

## WCOS SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Council meetings are open to parents/guardians of WCOS students, and we encourage all parents/guardians to attend. Our next meeting will be held virtually on April 25th @5:30pm. Please call the school at (403)843-4447 for the meeting link.

### West Country Outreach School Council Members:

- Chairperson-Michelle Stevens
- Vice Chairperson-Carrie Vaartstra
- Secretary-Debra Benusic
- Treasurer-Charlotte Smith
- WCOS Staff Representatives -Ms. Alva Holliday, Mrs. Natalya Agafonov
- Student Representatives-Kimberly Vaartstra, Kyler Stevens

## Teacher Talk with Mr. Robertson

### Wolf Creek Land Acknowledgment

"We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory and we recognize all the many First Nations, Metis, Inuit and non-First Nations whose footsteps have marked these lands." Every Friday on our school year calendar that is labeled as a "Staff Collaboration Day" begins with the Land Acknowledgment above. Acknowledging territory shows recognition of and respect for Aboriginal Peoples and recognizes their presence both in the past and the present. Recognition and respect are essential elements of establishing healthy, reciprocal relationships.

Following the Land Acknowledgment, we move to a Talking Circle. This is a First Nations practice that encourages dialogue, respect, and social discourse. The energy created from using this respectful approach to talking with others give us a sense of being connected we don't often find in common methods of communication. When everyone has their turn to speak, when all voices are heard in a respectful and attentive way, the Talking Circle becomes a rich source of information, identity, and interaction. Talking Circles originated with First Nations leaders - the process was used to ensure that all leaders in the tribal council were heard, and that those who were speaking were not interrupted. Usually the Chief would initiate the conversation, with other members responding and sharing their perceptions and opinions of the topic under discussion. The process provides an excellent model for interaction within the school. At West Country Outreach School, the staff performs Talking Circles by passing a rock to the left, only one person speaks at a time, and there is always the right to pass. We have learned a great deal about each other through this activity this year and had some great fun together. Some of the discussion topics have included:

- What superpower would we like to have, and why?
- What is the best laugh we can remember?
- What is your favourite movie, and why?



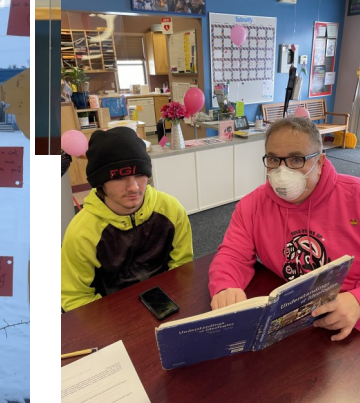
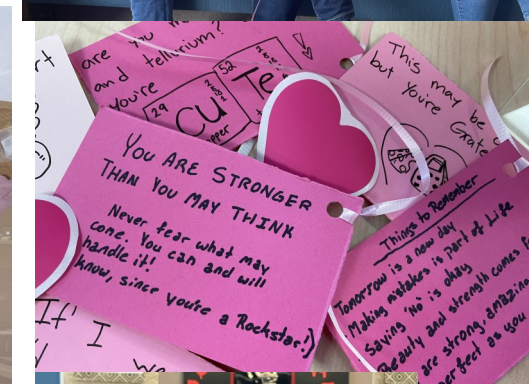
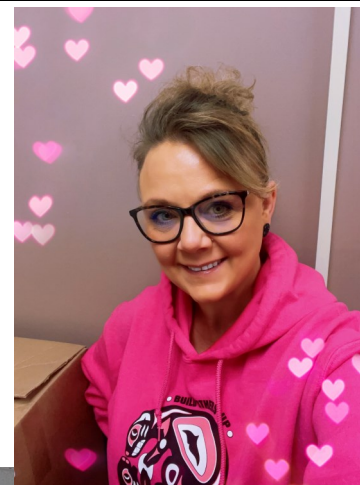
To instill hope and inspire success  
for all learners.



# Raven's Nest



March 2022







**Meet Our Staff—Mr. Robertson**

If I ever slip into my Scottish accent, please understand that I come by that very honestly. My parents were both born in the Glasgow area, and my dad still sounds like he left Scotland yesterday. I was born in Dover, England and lived there until just shy of my third birthday when my parents moved to Nanaimo, BC. My little brother (also a teacher) was born a couple of years later, rounding out the Robertsons. I grew up in a small Vancouver Island town called Nanoose Bay, graduating high school at Ballenas Secondary in Parksville. After many years of university that had me studying at Malaspina College, UVIC, and Simon Fraser, I became a certified teacher.

I will never forget my first subbing job in Campbell River, BC. It was Halloween Day, and I was in the Drama room. Chaos ensued. In my first three years teaching I taught Math, Drama, SS, Science, and French, took a couple of turns as Santa, and once supervised an entire school dance in an Easter Bunny costume.

I moved to Alberta in 1998, where I taught grades 3-5 at Zama City School. The following year I was hired as the principal in Zama, and taught grades 4-7 with 9 students. That was an eye-opening experience that helped prepare me for what was to come. After that year, I taught at a predominantly Mennonite school in a community called Blue Hills. While there I had my first experience driving on an ice bridge. There are things people are meant to do, and that is NOT one of them. In 2001, I started working at Rimbey Junior Senior High School, where I stayed for 4 years. And in 2005 I moved to West Country Outreach School. I feel like everything I've learned throughout my career about working with kids, adjusting to the student's needs, and meeting people where THEY are at, is finally serving me and the community perfectly. I love our little school, and the thought of being anywhere else pains me.

Outside of school, I have three wonderful children who fill my life with love and joy. We enjoy reading together, going to movies, Broadway theatre, baking, Shakespeare in the park, concerts, and anything that makes us laugh. Top of our list though is a love of reading. We keep the town library hopping with all of our requests and will share our favorite reads with one another. We can spend hours in Chapters just wandering. For fun, I enjoy soccer, baseball, travel, and listening to my records or CDs. There is always music playing in my house.

