She grew up on a working cattle ranch outside Williams Lake, BC, and was involved in agriculture from an early age, which included participating in the BC 4-H program for over eleven years. She holds a BA and BEd from The University of the Fraser Valley, as well as a diploma in Home Economics from UBC. Amy has taught home economics courses at middle and high schools in both Chilliwack and Kelowna, most recently at Ecole Glenrosa Middle School, teaching grades 6-9. Passionate about hands-on learning, Amy loves connecting teachers and students to agriculture and hopes to spark a lifelong curiosity about BC food systems and the agriculture industry.			
PR-0349	Track and Field Workshop for Teachers	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm	Participants: 3 / 35
Workshop Description: Introduction to all foundational track and field events. Starting with the common technical elements for each event, and then including age-appropriate progressions for development. Events include - Sprints, Starts, Hurdles, Relays / Long Jump, Triple Jump, High Jump / Shot Put, Discus, and Javelin			
Presenter Abstract: - Over 25 years of coaching track and field in the Okanagan. Experience with coaching all event areas. Junior Development age athletes up to Senior level. - Lead Coach Developer for BC Athletics - 20 years of facilitating NCCP and Non- NCCP coaching courses in all regions of BC. Courses include: Run Jump Throw Wheel / Intro to Track and Field (Sport Coach) / Club Coach course (event specific) - Athletics Canada Performance Coach Certified. - BC Summer Games Zone 2 Rep and Head Coach. -Multiple school track and field programs over the years.			
PR-0352	The non-digital Games Project	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm	Participants: 5 / 32
Workshop Description: The Games Project introduces four traditional games: Sjoelbak (Holland), Crokinole (Southern Ontario), Table Hockey (Canada) and Pitchnut (Quebec; a variation of Carom from India). The presentation will include the following: 1. (10 minutes) Intro to the background of the Games Project and a brief history of these four games. 2. (15 minutes) A quick lesson on how to play these games. 3. (10 x 4 = 40 minutes) Opportunity to play each game. 4. (20-25 minutes) Several possible discussions covering: a. How my school sessions play out and see if there is interest. b. Philosophy of how old fashioned games can be positive tools that may be implemented into the classroom or school. c. Screen time and social media issues. d. Purchasing or making games. e. Creating a longer list of games.			
Presenter Abstract: Wilf Pauls has encouraged thousands of children in their love of learning through stories, magic, science experiments, music, trivia, and real-life experiences. Together with his wife Pearl, he has worked in British Columbia (Kelowna, 108 Ranch, the Shuswap), Yukon Territory (Watson Lake, Old Crow), West Germany (Lahr, DND) and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In a career that has spanned four decades he has worn many hats: classroom teacher, principal, science specialist, music teacher, camp director and Teacher Librarian. He has published two "Baby Brawn Superstar" books, "Fweddy the Wed Fwog Pwince, and "The Baseball Bat (A True Story)". In 2019, he developed 'The Games Project' which has been shared with about 6000 students and adults. His latest development is 'The Africa Project' – an hour of oral storytelling.			
PR-0361	Fundamental Movement Skills	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm	


Workshop Description:

Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are the basic movements that form the foundation of all sports and physical activities. They are essential for children's success in future physical activities, helping build physical literacy and promoting lifelong participation in sport.

Presenter Abstract:

Kasey Wright is a qualified NCCP Instructor certified by Coach Canada.

Participants: 2 / 35
PR-0369 Healthy School Food Environments
Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Participants: 1 / 35
Workshop Description:

This learning session is designed to provide relevant, up-to-date information to help support and enhance Healthy School Food Environments with evidence-based Food Literacy resources. We will explore resources and learning from "Teach Food First, Interior Health, and BC School Food Toolkit."

Presenter Abstract:

Andrea Locke is the Health Promoting Schools Coordinator, District Safety & Well Being Teacher Consultant

PR-0376 Outdoor Council of Canada Field Leader Workshop
Feb 13, 2026 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Participants: 1 / 35

This is a two day session.

Lunch is provided on the 13th of February only.

Locations are TBD.

Workshop Description:

This nationally recognized course will provide participants with Outdoor Council of Canada (OCC) training in Field Leader and allow the Field Leader to lead in low-risk terrain as defined by the OCC. The course will be delivered by two OCC certified instructors. Course Info: The course length is 14 hours (7 in classroom and 7 outside.) To be leaders, participants should have some hiking experience and be able to participate in a low risk natural environment hike on a designated trail while carrying what they will need for the day outside. Participants must have the physical ability to hike on a footpath with rocks and roots, etc. Participants are required to read a manual beforehand. Further course information will be provided upon registration. Participants are responsible for their own accommodation, meals and transportation. This course will be offered on two days. The first day is Sunday, February 8, 8:30am to 4:30pm and the second day will be Friday February 13, 8:30am to 4:30pm. Location: Central Region of the Okanagan, BC. Cost: \$250 Exact location to be decided.

Presenter Abstract:

With a combined 40+ years of working in outdoor recreation, environmental education, guided interpretation and sustainable tourism in western Canada: Alison Campbell Urness (she/her) Rose Maunder (she/ her)

PR-0382 Teaching through Culture: Integrating Dance and Art Ethnology
Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Participants: 1 / 35

This session is at the Rotary Centre for the Arts

Lunch will be provided on-site.

Workshop Description:

It is widely understood that educating kids about the many different countries and cultures of the world creates not only more empathetic human beings, but those with greater global intelligence. One of the many ways to explore this is through cultural art forms, such as dance ethnology, ethnomusicology, and cultural art.

In this 90-minute workshop, participants will have the opportunity to explore this concept in detail with Dance Ethnologist and Artist Tascheleia Marangoni. Over the course of the workshop, participants will get the opportunity to learn technique from 4 different cultural dance forms, as well as discuss other forms of cultural dance and art that are available right here at the RCA, as well as the positive implications of sharing these courses with our youth.

Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and footwear. Bring a water bottle and notebook with a pen.

Presenter Abstract:

Tascheleia Marangoni is a professional dancer who resides in Kelowna, BC. She began her studies in dance at the age of 3, and boasts over 45 years of training and experience as a dancer, instructor, choreographer, studio owner, performer, and producer of dance from over twenty genres, including classical dance styles, and cultural dance, focusing on her passion for Dance Ethnology.

PR-0383 Mindful Movement
Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Participants: 9 / 35

This session is at the Rotary Centre for the Arts

Lunch will be provided on-site.

Workshop Description:

Pause, breathe, and reset in this calming "Mindful Moments" workshop led by experienced teachers and a certified yoga instructor. Participants will explore simple mindfulness practices, gentle movement, and classroom-ready breathing techniques that support focus, emotional regulation, and overall well-being—for



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both students and educators. This session offers practical tools you can integrate into any school day, along with a chance to experience moments of grounding and renewal for yourself.

Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing, bring a water bottle, a yoga mat and/ or blanket, and a small pillow.

Presenter Abstract:

Rina is a certified Yoga and Lifestyle, and Mindful Rest Yoga Nidra instructor bring these practices into her classroom as Teachers with her students for over 15 years. Rina looks forward to sharing ways with teachers to empower their students to use gentle decompression techniques, postures that can calm the nervous system ,and restore the body. She is mindful of creating an environment that shares playfulness, safety, warmth, and a grounding calmness. Join Rina and learn how to bring these practises as classroom breaks to restore you and your students to maintain wellness and engagement in the classroom.

PR-0401 The non-digital Games Project

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 1 / 32

Workshop Description:

The Games Project introduces four traditional games: Sjoelbak (Holland), Crokinole (Southern Ontario), Table Hockey (Canada) and Pitchnut (Quebec; a variation of Carom from India). The presentation will include the following: 1. (10 minutes) Intro to the background of the Games Project and a brief history of these four games. 2. (15 minutes) A quick lesson on how to play these games. 3. (10 x 4 = 40 minutes) Opportunity to play each game. 4. (20-25 minutes) Several possible discussions covering: a. How my school sessions play out and see if there is interest. b. Philosophy of how old fashioned games can be positive tools that may be implemented into the classroom or school. c. Screen time and social media issues. d. Purchasing or making games. e. Creating a longer list of games.

Presenter Abstract:

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Professional Development, Social Emotional Learning

PR-0339 Understanding the Open Parachute Platform

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

This workshop will provide an overview of the Open Parachute platform and resources. Educators will leave with an understanding of how and why they can use this content to teach preventative mental health and well-being skills to their students and support their own needs in the classroom.

Presenter Abstract:

Bridget Kamp is the head of Curriculum Development for Open Parachute. Prior to her role at Open Parachute, Bridget was teaching senior-level English in SD23. Bridget has taught a variety of subjects, including French, English, Foods, Physical Education, Career planning, etc. She also has experience in working with students from a wide variety of backgrounds and needs, which has given her the opportunity to be both a mentor and an adaptable educator. Bridget has always been interested in and involved in helping the 'whole student', creating lifelong learners, and supporting students in becoming contributing members of society, no matter what that might look like for each individual.

PR-0340 Conflict Trauma: Insights & Skills to make a difference for child...

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 2:30 pm

Participants: 6 / 35

This is a hybrid session.

Presenters will be at Kelowna Secondary, with an option to log in virtually.

Workshop Description:

Why are Maria & Alex withdrawing or losing focus? Fighting or arguing? Crying? Many children fled war zones – Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, Gaza, and elsewhere. Thousands of these children are now safe in BC classrooms, but continue to be affected by the trauma they experienced, and are currently experiencing. Trauma may result from any or all of many causes: - children's own capture and/or evacuation experiences; - loss of safe, comfortable homes; - leaving close friends or family members to a dangerous future; - loss of friends and family to death or capture as a prisoner of war. In some cases, children suffer anticipatory trauma and grief, worrying about a family members or friend who continue in military service, lives in areas targeted by explosives, or suffers as a prisoner of war. Of course, parents may also be recovering from trauma, so they may struggle to create and maintain ideal home environments. Though trauma due to war and conflict can be deep and long-lasting, teachers and school staff can make a tremendous difference in helping children cope and recover. You will leave the two-part session with insights and skills from a certified psychologist and teacher to help you make a difference: 1. Understanding war trauma and distinguishing it from other challenges 2. Strategies to ease pain and support recovery 3. Strategies for communicating with parents and care-providers, and those within the school system. Our counselling / consulting experience is primarily with children impacted by the war in Ukraine, but the concepts are relevant to children from any war zone, and some family situations.

Presenter Abstract:

Nataliya Chorna lives and works in the Vancouver area, and holds an MA (Counselling Psych), MEd, and BEd, with specialized training in many areas of psychology. She is a dedicated and compassionate Registered Clinical Counsellor with over 15 years of experience with individual, couples, group, and youth



therapy in Canada. Prior to training as a psychologist, Nataliya taught in middle school for 5 years in Ternopil, Ukraine. Upon arrival in North America, she served as a psychotherapist and immigration counsellor in New York for 6 years. Chorna is especially skilled in trauma-informed care, war-related trauma, and youth mental health. Using evidence-based techniques (including CBT, DBT, SFT, MBT, EMDR, and the Gottman Method), she provides culturally sensitive counselling with diverse communities, including refugees and war survivors. Chorna is highly empathetic and communicates effectively in challenging environments. A more detailed CV is available on request. Eugene Krupa lives in Kelowna, BC, and holds an PhD (Interdisciplinary), MEd, BE,d and BSc. He brings 38 years of experience as a parent, 12 years in education (teaching elementary and secondary, teacher education and curriculum development), and over 30 years as consultant and academic in public health. Much of that work focused on early childhood development, young families, and equity-seeking communities. Since 2013, he has led Catalyst Research & Development, and evaluated many innovations in health and human services, including programs for immigrants and refugees. As volunteer "Health Advisor" with Okanagan 4 Ukraine, he recognizes the critical importance of recovery from war trauma, and supports emerging initiatives for Ukrainians in Interior BC, as well as in Ukraine through partners there (e.g., Maple Hope Foundation, Superhumans Center, Ukrainian Pastor Chaplains). Krupa is empathetic, energetic and experienced in teaching and learning - online and in person A more detailed CV is available on request.

PR-0388	Bridging the Gap: Cognitive and Neuroscience Tools to Navigate Co	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 4 / 35

This is a virtual presentation. A room is available for viewing.

Workshop Description:

The stress experienced during conflict can diminish our ability to relate, articulate, empathize, and problem-solve. This offering is designed to support participants in learning to utilize curiosity as a relational tool, redefine boundaries as an inclusive process, explore established models of communication and scripting, and maintain the ability to stay regulated during difficult conversations. Content will also include burnout prevention.

Presenter Abstract:

Laurel Aasen is a Registered Clinical Counsellor devoted to promoting community literacy on Trauma-Informed practice and emotional regulation. Her passion is translating clinical literature and interventions from neuropsychology to empower clientele in modulating their nervous system and co-regulating with others. She has facilitated presentations for major organizations and school districts across British Columbia, to month-long intensive workshops for youth from all over the world.

PR-0391	How your Body Can Change Your Mind	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

How does trauma affect the mind-body and body-mind? Increasing climate events and immigration from war-torn countries add to the regular trauma pool. A traumatized student can impact the whole class, or if all students experienced an event, then everyone will be in a trauma state. Learn how trauma manifests and discover practical tools that help immediately and can be easily implemented in the classroom.

Presenter Abstract:

Gilly Thomas CRS, BEd, BA has been a bodymind therapist and workshop facilitator for 25+ years. She teaches Somatic Affective Talk and Touch, including how the body can build a bridge to heal the mind and move past trauma to enjoy life again.

PR-0394	From Overwhelm to Alignment: A Values-Based Approach to Educator ...	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 9 / 35

This hybrid session is available in person at KSS and virtually.

Workshop Description:

This session supports teachers in understanding what drains them, what fuels them, and how to create sustainable habits rooted in personal values. Participants leave with concrete tools for emotional regulation, values-driven decision-making, and day-to-day balance.

Presenter Abstract

Candice Knight is a dynamic speaker, author, and transformational coach who inspires audiences to break through burnout and reconnect with their deepest sources of strength.

With over 20 years as a high school educator and counsellor, Candice brings a rare blend of real-world experience, soulful wisdom, and practical tools to her work with women in transition.

Professional Development, Social Studies

PR-0331	Social Studies 10 Roundtable: Approaches & Resources	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 6 / 35

Workshop Description:

At the last Social Studies LSA Annual General Meeting, many teachers expressed interest in a roundtable discussion about best practices in Social Studies 10. They wanted to discuss pacing, structure, resources, and pedagogy. Challenges that were brought up included the lack of resources, vagueness in the curriculum documents, a perceived decline in student engagement and maturity, as well as the struggle to prepare them for grade 12 level courses in the following year. Join members of the LSA for an opportunity to discuss these and other issues and ideas. Two course models (with resources) will be shared and



discussed. Feel free to bring your biggest concerns and best ideas, or just listen in.

Presenter Abstract:

Derek and Jason have been teaching senior social studies for over 20 years at MBSS and serves on the executives of the COSSTA and BCSSTA. They are looking forward to a rich discussion supported by the experience and expertise of teachers from around the district.

PR-0374 Teaching the Holocaust: New Resources and Strategies for the BC C...

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 6 / 35

Workshop Description:

The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre's new online teaching resource, "Fragments in Focus: The History of the Holocaust," is a fully bilingual website developed to align with the new learning standards of the BC Social Studies curriculum. The Ministry of Education supports this work and features Fragments in Focus as a resource for BC classrooms. This session will introduce educators to the features of the Fragments website and provide practical strategies for engaging students in inquiry-based learning about the Holocaust, combining historical context with guided analysis of primary sources. Participants will receive ready-to-use lesson plans and resources and will learn about: • The Power of Objects: Teaching with Primary Sources • Defining the Holocaust • Using the Fragments in Focus website in the classroom.

Presenter Abstract:

Ellie Lawson is the Education Manager at the VHEC, responsible for the development, advancement, and support of educational initiatives at the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre. She develops resources and delivers impactful programs for schools, educators, professionals, the public, and adult learners. Ellie holds a master's degree in public history from Indiana University, Indianapolis, with expertise in Holocaust and genocide history. Throughout her career, Ellie has collaborated closely with Holocaust survivors, as well as second- and third-generation descendants, and survivors of human rights violations, amplifying their narratives.

Professional Development, STEM

PR-0328 Building Project Based STEM in Your Classroom

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

Join WWEST to explore the creation of individualized STEM projects within your classes without adding to your already full plate. Through hands-on activities and modeling, WWEST will demonstrate how to build scientific tasks that include collecting and analyzing data and creating additional opportunities to build student agency.

Target Audience, Grades 3-12 Instructors

Presenter Abstract:

A lead educator with the WWEST program at UBCO, Bob has over 30 years of secondary classroom experience and many years supporting educators in their professional development.

PR-0330 Wildfire Resilience Educational Unit

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 1 / 35

Workshop Description:

Using a combination of the FireSmart BC's Education Program, localized knowledge from guest speakers, alongside additional media, our team of passionate youth have developed an in-classroom unit to build communal wildfire resilience throughout the Okanagan. This unit would be taught by interested teachers over a two-week period using our outlined lesson plans and detailed final project for evaluation, supplemented by a list of local experts such as BC Wildfire Service representatives, Indigenous stewards, FireSmart BC ambassadors, and others available to contribute their knowledge as guest speakers. Our workshop at this Pro-D day would inform teachers on why it's so critical to address topics such as the current state of wildfires in BC, how we can build resilience within our communities, and the ways we can learn from Indigenous peoples going forward. Our goal would be to fill basic knowledge gaps in teacher understanding and introduce our developed unit, ultimately having them inspire action in their classrooms to build a more sustainable and resilient future.

Presenter Abstract:

Having grown up in Salmon Arm, BC, Maggie spent most of her childhood in the mountains with her family and being deeply involved in the community. To give back and address the observed climate impacts on that land, home to the Secwépemc peoples, she worked five seasons on the BC Wildfire Service Rappel crews out of Salmon Arm and has since shifted to an educational role to improve Revelstoke's food security and sustainability. Having completed a BA in Philosophy at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, NS, Maggie's academic background, combined with her lived experience, motivates her to ask critical questions about how educational, Indigenous-led, and community-based approaches can lead us towards a more resilient and sustainable future.

PR-0342 Code, Roll, Create: Sphero Robotics for Grades 5-7

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 2 / 35

Workshop Description:

Bring coding into the palm of your hand, onto your classroom floor, or beyond, with this engaging workshop on Sphero Robotics. Designed for grades 5-8



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classrooms (or anyone who wants to roll along), this session shows how Sphero fosters creativity and critical thinking while taking students from new programmers to rolling robot experts. Teachers will explore visual block-based coding to introduce concepts like variables, iteration, and debugging. Learn how Sphero's sensors connect to cross-curricular activities, making robotics easy to integrate beyond STEM. The session will touch on transitioning into text-based coding languages like Python and JavaScript, showing how Sphero lessons can be leveled up. No prior coding or Sphero experience is required. You'll leave with ready-to-use lesson plans adaptable for any skill or enthusiasm level. This workshop makes robotics approachable, hands-on, and fun for both teachers and students.

Presenter Abstract:

Jen Garner is the Geering Up STEM Outreach Coordinator for the School of Engineering at UBC Okanagan. She has 12+ years of experience in educational outreach and non-traditional learning environments. Jen works closely with a team of UBC Engineering students to bring STEM into SD23 classrooms and communities around the Okanagan.

PR-0351 Indigenizing Senior Chemistry

Feb 13, 2026 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Participants: 4 / 35

Workshop Description:

A seminar and Q & A session with a UBCO Associate Professor who is working on indigenizing first-year chemistry content. Learn about a local Indigenous framing context that has been introduced to first-year chemistry courses as part of a larger project to redesign the curriculum. Students impacted by this project will also be discussed. Teachers will be inspired to indigenize their own senior science content.

Presenter Abstract:

A seminar and Q & A session with UBCO Associate Professor Stephen McNeil, who is working on indigenizing first-year chemistry content. Stephen will speak about his work using a local Indigenous framing context in his first-year chemistry courses as part of a larger project to redesign the curriculum. Students impacted by this project will also be discussed.

PR-0362 Transformative Curriculum for Change

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

This workshop explores field-tested ways to motivate your students with inquiry-based, experiential learning that connects global research with community place-based activities for a self-reflective approach to real-world, eco-social issues. Teachers will interactively explore ways to guide students in the skills of reflective dialogue, critical and creative thinking that leads to empowered action with the support of free learning resources from Student Leadership for Change (SLC). SLC brings progressive pedagogical approaches to address important eco-social issues. Come prepared to engage with colleagues and experience how your students can gain a deeper connection with themselves and each other, while exploring the complex systems and problems of our times. Your students will never ask you why they have to learn this!

Participants should pre-register for SLC free resources at: <https://www.bethechangeearthalliance.org/register>

Presenter Abstract:

Maureen Jack-LaCroix is an engaging facilitator with 19 years of experience as an environmental educator and facilitator of Dr. Macy's 'Work That Reconnects'. Maureen has a Master's in Eco-Psychology and PhD in Eco-Social Education from SFU. As the Creative Director and co-founder of BTCEA, she led the co-creation of Student Leadership for Change learning resources with Metro-Vancouver teachers. Maureen loves exploring different ways to engage in transformative education through reflective, critical, experiential and place-based learning that empowers students to meet today's challenging eco-social issues. Maureen finds meaning in her life's work, joy with her cherished family, and gratitude for the natural beauty of her home on Galiano Island, the ancestral and unceded land of the Penelakut people.

PR-0363 Sustainable Development Goals and Design Thinking: Design a Seed

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

Bring real-world issues to the classroom using Design Thinking to solve food security problems highlighted by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. During this Let's Talk Science session, you will discover how students can design seed savers from simple materials to protect seeds for future use.

Target Audience, K-9 Instructors

Presenter Abstract:

Tanya Clift is a secondary school teacher and a Let's Talk Science Teacher specializing in Career Education. Tanya is in her 30th year of teaching and has worked as both an enrolling and non-enrolling teacher at a school and at the district level. She holds a Master's Degree from the University of Oregon in Educational Leadership. Tanya is passionate about equipping teachers with the tools to help their students consider their futures in a rapidly changing world. She has worked with Let's Talk Science for five years and led workshops across the province of British Columbia.

PR-0364 Discover STEM Skills for Future Careers

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

STEM is everywhere in modern life and is transforming how we live, where we live, and how we earn a living. In a world that is increasingly driven by innovation and technology, the demand for people who can fill STEM-related jobs will only continue to increase. Join this Let's Talk Science session to discuss the



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importance of STEM when students are considering their possible future career options. Discover the ways technology disrupts and changes the workplace and how to prepare students to solve current and future problems like climate change.

Presenter Abstract:

Tanya Clift is a secondary school teacher and a Let's Talk Science Teacher specializing in Career Education. Tanya is in her 30th year of teaching and has worked as both an enrolling and non-enrolling teacher at a school and at the district level. She holds a Master's Degree from the University of Oregon in Educational Leadership. Tanya is passionate about equipping teachers with the tools to help their students consider their futures in a rapidly changing world. She has worked with Let's Talk Science for five years and led workshops across the province of British Columbia.

Professional Development, Technology

PR-0346	The Great AI Debate - Tales From the Classroom	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

Participants will take an inquiry approach to exploring authentic AI use scenarios from the classroom. We will explore questions and wonders about AI use, sharing connections to instructional design, and recommended district guidance to co-construct new knowledge and understanding.

Presenter Abstract:

Tobias and Niki are both members of the SD23 Learning and Innovation Team and have been engaged in provincial and district-wide discussions regarding the use of AI in education.

PR-0347	The Great AI Debate - The New Teammate or the Ultimate Cheat Code	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

This session is grounded in experiential learning as participants will explore and unpack the use of generative AI in education. We will explore insights into generative AI use and the connections to learner agency and instructional design.

Presenter Abstract:

Tobias and Niki are both members of the SD23 Learning and Innovation Team and have been engaged in provincial and district-wide discussions regarding the use of AI in education.

PR-0350	Making Thinking Visible: Digital Tools for Deeper Learning	Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
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Participants: 0 / 35

Workshop Description:

This workshop is designed for high school educators (Grades 9–12) interested in using digital tools such as Padlet, FigJam, Peardeck, and Miro to enhance student critical thinking and collaboration. Grounded in action research and doctoral studies, the session demonstrates how educational technology can meaningfully support critical thinking development across subject areas, with practical, classroom-ready strategies educators can apply immediately. The workshop emphasizes discussion, collaboration, and reflective learning to prepare students for success in the 21st century.

Presenter Abstract:

Tara Grant is an experienced educator and instructional leader with over 25 years in British Columbia's education system. She holds a B.Ed. from Simon Fraser University, an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from the University of Victoria, and recently completed her Ed.D. at the University of South Carolina, focusing on learning design and educational technology. Tara has served as English and Social Studies Department Head, leading curriculum integration, literacy initiatives, assessment reform, and online learning during COVID-19. A credentialed Literacy 10/12 marker, she regularly facilitates professional development focusing on literacy, assessment, differentiation, and student engagement. Tara currently teaches in the Central Okanagan School District and works with post-secondary institutions and industry partners, bringing a research-based, collaborative approach to professional learning.

PR-0354	Canva: Making Quality Hand-outs Easy for Any Subject	Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
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Participants: 15 / 35

Workshop Description:

With so much on a teacher's plate already, making your own Handouts can be a huge extra burden. Many teachers don't even bother, either buying them online, using other teachers materials or making them once decades ago and photocopying them till the clip art looks like it was from a horror film. I've been told by several people that my handouts look pretty nice so I'm happy to share my tips and tricks to save you time and effort. (You will need a laptop) In this session, you'll be * Gain full access to Canva for free forever. * Make your own Hand-Out on Canva (Which will be a template you can work from) * Tips and tricks of why Canva makes life much easier compared to other tools * Simple and clean document storage using Canva * Handy tricks like: Dynamic pdf editing, digital document signing and more * Some very cool modern AI tools that make life easier.

Presenter Abstract:

Aurey Harris is a Teacher of Electronics, Robotics, and Math from Kelowna Secondary School with many hats including, COTA social justice chair for 2 years, running the Diversity Club, Dungeons and Dragon Club, and Robotics Club at KSS for 3 years. They have a background in Sciences Majoring in Psychology and Minorng in Computer Science. Gamification and digital integration in a classroom environment have always been an important part of their pedagogy.



PR-0355 | AI for Educators: Beyond the Basics

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 3 / 35

Workshop Description:

Ready to move beyond single lessons and tackle bigger challenges? This intermediate workshop helps you design multi-week units, create student-facing AI literacy lessons, and develop reusable workflows that save time across the semester. We'll explore chaining prompts together for complex planning, adapting AI tools for safe student use, and designing assessments that work with AI rather than against it. You'll get hands-on practice building prompt sequences for unit planning, creating scaffolded student AI interactions, and generating differentiated materials at scale. This session assumes basic familiarity with AI tools. If you took "AI for Educators: An Introduction" or have experimented with prompting on your own, you're ready. Bring your laptop, a unit you're planning, and questions about what you've tried. You'll leave with advanced prompt sequences, student-facing lesson templates, and strategies for AI-aware assessment.

Presenter Abstract:

Courtney has a Master's of Education specializing in AI in inclusive education. Her work explores how LLMs (Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot) can help amplify student voice, support differentiated learning, and enable equity-centered planning, while actually reducing workload, not adding to it. She is currently developing CARL, an edtech platform, and created the CARING Framework: a values-driven approach to using AI with intention, empathy, and human connection in educational contexts. With a background in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and a practical, efficiency-focused mindset, her sessions are hands-on, conversational, and grounded in the real challenges BC teachers are navigating.

PR-0356 | AI for Educators: An Introduction

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 6 / 35

Workshop Description:

Teachers across BC are balancing growing demands for inclusion, differentiation, and culturally responsive practice, often with limited time and tools. This hands-on workshop is a practical introduction to using generative AI (ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini) to draft lessons, adapt for diverse learners, and strengthen inclusive practice. No tech background required. We'll cover AI basics, address common concerns, and outline ethical protocols for EDI (Equity, Diversity & Inclusion) and cultural safety. Bring your laptop to try live prompts, critique AI drafts, and turn them into classroom-ready materials. You'll leave with your own personal prompt bank, access to a shared resource library, and concrete time-saving strategies you can use immediately.

Presenter Abstract:

Courtney has a Master's of Education specializing in AI in inclusive education. Her work explores how LLMs (Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot) can help amplify student voice, support differentiated learning, and enable equity-centered planning, while actually reducing workload, not adding to it. She is currently developing CARL, an edtech platform, and created the CARING Framework: a values-driven approach to using AI with intention, empathy, and human connection in educational contexts. With a background in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and a practical, efficiency-focused mindset, her sessions are hands-on, conversational, and grounded in the real challenges BC teachers are navigating.

PR-0371 | Digital Literacy - Supporting Students in an Ever-Changing Techno...

Feb 13, 2026 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Participants: 6 / 35

Workshop Description:

Are you looking to support your students around Digital Literacy topics such as Artificial Intelligence, Social Media, Misinformation, and Digital Wellness? We will explore a variety of resources and pre-made lessons for Middle Grade students. Aaron will share his Middle School Technology Learning Continuum for his Grade 6-9 students at GMS. Come ready to explore CTRL-F, Common Sense Media, Crash Course, and more!

Presenter Abstract:

Aaron Cassidy has been the Teacher Librarian at Glenrosa Middle School for 10 years. He has spent time on the Leading Technology Learner District group, as well as the District Artificial Intelligence Working Group. He has been teaching Digital Literacy for several years and has developed Digital Literacy Learning Continuum lessons for Grades 6 to 9 at GMS.

Professional Development, Well-being/Health

PR-0343 | Happy Adults - Happy Classrooms

Feb 13, 2026 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Participants: 25 / 35

Workshop Description:

A practical, uplifting workshop designed to support the well-being of you, the Adults in the classrooms. If we are not putting on our own oxygen mask first, we are no good to anyone else – we cannot pour from an empty cup. Participants will explore self-care and what it looks like to care for themselves. We will practice mindfulness techniques that help reduce stress, build emotional regulation, and prevent burnout. Through hands-on activities, teachers will learn key social-emotional learning (SEL) skills they can then model and integrate into their own classrooms. This workshop emphasizes realistic ways to commit to and plan for self-care, in order to gain consistency and feel great about it! Educators will leave feeling grounded, energized, and equipped with tools that support their own wellness in order to best support their students' emotional growth.

Presenter Abstract:

Lori Hazel is a 30+ year educator and a Life Design Coach. Her passion is guiding her students and her clients to be the happiest, healthiest versions of



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themselves. She has 2 daughters and 1 cockalier. She spends as much time as she can hiking, reading, cooking, and being with her favourite people.