



# Rayleigh Elementary School

306 Puett Ranch Road

Kamloops, BC V2H 1M9

Phone: (250) 578-7229 Fax: (250) 377-2246

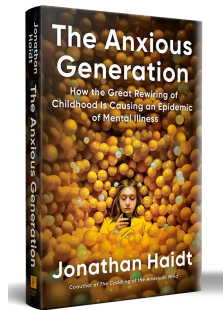
rayleigh.sd73.bc.

## January 2026 Newsletter

### Tech Intentionality

In the November 2024 school newsletter, I shared some ideas from the book, "The Anxious Generation" by Jonathan Haidt. This book recommends strategies such as:

- No smartphones before high school
- No social media before age 16
- Phone free schools
- More independence, free play and responsibility in the real world



In *The Anxious Generation*, Haidt argues that kids are struggling because their world shifted from real-life play to phone-based living. As children grow up, they need freedom to explore, solve problems, and interact face-to-face as those experiences wire their brains for resilience. But as independent play declined, screens filled the gaps. Smartphones provide the opportunity for comparison, online drama, cyberbullying, and disrupted sleep—factors shown to heighten anxiety and depression, especially for teens. Studies find that about **half of adolescents spend 4–9 hours a day on screens**, with smartphones and social media making up a large share of that time. (credit to Krystal Devick for book information above)

If you have been watching the developments that are happening in Australia, you will have seen that they have been taking deliberate steps when it comes to placing limits on social media for young people. It will be interesting to see if things move in this direction in Canada, but families have the power now to band together and be intentional in how they move forward with technology. If you are looking for ideas on how technology has been impacting the next generation (and those of us who are a few years on), you may want to check out this book and other research along these lines.

### Upcoming Events & Dates

- Jan 5 First Day back from Winter Break
- Jan 7 PAC Meeting in the Library at 6:30 pm
- Jan 26-30 UnPlug & Play Week
- Jan 28 Greg Stewart Presentation
- Feb 2-6 Kindergarten Registration Week
- Feb 6 In-Service Day (no school for students)
- Feb 16 BC Family Day (no school)
- Mar 11 Term 2 Learning Updates Published
- Mar 13 Last Day before Spring Break
- Mar 30 First Day back from Spring Break
- April 3 Good Friday (no school)
- April 6 Easter Monday (no school)
- April 7 Day of Suwewtwecw
- April 16 LifeTouch Class Photos
- April 27 In-Service Day (no school for students)
- [SD #73 School Calendar for 2025/2026](#)
- [SD #73 School Calendar for 2026/2027](#)

### Learning Updates Overview

- **1st** Point of Contact: Classroom Connections - Nov 6th
- **2nd** Point of Contact: Written Learning Updates Published - Dec 12th
- **3rd Point of Contact: Written Learning Updates - March 11th**
- **4th** Point of Contact: Various formats - April 27th - May 8th - exact date to be determined
- **5th** Point of Contact: Summative Written Learning Updates Published - June 25th

### Open Parachute Learning Moment

This month's Open Parachute Learning Moment shares ideas around how to have [Supporting Healthy Social Media Use](#). Some of the topics covered in this series of video clips includes: How parents can establish boundaries, concerning platforms to watch out for & practical tools parents can use. We hope that this 30 minute learning opportunity will give some ideas that will work for your family.

openparachute®

### Rayleigh Digital Device Policy

For a comprehensive review of the Rayleigh Elementary Personal Digital Devices Guidelines & Expectations, [click here](#).

## **Kindergarten Registration 2026**

Kindergarten registration for catchment schools is from February 2nd to 6th. You can pick up a registration package between 8:15 am and 3:00 PM. Parents are strongly encouraged to register children for Kindergarten on these dates. Please share this information with anyone you know who will have a child eligible for Kindergarten next year.

To be eligible for attendance in Kindergarten for September 2026, a student must be five years of age by December 31, 2026.

When registering, please bring your child's original birth certificate, BC Services Card and proof of address with you as well as any legal documentation concerning custody (if applicable).

## **Christmas Hampers Update**

Before Winter Break, we asked for families to donate items toward Christmas Hampers. Due to your generosity, we were able to give three Rayleigh families a Christmas Hamper to bring some financial relief at this time of year. Thank you for your willingness to support these local families that needed an extra hand at this time.

## **Spoons & Forks**

We are finding an increasing number of students are coming to the office looking for utensils to use and this is creating a need for an excessive amount of cleaning to be done. In the middle of January, we will be shifting away from having reusable utensils available at the office and we are encouraging families to include these in your children's lunch kits.

## **Lunch Hour Supervisors**

If you are looking for a great way to be more connected with our school and to get some fresh air, maybe becoming a Lunch Hour Supervisor is right for you. We are in need of a second Lunch Hour Supervisor on Tuesdays & Wednesdays. If you are interested, please connect with Mrs. Sandra Maskell by contacting the office or by email ([smaskell@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:smaskell@sd73.bc.ca)) and she will walk you through the process of joining our supervision team.

## **Basketball Season**

Our teams are practicing and the first games start the week of January 19th. For more information on the times and coaches involved this year, please visit [Sports & Athletics](#) on our website. If you are interested in helping with refereeing basketball this season, please email [dconroy@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:dconroy@sd73.bc.ca)

## **Communicating with the School**

Our staff recognize that parents and caregivers are partners in education. If you have questions or concerns about your child in relation to the classroom, the first step is to contact the classroom teacher to make an appointment to discuss concerns. In the event that resolution cannot be reached after consultation with the classroom teacher, parents and caregivers are asked to inform the teacher and are then welcome to make an appointment to see the Principal. This process helps to ensure that we are working with a full perspective of the information and provides all of us with the best opportunity for a positive resolution to the challenge.

## **Emergency Preparedness Drills**

All schools participate in Emergency Preparedness Drills each year. We will have six fire drills, two lockdown practices and an Earthquake drill. We are planning for one Emergency Preparedness Drill in the month of January. If your child talks to you about these drills, please reassure them that the practices are to ensure their safety in an emergency.

## **Head Lice**

There is often a spike of Elementary students dealing with head lice at this time of year. Head lice are tiny insects that live on human heads. They lay eggs (called nits) close to the scalp. Head lice do not spread disease and they love washed and unwashed heads just the same! Head lice are common among children aged 3-11, especially during the winter months. Scratching the head can be a sign of head lice, but children can also have them without any itching.

While you cannot entirely prevent getting head lice, you can teach your child not to share personal items used on their heads (like brushes & hats). Be sure to braid or tie long hair back and when you notice any signs of itching, check your child's head regularly (at least once a week). More information about head lice and treatment of head lice can be found on the [Interior Health website](#) and [here](#).

## **PAC News**

Happy New Year! We hope you all enjoyed the winter break. The PAC would like to thank everyone for participating in the various fundraisers and social events leading up to the festive holiday season. Please join us Wednesday January 7th 6:30 pm in the Library for our next meeting. Childminding by donation available in the Gym.