



Columneetza Junior Secondary School February 2026 Newsletter

Newsletters are posted to the school website at the beginning of each month. Please bookmark our website for this, focus area posts, news and more!
www.cjs.sd27.bc.ca

Important Dates

- Feb. 2 Semester 2 / Start of Expo 5
- Feb. 9 Real Acts of Caring (RAC) Week
- Feb. 12 Grade 8-9 Learning Updates go home, Valentine's Dance – 6-8:30
- Feb. 13 Pro-D (no school)
- Feb. 16 Family Day Stat (no school)
- Feb. 19 Gr. 7 TRU Youth in Trades
- Feb. 23 PAC Meeting, 5:30pm
- Feb. 25 **Pink Shirt Day**

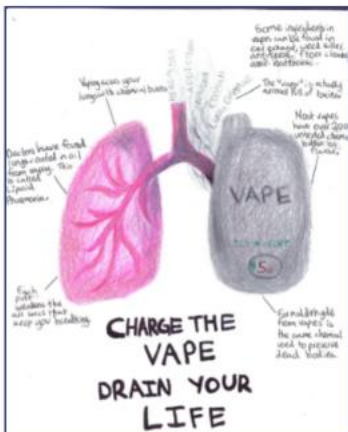
ERASE Information for Caregivers: Caregiver resources can be found at: [erase for Adults - Province of British Columbia](#). ERASE posters are in classrooms and posted around the school.

Please bookmark and check out these **FREE sessions/information** from ERASE:

1. Establishing Safe, Caring & Respectful Digital Communities, [FREE Upcoming Remote Sessions](#) – Next session is **March 11, 2026** at 6:30pm.
2. Establishing Family Practices for Safeguarding Against Cyberbullying and Sextortion, [FREE Upcoming Remote Sessions](#) – Next session is **February 18, 2026** at 6:30pm.
3. Raising Digitally Responsible Youth: A Guide for Parents and Caregivers, [FREE Digital Download](#) (this guide will be continually updated by Safer Schools Together)

Closed Campus – Columneetza is a closed campus. If students need to leave the school, they must sign out at the office with the school secretary so that the school knows where they are or be on an approved list (parent permission) for the day or year. We have lunch food available daily, a healthy vending machine that accepts debit and drinks sold at the Falcon's Nest. Clubs are beginning at lunch time as well. *Reminder: There is **no supervision** once students leave school grounds. We have firm expectations that if parents agree their youth can be in the community they are upholding the Code of Conduct and displaying community citizenship.*

School Messenger: Columneetza uses School Messenger automatic callout module. The program is linked to MyEd BC and sends out emails, phone calls and messages to parents whose children did not go to class for that morning or afternoon (unexcused absence). Parents can respond in kind to the message indicating that the child is away. The system also allows parents to indicate that their child will be away for the day by calling 1 (833) 582-6944, using the phone app, website login or calling the school. <https://go.schoolmessenger.com>



Beyond the Buzz 2.0 Winners - Interior Health (IH) is pleased to announce the winners of this year's Beyond the Buzz 2.0: Youth Voices on Substance Use poster contest. By using impactful peer-to-peer messaging based on their real-life experiences and perspectives, youth across the region are empowered to make positive and informed decisions. **To view the winning posters, learn more about the poster contest, and find substance use information for youth, visit:**

<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/information-for/youth/beyond-the-buzz-contest>

New Resource: Honest, Youth-Friendly Info About Drugs - Interior Health has launched a new online hub designed to help young people access reliable, easy-to-understand information about substances. The site offers practical guidance and connects youth with supports available in their communities. **Explore the resource:**

<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/information-for/youth/get-to-know-more-about-drugs>



Eating Disorders Awareness Week - Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Week (Feb 1–7) is a province-wide campaign put on by EmbodyBC and the National Eating Disorder Information Center (NEDIC) to raise awareness about eating disorder prevention, early intervention, and treatment. If you suspect your child may be struggling with disordered eating or an eating disorder, you'll want to attend this upcoming event:

- For Families: [A Conversation About Eating Disorders](#) – join the free online webinar to find ways to support those who are navigating the challenges of a child's eating disorder.
 - o February 4 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm PST, register [HERE](#)



ADHD for Parents and Caregivers: Webinar Series - BC Children's Hospital ADHD Clinic and the Kelty Centre hosted a learning event designed to support parents of children with ADHD, covering topics like ADHD basics, self-regulation, behaviour at school, and medication. If you missed it, the speaker sessions available now: [ADHD for Parents and Caregivers: Webinar Series | Kelty Mental Health](#)

The Truth about SAD: Seasonal Affective Disorder - Between colder, wetter weather and less light – keeping your own and your family's well-being top of mind can take a little extra effort. [Check out this article](#) from Kelty Mental Health a *few tips you can put in place* to make the chilly season a bit easier.

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 988 Call or text for a safe place to talk, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

BC Lung Foundation: Tobacco, Vaping & Cannabis resources. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

Food Available at School:

Breakfast for Learning – breakfast food is available 5 days a week from 8:10-8:40am.

Lunch Schedule:

Monday – wrap/sandwiches, \$2.00/half

Tuesday - PB & J, fruit, yogurt, granola bars, hard boiled eggs

Wednesday - pizza, \$2.00/slice

Thursday - PB & J, fruit, yogurt, granola bars, hard boiled eggs

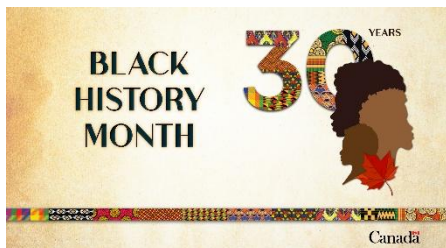
Friday – wraps/sandwiches, \$2/half

Financial assistance for lunches is available. Students or parents can ask any staff member or the office how to access support. Every day of the week, additional snack food will be available in the Cultural Room (Room 144) for students to access if needed.

Learning Updates (Report Cards): All Semester One (grade 8/9) Learning Updates will be available on February 12th in the Parent Portal on MyEducation. If you need a printed copy, please call the office and we will print one for you. Click [HERE](#) for instructions on accessing the Learning Updates. Please note that MyEd requires parents to reset their Portal password every 90 days, click [HERE](#) to reset.

Semester 2 Begins! Students and Parents - Classes are in session now for Semester 2 and class changes will only be for exceptional circumstances. Most classes are full. Your child can request an appt. with the counselor if needed.

Free e-library for Columneetza students: Students can access this e-library from school or home, on their computer, Apple/Android phone, or tablet. There are hundreds of audiobooks, fiction & non-fiction books, and magazines. Just download the free Sora app, find our library (British Columbia Interior/North K-12 Shared Digital Collection), select "Columneetza", and sign in using your school username and password. If you can't find the audiobooks/books you were hoping for, just drop by the Columneetza library – we may be able to add them to the collection. Please call the Teacher-Librarian Ms. Vachon at 250-392-4158 if you have any questions.



Columneetza recognizes **Black History Month** - Each February, people across Canada participate in Black History Month events and celebrations that honour the legacy and contributions of Black people in Canada and their communities. The 2026 theme for Black History Month is: "[30 Years of Black History Month: Honouring Black Brilliance Across Generations — From Nation Builders to Tomorrow’s Visionaries.](#)" This theme celebrates three decades of Black History Month in Canada by highlighting the enduring contributions of Black Canadians across time. It acknowledges the foundational role of nation builders—those who

fought for civil rights, advanced social justice, and shaped Canada’s cultural and political landscape. At the same time, it looks forward to tomorrow’s visionaries, the emerging leaders, innovators, and changemakers who are redefining excellence in every field.



Columneetza also would like to recognize **Lunar New Year – The Year of the Fire Horse!** – Lunar New Year, often called the Spring Festival or Chinese New Year, is the most important holiday in China and Chinese communities around the world. It is not only celebrated in China. Vietnam, Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore also celebrate the Lunar New Year holiday. The two-week celebration includes family and friends, feasting and fireworks, parties and parades.

Bus Passes: Just a reminder that students who are registered bus riders should have their bus passes with them when they ride. If your child loses or damages their bus pass, replacement cards can be purchased from the office for a replacement fee of \$10.

Student Leadership presents: Valentines Day Dance! Thursday February 12th we'll be hosting a school dance in the cafeteria. The theme is Dress to Impress (Duo Edition), and the space will be fully decorated similar to last year (*but with less Scotch tape*). Similar to last year, we'll have door prizes, popcorn, pizza, and hopefully the Polaroid station again.

Floor hockey intramurals are underway and run through the last week of February.

Student Council: Our *student council* has organized a candygram sales, each lunch hour leading up to Valentine’s Day. All profits will go directly to the Columneetza Playground Fundraiser. Thanks for supporting!

Wear Seasonal Clothing – Be Prepared! Students and caregivers: as the cooler and sometimes wetter weather begins to make an appearance, we are asking for students to ensure they are wearing weather appropriate clothing to school so that they can be outside during classes and scheduled breaks. We want to get outside for learning! **It is also important students using the gymnasium and weight room have a pair of clean, indoor shoes at school.** *If you need help with purchasing winter clothing for your child(ren), please contact the school.*



Please DONATE! Shoe Lending Shelf: We are actively seeking donations of good quality used or new shoes in all adult sizes, men’s or women’s, to have students borrow from our lending shelf in the gym. For several reasons students sometimes don’t have a pair of indoor CLEAN shoes to participate. This helps! We sanitize them just like the bowling alley. Please bring donations to the office or directly to Mr. Gainer. Questions?

Tanner.gainer@sd27.bc.ca



Student Learning Survey 2025/2026: The Provincial Student Learning Survey is unique in its scope, size and usefulness to schools. It gathers information from parents/guardians/caregivers, teachers, and students on topics related to school environment, safety, and achievement. The information is used for planning in individual schools and provides a district and provincial perspective. Early in 2026 the Student Learning Survey will be administered to students in grades 4/7/10/12, their parents/guardians/caregivers, and all school staff. We encourage parents/guardians/caregivers to participate in this survey, as the results are important in identifying and celebrating current strengths, as well as determining where the school needs to focus improvement. The survey can be completed electronically and can be accessed on the Internet at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/student-learning-survey>. On the login page, click on the Parents icon, and then select the school district and school name where your child attends school. The e-survey site will be open until May 1, 2026. If you have any questions, please contact the school.

Parent Advisory Council: Thank you to the parents that attended the last meeting. 2025-2026 PAC Executive: Don Firth, President, Mariana Hobi, Vice-President & DPAC, Melanie Engelbrecht (lcsspac@gmail.com), and Treasurer, Barbara Hooker. The meetings are usually held on the third Monday of each Month starting at 5:30pm in the Library. **NEXT MEETING: PAC Budget Meeting - February 23rd @ Columneetza Campus Library – 5:30pm. Mark your calendars** for upcoming 2025/2026 MEETINGS: Feb 23rd, March 30th, April 20th, May 25th, none in June.

Code of Conduct: Our School Code of Conduct is a living document that we continually amend and adapt to ensure our school is safe and student expectations are clear. We encourage feedback from parents to ensure our Code of Conduct is clear and helps guide student behaviour. Please become familiar with our Code of Conduct and contact school administration with any questions or comments. You can find our COC on the website: [Columneetza-Code of Conduct](#).

Steps to Resolve Concerns: If you have concerns with a situation at the school there are steps to follow to ensure your concern is dealt with efficiently and properly. Please refer to [Steps to Resolve Concerns](#) for more information.

[ERASE = Expect Respect & A Safe Education](#): Students can report a problem or find help; parents can explore resources and access training, and school staff can find resources for their classrooms and the school. **ERASE posters are in classrooms and posted around the school.**

Columneetza School Website: [Home - Columneetza Junior Secondary](#)



Facebook Page: "Columneetza Junior Secondary School"

Please follow us on Facebook for celebrations of learning, student of the week, and reminders.

Team Directory	
Leadership Team Holly Zurak, Principal Matt Cullum, Vice-Principal Alina Cameron, Vice-Principal	Clerical Team Liz Crosina, Office Front Desk Dorothy Mundy, Office Records & Registration Ann Bailey, Office Finance
Columneetza Indigenous Support Workers George Fraser Jordy Moise Katrina Wilde Youth Engagement Worker Courtney Mailhot	Counselling Team Jon Harding Tara Burtenshaw