

Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School Newsletter

Strong Together In All We Do



February/March 2026

Gilakas'la,

February has been a full and rewarding month at Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School with so much meaningful learning taking place here each and every day — not only in our classrooms, but beyond our walls as well.

Our students have been engaged in a wide range of learning opportunities. Outdoor education continues to be a priority, with classes taking learning outside and making connections to the land. We've also had the opportunity to participate in swimming and skating, helping students build confidence, physical literacy, and resilience.

Cultural learning remains at the heart of who we are. Students continue to engage in experiences that strengthen identity, language, and connection to community. These opportunities are essential to ensuring our children see themselves reflected in their learning and feel pride in who they are. We have been fortunate to have Johnny Henderson at the school sharing his gifts, knowledge, and time in support of our cultural programming. His presence and guidance are deeply valued and make a meaningful difference for our students and staff.

February also allowed us to focus on safety and preparedness, as we practiced our emergency procedures. While we hope we never need to use them, practicing ensures that students and staff feel confident and prepared.

One of the highlights of the month was our Family Literacy Night. It was wonderful to see families in the building, sharing a meal and spending time reading and learning together. Strong school-home partnerships make a tremendous difference in student success. We also recognized Pink Shirt Day as a school community, engaging in conversations and activities centred on kindness, inclusion, and standing up for one another. While we proudly wore pink, we reminded students that these actions must extend beyond one day. At Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School, we continue to ground ourselves in *Mayaxala* — treating one another with respect, dignity, and care — in our classrooms, on the playground, and throughout our community.



Our staff also engaged in important professional learning during our Pro-D Day with Len Pierre. His work around Indigenous Trauma & Equity Informed Practice challenged us to reflect deeply on our roles as educators and to continue strengthening our understanding, compassion, and practice in support of students and families.

Overall, February has been a month that reflects what makes our school special — strong relationships, rich learning experiences, cultural connection, and a shared commitment to our students.

Reed Allen - Principal

News from Karen

Yo Families and Caregivers,

As Spring Break is only a few weeks away, I want to wish everyone a safe and happy time together. The next few months are going to come quickly with many exciting events and learning for our students. We are excited to share that the following students had perfect attendance for the month of February.

Emelia, Nathaniel, Calai, Alice, Carey & Ta'nis!

Congratulations! Each student will receive a \$10.00 Co-op Card.

Over 126 GOTCHA tickets given out to students in the past two months, students being kind, helping and supporting each other! Here is one great helper - Phoenix C, always willing to help where needed. Such a superstar!



School Assessment Update:

As a school, we have been categorizing topics to develop our school goals based on information gathered during the assessment process. We will be sharing our goals with everyone in our next newsletter.

Reading Update:

We are very excited to share that our mid-year reading assessments indicate that all students have increased their reading outcomes. Two great ways to support your child with reading: 1) Read the TV: On television, turn off the sound, and turn on the closed captioning. Have your child read outloud the words they know. 2) Be the Teacher - as you read one of your child's books, ask him or her to follow along in the book and correct you if you make a mistake. At first, read slowly, and deliberately misread one word per sentence (at most). Prompt your child to fix your mistake. Gradually increase your reading speed and the number of mistakes per sentence.

Lyams's Grade 6/7 Class

Gilakas'la,

We have had an awesome and very full end to Term Two. This month, our class has been especially busy with meaningful learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. We have been focusing on building our reading stamina and comprehension skills, spending dedicated time each day strengthening our literacy. Students have shown great effort and growth in their reading confidence.

In addition, our class had the special opportunity to work with the Kindergarten and Pre-K classes to make hand drums. Our students demonstrated leadership, patience, and responsibility as they helped teach and guide the younger students through the process. We also carved our own drumsticks, continuing to build our skills and understanding of traditional art practices. It has been wonderful to see students take pride in their work and support one another.

We attended the Hope and Health event at PHSS, which provided valuable learning around wellness and community connections. To wrap up the term, we enjoyed a canoeing experience with the Kwalasta Health Centre team, strengthening teamwork skills while spending time on the water together.

Please continue to monitor the class Facebook page for updates regarding our upcoming class field trip and ongoing fundraising efforts. Thank you for your continued support — we are looking forward to an exciting Term Three!



Allyson's Grade 5/6 Class



Created by the students of Div 2

Deb's Grade 4/5

February was a full and engaging month in our Grade 4/5 classroom. Students continued their learning in Science, exploring the scientific study of fossils, plants, and animals. Through hands-on inquiry and discussion, they developed their understanding of life on Earth in the past and how evidence from the natural world helps us connect to our present environment, aligning with the BC Curriculum's focus on questioning, predicting, and analyzing evidence. In Literacy, students strengthened their ability to read and understand informational science texts. They practiced identifying key ideas, using text features, and gathering reliable information from a variety of sources. Students worked on building their critical thinking skills by learning how to determine whether a source is trustworthy and relevant to their research topics.

Our outdoor learning experiences provided meaningful connections to place-based learning. We spent an afternoon at Stories Beach with Fred Wilson, where students learned about clams and how local First Nations peoples traditionally used the land. This experience helped students understand the importance of stewardship, traditional knowledge, and respectful relationships with the land.

We explored the Quatse River with Jen's Grade 3/4 class. During this visit, Latisha shared the names of the trees in Bakwamk'ala, followed by students participating in a nature-inspired art activity.

Students also engaged in rich cultural learning opportunities throughout the month. They participated in drum-making with Robin and deepened their understanding of cedar, paddle-making, drawing, and painting with Latisha and Johnny Henderson. It has been wonderful to see students actively engaged in their learning, both in and out of the classroom.



Jen's Grade 2/3/4 Class



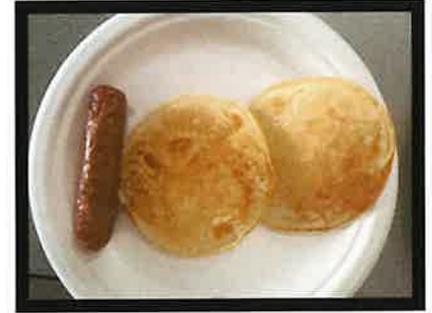
February Highlights in Grade 2/3/4 - Valentine's Day, where we shared treats and cards of love and endearment with each other! The 2026 Olympic Games where we watched highlights and both men's and ladies hockey games! Learning traditional practices from Johnny, Fred, and Robin. Drum making, cultural drawing and cedar processing and shell anatomy. Anti-Bullying day - learning about sprinkling kindness to all around us and that every kind act comes back to us like a boomerang!



Important Upcoming Dates
April 8
Mandatory Parent's Meeting
April 15-18
Camp Homewood Trip

Jackie's Grade 2/3 Class

Our 100th Day of School was a popping success!



Perseverance, Determination, and Indefatigability

Our class joined Allyson's Grade 5/6 class for a day hike on the Blinkhorn Trail ~ it was a test of problem-solving, grit, strength, and courage as we scaled steep inclines, rope climbed up and down a waterfall, and crossed bridges. Both classes agreed that the absolutely stunning view at the end was worth all the effort to get there!

The benefits of hiking are both physical and mental ~ it improves cardiovascular fitness and muscle strength, reduces stress, and enhances cognitive function.



Pure happiness!

Melanie's Grade 1 Class



This month has been a busy and meaningful one. We celebrated several special days, including Valentine's Day, 100's Day, and Pink Shirt Day. Our focus for February was "fostering kindness." The children were encouraged to carry out acts of kindness each day, and together we worked on respectful problem-solving. We also discovered that kindness is contagious; the more we share it, the brighter our light shines. We were also very lucky to have special opportunities in Culture this month with our quest, Johnny.

Sheri-An's Kindergarten Class

Gilakas'la! February has flown by and our days are getting brighter. Our salmon eggs hatched and are now fry, we will release them to the Quatse River before Spring Break. This month was filled with lessons of love, family and friendship. Students have also been learning about salmon and eagles. We were very fortunate to have the opportunity to make manatsi (drums) with Robin, Lyam and the grade 7 class. We will be making drumsticks after spring break and ganganangam will have the chance to use them in the gukwdzi before bringing them home.

Making manatsi.



kwisa



Lessons with Uncle Johnny.



Library Storytime with Myra



Love
ONE ANOTHER

Pink Shirt Day



Michelle's Pre-K Class: February

February was a month full of friendship, kindness and connection. We enjoyed some sun, some rain and even some snow! Grade 6 and 7 students helped each child to make a drum of their own, led by Teacher Lyam. The next step will be to make the sticks. Valentine's Day inspired friendly gestures between the students, and everyone felt so happy and proud to hand out their special Valentine cards. This week, the students received Pink T-shirts to honour the importance of being kind and creating a safe, bully-free world. Our class is a busy hub of creativity, interaction, and problem-solving. With each new day together, the children are strengthening their communication skills, and very sweet friendships are emerging. As always, we are so grateful to receive visits from elders Kathy Walkus, Mary George (Henderson), Mary Rufus, Mary MacDougall and Johnny Henderson, who share their wisdom, love and care with us all.



Robin's Bakwamkala Class

Gilakasda'xw'la!

This past month has been full of learning, leadership, and community connection. We hosted a drum-making workshop, where our senior students had the opportunity to assist and guide the younger students. Over two days, we crafted approximately 30 drums, and it was wonderful to see the pride and excitement on everyone's faces. The older students stepped up as leaders, sharing skills and encouraging their peers, which made the workshop a truly special experience for the whole community.

We also took time to celebrate Pink Shirt Day, talking with our students about kindness, respect, and standing up for one another. It was a meaningful reminder of the values that hold our community together and the importance of nurturing empathy in our young people. We are proud of all the students for their efforts and for showing up for each other with heart and dedication.

We look forward to more opportunities to learn, share, and grow together in the coming months.



Latisha's Culture Class

Gilakasda'xw'la Łi'laxwəl!

The g_in_in_am have been very busy with hands on projects lead by uncle Johnny Henderson. We are very blessed and grateful to have him teach us, share his life experience and his knowledge of our world, and our cultural ways of being through artistry, traditional harvesting and handling of our precious resources, carving and the list goes on. The kids grow in their creativity, their confidence to try new things, and to do their very best.

Your gifts begin to unfold and make themselves visible when you allow yourself the time, patience, and dedication to grow.

We are grateful to have a space where Uncle consistently holds and protects that truth for us.



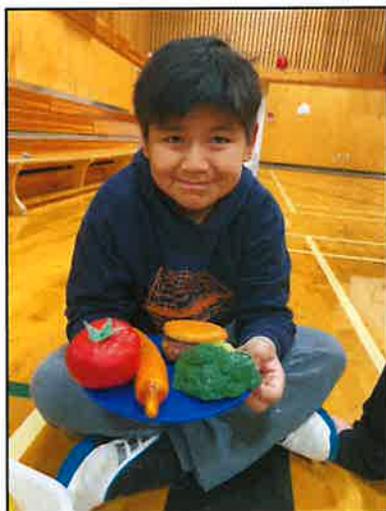
Sara's P.E. Class



During the month of February we focused on a few BIG learning areas, the first being the Olympics! Not only did we get to actively watch different sporting events in the gym but we also got to experience different sport-specific movements. To the right you will see Ricky doing an alpine skiing track and finishing off with a star spring board jump! Great form! Middle right you will see Rudy shooting a curling rock down the ice!



The next big learning focus was cooperation and kindness. On Pink Shirt Day the whole school took part in different challenges which required teamwork and communication skills. Top left you can see Naomi guiding the blindfolded Novah through a maze. They made it out confidently! Middle left a group of grade 2/3/4 students work together to move a big yoga ball from one end to the other using only their feet!



The last big focus was on food health. Students are learning through the Canada Food Guide and play different games to demonstrate their learning. Bottom left and right you can see Gary and Naomi holding a plate with 50% fruits and vegetables!



News from Heather

A lovely focus during this month has been to “Sprinkle Kindness!”

As well, we all know that conflict is a part of our lives at various times. It is important that we all know and recognize the difference between misunderstandings, conflict, and when someone’s actions are legitimately bullying.

Please encourage conversation about these distinctions :)

IS IT BULLYING?

Not everything that’s mean is actually bullying. Use the chart below to understand the difference between bullying, conflict, and a mean moment.

MEAN MOMENT

- One Time
- Hurtful
- On Purpose
- One Sided

CONFLICT

- Occasionally
- Hurtful
- On Purpose
- Both parties involved

BULLYING

- Repeatedly
- Hurtful
- On Purpose
- One Sided

News from Chef Sharon

Hello Everyone,

February was all about kindness which included polite manners in the breakfast and lunch line. Saying please and thank you to the cafeteria staff. It was very much appreciated.

March is Nutrition Month! We will be focusing on: Eating more fruits and vegetables and trying new healthy foods. As always we appreciate your support with the school food program. Have a happy and safe March break.

Thank you,
Sharon



School Activities



Been great having Johnny Henderson and Michael George share their gifts in our culture class!



Pink Shirt Activities: Assembly and shirt designers (Cristian and Karder)

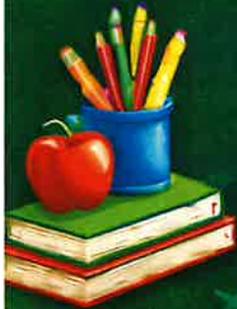


Literacy Night



We hosted a family evening full of literacy activities, food and a magician!

Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School



STUDENT-LED

CONFERENCES

MARCH 12

1:00 - 4:00 PM



Come Share Your Learning!

Students Dismissed at Noon





**Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'xw
School**

**SPRING
BREAK**

**Closed from
MARCH 16-27**



MARCH 2026

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 Div 1 Drug & Alcohol Awareness AM Div. 1 Canoeing PM Happy Birthday Jenna | 3 Swimming Preschool/ Kindergarten Div. 1 Galgapothla Gathering 10:00-1:00 | 4 Div. 6/7 Storey's Beach Happy Birthday Bobbi-Ann | 5 Happy Birthday Cameron | 6 Swimming K-7 Happy Birthday Royce | 7 |
| 8  Happy Birthday Bailey and Bentley | 9 Div. 6/7 Fish Release (AM) Div 2/5 Ledge Point PM Happy Birthday Rita | 10 Grade 7 PHSS Transition Day 1:00-3:00 PM Swimming Preschool/ Kindergarten | 11 Div. 3/4 Storey's Beach | 12 Student Led Conference/ Report Cards 1/2 day for students 12:00 Dismissal | 13 Swimming K-7 PJ Day! | 14 |
| 15 Happy Birthday Spruce, Simone, Shaylene | 16-20 No School-Spring Break | | | | | 21  Happy Birthday Kai |
| 22 | 23-27 No School-Spring Break | | | | | 28 |
| 29 | 30 School Reopens | 31 Swimming Preschool/ Kindergarten | 1 Div. 6/7 Storey's Beach | 2 | 3 Good Friday - School Closed | 4 Div 1 Lyam Div 2 Allyson Div 3 Deb Div 4 Jen Div 5 Jackie Div 6 Melanie Div 7 Sheri An Div 8 Michelle |