



School District 8
Kootenay Lake

EARLY YEARS REPORT 2022-2023

Prepared November 1, 2022



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge, respect and honour the First Nations in whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District No. 8.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) has an overall goal that all learners graduate from high school with dignity, purpose and options. In addition, in recent years, school districts have also been tasked provincially with looking beyond the K-12 model to ensure that the needs of children aged birth to pre-Kindergarten are also being met.

The 2022-2023 “Early Years Annual Report” reflects SD8’s strategic priorities for all learners. These priorities are guided by the district’s vision and values and supported by school learning plans. Priorities outlined in the provincial Early Learning Framework (ELF) are reflected within the goals and action items in the SD8 Early Years Annual plan. In addition, the provincial Early Learning Framework emphasizes collaboration between school districts and community organizations both provincially and regionally. To better illustrate the SD8 early years partnerships within the larger community, a section on community partnerships is also included.

SD8’s strategic goals are literacy, numeracy, inclusion and Indigenization. The district’s vision focuses on excellence for all learners in a nurturing environment. These goals and vision align with the goals of the Ministry of Education and Child Care’s [“Service Plan 2022-2025.”](#)

SD8 recognizes that equity is the foundation for improving learner achievement; it is central to the learner’s experience and engagement. Linking learner achievement to equity, inclusion and diversity will increase a learner’s well-being, engagement and connection to others and to school.

The items in the Early Years Report’s action plan will be given high priority for the 2022-23 school year. SD8 continually monitors these priorities to ensure continuous improvement for all learners, including Indigenous learners, learners with diverse abilities, children and youth in care, and English language learners.

Priority areas from the 2021-2022 “Enhancing Student Learning Report” (ESL) are addressed as follows:

- Implement 3-year District Literacy and Numeracy Plans focused on improving literacy outcomes for all K-12 learners, in consultation with Aboriginal Education staff, district itinerant staff, and school teams
- Support literacy and numeracy for K-12 school teams, district itinerant staff, and Aboriginal Education staff in improving literacy proficiency for all learners
- Implement district literacy assessments at the primary (K-grade 3) level
- Expand the SD8 Early Literacy Profile to encompass Kindergarten to Grade 3
- Continue to strengthen SD8 community partnerships that support literacy and numeracy from birth to Grade 12

SD8 continues to look for ways to build on strengths and celebrate learner success. By referring to data that informs decision-making, planning and practices, and by working with education partners, the district can make a difference for all SD8 learners.

The annual “Early Years Report” supports the priorities outlined in SD8’s strategic plan. These priorities are central to the district’s vision, which is: We focus on excellence for all learners in a nurturing environment.

It is vital to ensure the district addresses how each individual’s potential connects to SD8’s mission, which is:

Focus. Learn. Excel.

This report outlines how SD8 supports learner success in the early years (ages birth to eight).

EARLY YEARS ACTION PLAN 2022-2023

- Support the implementation of the Early Learning Profile for Literacy (ELP) in grade 3 and continue to support the ELP in K to 2 to increase literacy development for all primary learners.
- Develop a 3 year numeracy plan to support numeracy development for primary (K-3) learners
- Facilitate bi-annual primary success meetings with elementary school Principals to support all K-3 learners to monitor success.
- Provide in-person and online training for primary teachers to implement the MindUP program.
- Implement a plan for analyzing K-3 district literacy and numeracy data in order to align resources to meet learner needs.
- Continue the model of ongoing collaboration between district portfolios to ensure district-wide coherence and support in meeting the needs of all primary learners
- Support school primary teams in scheduling and planning for 2/3 of Inclusion Support Teacher time in primary classrooms.
- Facilitate ongoing Literacy Community of Practice workshops for primary school teams.
- Curate resources for the SD8 teacher resource database to support primary staff.
- Continue to foster collaborative projects and build relationships with local, regional, and provincial partners.
- Implement the Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ) in all elementary schools.
- Participate in provincial projects that support early learners such as Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten (SEY2KT) and Changing Possibilities for Young Children (CP4YC) and Ready, Set, Learn.
- Implement the Early Development Instrument (EDI) in all elementary schools, including providing inservice training for Kindergarten teachers who are new to the EDI.
- Open a new StrongStart Outreach location in Nelson to accommodate the growth in birth to pre-school aged children and their families in the Nelson community.
- Host Ready, Set, Learn events in each elementary school for children and their families to support the transition to Kindergarten.





INTRODUCTION

Early Years in SD8

SD8 is a learning organization committed to continuously reviewing, refining and reflecting upon its practice to support the best possible outcomes for learners.

The Early Years Report looks at the provincial Early Learning Framework (ELF) as well as SD8 early years programs and initiatives. With the ongoing support of the province, SD8 community partners, and dedicated early learning SD8 teams, the district is able to offer sustainable initiatives that allow children to thrive.

Research continues to demonstrate the critical importance of learning from birth to age 8. Inclusive and adaptable programs allow every child to find success in the primary program. In doing so, it is evident that our work does not happen in isolation; rather, it is the result of interweaving community partnerships throughout this geographically broad district as a way to ensure young learners and their families are set up for a successful learning journey in SD8.

The SD8 early years team has four main goals:

- Develop a repository of primary data sets for school teams and district staff to better understand early learners' developmental and academic needs.
- Participate in provincial and regional early years programs to improve children and family connectedness to schools.
- Build and strengthen community partnerships and initiatives that support the early years.
- Over the next three years SD8 will strengthen data retrieval systems, using the available data to plan for system improvement. In addition, SD8 will continue to play a lead role in provincial, regional and community partnerships.

By continually focusing on improving results and striving for equity for all learners, the Ministry of Education and Child Care places student success and well-being at the centre of its mandate. As specified in the "[Statement of Education Policy Order](#)," the Ministry's mandate is to develop the "Educated Citizen," which is defined as the intellectual, human, social, and career development of students.

The Ministry's ultimate goal is that children achieve their individual potential and become independent adults who have a lifelong appreciation for learning, a curiosity about the world around them, and a capacity for creative thought and expression through compassionate and empathetic worldviews.





EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

SD8's work in the areas of early learning reflect the goals and objectives of the [Ministry of Education and Child Care \(MOECC\) "Service Plan 2022-2025"](#)

Ministry Goal 1: All Students Become Educated Citizens

Objective 1.2: Establish and Maintain High and Measurable Standards

Key strategy: *Provide teachers and students with access to updated learning and teaching resources to support ongoing instruction and assessment across the redesigned K-12 curriculum.*

Ministry Goal 2: Learning Environments Foster Healthy and Effective Learning

Objective 2.1: Implement High Yield Strategies to Support Student Growth and Achievement

Key strategy: *Improve access to quality early learning opportunities for young children and support transitions into the K-12 education system.*

Educational Outcomes: *Learners will meet or exceed literacy and numeracy expectations.*



Literacy

With the overarching belief that literacy is fundamental to learning and to learner success in school and beyond, and consistent with the Ministry’s “Service Plan 2022-2025,” SD8 has set a goal of improving literacy proficiency for all learners. To that end, SD8 has invested heavily in the early years.

In 2020, SD8 implemented a three year literacy plan for primary (Kindergarten to grade three). The literacy plan entailed a philosophical and pedagogical shift in practice in SD8. By engaging the expertise of early years literacy consultant Dr. Donna Kozak, SD8 created a series of targeted professional development opportunities for K-3 teachers and Inclusion Support Teachers (ISTs) in addition to utilizing the professional capacities of district support staff. In addition, a district Literacy assessment tool, called the Early Literacy Profile (ELP) was implemented. The Primary Literacy Coherence 3 year plan focuses on the following areas:

- Professional development workshops for Kindergarten to grade three teachers focused on a responsive literacy program designed to meet the needs of all learners
- Community of Practice (C.O.P.) model for teacher collaboration
- Teacher professional resources
- Classroom literacy resources
- An online literacy resource database
- District Literacy K-grade 3 Assessment tool (ELP)
- District Literacy Data platform (CLEVr)
- Targeted classroom support at the primary grade level
- Focus on school primary teams in a Community of Practice (C.O.P.) model
- Bi-annual Primary Success Meetings for Principals and district staff

The following data tables provide literacy information for SD8 Kindergarten to Grade 2 learners from the SD8 Early Literacy Profile (ELP). Data is reported as the percentage of students achieving “Mastery” (proficient/meeting grade level expectations) in a specific literacy subset.



Kindergarten Literacy Data 2021–2022

Skill Subset	Winter 2022 (Jan/Feb)	Spring 2022 (May)
Rhyming Production	63%	72%
Correct Sound	32 %	74 %
High Frequency Words	7 %	71 %
Writing	3 %	75 %

Grade 1 Literacy Data 2021–2022

Skill Subset	Winter 2022 (Jan/Feb)	Spring 2022 (May)
Correct Sound	32 %	74 %
High Frequency Words	7 %	71 %
Writing	3 %	75 %

Grade 2 Literacy Data 2021–2022

Skill Subset	Winter 2022 (Jan/Feb)	Spring 2022 (May)
Rhyming Production	35 %	67 %
Segmenting Phonemes	22 %	43 %
High Frequency Words	32 %	82 %
Overall Reading	6 %	55 %
Overall Writing	6 %	61 %

With the implementation of a district-wide literacy coherence model, SD8 now has a platform to track literacy data in the primary years which will enable SD8 to respond in a timely and responsive manner and to put resources and supports where needed. SD8 is optimistic that the Literacy Coherence model in primary is setting all students up for success throughout their K-12 school experience and beyond.

Numeracy

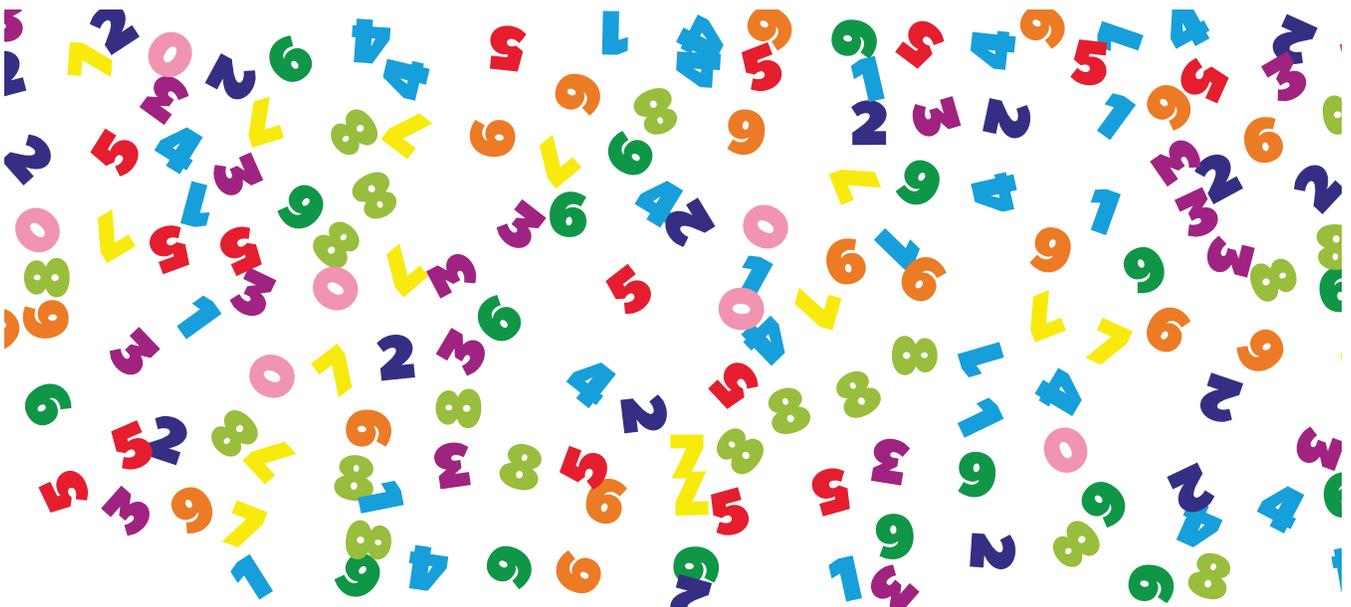
SD8 is committed to improving numeracy outcomes and proficiency for all learners. In recent years, SD8 has focused on improving literacy in the primary grades. Literacy proficiency directly correlates to numeracy proficiency. SD8 is in its third year of focusing on literacy in the primary grades. For the 2023-2024 school year SD8 will implement a three year numeracy plan in the early years (Kindergarten to aged 8) following a similar model that has been developed for literacy.

This targeted approach will be implemented to directly support improved numeracy proficiency for all Kindergarten to grade three learners.

SD8 is currently in the process of developing a numeracy assessment tool to pilot at the K-3 grade level.

Action Items

- Support the implementation of the Early Learning Profile for Literacy (ELP) in grade 3 and continue to support the ELP in K to 2 to increase literacy development for all primary learners.
- Develop a 3 year numeracy plan to support numeracy development for primary (K-3) learners.
- Facilitate bi-annual primary success meetings with elementary school Principals to support all K-3 learners to monitor success.
- Implement a plan for analyzing K-3 district literacy and numeracy data in order to align resources to meet learner needs.
- Continue the model of ongoing collaboration between district portfolios to ensure district-wide coherence and support in meeting the needs of all primary learners.
- Support school primary teams in scheduling and planning for 2/3 of Inclusion Support Teacher time in primary classrooms.
- Facilitate ongoing Literacy Community of Practice workshops for primary school teams.
- Curate resources for the SD8 teacher resource database to support primary staff.



District Strategic Priorities

SD8 Early Years focuses on 3 priority areas:

- Developing a repository of primary data sets for school teams and district staff to better understand early learners' developmental and academic needs.
- Participating in provincial and regional early years programs to improve children and family connectedness to schools.
- Building and strengthening community partnerships and initiatives that support the early years.

SD8 continues to look for ways to build on strengths and to celebrate student success. By using to data inform decision-making and planning and by working together with early years education partners, SD8 can make a difference in the education and life outcomes of Kootenay Lake learners.

Future Directions

SD8's "Focus. Learn. Excel." initiative concentrates on learning goals from the board of education strategic plan. These goals are addressed by:

- Improving learning and assessment
- Supporting vulnerable learners
- Literacy and numeracy
- Enhancing learner supports

Staff engage in robust professional learning opportunities facilitated by renowned education professionals. Staff also have opportunities to contribute to district communities of practice in several educational domains, such as literacy, numeracy and early learning.





DISTRICT CONTEXT

Targeted Ministry-Funded Programs and Initiatives

The Ministry of Education and Child Care supports school district early learning through several funds contained within our Transfers Under Agreement.

Early Learning Programs

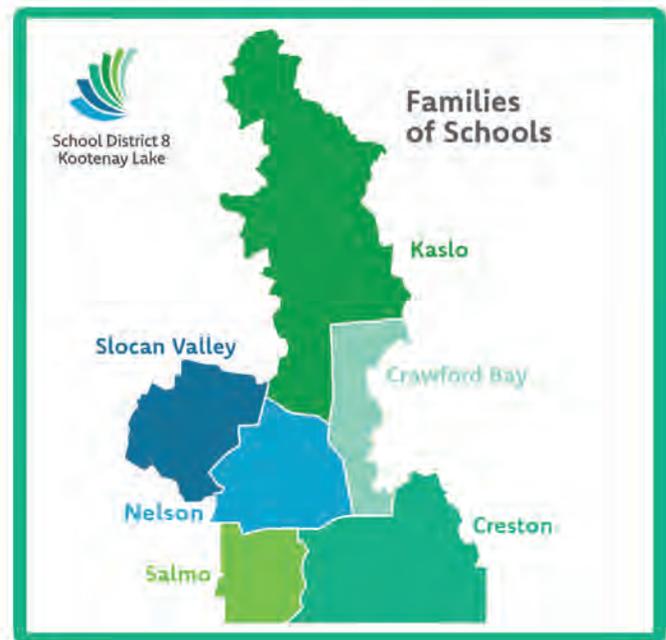
- StrongStart
- Ready, Set, Learn

Capacity Building

- Early Learning Framework (ELF)
- Changing Possibilities for Young Children (CP4YC)
- Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions (SEY2KT)

Other programs and projects are supported through the University of British Columbia's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), such as the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and the Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ).

Other projects are supported by local early years community partners as noted in the Community Collaboration section of this report.



Early Years Development Indicators

SD8 monitors and supports early learning programs. The complexity of measuring early learners combined with the knowledge that learning is fluid in the early years requires ongoing measurement throughout the year. SD8 collects data in the late fall and spring of the school year. This data is used to guide programs and supports for learners.

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a short questionnaire completed by Kindergarten teachers in February. The instrument is used not only across SD8, but across Canada and internationally. The purpose of the EDI is to measure a child’s ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations as follows:

- Physical Health and Well-being
- Social Competence
- Emotional Maturity
- Language and Cognitive Development
- Communication Skills and General Knowledge

Information from the EDI is important to educators, school districts, health professionals, early years care providers and community members as it guides program planning and services for children and families.

The EDI district data is collected in two- or three-year cycles, called waves. SD8 participated in the EDI in 2020-2021. This year, SD8 Kindergarten teachers will complete the EDI in February 2023. In addition, training for administering the EDI will be provided to Kindergarten teachers who are new to using the EDI.

EDI Wave 7 Community Profile – SD8

APPENDIX 2B – EDI DATA FOR THE 5 SCALES OF THE EDI FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS IN KOOTENAY LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT – WAVE 2-7

Wave Number	# of Children						Percent Vulnerable																																		
	2	3	4	5	6	7	Physical Health & Well-being							Social Competence							Emotional Maturity							Language & Cognitive Skills							Communication Skills & General Knowledge						
Creston	253	166	83	66	94	81	11	10	5	14	16	7	11	12	11	14	12	9	18	23	19	14	16	9	11	12	7	9	14	6	9	14	13	14	13	10					
Kootenay Lake Rural	408	235	139	119	145	112	8	10	8	21	18	16	7	9	12	10	19	12	9	16	15	20	24	15	6	8	9	9	4	6	5	8	6	13	13	6					
Nelson	231	145	77	92	75	84	11	7	8	11	16	14	7	6	5	7	9	7	12	12	17	8	12	17	6	6	7	1	7	5	6	8	4	7	5	11					
Kootenay Lake	892	546	299	277	314	277	10	9	7	16	17	13	8	9	10	14	15	10	13	17	17	15	19	14	8	9	8	7	8	6	7	10	7	11	11	9					

Although SD8 Kindergarten learners are less vulnerable in all five EDI domains compared to the provincial average, there is work to be done to ensure that Kindergarten learners and their families receive the supports they need to be successful as they begin their K-12 educational experience. Initiatives such as the CHEQ will directly inform SD8 staff about the needs of Kindergarten learners at the beginning of the school year.

In addition, provincial and community initiatives such as StrongStart, Ready, Set, Learn (RSL), Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions (SEY2KT), and Changing Possibilities for Young Children (CP4YC) directly support Kindergarten learners and their families.

Furthermore, programs such as MindUp provide education and strategies for children to support social-emotional and self-regulation.

Action Items

- Provide training for Kindergarten teachers who are new to the EDI. The focus of the training includes the process for completing the EDI as well as the purpose of the EDI.
- Plan focus sessions to analyze EDI data with elementary school Principals and district staff.
- Provide in-person and online training for primary teachers to implement the MindUP program.

Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ)

The Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ) is a questionnaire completed in the fall by the parents or guardians of Kindergarten-aged children. The CHEQ focuses on early experiences in key areas of development. These developmental areas can be correlated to the well-being, health, education and social outcomes for the child. The CHEQ questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. The CHEQ gives schools important information that is used at the classroom and school level to help plan for programming and supports in Kindergarten.

Action Items

- Support elementary schools with CHEQ administration during the fall of 2022.
- Support elementary school teams in correlating CHEQ data with EDI and ELP in order to better support SD8 learners.



District and Provincial Programs

SD8 participates in a number of partnerships, both between district portfolios and in local and regional communities. SD8 Innovative Learning, Aboriginal Education, and Inclusive Education work together to ensure students have the supports they need for success. Partnerships in the community further enhance learning experiences for current and soon-to-be students and their families.

StrongStart

StrongStart is a Ministry of Education and Child Care program offered in SD8. StrongStart provides rich learning experiences designed to support early learning in a variety of developmental areas including physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and oral language. StrongStart is often a family's first introduction to their local elementary school and provides a supportive and welcoming connection for families with toddlers and pre-school aged children. StrongStart programs are facilitated by qualified Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). The ECEs work closely and communicate regularly with SD8 staff in the primary years.

StrongStart Goal

To support the positive transition to Kindergarten by providing children the opportunity to make friends and continue their learning journey in a good way.

SD8 uses third party contractors to manage and operate all its StrongStart programs. SD8 has five overall StrongStart Outreach Programs at 13 different StrongStart locations:

StrongStart Outreach Programs

Program	Operator	Location
1. StrongStart Nelson	Kootenay Kids Society	Redfish Elementary, Hume Elementary, Rosemont Elementary, Blewett Elementary, South Nelson Elementary (new program commenced fall 2022)
2. StrongStart Crawford Bay	Kootenay Kids Society	Crawford Bay Elementary/Secondary School
3. StrongStart Kaslo and Meadow Creek	North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society	J.V. Humphries Elementary/Secondary School, Jewett Elementary School
4. StrongStart Slocan Valley	W.E.Graham Community Services Society	W.E.Graham School, Winlaw School, Brent Kennedy Elementary
5. StrongStart Creston	Valley Community Services Society	Canyon Lister Elementary School, Creston Education Centre

During the 2021–2022 school year, SD8 implemented a virtual registration platform for new StrongStart families which has streamlined the registration process. New for the fall of 2022, StrongStart Nelson opened a new site at South Nelson Elementary School. By opening this new StrongStart location, more families in the Nelson community are able to access StrongStart on a regular basis.

Action Items

- Continue to foster collaborative relationships between SD8 early years staff and StrongStart Early Childhood Educators.
- Continue to provide ongoing professional development opportunities for StrongStart Early Childhood Educators that foster collaborative relationships between ECE’s and SD8.
- Explore opportunities for potential additional StrongStart Outreach SD8 locations in order to equitably meet the needs of families in all SD8 communities.

Ready, Set, Learn

Ready, Set, Learn is a Ministry of Education and Child Care program that provides family-oriented events for children between the ages of three and five.

Ready, Set, Learn Goal

To support the positive transition of children to Kindergarten.

Specifically, Ready, Set, Learn helps young children in the following areas:

- Confidence
- Relationships with friends
- Language development
- Ability to communicate needs
- Ability to follow instructions and routines

A child learns to prepare for school through play. Families who attend Ready, Set, Learn events participate in play-based activities while learning about early years programs and services. SD8 uses Ready, Set, Learn funding to partner with local community organizations such as the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL) to offer literacy programs and activities for families of preschool aged children. These programs are free for families.

SD8 also uses Ready, Set, Learn funds to host “Transition to Kindergarten” events at each elementary school. Transition to Kindergarten events are scheduled in the late spring, and are designed to welcome incoming Kindergarten children and their families to their catchment school. The event offers an opportunity for children and their parents or caregivers to meet the school Principal, meet the Kindergarten teacher, have a guided tour of the school, and participate in interactive centres and stations in the Kindergarten classroom.

Ready, Set, Learn funds also support Kindergarten preparedness. An SD8 cloth tote bag filled with Kindergarten tools and resources such as 3-sided crayons and a pencil, a children’s book, an SD8 publication entitled “Kindergarten Let’s get started!”, and a Métis Early Years brochure is given to each family. Each spring, families look forward to Transition to Kindergarten events as this is one way of knowing what to expect when starting Kindergarten in September.

Action Items

- Plan, organize, and host face to face “Transition to Kindergarten” events at each SD8 elementary school.
- Provide all Kindergarten families with a starter kit of educational Kindergarten readiness resources.
- Update each elementary school’s Kindergarten video storywalk and post on each school’s website.
- Provide all Kindergarten families with a brochure of information about SD8 Kindergarten and Metis Early Years resources.

Early Learning Framework (ELF)

In the fall of 2019, the Ministry of Education and Child Care created a new early learning guide to help foster accessible high-quality early learning environments and opportunities for all British Columbian children and to make sure education professionals, parents and caregivers have the knowledge required to support children to move forward positively through their K-12 studies in order to reach their full potential.

The Early Learning Framework (ELF) principles set forth ways of thinking about childhood, learning, and teaching that underpin the vision of respectfully living and learning together. The principles are:

- Children are strong, capable in their uniqueness, and full of potential.
- Families have the most important role in contributing to children’s well-being and learning.
- Educators are researchers and collaborators.
- Early years spaces are inclusive.
- People build connection and reconnection to land, culture, community and place.
- Environments are integral to well-being and learning.
- Play is integral to well-being and learning.
- Relationships are the context for well-being and learning.
- Learning is holistic.

Action Item

Provide ongoing opportunities for SD8 StrongStart Early Childhood Educators and primary teachers to collaborate in order to explore the Early Learning Framework and apply it to their teaching practice.

Changing Possibilities for Young Children (CP4YC)

Changing Possibilities for Young Children (CP4YC) is a Ministry of Education and Child Care funded initiative.

CP4YC Goals

- *To increase the social and emotional well-being of young children*
- *To improve the quality of practices associated with teaching social and emotional well-being*
- *To increase collaboration and strengthen relationships between early childhood educators and primary teachers*
- *To use science and research about social and emotional well-being to improve educators’ practice and social and emotional outcomes for children*
- *To provide young children with opportunities and specific skills that foster their social and emotional competence through positive human qualities: happiness, self-regulation, kindness, empathy, sense of belonging, altruism, sense of agency, compassion, sense of identity, and building relationships*

[Changing Possibilities for Young Children Research Findings 2020–2021](#) is a provincial report shared with school districts and early childhood educators. Ongoing research informs the CP4YC collaborative inquiry project that brings together community-based educators, StrongStart facilitators, and K/1 teachers to learn together in six professional learning community of practice workshops.

For the 2022–2023 year, SD8 has CP4YC teams in place from the following schools:

- Adam Robertson Elementary
- Redfish Elementary
- Rosemont Elementary
- South Nelson Elementary

Action Items

- Participate in ongoing opportunities for ongoing collaboration between early years community providers and SD8 in order to increase pedagogy coherence.
- Employ the CP4YC inquiry model to improve the social and emotional well-being of young children.

Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten (SEY2KT)

Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten (SEY2KT) is a Ministry of Education and Child Care funded initiative. [Making Connections: Building Relationships Final Report 2020–2021](#) is the most recent provincial report. A full list of past reports and SEY2K initiatives is also available on the [Compassionate Systems Leadership site](#).

SEY2KT Goal

Improve the social, emotional and academic learning outcomes for early learners.



Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions uses a [Compassionate Systems Leadership](#) approach. Teams consisting of community early years representatives and SD8 staff collaborate on a project designed to promote effective transitions to Kindergarten for pre-Kindergarten children and their families.

During the 2021–2022 school year, an Early Years SEY2KT consultant was contracted by SD8 to gather information regarding the early years services, programming and potential needs within each SD8 community. This information will help inform SD8 and early years community partners about where additional supports and programming for families in the early years may be needed.

SD8 is carrying out three SEY2KT projects:

Salmo

The Salmo SEY2KT project began in 2018 and has been provincially funded for five years. It focuses on ongoing collaboration between early childhood educators from the Salmo Children’s Centre, Salmo community organizations and the K-1 teachers and administration at Salmo Elementary School. The project fosters play-based opportunities such as “Play in the K” where families and their pre-school aged children are able to join the Kindergarten class to play games together in the Kindergarten classroom and “Pop up Play” events in various community locations.

Creston

The Creston SEY2KT project began in 2020 and has been provincially funded for three years. The project involves members from the Creston Early Years Advisory, primary teams from Adam Robertson Elementary, Erickson Elementary, Canyon Lister Elementary, Creston Wildflower and Creston HomeLinks, and StrongStart Early Childhood Educators. During the 2021–2022 school year, the project focused on strengthening community early years partnerships including strengthening information sharing between community partners. In addition, a community-based Early Years SEY2KT coordinator was contracted by SD8 to facilitate a series of school-based drop-in play sessions for families and their pre-school aged children. These sessions were a resounding success.

Crawford Bay

The Crawford Bay SEY2KT project is new for the 2022–2023 school year. Project members include Crawford Bay Elementary/Secondary School primary years staff, Crawford Bay StrongStart facilitator and Childcare Resource and Referral representative. This year the SEY2KT team will use an inquiry-based focus to determine how best to support the needs of families and their pre-school aged children in the Crawford Bay community.

Action Items

- Participate in provincial and regional sessions to support early learners.
- Share the Early Years Community Programming and Supports document created by SD8 with community early years partners

Roots of Empathy (ROE)

Roots of Empathy (ROE) is a program in British Columbia that promotes social and emotional well-being, empathy and compassion in young learners. The key tenets of ROE are:

- The leaders of tomorrow are sitting in the classrooms of today and they need imagination and empathy to be able to identify and solve society's problems.
- Empathy is foundational to helping children navigate relationships, form connections and be inclusive of others.
- If children have empathy, they can change the world.

ROE facilitators receive specialized training in order to facilitate the ROE program in school classrooms. The ROE facilitator teaches a monthly lesson to school-aged learners. The lesson also involves a parent and infant who volunteer to participate in the ROE program. More information about Roots of Empathy can be found on [their website](#).

SD8 currently has two certified ROE facilitators – one facilitator in Creston and one facilitator in Nelson. For the 2022–2023 school year, SD8 is hosting 3 Roots of Empathy programs at the following schools:

- Erickson Elementary
- Wildflower Creston
- South Nelson Elementary

Action Item

Deliver three ROE programs in SD8 in order to foster social-emotional well-being, empathy, and compassion in learners.



Roots of Empathy

Racines de l'empathie



CONCLUSION

Supported initiatives demonstrate the positive difference collaboration makes in children’s lives. The goals of the BC Early Learning Framework provide a roadmap for collaborative learning and programming as a partnership between SD8 and the communities within the boundaries of SD8.

SD8 recognizes the important role that the early years plays in order to set families up for success throughout their K-12 education and beyond. Through partnerships with provincial, regional and local communities, SD8 endeavours to foster smooth transitions for children and their families so they are able to thrive.



GRATITUDE

Community Partnerships

SD8 recognizes that community partnerships are a key component to providing the resources and supports families need. Working with the community not only benefits early learners and their families, but also supports the goals of the Ministry of Education and Child Care Early Learning Framework.

SD8 thanks the following community partners for the important work they do within the region:

[Circle of Indigenous Nations Society \(COINS\)](#)

[College of the Rockies](#)

[Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy \(CBAL\)](#)

[Columbia Basin Environmental Educators Network \(CBEEN\)](#)

[Creston Valley Youth Network](#)

[West Kootenay Early Years: Slocan Valley, Salmo, Creston, Nelson, Kaslo](#)

[East Kootenay Teacher Education Program \(Univeristy of Victoria\)](#)

[East Kootenay Child Care Resource and Referral \(CCRR\)](#)

[Interior Health Authority \(IHA\)](#)

[Kootenay Kids Society](#)

[Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society](#)

[Ministry of Children and Family Development](#)

[Nelson & District Youth Centre](#)

[North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society](#)

[Selkirk College](#)

[Valley Community Services Society](#)

[W.E.Graham Community Services Society](#)

[West Kootenay Child Care Resource and Referral \(CCRR\)](#)

[West Kootenay Teacher Education Program \(University of British Columbia\)](#)