



September 2025

# TOGETHER WE CLIMB

## *A Rocky Mountain School District Update*

*Together We Climb reflects the collective journey of the Rocky Mountain School District community as they work to support each learner in reaching their full potential, one step at a time.*

*It's a pleasure to welcome you to the 2025-26 school year! As always, 'back to school' season is an exciting time of year, often bringing fresh energy and optimism as students, families and staff alike consider the many opportunities ahead for fun, connection and growth.*

*At all Rocky Mountain schools, relationships are a priority with personal connections forming the foundation of strong school communities. Whether it's a warm greeting at the bus stop, a moment of encouragement between colleagues, or a thoughtful phone call to a caregiver, every interaction matters. Together, these intentional moves help to build trusting relationships where people feel welcome and able to succeed.*

*September is a month where families and school staff settle into routines that support student learning and well-being. These daily practices at home and at school help to create safe, predictable and supportive environments for students. As the month unfolds, we encourage families to stay connected through informal conversations, classroom updates or school events as this partnership is essential for student success.*

*At the district level, team members are enthusiastic about the continued implementation of the Board's Strategic Plan, which guides efforts across four priority areas: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; Success for Each Learner; Growing the Capacity of Self & Others; and Stewardship for the Future.*

*With this shared purpose and thoughtfully planned opportunities for collaboration, this year is shaping up to have many moments worth celebrating!*

*Finally, today we officially launch the monthly publication 'Together We Climb'. The title speaks to the collective nature of our work and the shared commitment of educators, support staff, families and community members in support of student achievement. Editions through the year will share school and student focused stories of success, highlights of key district and provincial initiatives, and articles introducing staff and school volunteers improving learner outcomes through their efforts.*

*With gratitude,*

*Aaron Callaghan, Superintendent*



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## FEATURED STORIES FROM OUR SCHOOLS

*This month we acknowledge Rocky Mountain School District Custodial & Maintenance staff, as well as local community tradespeople, whose efforts over the summer months had schools well prepared to receive staff, students and families this September. Projects of all sizes were completed across the three zones, many of which are noted below.*

### SELKIRK SECONDARY SCHOOL

An extensive project was undertaken this summer at Selkirk Secondary School, with more than 90% of the school's flooring being replaced.



### KIMBERLEY ZONE OFFICE

Significant electrical upgrades were completed at the Kimberley Zone Office, allowing for increased electrical capacity including winter plugins and E-Fleet charging.



### UPCOMING DATES:

Monday September 22 – Non-Instructional Day (No Classes)  
Monday September 29 – Orange Shirt Day  
Tuesday September 30 – National Day for Truth & Reconciliation (Schools Closed)  
Monday October 13 – Thanksgiving (Schools Closed)





## EDGEWATER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

With a growing student enrolment, renovations took place this summer at Edgewater Elementary School to ensure the availability of classroom space for incoming students.



## KIMBERLEY ALTERNATE SCHOOL

Extensive renovations were completed at Kimberley Alternate School during the 2024-25 school year. The school houses not only KAS students but also has dedicated space on the first level for Kimberley children participating in StrongStart.

RMSSD Maintenance and Custodial staff are pictured below as they prepare outdoor learning spaces for students and children participating in local programming.



## TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Rocky Mountain School District is located on the traditional unceded territories of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc Nations. We honour the cultures, languages, and First Nations people of these territories.



## LADY GREY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Summer renovations at Lady Grey Elementary School resulted in a much-needed facelift to the school's staff room.

## MARYSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



With the support of provincial funding, a new accessible playground was constructed in July at Marysville Elementary School. The playground has already been used extensively by children in the local community with rave reviews for the new structures.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHILDCARE - INVERMERE



The new purpose-built childcare facility in Invermere nears completion adjacent to Eileen Madson Primary School. Rocky Mountain Childcare is anticipated to open its doors to the public later this fall.



# THE SUMMIT SPOTLIGHT

*We're lifting up those individuals and teams whose contributions reflect the spirit of collaboration and excellence that drives Rocky Mountain School District forward!*

## MEET THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TEAM

In this inaugural Summit Spotlight we feature the members of the district's Information Technology Team – Jason Effa, Dapo Asekun, Karsen Seel and Dinesh Gautam. These digital wizards work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure every student and staff member are able to teach, learn and lead in an increasingly technological world. Whether it's safeguarding our data, troubleshooting devices or rolling out a new tool, their work is foundational to our school district's success.



*Jason Effa, Dapo Asekun, Karsen Seel & Dinesh Gautam*

### Jason Effa Tech System Specialist

**Q: What inspires you in your work with Rocky Mountain School District?**

*A: "Knowing what I do has a direct effect on our staff's ability to do their jobs, and for student success in completing their courses."*

### Dapo Asekun Tech System Specialist

**Q: What does 'Together We Climb' mean to you?**

*A: "It reflects the way we approach challenges or life in general, not alone, but as a team working towards a common goal. Personally, it reminds me that progress isn't always immediate or easy but when we support each other, we move forward, step by step. And that's what makes the climb worthwhile."*

### Karsen Seel IT Coordinator

**Q: How has your role evolved since you joined the district?**

*A: "My role has grown as technology continues to evolve. You have to adapt to taking on new responsibilities and learning continuously to keep things running. Recently, a major area of growth has been exploring and implementing AI across the district, which has expanded both my skills and the role itself."*

### Dinesh Gautam Director of Technology

**Q: What's something you've learned from the land or community you work in?**

*A: "It is important to respect the land, where people have had a deep connection for thousands of years. Progress is strongest when it is rooted in respect and collaboration."*

# STRATEGIC PLAN IN ACTION

*In 2023 the Board of Education released its visionary Strategic Plan 2023-2027. Annually, the Operational Plan identifies those actionable commitments across the four overarching priority areas: **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**; **Success for Each Learner**; **Growing the Capacity of Self & Others**; and **Stewardship for the Future**.*

## THE OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR 2025-26

### EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

1. **Advance Truth & Reconciliation**
  - Increase integration of Indigenous content, perspectives and Ways of Knowing in all learning environments
2. **Create Safe & Healthy Spaces Across All School Communities**
  - Implement district practices to improve the well-being of people of all identities & races
3. **Elevate Student Agency in Organizational Decisions & Processes**
  - Create District Student Advisory Council

### SUCCESS FOR EACH LEARNER

1. **Improve Student Connection**
  - Improve student attendance
  - Improve student transitions throughout the system
2. **Student Academic Growth**
  - Improve student achievement in Literacy and Numeracy

### GROWING THE CAPACITY OF SELF & OTHERS

1. **Provide Meaningful Learning Opportunities**
  - Collaborating with partners, create and deliver an evidence-informed, responsive professional learning calendar
2. **Improve Health & Well-being for People in the Organization**
  - Implement the initiatives of the District Employee Wellness Committee
  - Develop an employee attendance support program

### STEWARDSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

1. **Build Healthy School Communities**
  - Implement school 'Action Grants' for climate healthy projects
  - Enhance food security and improve food literacy
2. **Enhance Digital Citizenship**
  - Implement the District Technology Plan, with emphasis on Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, and access to instructional technology



# ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE: A PROVINCIAL INITIATIVE

*Highlighting initiatives, innovations and partnerships beyond our geographic boundaries that inspire and inform our journey in Rocky Mountain School District.*

## PROVINCIAL K-12 LITERACY SUPPORTS INITIATIVE

Rocky Mountain School District is proud to participate in the K-12 Literacy Supports Initiative, a province-wide effort to improve literacy outcomes for all students. The initiative has been developed by Ministry of Education & Child Care in partnership with educators, literacy experts, and Indigenous communities, and is being implemented with targeted funding primarily supporting professional learning and resource development. The initiative will encompass the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years.



## WHAT TO EXPECT IN ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCHOOLS

Rocky Mountain School District has submitted a detailed implementation plan to the Ministry of Education and Child Care to align with the provincial K-12 Literacy Supports Initiative. Over the next two school years, the school district will engage in:

- **Early Literacy Screening:** All students in K-3 will participate in early literacy screening using evidence-based tools to help identify students who may need additional support.
- **Targeted Professional Learning:** Educators and support staff will engage in professional development focused on structured literacy, inclusive practices, and strategies for supporting students with learning disabilities. Training will be delivered through a variety of formats.
- **Enhanced Intervention Supports:** Schools will expand access to intervention programs for students in Grades K-12 who require extra help with reading and writing.
- **Collaboration & Capacity Building:** The district will work closely with school teams to conduct literacy needs assessments and build capacity for sustainable literacy instruction.
- **Family Engagement:** Resources and learning opportunities will be shared with parents and caregivers to support literacy development at home.

The overall plan, crafted by a collaborative working group and using the new Change Management Framework, aligns with Rocky Mountain School District's Strategic Plan priority area 'Success for Each Learner'. It reflects the district's commitment to ensuring every student has the opportunity to thrive through strong literacy foundations.

Updates will be shared throughout the 2025-26 school year as the initiative progresses.

## BY THE NUMBERS

The Rocky Mountain School District operates 30 school buses, 3 of which are electric, in transporting 1786 students to school daily.

