



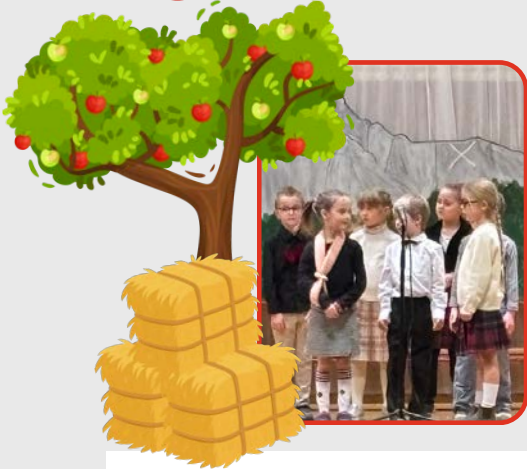
Winter's chill is here – But in our town the joy abounds – When loved ones gather near – Hearts are glowing, kindness showing, – Laughter filling the air – Our valley gleams with hopeful dreams – And warmth we all can share

Light Up the Town



Adam Robertson
Elementary

DECEMBER NEWS



Despite a power outage and school closure earlier in the day, our school community pulled together for one packed performance of a holiday musical, created by Mrs. Delcaro, with the support of ARES staff.

The musical told the story of Creston on the night the town gathered to light the Christmas tree—only to discover the star was missing. What followed was a journey through the valley, with students guiding the audience to familiar local places including farms, orchards, the flats, and Wynndel sawmill, before returning to Town Hall for a meaningful reminder rooted in the teachings of the Yaqan Nukiy people. This valley has always been one connected land and community, and that when we care for the land and for one another, the star shines on all of us together. Although each song was specific to Creston, the tunes were all familiar holiday songs.



What's New at ARES?

- Light Up the Town – Holiday Concert
- Student Leadership Brings Karaoke
- Student Led Floor Hockey
- Fry Bread, Leadership, and Generosity at ARES
- Connecting with the Greater Creston Community
- Maker's Studio Open House
- Holiday Concert Plan
- Staff 15-Day Island Hop Vacation
- Special Thank You
- Important Dates

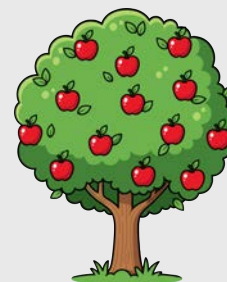




ARES Owls are calling, "Join our quest together" – Kind hearts and helping hands will find the light – Follow the hooting, hope is on the hillside – Shine on our way – Shine on our way and lift our spirits high



More Concert Highlights





O hello Creston neighbors, friends from every hillside – Farms, mills, and orchards,
gathered in the square – Shine, little lanterns, glow for one another – Lift up our
town! Lift up our town! – Lift up our town, we're lighting Creston bright!

Student Leadership Brings Karaoke

This year, our Grade 7 Leadership Group has been hard at work building school spirit and creating fun opportunities for our students. Meeting every Friday, this dedicated group—supported by Mrs. Hamm—has taken on several initiatives to bring our school community together. They organized our December Spirit Days, created posters, and visited classrooms to encourage student participation. With guidance from Mrs. Hamm, they also launched Lunchtime Karaoke, where students could sign up for a chance to perform with friends. The lunchtime crowd enjoyed many brave and entertaining performances, and the leadership team looks forward to hosting it again.



Family Movie Night

Enjoy the *FROZEN*
movie with your
family on
**Monday,
January 12th
5:00 – 6:30**





ARES Owls are calling, "Join our quest together, " – Kind hearts and helping hands will find the light – Follow the hooting, hope is on the hillside

Student Led Floor Hockey



Another example of leadership at ARES was our first annual *Winter Classic* Floor Hockey Tournaments. These tournaments were open to Grade 4 students and to Grades 5, 6, and 7, with 35 intermediate students taking part. The *Winter Classic* was organized, played, and officiated entirely by Grade 6 and 7 students, with Mrs. Vigna as the teacher support. After a round-robin format, the finals were held on Thursday, Dec. 11.

Congratulations to the Grade 4 Hawks (*Frankie, Conor, Will, Ved, and Byron*) and the Grade 5–7 Tornadoes (*Dylan, Ben, Ryder, and Corben*) on their tournament wins.



Student Initiated Activities

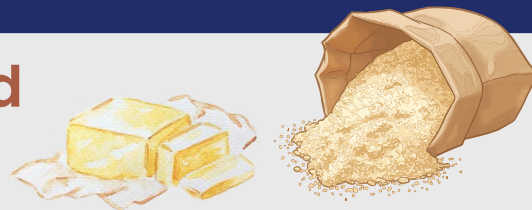
We love seeing students imagine ideas and take the lead. During the noon hour, our Library Space has become a hub for student-led clubs such as sewing, Lego, Year-Book, drawing, arts and crafts, and bracelet making. These inclusive clubs are open to everyone, with students creating signs, reserving tables, and teaching their skills to others. This initiative showcases student leadership, independence, and helps to create a welcoming school culture.





A buzzing light drifts through the mill, it flickers, spins, and sways – It weaves between wooden beams – a comet's golden haze – We watch it dip beyond the hill – then fade into the maze

Fry Bread, Leadership, and Generosity at ARES



This month, our students took part in a special learning experience connected to Indigenous culture and our ongoing Circle of Courage work. Our Aboriginal Support Worker, Josie Fullarton, and Aboriginal Success Teacher, Danielle Sonntag, guided two classes in learning how to make fry bread, a well-known Indigenous food with deep roots in history and community.

Fry bread is found in many Indigenous nations, including the Ktunaxa. Although it began during a difficult period when Indigenous peoples were displaced and given limited rations, it has since become a meaningful symbol of resilience, cultural strength, and coming together. Today, it is often shared at gatherings, celebrations, and community events, reminding us of the importance of generosity and caring for one another.

After learning the process, themselves, Mrs. Hamm's Grade 6/7 class demonstrated leadership. Once they mastered the recipe, they supported Mrs. Vigna's Grade 4 class in making another large batch by teaching the younger students. Together, the two classes made enough fry bread for every student in the school, ensuring everyone received a piece before they enjoyed any themselves.

This experience supported the Circle of Courage value of Generosity, showing that caring for the community is central to learning. It also reflects an important Ktunaxa teaching, that we look after each other by giving to others before taking for ourselves.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational.

First Peoples Principles of Learning

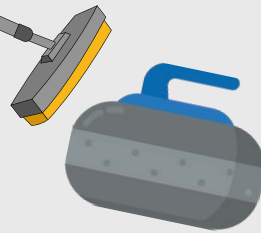




*Apples and cherries – Sweet as can be – If you see a shining topper –
Please call out to me! – Roots in the valley – And blossoms above – The star
must hide beyond them – A mystery we love*



Connecting with the Greater Creston Community



This month, ARES students had more opportunities to connect with the wider Creston community. Mrs. Page's class walked to Kootenay River Secondary School to watch Chemistry 11 demonstrations, with some students even getting the chance to participate. It was a great way for the grade 3/4 class to see older students in action in another school setting.

In Mr. Blick's class, the grade 4/5 students tried curling at the Creston & District Community Complex, guided by volunteer coaches. Many were experiencing the sport for the first time and were fully engaged as they learned new skills from patient and skilled adults.

Mrs. Vandenberghe's class returned to Crestview Village, spending time with senior residents making Christmas ornaments. They also sang their concert song for the residents, to add some holiday cheer.

These experiences connect directly to the Circle of Courage, highlighting the importance of adults as role models and guides. Students learn not only through practice and participation, but also by observing and engaging with adults who encourage, support, and inspire them. Whether it's a volunteer coach, a teacher, or a senior resident, these meaningful connections help students grow, feel a sense of belonging, and understand the value of contributing to their community.





*With lanterns in the darkest night - We lift them high and low - We clear the way
and light the path - Wherever the searchers go - By river's shining edge - We
catch a twinkling gleam - It points us to ARES - the heart of Creston's Dream*

Maker's Studio Open House Showcases Student Creativity

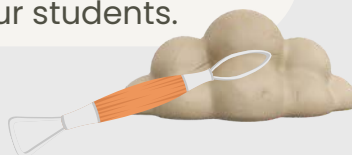


Four classes (*Mr. Percival, Ms. Read, Ms. Sonntag, & Mrs. Hamm*) recently welcomed families to a Maker's Studio Open House, celebrating the creative work students completed in Fine Arts under the direction of Mrs. Delcaro.

From 2:45–4:00 p.m. on December 18th, the gym was transformed into a gallery space filled with student artwork, journals, and mixed-media projects. Families were invited to enjoy a warm drink while touring the displays, as students proudly guided them through their creations and explained their artistic choices and processes.

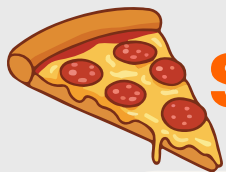
In this context, the Maker's Studio focused on artistic exploration and hands-on creativity. Students worked with a variety of materials and techniques, using mixed media to design journals and other original pieces. Emphasis was placed on imagination, experimentation, and personal expression, with students learning through the process of making rather than following a single prescribed outcome.

The open house was an opportunity to celebrate student voice, creativity, and learning through art. Thank you to our families for attending and to Mrs. Delcaro for inspiring creativity in our students.





We are A-R-E-S Owls - Fa-la-la-la-la, la la la la - Creston's heart for many miles -
Fa-la-la-la-la, la la la la - Learning, leading, helping daily - Fa-la-la-la-la, la la la
la - Lift each other, shining bravely - Fa-la-la-la-la, la la la la



Special Thank You

Thank you to one of our ARES families at *Pizza Pizza* for generously supporting our PAC meals. We appreciate your kindness with our Hot Dog and Pizza lunches, as well as your donation of treats for our Ho-Ho-Ho Assembly on Friday.

We are fortunate to have you as part of our school community!



Mrs. Delcaro



Mrs. Delcaro is the visionary behind our Holiday Concert. She worked tirelessly, staying late every day to paint sets, organize props, and help students rehearse. Despite her incredibly busy schedule, she always maintains a bright smile that keeps even the craziest month of school positive and happy. Thank you, Mrs. Delcaro, for being the shining light of our concert. ★





Light the town, light the town – Creston shining bright – Owls and friends together now – Our hearts take flight tonight – hey! – Light the town, light the town – Raise the star up high – Creston sings and Creston shines – Beneath the winter sky



Did you Know the ARES Staff were on a 15-Day Island Hop Vacation?

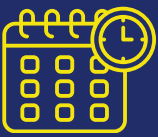
During the final 15 days of December, staff took part in a 15-Day Island Escape designed to bring some fun to the busy month of December. Each day, staff travelled to a new “island” somewhere in the school to solve a riddle. Thanks to our amazing team who quickly jumped on board, this surprise for staff quickly grew into a whole-school experience, with classrooms transforming into welcoming island destinations.



At Heathering Harbour, Mrs. Vigna’s class hosted a tiki bar, serving tropical drinks and greeting staff with leis. Lagoon of Lisoa came alive as Mrs. Page’s students surprised visitors with a welcoming song and dance. In Delta of Danielly, Ms. Sonntag’s classroom became an ocean, where students created a wave with their bodies and gifted staff saltwater taffy. Lindara Isle featured handmade flowers from Mrs. Cote’s class, while Melissao’s Marina refreshed staff with slushies and handcrafted flip-flop souvenirs. At Jenoa’s Jetty, the Grade one classroom was filled with boats, and students escorted staff down the board walk for hot chocolate and popcorn. Luckily students had made fans to help staff beat the “tropical heat.”

Students were thrilled to welcome staff into their classrooms and eagerly watched to see what our daily island attire would be. This wellness initiative became a fun school-wide celebration, thanks to the staff who are such good sports!





Have a lovely two-weeks with your family and we will see you back in 2026!

IMPORTANT DATES

- Friday, December 19th – Holiday Sweater Day
- Friday, December 19th – Last Day of School before Winter Break
- Monday, January 5th – First Day Back to School
- Monday, January 12th – Family Movie Night - *FROZEN* - 5:00 - 6:30
- Monday, January 19th – District Pro-Day – No School for Students
- Wednesday, January 21st – PAC Meeting @ 9:00
- Monday, January 26th – Family Literacy Week Begins
- Monday, January 26th – Schoolwide Literacy Scavenger Hunt
- Tuesday, January 27th – Family Read @ 2:00
- Wednesday, January 28th – Teacher Exchange @ 1:15
- Thursday, January 29th – Great Big Buddy Read @ 9:30
- Friday, January 30th – Final Read-a-thon Assembly @ 2:00



Tanya Christenson | Principal
tanya.christenson@sd8.bc.ca



Adam Robertson
Elementary

**Adam Robertson
Elementary School**
421 9th Ave N.
Creston, BC
Office: 250-428-2051
Web: www.ares.sd8.bc.ca



William Klassen | Vice Principal
william.klassen@sd8.bc.ca

ARES Goal

To actively incorporate the Circle of Courage philosophy and the four universal needs of all children (Belonging, Independence, Generosity, & Mastery) into our school-wide culture.