

# Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School Newsletter

*Strong Together In All We Do*



April 2026

Gilakas'la,

April has been a vibrant and well-rounded month at Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw School, filled with rich learning experiences, celebration, and community connection. It has been wonderful to see students engaged in so many opportunities both inside and outside the classroom.

Our students continued to grow through strong classroom learning, outdoor education, and cultural activities that remain central to who we are as a school. These experiences continue to strengthen identity, belonging, and connections to community.

A highlight this month was the field trip to Camp Homewood for our intermediate students. This was a meaningful opportunity for students to build independence, teamwork, and confidence while enjoying new experiences together outside of school.

We were also proud to host the premiere of the Gukwdzi video project, a powerful film featuring Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw community members reflecting on their journey toward a new Gukwdzi. This was a special and moving opportunity for students, staff, families, and community members to come together, honour this important work, and deepen understanding of the cultural and historical significance of this journey. Gilakas'la to Robin, Michelle and Dusty for putting this project together!

Our Annual Fun Fair was another wonderful success and a true highlight of the month. It was heartwarming to see so many families and community members come together for an evening of fun, laughter, and connection. Events like this remind us how strong our school community is when we come together.

April has reflected the balance we strive for at our school — strong academics, cultural learning, enrichment opportunities, and joyful community experiences. Thank you to our staff, students, families, and community members for making this such a positive and memorable month.

Reed Allen - Principal



A group of Grade 7 students went to Seven Hills to try golf for the first time.

# News from Karen

Yo Families and Caregivers,

April has flown by, and we are so excited for all the happenings in the school over the next few months.

In May, we will be welcoming the FNSA/FNESC School Assessment External Team, Megan and Randy. They will be spending two days visiting classrooms, speaking to staff, and parents. As we have shared in previous newsletters, over the past several months, we have now created three key goals to guide our work over the next four years.

## **Goal #1: Student Progress Reporting**

We will strengthen how we use Reading, Math and CAT4 data to guide instruction, with a goal that 85-90% of students will be meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations by Grade 7.

## **Goal #2 - Career Education and Counselling**

We will build a K-7 career awareness program by partnering with local businesses and community members to connect learning with real-world opportunities.

## **Goal #3 Leadership Program**

By Year 4, every student will have at least one leadership opportunity each year, building skills in responsibility, collaboration, and community.

Once we have completed the School Assessment, we will report out to the community. Have a wonderful month.

# Lyams's Grade 6/7 Class

Gilakas'la,

Gilakas'la, we have had a really positive and productive month. Students have been enjoying our outdoor education days and showing great teamwork and respect while learning on the land. We have also been working hard to complete our CAT 4 testing, and I am proud of the effort everyone has put in. We ended the month in a meaningful way—celebrating a few birthdays together and taking part in cutting fish in preparation for the Big House opening, which was a valuable cultural learning experience for our students.

Looking ahead to next month, we are excited for our upcoming field trip to Nanaimo, which will be a great opportunity for both learning and connection outside the classroom. I will be announcing a mandatory parent meeting soon to go over important details, expectations, and answer any questions. Thank you for your continued support—we are looking forward to another great month ahead.



# Allyson's Grade 5/6 Class

What a month we've had! Our classroom garden bed is officially underway—students planted peas, lettuce, and carrots and have been eagerly checking for sprouts. There's nothing quite like watching kids discover the magic of seeds becoming food. We dove deep into our solar system unit this month, exploring the planets and learning about humans in space. A highlight was following the Artemis II mission and discussing what it means for the future of space exploration. Your kids have some big dreams about exploring space! They spent three amazing days at Camp Homewood riding horses and canoeing, playing Mission Impossible, hitting targets and exploring their leadership skills with younger campers. We went on a memorable outdoor adventure to the Dakota plane crash site combining history, nature, and teamwork. Students experienced a live string quartet and were impressively attentive listeners at the concert. We are proud to report that our class gave 100% effort on the CAT 4 testing where they flexed their test taking muscles. Their focus and determination were outstanding. We are looking forward to a brilliant May!



# Deb's Grade 4/5 Class

April was an exciting month full of excitement and anticipation in our Grade 4/5 classroom. Students' classroom talk was largely on Camp Homewood!

Students continued their learning in Science, from palaeontology to anthropology! We have started a unit on the Yukon Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. Continuing with the theme of connecting the past to our present environment, aligning with the BC Curriculum.

Camp Homewood!!! Students, staff and volunteers alike had an amazing few days. Big thank-you to our parent volunteers! And the weather held up for us! Upon reflection by students on the overall experience, our board consisted of the following words: "kindness, laughter, love, acceptance, teamwork, learning, friendship, fun, happiness, positive attitude!"

With the weather so nice, the students have been enjoying our outdoor learning experiences at local beaches and parks, as well as our latest and must-do-again bubble gum blowing contests!

Students have also been engaged in rich cultural learning opportunities throughout the month, helping to prepare for the opening of Gukwdzi! They participated in jarring salmon, with Robin and deepened their understanding of beading and drawing, and painting with Latisha and Johnny Henderson.



# Jen's Grade 2/3/4 Class



Camp Homewood once again was an amazing experience for all our Ganganam and staff. Happy faces, full tummies, lots of connections with friends, tons of activities, and pushing ourselves to try something new. A huge thank you to our support staff, our bus driver Rick, and all our parent volunteers for making this trip so special. Shout out to Chelsey Johnny, Cassidy Dondaneau, Fred Wilson, Thomas Wamiss, and Diana Charlie. Gilakas'la!



Canoeing



Beach Combing



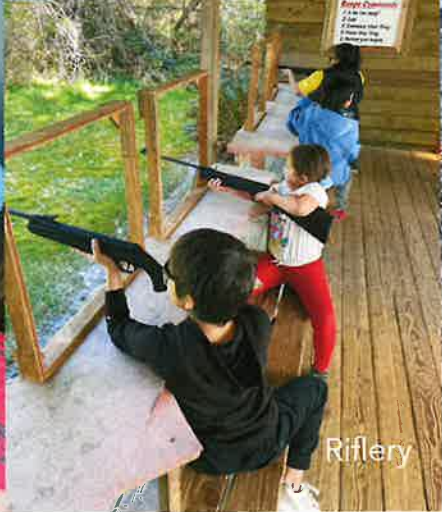
Horseback riding



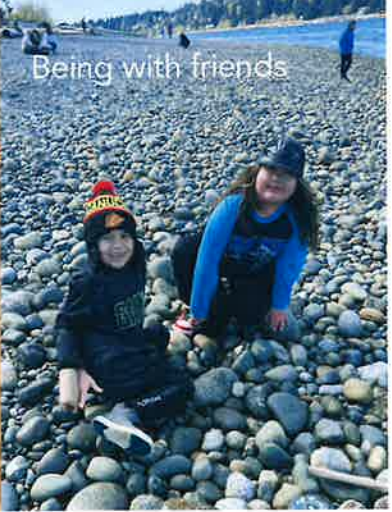
Rebecca Spit Outing



Bus ride home! So tired!!

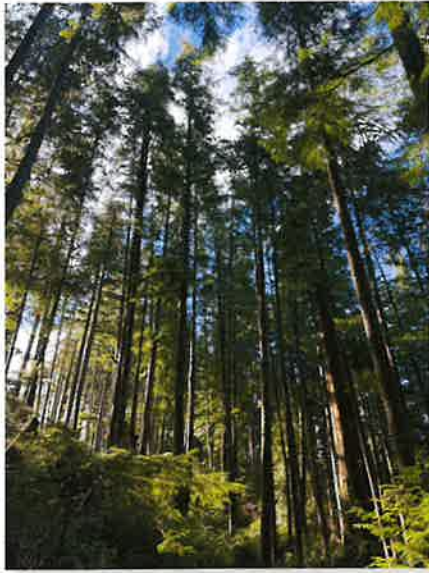


Riflery



Being with friends

# Jackie's Grade 2/3 Class



*“Roots of understanding grow deep when curious minds are nourished in nature.”*

*~ Nell Regan Kartychok*



# Melanie's Grade 1 Class

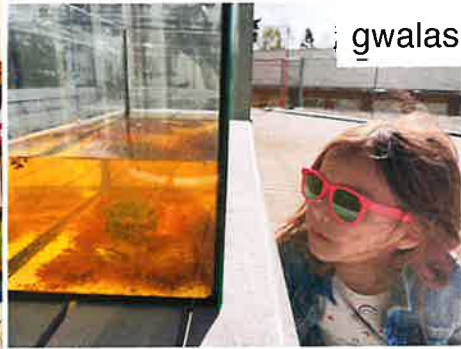


This month was busy! We celebrated Easter, enjoyed the fun fair, and, most importantly, honoured Earth Day. We learned how important it is to keep our *awinagwis* healthy and balanced for the well-being of all living things. Together, we explored ways we can help protect and heal the environment. We also took advantage of the lovely weather and spent lots of time in nature, relishing all of its wonders.

# Sheri-An's Kindergarten Class

Gilakas'la! April has flown by and the gāngānanam are looking forward to all of the exciting animals that will be joining us in May. We began the month releasing our salmon fry in the Quatse River. We have been learning about oviparous animals and are witnessing the life cycle of frogs and chickens in our class. Our frogs eggs have hatched and we are awaiting the hatching of our salamanders. Our chicks are expected to hatch after May long weekend. Gāngānanam are preparing for the gukwdzi opening during culture classes and this week are participating in making jarred fish to be used as gifts for the big house opening. Stay tuned for all of our babies in May!

Balloon Room



gwalas



kalxa'mina



Salmon release

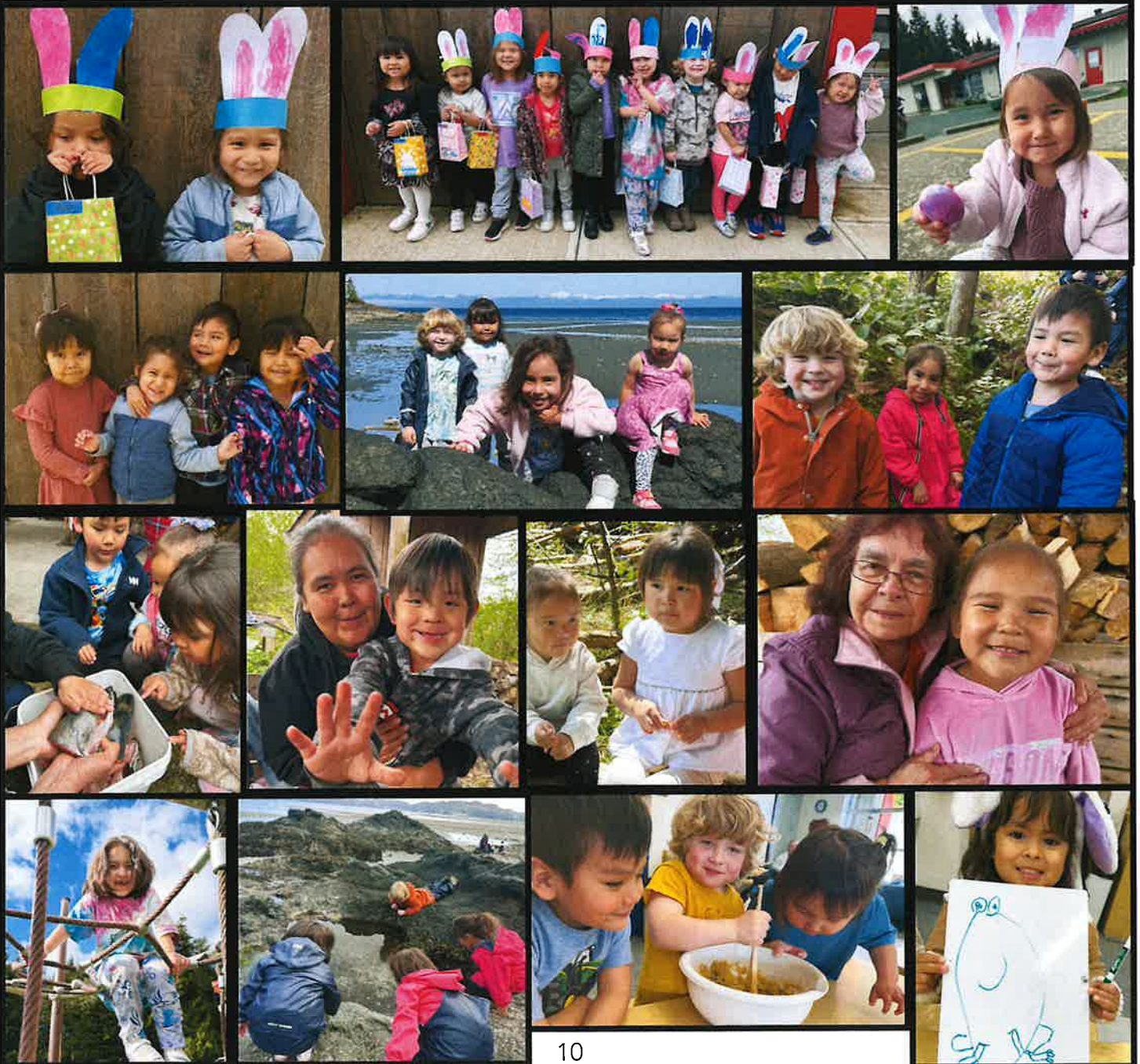


Tłubakw



# Michelle's Pre-K Class: April

Gāngānānām returned from Spring Break this month with great enthusiasm, and they have grown taller! We coloured eggs in a fizzy science experiment, and the children bunny-hopped through the halls on an Easter scavenger hunt. With the sunny weather arriving, we have been walking to the tāsagwis and the atī, and spending time in the garden getting ready for spring planting. Watering the vegetables in the greenhouse is an important job that the children enjoy. Our classroom is alive with curiosity, big feelings, sweet interactions and learning through play. Quiet book time is actually the loudest time of the day, as the children have so much to say to each other. Looking ahead, we have 6 more weeks of school before



# Robin's Bakwamkala Class

Gilakas'da'xw'la. April has been an uplifting month filled with connection, celebration, and community spirit. As the weather begins to warm and the days grow longer, it has been wonderful to see more families spending time at the school and joining in our activities. Your presence brings such positive energy.

One of the highlights this month was our Fun Fair. It was a great success, filled with laughter, games, and smiles all around. A special thank you goes out to the many community members who generously donated cakes for the cake walk.

We also hosted the film premiere of *Kwekwalas: A Story of Resilience*. It was a powerful event celebrating the journeys and stories of our Elders and loved ones. Our community came together to uplift and honour these voices.

Another important experience this month was Fish Camp. Together, we prepared for the opening of the Gukwdzi by jarring fish and making t̄ubakw. It was inspiring to see so many community members come out to support and help with the fish processing. These moments of working together, sharing knowledge, and continuing our traditions are so special for everyone involved.



# Latisha's Culture Class

Gilakasda'xw'la Łi'laxw<sub>ł</sub>,

The ginginanam have been busy in culture preparing for the big house opening through dance practice, learning our songs and where it originates from, as well as creatively through hands on art projects like beading and working on cedar with uncle Johnny Henderson Sr.



We have been exploring and expanding on our language learning for fish processing — including the tools we use to bbq fish, the parts of the fish, salmon life cycle, as well as how we are supposed to respect our precious resources that our ancestors were first blessed with. Gilakas'la from the culture room!



# Sara's P.E. Class



During our recent Physical Education unit, students explored the exciting world of gymnastics. Throughout the unit, we focused on developing three key areas: flexibility, strength, and balance. Students participated in a variety of activities that encouraged them to stretch their muscles, build core strength, and improve their ability to stay steady and controlled in different positions.

Using the school's gymnastics equipment—such as mats, balance beams, and bars—students practiced skills in a safe and supportive environment. They showed great enthusiasm as they learned new movements, challenged themselves, and built confidence in their abilities. It was wonderful to see their progress as they worked both independently and with partners to develop their skills.



Top left: Merrill balancing unassisted on the balance beam

Top middle: Roscoe demonstrating his core strength and coordination during a back fall

Top right: Willis navigating through obstacles on the climbing wall

Bottom middle: Colleen swinging confidently on the ropes

# News from Heather

This past month, like every month it seems, has been a busy one! The Learning Support Room has welcomed professionals for assessments, reports, vaccinations, eye exams, and our general student services! Please contact me at the school if you have any questions about how I can help support your students! Enjoy the sunshine!!!

**SPRING**  
WORD SEARCH

T	E	G	G	S	X	T	T	B	V
Q	V	G	E	P	P	C	S	L	B
W	T	B	L	C	O	O	M	O	C
N	I	U	A	H	G	R	A	S	S
M	M	G	E	I	O	A	Z	S	C
R	U	S	B	C	J	I	L	O	P
K	D	D	E	K	B	N	R	M	N
C	W	O	R	M	S	P	C	O	E
T	A	U	F	L	O	W	E	R	S
V	C	S	F	E	Z	G	Y	B	T

BLOSSOM  
BUGS  
FLOWERS  
RAIN  
MUD  
EGGS  
NEST  
CHICK  
WORMS  
GRASS

The graphic features a large, bubbly 'SPRING' title with a smiling cloud raining to its right. Below the title is a 10x10 grid of letters for a word search. To the right of the grid is a vertical list of spring-related words. At the bottom, there are three simple line drawings: a ladybug on the left, a worm in the middle, and a flower on the right.

# News from Chef Sharon

Happy Spring Everyone!

April has been a wonderful month in our cafeteria. We welcome the longer days and so many signs of spring. The kids were able to play outside more with the sunny days we had. We have noticed that when they come in at lunch time they are ready to eat a nourishing meal that helps them have extra fuel for learning and creativity.



We had a great turn out for Fun Fair, food brings people together, and sharing meals is an important way to connect. Great memories for everyone.

Thank you to all our students, families & staff for all your support.

Sharon



# Fun Fair



Our annual Fun Fair is a much-loved school tradition that brings together students, families, staff, and community for an evening of fun and connection. With games, activities, food, and the popular cake walk, the Fun Fair helps build school spirit while creating joyful memories for our children. It is also a wonderful example of community coming together to support the school and celebrate our students.



# Fish Processing



Students have been learning traditional ways of processing salmon, including cutting, bbqing, and jarring, as part of hands-on cultural learning. Through this work, they are gaining important knowledge connected to food preparation, sharing, and tradition. The salmon they prepared will be gifted during the Gukwdzi opening in June, reflecting the values of generosity and community.



# April Birthdays

Happy birthday to: Tris, Tyla, Justice, Lennox, Skyler, Terry and Darryl



# NOTICE TO FAMILIES

## IMPORTANT SCHEDULE REMINDERS

**THURSDAY,  
MAY 7**



**HALF DAY**  
FOR PRE-K AND  
KINDERGARTEN  
STUDENTS



PLEASE ARRANGE  
FOR PICKUP AT  
**12:00 P.M.**

*Thank you for your support!*

**FRIDAY,  
MAY 8**



**NO SCHOOL**  
FOR ALL STUDENTS

SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED  
FOR A PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT DAY.

Our staff will be engaged in learning  
and planning to support student success.



Thank you for your understanding and support.  
**Together, we support our students!**

..... **GWA'SALA-'NAKWAXDA'XW** .....  
..... **SCHOOL** .....



# MAY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>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</p>				<p>Half day for Pre K and K Students</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Swimming K-7</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Happy Birthday Charlie</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Div. 1 &amp; 2 Outdoor Learning 9:30 Cluxewe</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Pre-K &amp; K Swimming</p> <p>RCMP Bike Rodeo</p> <p>Fire Drill</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Div. 3/4 Outdoor Ed 1:00</p> <p>Happy Birthday Tyson</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Div.1 Seaweed Gathering</p> <p>John Gogo Performance 11 am</p> <p>Happy Birthday Irene, Gage and Teacher Sara</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Pro-D Day No School For Students</p> <p>Happy Birthday Katerina</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Happy Birthday Ricky</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Pre-K &amp; K Swimming</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Div. 6/7 Storey's Beach 1:00</p> <p>Happy Birthday Nova</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Class Photos</p> <p>Happy Birthday Patricia</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Swimming K-7</p> <p>Happy Birthday Teacher Michelle</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>No School!</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Pre-K &amp; K Swimming</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Div. 1 - Nanaimo Trip</p> <p>Div. 3/4/5 Lady Ellen Point - All Day</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Div 6/7 Boat Trip</p> <p>Happy Birthday Christine</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Swimming K-7</p> <p>Happy Birthday Mr. Allen</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Happy Birthday Noah</p>
<p>24/31</p> <p>Happy Birthday Willis (31st)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Div. 1 - Mowi Trip Div 5 Tex Lyon (All Day)</p> <p>Happy Birthday VP Karen</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Pre-K &amp; K Swimming</p> <p>Parents/ Student Breakfast 8:30 - 9:15</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Div. 6/7/8 Storey's Beach 1:00</p> <p>Happy Birthday Maverick</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Swimming K-7</p> <p>Happy Birthday Tiffany</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Happy Birthday Merrill</p>