

JUNE 2026

SPARKS NOTES

Principal's Message

Welcome to June — an exciting, busy, and celebratory time at SESS. As we enter the final month of the school year, we have much to be proud of. Our staff have created countless opportunities for students to learn, grow, and connect, and our students have continued to rise to the occasion.

The final day of high school classes is June 19. Secondary Exams and Final Assessment Days will take place June 22–24. Students are only expected to attend if they are writing an assessment or completing outstanding “I” work. Assessment schedules will be posted throughout the school.

Students who are unsuccessful in courses will be contacted by teachers, and counsellors will complete rescheduling for the 2026–27 school year by June 25. We are hopeful that high school schedules for next year will be available on MyEd next week, allowing time for review and course change requests.

For our elementary learners, the final day of school is June 25. We will celebrate the year with our final elementary assembly and a special farewell to our Grade 7 students as they prepare for high school. An invitation with more details will be sent to families closer to the date.

June is packed with field trips, celebrations, learning opportunities, and special events. Elementary students will also participate in a swimming program throughout the month. Please watch for permission slips coming home and return them promptly so students can take part in these experiences.

As graduation approaches, we encourage our Grade 12 students to stay engaged, attend regularly, and finish their high school journey with pride and purpose. Congratulations to the Class of 2026 — we are incredibly proud of you.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our many community partners who enrich the educational experiences of our students. From warm muffins, apple deliveries, fishing experiences, knitting projects, swimming opportunities, and greenhouse partnerships to cultural learning and hands-on expertise, your generosity makes a tremendous difference. Thank you to Ntamtqen Band School, the Keremeos Rec Centre and pool staff, All Plants R Us, Don & Anna's Greenhouse, our many local experts, and the many community members who continue to support SESS in countless ways. We are deeply grateful.

June is one of the busiest months of the year, but also one of the most rewarding. Thank you to our students, staff, families, and community for another wonderful year together. I am grateful to be part of the SESS family and look forward to finishing the year strong.

Stacey Smith

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Important Dates: June

3 Indigenous Grad @ Ashnola Pow Wow Grounds 5:00

4 Final Band Concert @ 6:00

5 Elementary District Track Meet

5 Alice#Wonderland - Play @ 7:00

9 Fishing Club to Maron Valley

10 Storm the Wall @ OSS

11 Grade 4 Transition Day

12 Restoration Celebration @ Ashnola Pow Wow Grounds

17 Grades 5/6 to Loco Landing

18 High School Awards Night @ 5:00

19 Elementary Sports Day

19 End of Term - Secondary

19 National Indigenous Day

22 Sec Exam & I Day

23 Sec Exam & I Day

24 Sec Exam & I Day

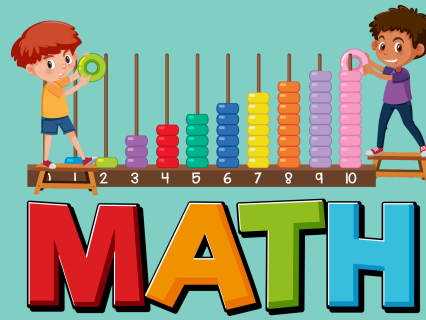
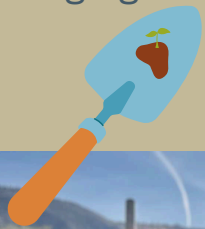
24 Grad Walk and Rehearsal

25 Elem Year End Assembly

25 Graduation Ceremony @ 5:00

Culture, Conversation and Community

Our indigenous advocates alongside Jenny Martin hosted an amazing day in the SESS garden for culture, conversation and community. There was some delicious food, baby chicks, beautiful conversation, and a real sense of belonging.



Come Count with Me



Our grade 5/6 teachers invited students and families from grade 4-7 to play some math games, eat some pizza, and have so much fun! Thank you so much to those families who came to support our math program and our students. It was a fantastic evening! Thank you to Melia Dirk, our district V.P. of Early Learning for organizing.





Grad 2026 Update

The finish line is in sight for our incredible SESS Grads, and excitement is building as they prepare to celebrate the end of their high school journey!

Over the past few weeks, our graduating students have been busy finalizing details for their ceremony and other special events. They just returned from an amazing Grad Trip to Vancouver where they visited the PNE, the aquarium, and stayed at the Capilano Camp. Thank you to Ms. Bumstead, Mr. Collins, and Ms. Bidoka for chaperoning!

The grads' hard work, commitment, and perseverance are paying off, and we couldn't be more proud of how far they've come.

Just a reminder of important upcoming events for Grads:

June 24th - Grad Walk 9:00-12:00

June 24th - Grad Rehearsal 1:00-2:40 (mandatory attendance)

June 25th - Graduation Ceremony @ 5:00 (Grads must be in the Cafeteria at 4:00)



Revitalizing Our School Garden: A Blooming Success!

We're thrilled to share some exciting news: the school garden is alive and thriving once again! Thanks to the hard work of students, staff and generous community members, our outdoor learning space has been transformed into a vibrant, productive garden that's already making an impact on our school community.

The first step in the garden's makeover was replenishing the beds with rich, nutrient-packed soil. Staff members, led by Ms. Anderson, worked alongside student and community volunteers to remove old debris and spread fresh and organic topsoil, ensuring the garden has a healthy foundation for years to come. This new soil has already made a difference, helping young seedlings take root and thrive.

Our garden wouldn't be nearly as lush without the incredible support from local families and businesses. Community members donated a wide variety of plants—from tomatoes and kale to watermelon and herbs. Each donation has added unique beauty and biodiversity to the space. Students have taken ownership of watering, weeding, and caring for the plants, learning valuable lessons in responsibility and sustainability along the way.

The revitalized garden is more than just a green space—it's a living classroom. Teachers are incorporating the garden into lessons on science, nutrition, art, and ecology. A special thank you to Ms. Heidi Anderson and Ms. Jenny Martin for playing a key role in the garden development.





Celebrating Indigenous Graduates

On June 3rd, Indigenous Graduates from across School District 53 will come together with their families and friends for a special celebration honouring their achievements. This meaningful event recognizes the hard work, resilience, and success of Indigenous students as they prepare to take the next steps in their journeys.

We are proud to share that many of these graduates are from Similkameen Elementary Secondary School (SESS). It will be a day filled with pride, cultural recognition, and community spirit.

Thank you to all of the members of the Indigenous Education team who help to organize this wonderful event.

To all the SESS graduates of Indigenous ancestry, your accomplishments are inspiring, and we look forward to seeing the bright futures you will create. Well done, graduates!



Sparks of the Month



Although not all pictured, Simona Bent Arrow, Harlen Amos, Alexis Abbott, Wyatt Beynon, Spencer Haro, Lacey Kerr, and Yuvraj Brar were celebrated at our Elementary Month-End assembly for being Sparks of the Month. Well done!

Bus Registration

Any new student registrations or address changes for the bus for 2026-2027 can be done via the form on our page starting June 1.

<https://www.sd53.bc.ca/apps/pages/studenttransportation>



Attendance matters



Regular attendance is the key to your child's success at school. Chronic absences make it difficult for students to learn the necessary skills to be successful, and they also put a lot of pressure on staff to support students who miss a significant amount of in-class learning. This year we are focusing on attendance, and our priority will be communicating with families about the importance of students consistently showing up each day. Our automated callout system is used to notify secondary parents each evening if a student has an unexcused absence. A reminder that if your child misses school due to illness or a family commitment, then a parent or guardian must contact the school to excuse the absence.

What Has Been Happening at SESS!

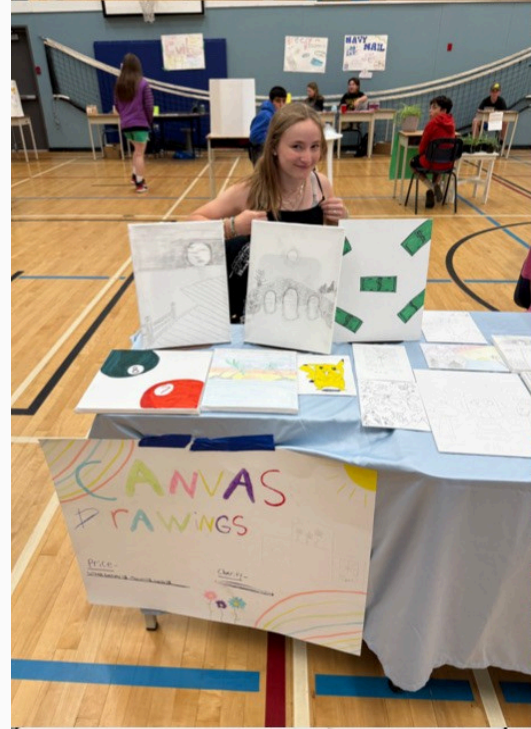


JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

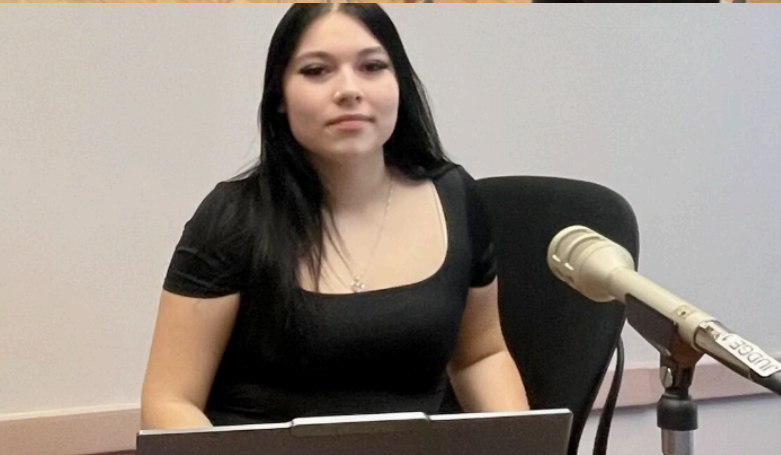




GRADE 7 ENTREPRENEUR MARKET



...more Entrepreneur Market



SESS Goes to the Court House and Military Museum





Fishing!



Elementary Track & Field

On Thursday, May 28, SESS students and the grade 4 classes from CPS, participated in our annual Track and Field Day. Congratulations to all students who qualified for the District Track Meet in Oliver on Friday, June 5th.





Wilderness Career Fair





Registration Form

Date: July 8th-11th, 2026

Place: Southern Okanagan Secondary School Gym, Oliver B.C.

Time: 9am-12noon (*Rookie Camp*)
1pm-4pm (*Pro Camp*)

Cost: Rookie and Pro Camps: \$ 200.00

No Refund After June 13th, 2025.

Late Fee for the camp after June 13th: \$ 225.00

What to bring: Proper basketball gear, water bottle, and a great attitude!

What you get: an NBN camp T-shirt, basketball (Courtesy of Canadian Tire Oliver)

Gatorade, gift certificates and other prizes. **What do we do:** **NBN** is for *players of all levels*. We focus on improving basketball skills and strategies while stressing proper **FUN**damentals on both ends of the court! Ball handling, shooting, passing and fun games every day, as well as offensive and defensive strategies. **BC Basketball Hall of**

Famer, UVIC Hall of

Famer, Former UBC and UVIC assistant coach, Coordinator of Lake City Development, Spencer McKay, brings incredible knowledge and unmatched international experience to NBN.

-----Please cut here-----Keep top portion for your reference-----

Name of Player: _____ Gr: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Contact Number : _____ Email: _____

Medical Number: _____ Allergies: _____

Camp Selection: Please Check off :

Rookie Camp (Gr. 3-6) \$200 _____ Pro Camp (Gr. 7-12) \$200 _____

Day Drop in (\$60/day) days _____

Shirt: Adult: Please circle size _____ XXL XL L M S Youth L M

Make Cheque Payable to NBN Basketball: Mail: NBN Camps 134 Hemlock Ave,
Kaleden, BC V0H 1K0, or e-transfer to smckay15@gmail.com

Make sure all e-transfers contain the name of the player and camp for our record keeping

Release form: In consideration of the acceptance of this application for registration. I, intending to be legally bound, hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I sustained and suffered by me in connection with my association with or entry to this camp and which may arise out of my traveling to, participating in or returning from the camp. We are unaware of any illness or injury that would prevent full participation in the camp.

The NBN Staff reserves the right to send a player home without refund if he/she is in violation of camp rules and regulations.

Visit us at: nbnbasketball.ca

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OLIVER

STAY SAFE IN THE HEAT

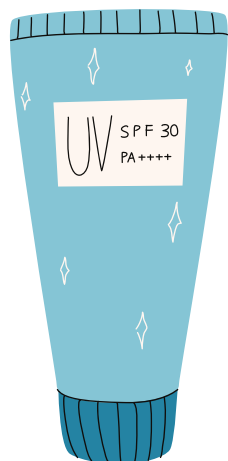
LIMIT SUN EXPOSURE

During high temperatures try to stay indoors or in shaded areas between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., when the sun is strongest.



DRESS FOR SAFETY

Children should wear a wide-brimmed sun hat and sunglasses with 100% UV (broad spectrum) protection.



LOOK FOR HEAT EXHAUSTION SIGNS

- Fatigue
- Thirst
- Leg or stomach cramps
- Cool, moist skin



If you notice any signs bring the child indoors to rest, remove extra layers of clothing, and offer small sips of water.

APPLY SPF 30 SUNSCREEN

Apply at least 30 minutes before going outside.
Don't forget: ears, nose, neck, and tops of feet.



STAY HYDRATED

Encourage frequent water breaks—even if children don't say they're thirsty.



School staff can access information on preparing for heat events and other safety measures and resources.

[InteriorHealth.ca](https://www.interiorhealth.ca)