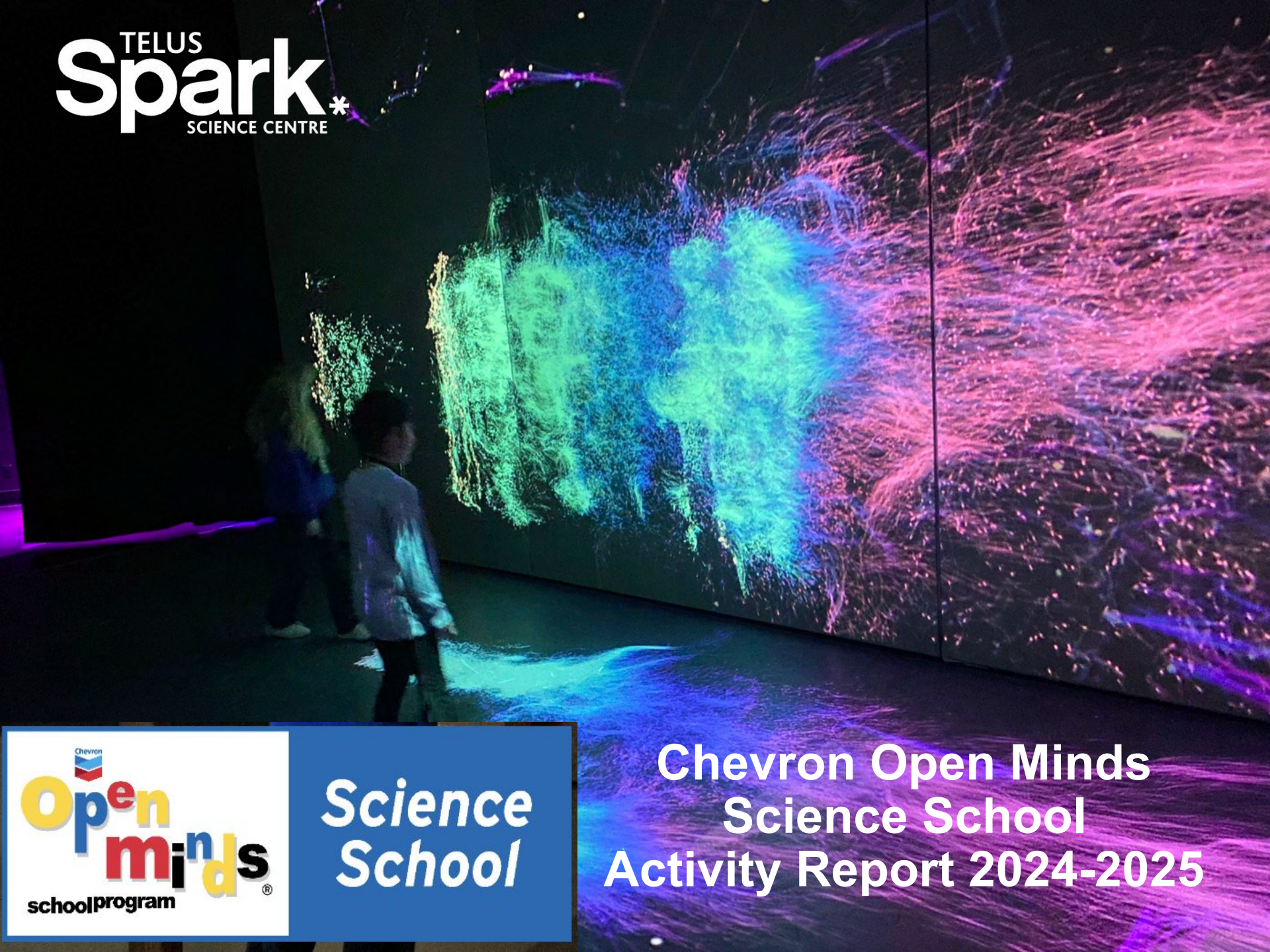


Chevron Open Minds Science School Activity Report 2024-2025

THE LAND

TELUS Spark Science Centre acknowledges it is situated on the Ancestral Lands of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot Confederacy), and Traditional Lands of the Tsuut'ina First Nation, the Îethka Nakoda First Nation, and more recently the Otipemisiwak Métis. Spark recognizes and supports the depth of science within these Lands, Languages, Stories, and Peoples, that have been caretakers of this land, where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet, their home for thousands of years. This science centre sits within a natural corridor for trade, migration, and hunting. It leads people, animals, and weather to the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers, a traditional and current gathering place. We are grateful to the peoples who have been caretakers and stewards of this land, allowing us to thrive on this land today, where many cultures and Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, live together in peace and respect.

Let's Talk about Spark…

Purpose

Spark exists to lift people up with the power of curiosity.

Mission

Spark's mission is to deliver world renowned, creative experiences with science.

Vision

Spark's vision is to inspire HUMANITY to connect with science in meaningful and mind-blowing ways.

Let's Talk about Spark…

Values

Collaboration

Spark encourages debate and dialogue. Diverse perspectives are considered interesting and healthy. Different points of view make the world a better, stronger whole.

Commitment

Spark is fueled by passion for purpose. Spark is committed to training itself and others in ever-evolving ways to delight people in the science of everyday life.

Curiosity

Spark inspires people to wonder, question and learn. Staff and visitors play, create and learn together.

Courage

Spark supports action and experimentation. Unintended results are surprising opportunities to learn and try again.

Creativity

Spark values the role of art and creativity in sharing science with broad audiences, where culture and motion kick start conversations.

Let's Talk about pillars…

Place

Build Re-imagined Spaces that create inclusive and emotional connections with science.

Product

Deliver innovative and inspired Programs to open more doors into the world of science.

People

Cultivate Science That's Welcoming to All, from every corner of the community.

Campus Calgary/Open Minds - Co-Guiding the Journey

The mission of the Campus Calgary/Open Minds program is to transform teaching and learning by increasing student engagement through community, funder and educational partnerships.

Key Elements

- Teachers as designers, in collaboration with site coordinators and educational coordinator, co-constructing learning
- Work alongside experts
- Engage in hands on activities and experiential learning
- Slow down and go beyond the obvious
- Explore, discover, reflect and share
- Build strong relationships
- Inspire ownership and stewardship
- Maintain high standards for quality learning experiences for all students
- Inquiry driven interdisciplinary approach
- Develop action and awareness
- Personalized learning opportunities to meet individual needs

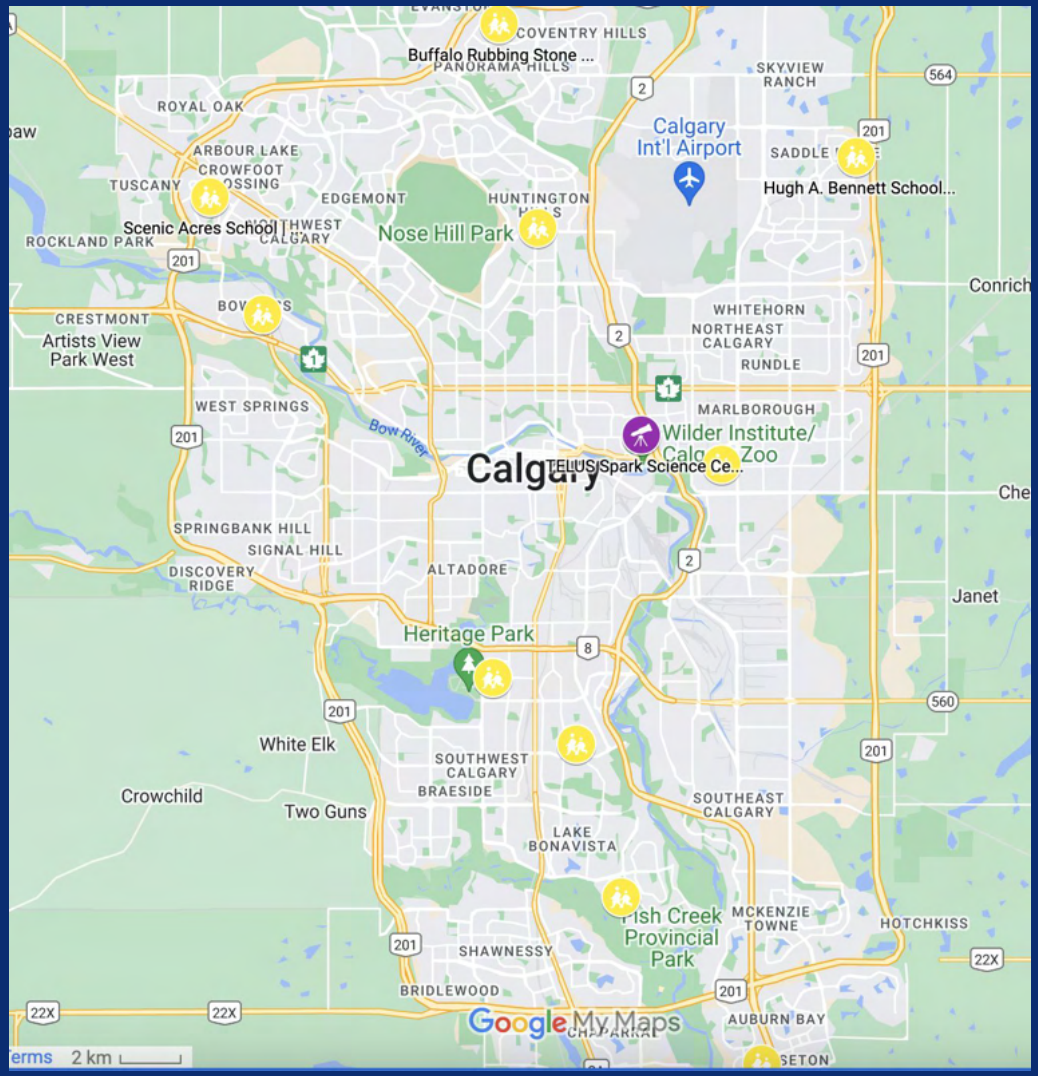
Chevron Open Minds Science School is a place to:

Chevron Open Minds Science School at TELUS Spark is one of five Open Minds Program Sites supported by Chevron Canada. It has been supported by Chevron Canada since 1997. Chevron Open Minds Science School is a week-long educational experience that provides students the opportunity to explore and develop skills to help them, grow, collaborate to solve problems and answer big authentic questions. This unique learning opportunity also helps to spark a passion for learning through STEAM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, art and math) in many ways:

- **Collaborative design projects** help students explore the design process and discover the connections between engineering, innovation, technology and art.
- **Risk taking in a safe environment** ignites excitement for STEAM disciplines, using activities that build courage.
- **Free play** in Spark's many interesting spaces fuels creativity and learning.

This report provides an overview of programs and experiences for Science School for the period of September 2024– June 2025.

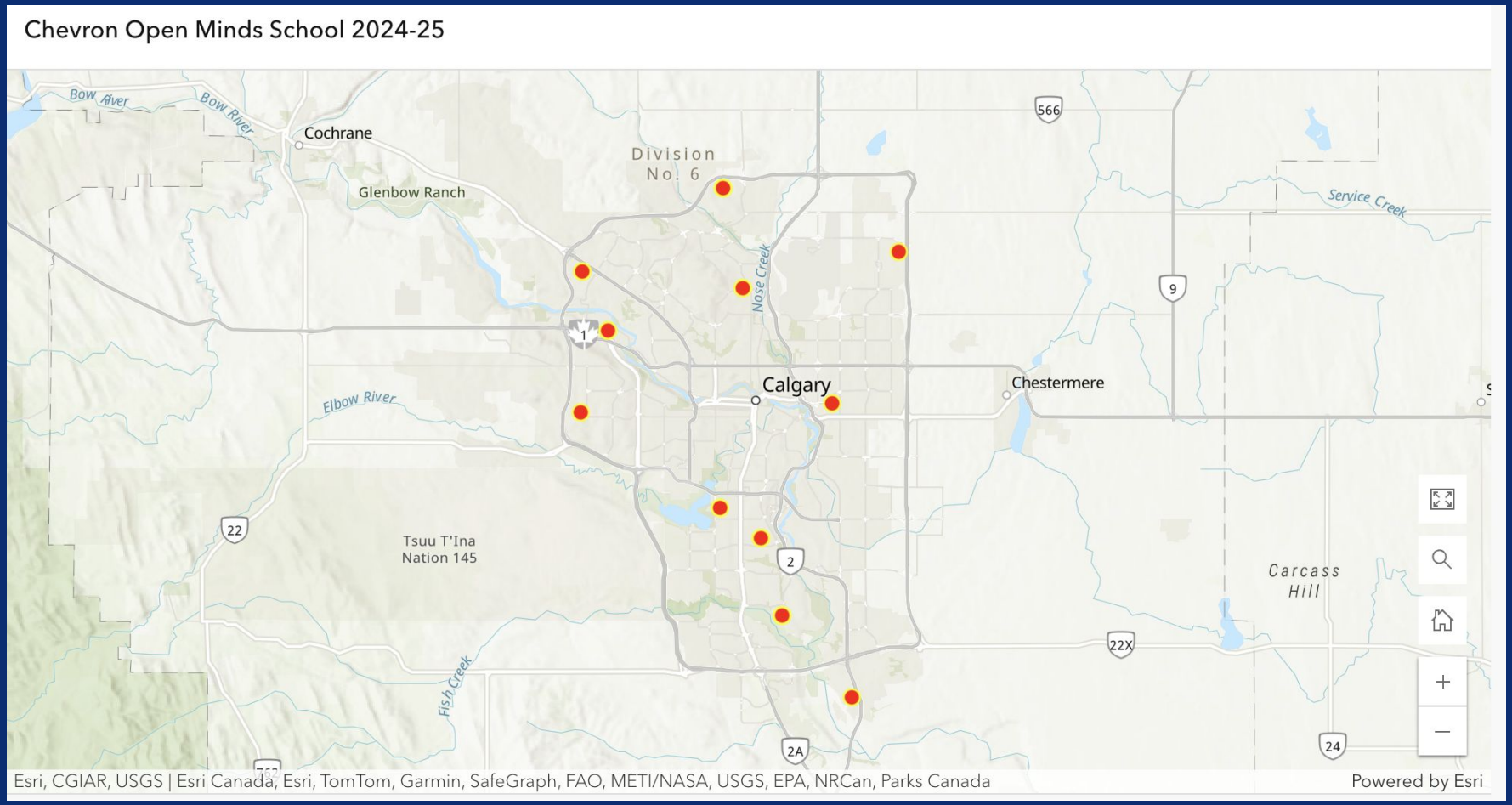
Program Overview School Demographics



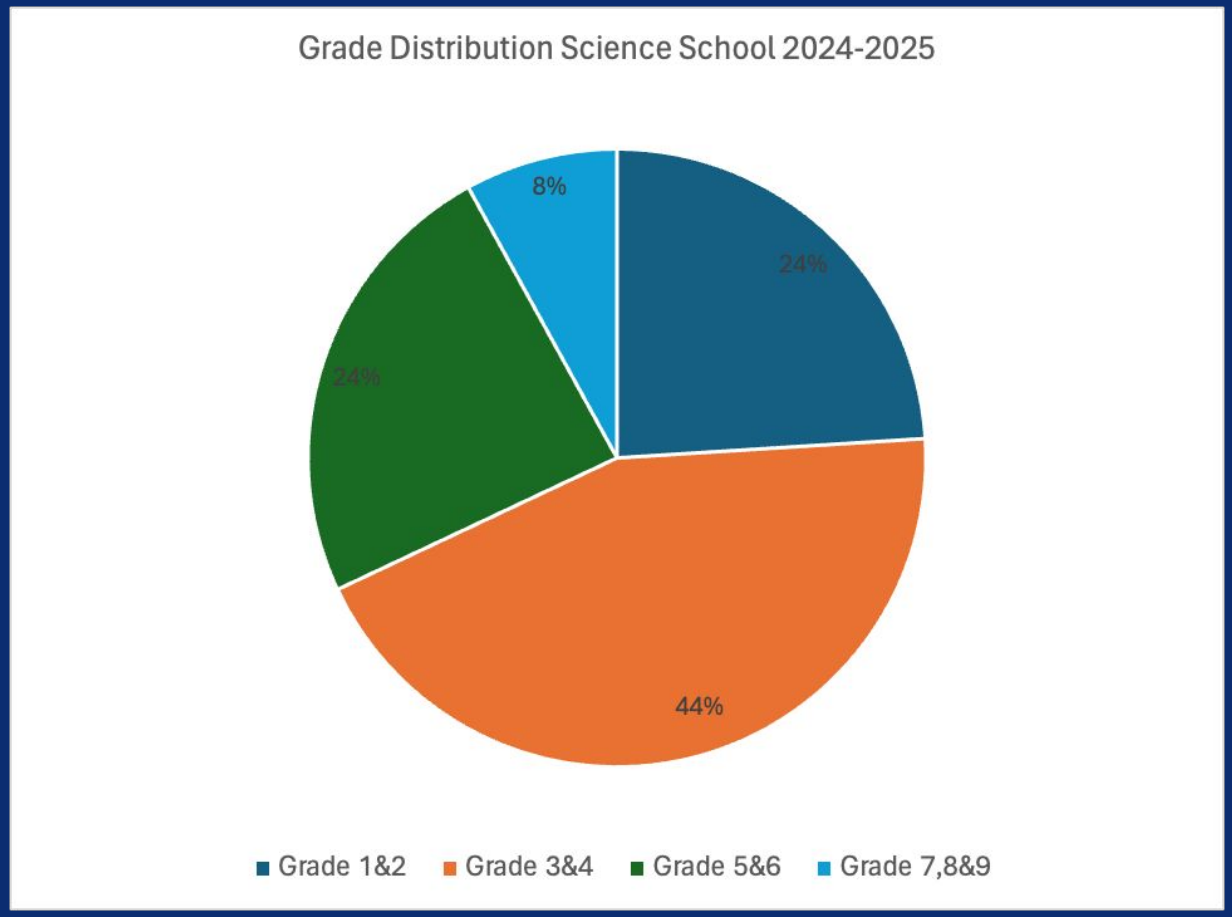
September 2024 – June 2025
Map of Schools who have been accepted for Science School

One of the goals of Science School is to offer the opportunity to students and teachers all over Calgary.

80% of our accepted applicants this year are from schools new to science school or schools that haven't participated in many years.


Chevron Open Minds School 2024-25
Bow River
Bow River
Cochrane
Glenbow Ranch
Division No. 6
Nose Creek
Service Creek
566
9
1
Calgary
Chestermere
Elbow River
22
Tsuu T'Ina Nation 145
2
Carcass Hill
22X
Fish Creek
2A
24
Esri, CGIAR, USGS | Esri Canada, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NRCan, Parks Canada
Powered by Esri

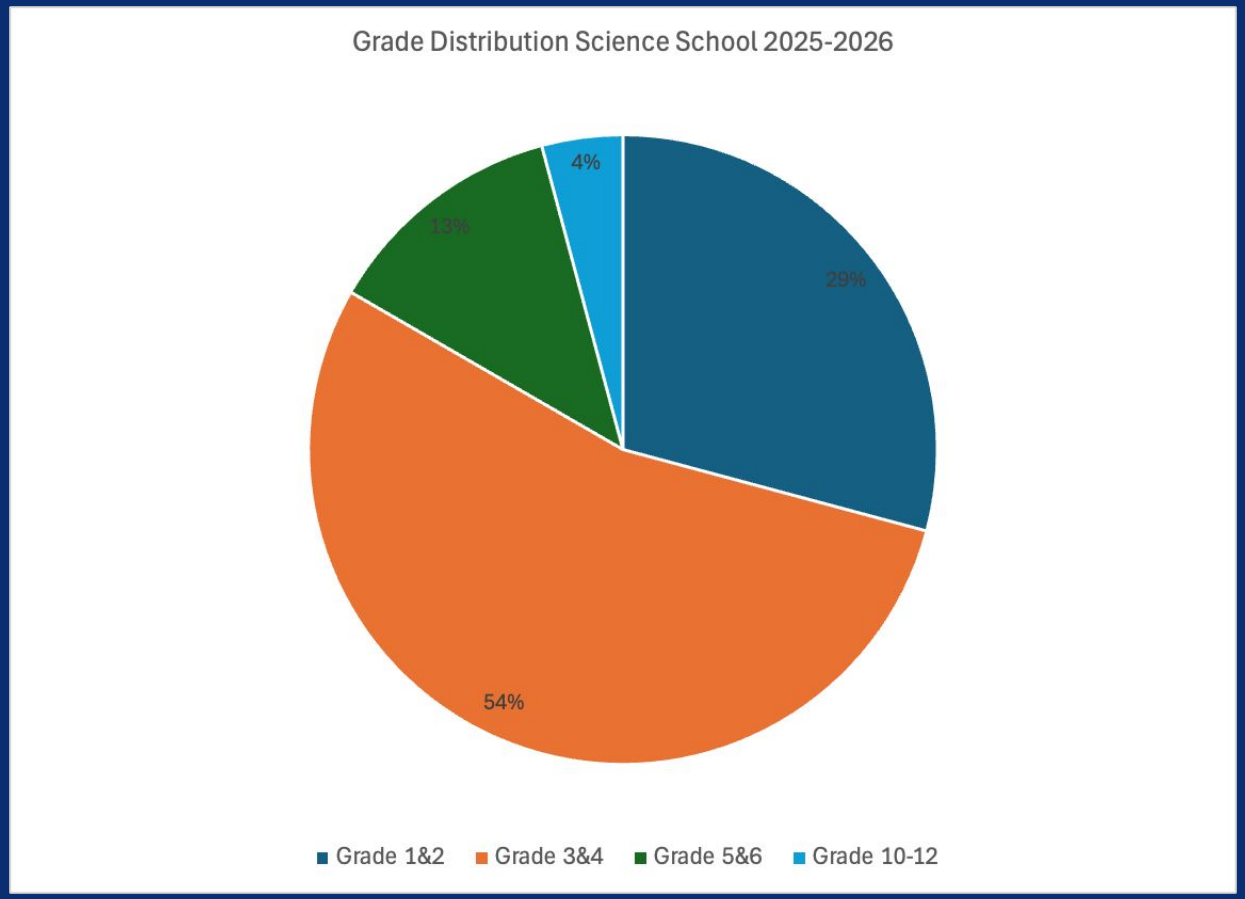
Program Overview School Demographics
Grade Distribution 2024/2025



Participating classes for 2024-2025

Grade Distribution for Open Minds Science School Classes September 2024-June 2025 (as of June 2024)

Program Overview School Demographics
Grade Distribution 2025/2026



Participating classes for 2025-2026

Grade Distribution for Open Minds Science School Classes September 2025-June 2026 (as of June 2025)

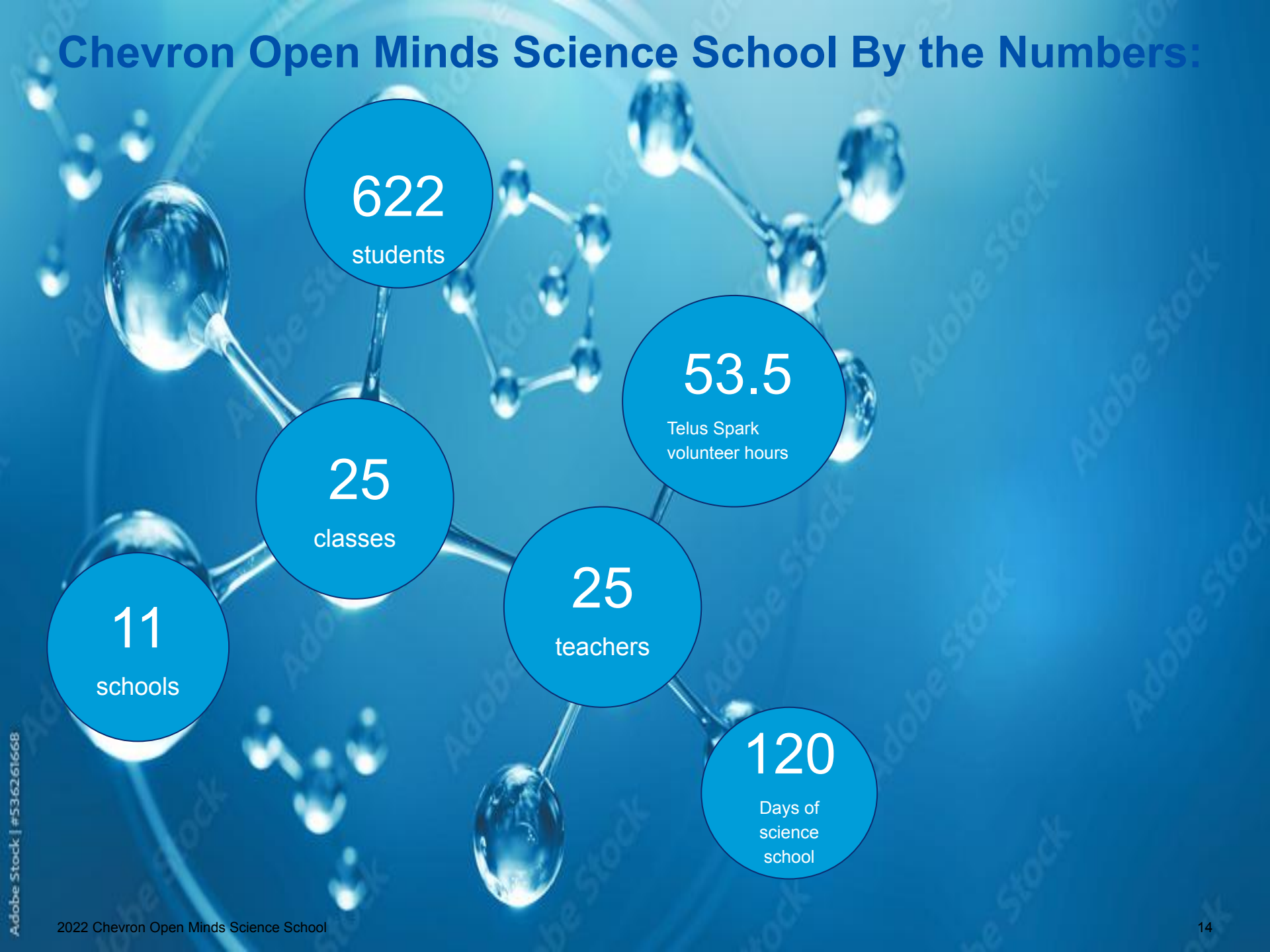
What's the big idea?

Big Ideas from 2024-2025

What's the big idea?

Big Ideas from 2025-2026

Chevron Open Minds Science School By the Numbers:



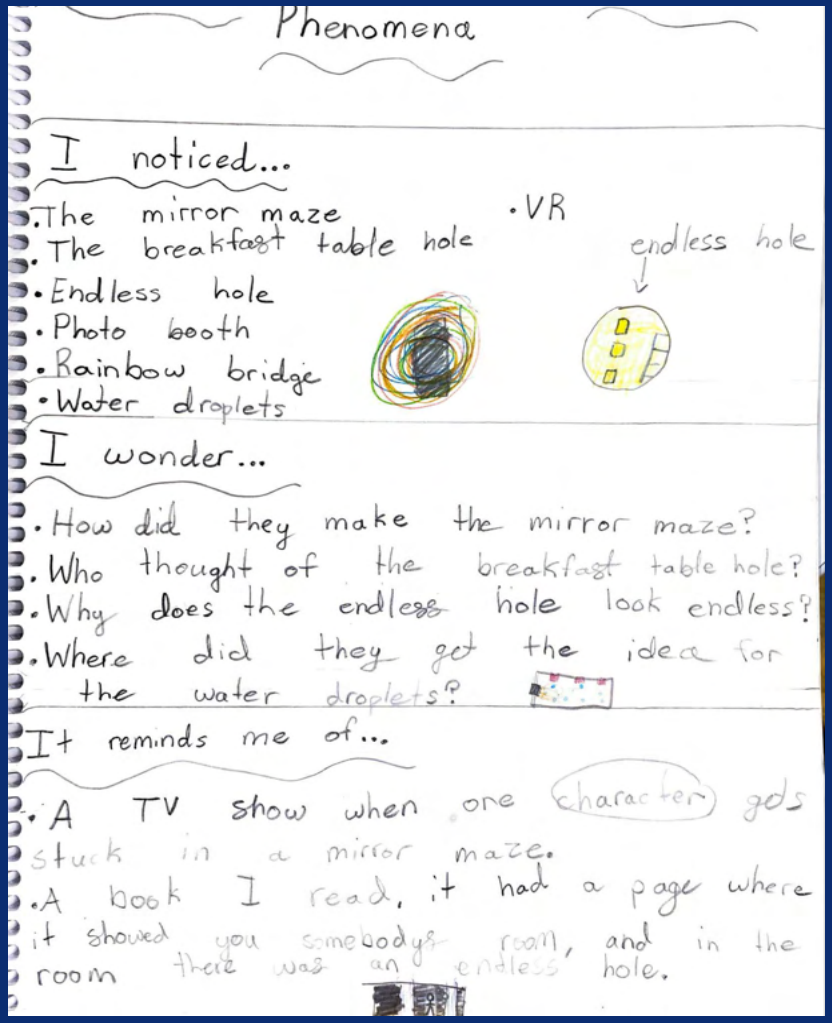
SITE OUTCOMES
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE), the Calgary Catholic School District (CCSD) and the Calgary Foundation support the program philosophy which provides diverse opportunities and alternative quality education for students and the professional growth of teachers. Jennifer and Natasha, CBE, and Marta, CCSD, provide valuable support to site coordinators, teachers and students. This includes mentoring site coordinators and providing ongoing professional development to participating educators.

Phenomena: The Exhibition

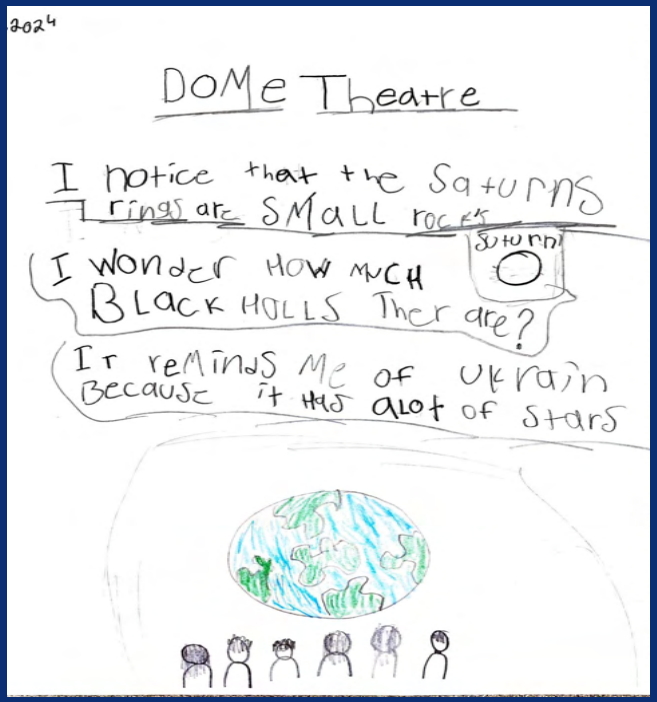
Immersion in Unique Science Experiences

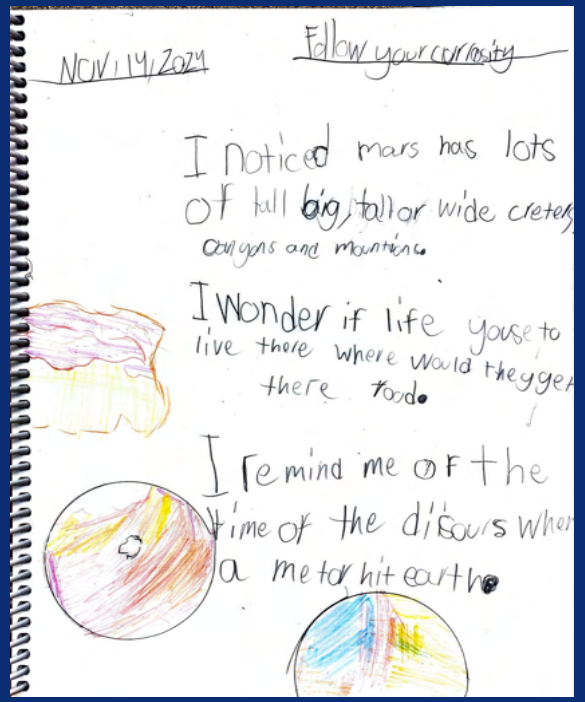
PHENOMENA: The Exhibition invited you to uncover the science behind illusions and explored the mechanisms that governed human perception. Through hands-on experiences and captivating exhibits, students discovered how your brain can be tricked and learned about the scientific principles behind these deceptions.



Infinity Dome Theatre

Immersion in Unique Science Experiences





The Infinity Dome Theatre sparked curiosity and transported students to a variety of new environments like distant nebulae. The power of science school is helping students make connections, ask questions, and relate to what they see in immersive environments like the dome theatre.

Chevron Open Minds schoolprogram Science School Celebrating 25 years 1997-2022

TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE

Digital Immersion Gallery

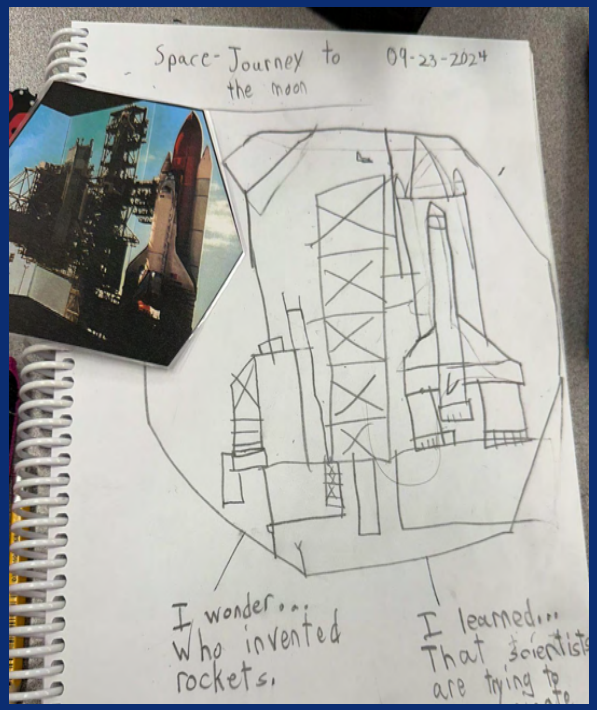
Immersion in Unique Science Experiences

Students were immersed in a vivid realm with colour, energy, and sound in Quantum Sandbox. They discovered five core principles of quantum physics as they explored this endless playground where science and art merge and experienced a fresh journey, with each new visit ,through landscapes shifting with light, time, and motion.

TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE

Digital Immersion Gallery

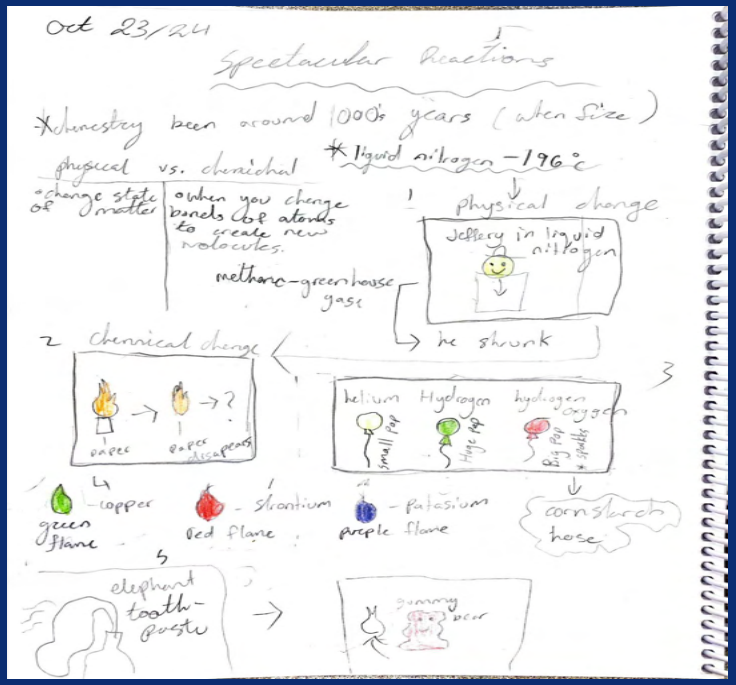
Immersion in Unique Science Experiences

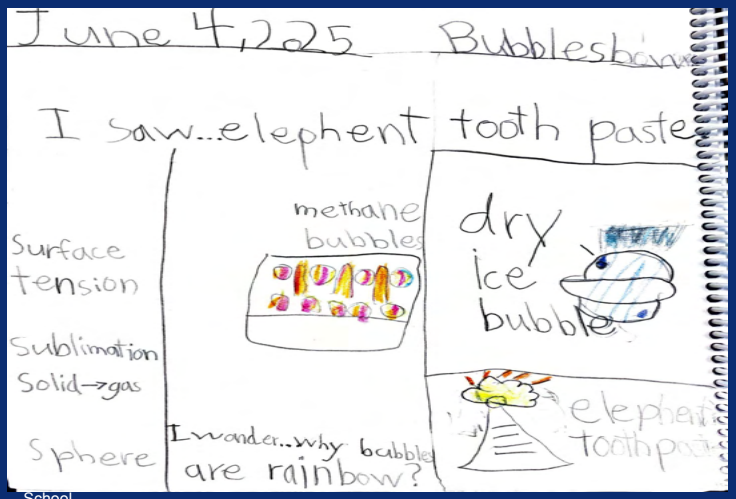


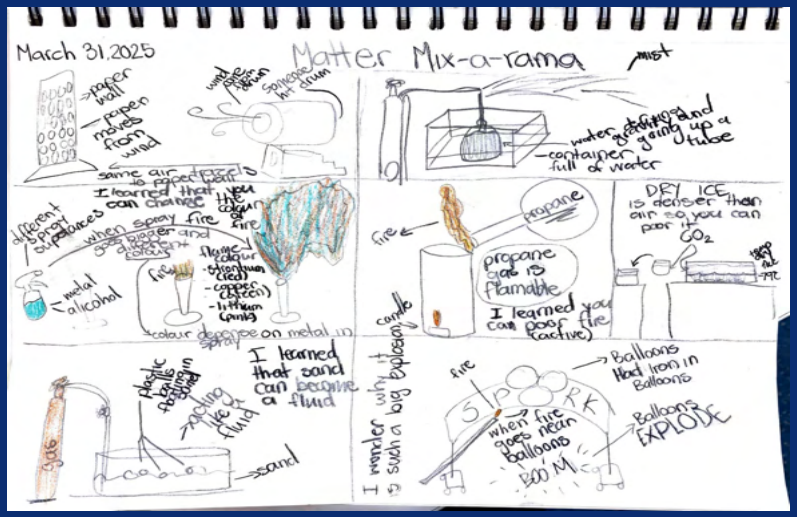
The spectacular immersive images and audio lent themselves to creating many moments of awe and wonder as students explored Space: A Journey to the Moon and Beyond. Students explored, made connections and visualized their thinking using hexagonal tiles with images to trigger memories of the experience and to scaffold journaling.

Inspiration Stage

Immersion in Unique Science Experiences







Students and adults enjoyed experiencing the story and power of amazing demos to inspire thinking and writing about science.

Site Outcomes: Building Relationships- Comments from School Volunteers

Comments:

THE PROGRAM ALLOWED MY CHILD/THE CHILDREN TO BE IMMERSED INTO NEW SITUATIONS THAT GUIDES THEM INTO NEW TECHNIQUES OR PATHWAYS TO LEARNING.

12. Any other comments:

THE PROGRAM IS AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY FOR THE KIDS TO EXPERIENCE THE APPLICATIONS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE LEARNED. ALSO, HAVING A FULL WEEK ALLOWS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE TO BE

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

ABSORBED. THE LEVEL OF ATTENTION AND ENGAGEMENT OF THE KIDS SEEMED TO BE GREATER THAN USUAL.

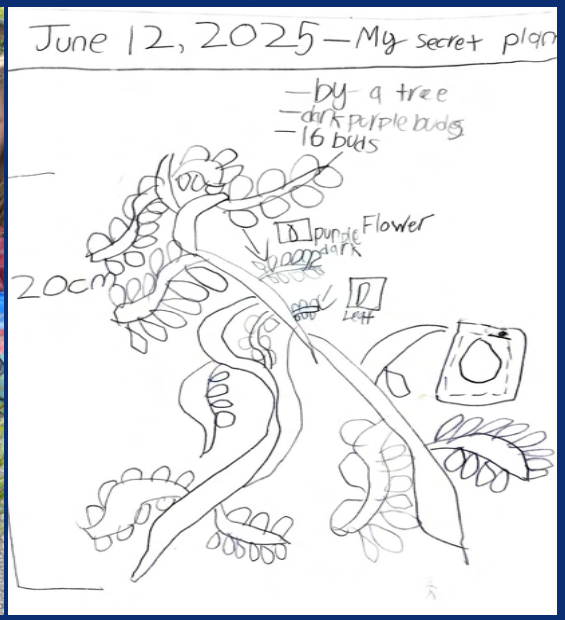
10. What was the highlight for you at Science School?

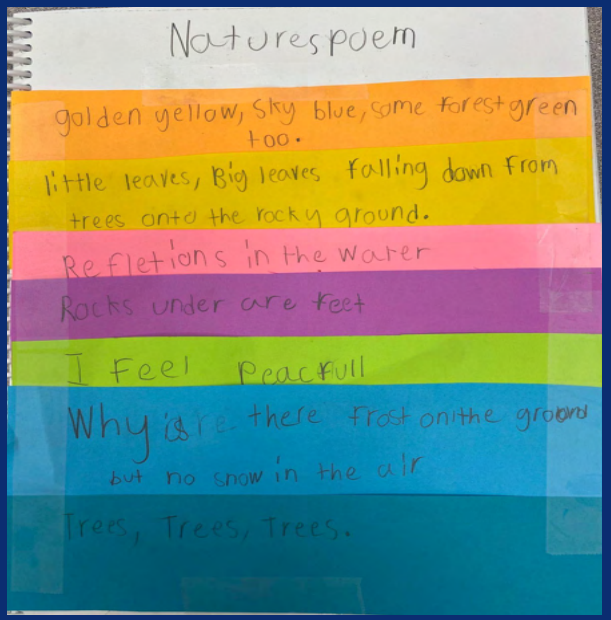
WITNESSING THE "SPARK" IN THE KIDS' BRAINS WHEN THEY DISCOVERED THAT THEY CAN DO THE TASK OR MAKE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LEARNING AND DOING.

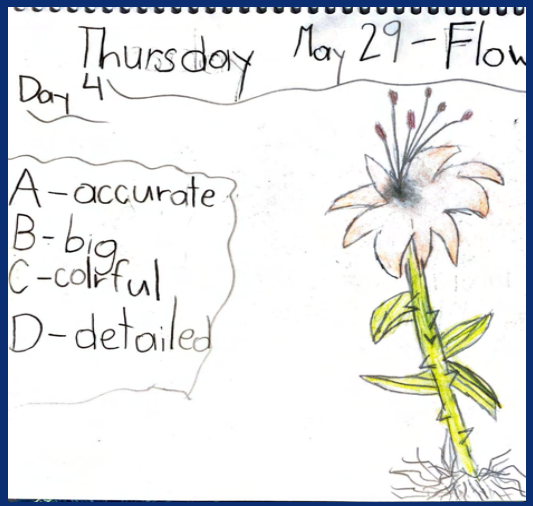
11. Do you have any suggestions to improve the week at TELUS SPARK Chevron Open Minds Science School?

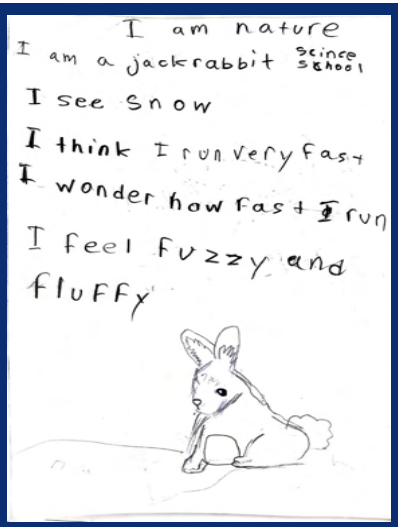
"Students, parents, the science school team and teachers working together, sharing their thinking, supporting each other, problem solving together was a powerful and beautiful thing to witness. Everyone was involved in the learning and the parents could see how much their child was learning and how this experience deepened their understanding of their child's learning journey." (Teacher)

Site Outcomes: Curiosity Connections to the land



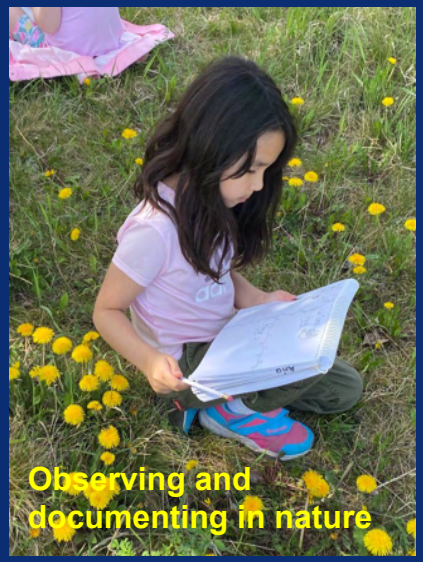


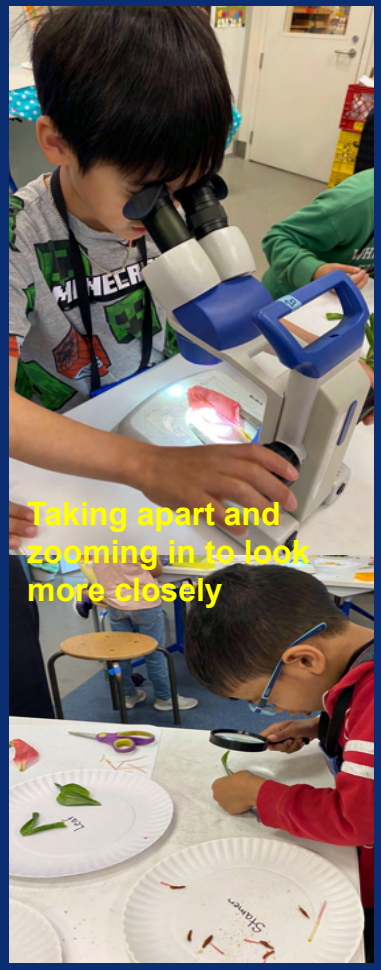


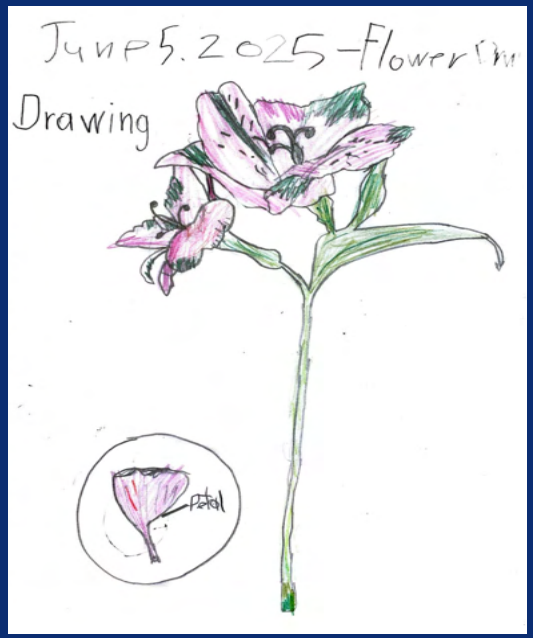


Telus Spark's pond and Tom Campbell's Hill served as places to connect with and notice nature using a variety of journaling techniques for students of all ages.

Program Outcomes: Curiosity and Creativity - Slowing Down and Going Beyond the Obvious

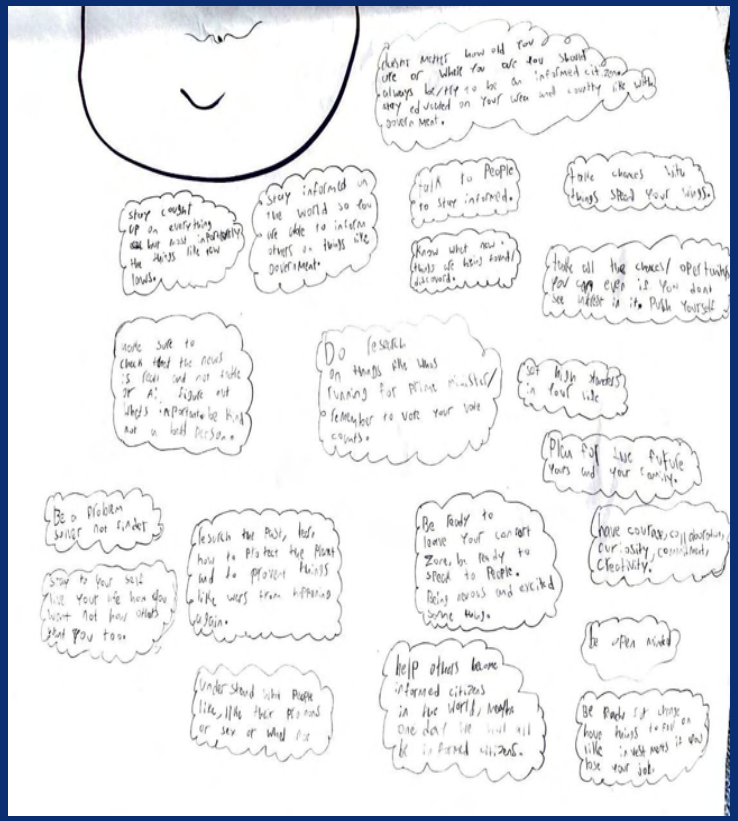


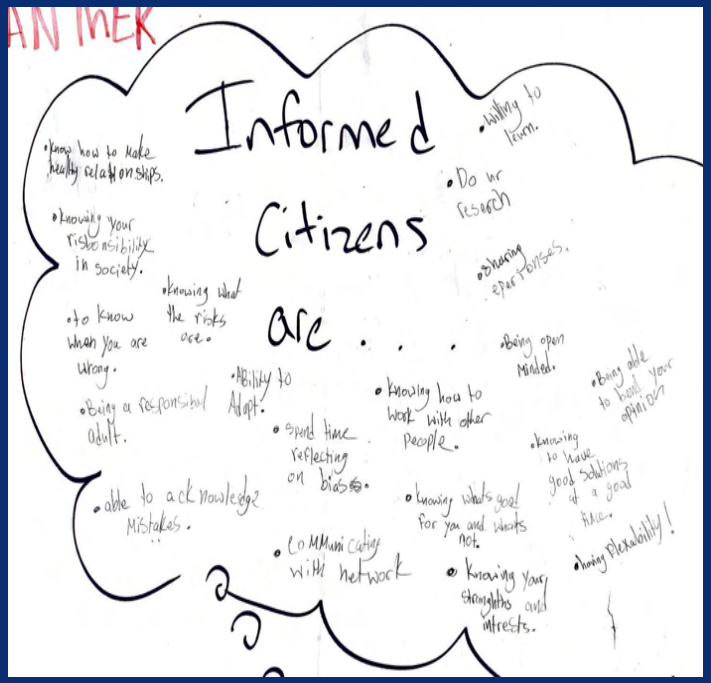




Students worked with an artist and Megan to connect, nurture and gain empathy for the natural world. Students slowed down as they made observations, explored,sketched, and used the tools of scientists and artists.

Program Outcomes: Building Relationships- Working with Experts





Grade 9 students explored their big question of “How do we become informed citizens?” by co-creating some ideas about what it means to be an “informed” citizen. Experts were utilized in new ways where students met in small groups with volunteers from different careers, asked questions, and brainstormed together.

Program Outcomes:
Building Relationships- Working with Experts

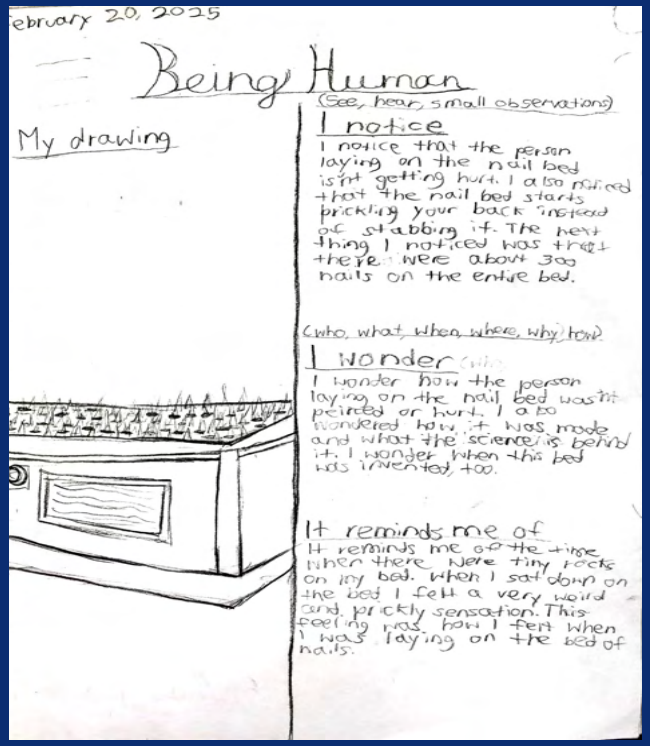
Connecting to the land with Alexis, Lead Indigenous School Programming, involved listening to stories, engaging in the mini planetarium and observing artifacts. Students explored how Indigenous Science and Western/Global Science complement each other and how science and storytelling can walk hand in hand (or hand in paw)!

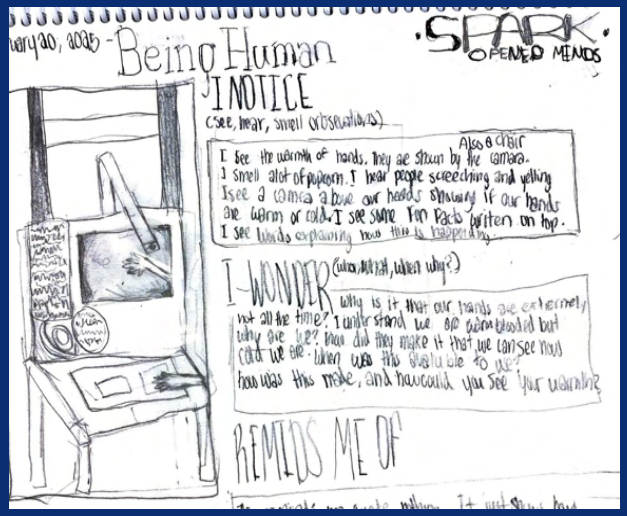
TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE

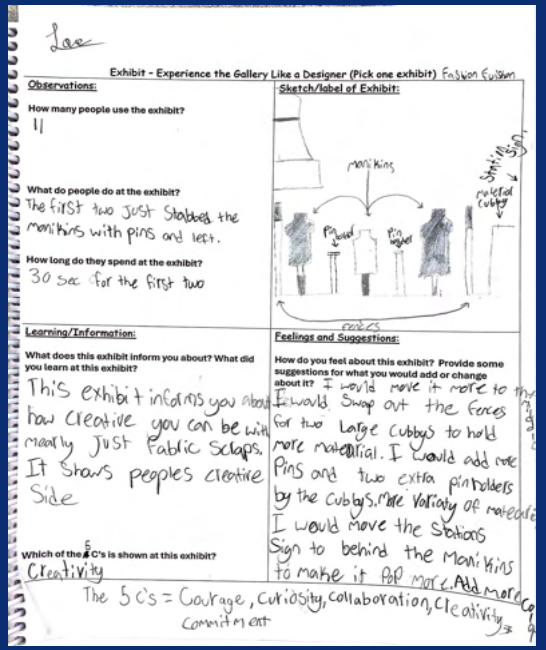
Student Outcomes: Curiosity- Immersion in Unique Science Experiences - Steven's Lab

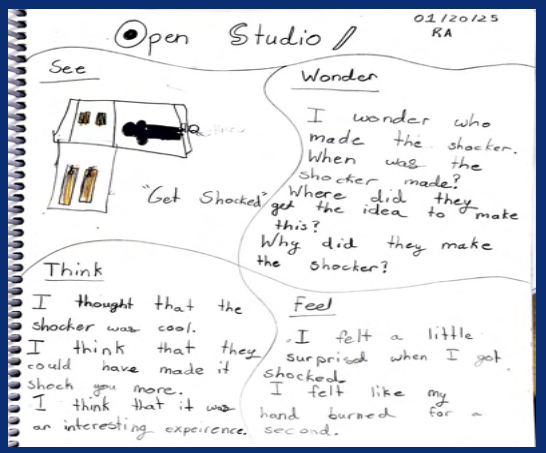
Many of our classes engaged with the exciting activities of Steven's Lab. Steven's Lab inspires the imaginations of future innovators through engaging hands-on experiences with real scientific tools. Its mission is to empower young minds to harness the power of science as a catalyst for positive change in the world.

Student Outcomes:
Curiosity- Immersion in Unique Science Experiences- Exhibits









Examples of Journaling techniques used in the galleries. Student wonders were supported with the 5W question scaffold which helped students to diversify the types of questions asked.

Teacher Outcomes:
Teacher Professional Development

"The breadth of resources, expertise and hands-on activities is unparalleled. Having access to a top notch facility and personnel has been stellar." (Participating Teacher)

My participation in Chevron Open Minds Program met my expectations for what I thought I was going to receive.	
(no label)	strongly agree
Explain your reasons.:	Absolutely. Science School was an incredible week for my students to explore topics they were interested and curious about. The way the program was designed allowed for me to easily bring concepts back into the classroom and continue the work that was done. This will definitely be the highlight of my students year!

My participation in the orientation, summer-inservice, planning meetings and CC/OM workshops throughout the year has made a difference/impact on my teaching practice?	
(no label)	strongly agree
Explain. Please share an example.:	I love the journaling techniques I learned during the summer-inservice and the insightful ideas that were brought forward during our planning meetings. I have tried a number of new journaling techniques with students, such as hexagon thinking and curiosity chains.

Program Outcomes: Teacher Comments

My participation in the orientation, summer-inservice, planning meetings and CC/OM workshops throughout the year has made a difference/impact on my teaching practice?

(no label)	strongly agree
Explain. Please share an example.:	I learned so many journaling techniques that we used throughout the year. The students loved the tasks, and I learned so much more about my students than I otherwise would have. I plan to incorporate this journaling techniques into my everyday teaching approach moving forward, as they are easy to execute, motivating for the students, and they give lots of information about student learning.

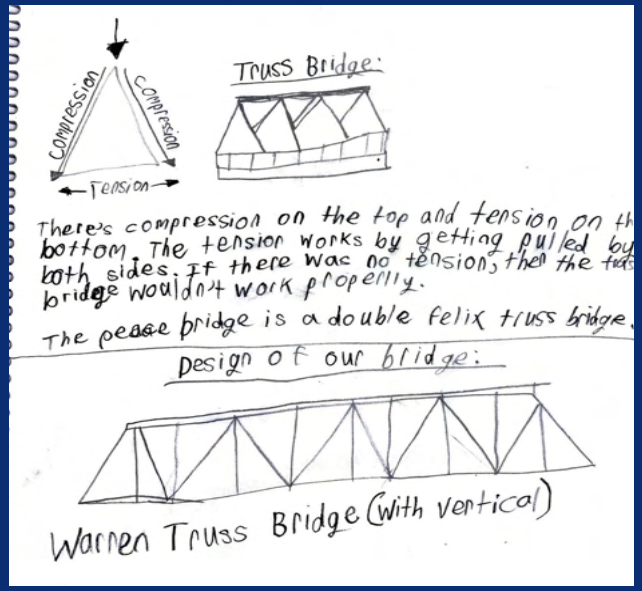
I would recommend this program to a colleague.

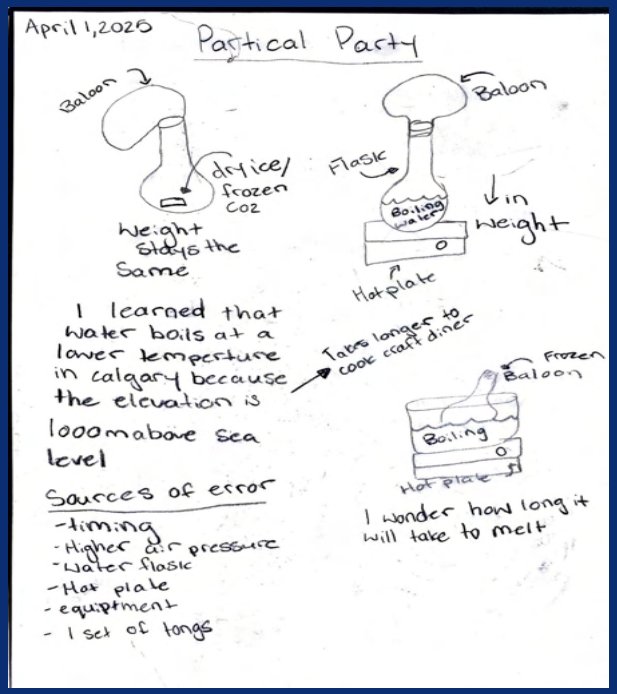
(no label)	strongly agree
Explain your reasons.:	Yes. I would recommend this program to all teachers! This isn't just a one-time field trip; it's an opportunity to ignite curiosity, foster inquiry-based learning, and encourage critical thinking throughout the entire school year!

I have a better understanding of my role in the inquiry process.

(no label)	strongly agree
Describe your role. Please share an example of your role.:	I better understand how to be a student facilitator (helped students understand our big question and helped develop problem solving skills as they looked for answers). I was a collaborator with Donna and Megan, who did a masterful job of creating a truly enriching inquiry-based learning journey for my students.

Site Outcomes:
Commitment to Inquiry:
Trying New School Programs for new Gr 4-6 Science Curriculum





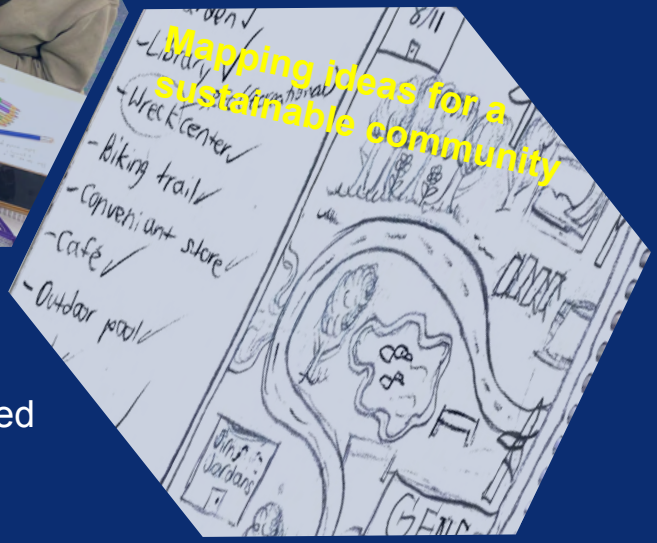
From Left:Tension, Trusses and Triangles and Particle Party

Some of our Grade 4-6 students had the opportunity to engage in Telus Spark's new school programs developed for the new Gr 4-6 Science Curriculum. With more time for metacognition through journaling or discussion, Science School students were able to extend the learning for deeper learning.

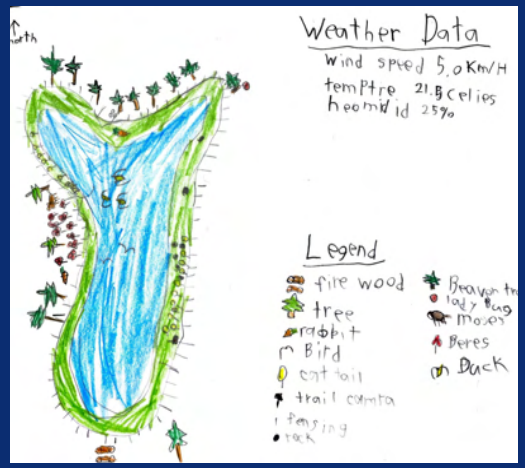
TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE

Program Outcomes: Commitment to Inquiry and Personalizing Learning

Gr, 6 students explored: "How does human ingenuity affect our shared spaces to build strong communities?"

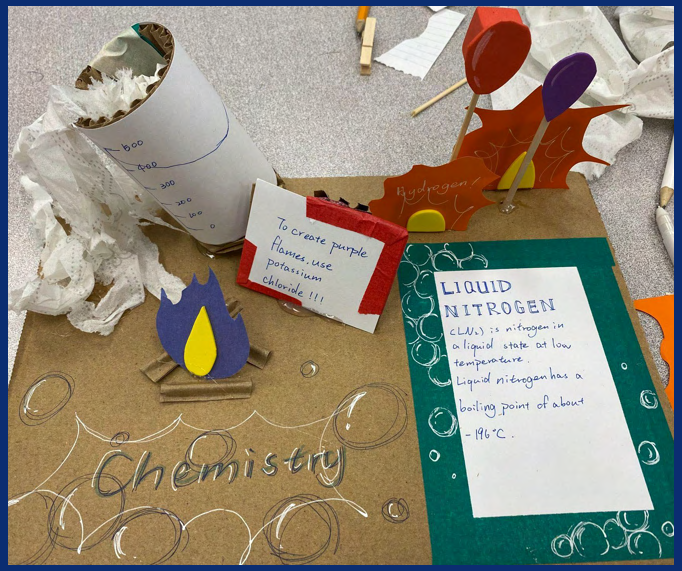


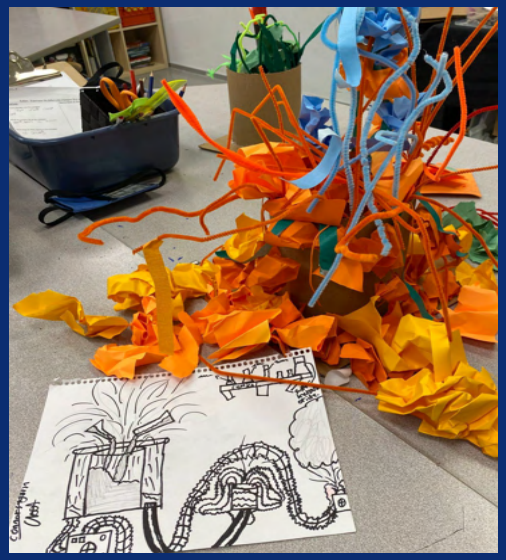
Program Outcomes: Commitment to Collaboration and Creativity

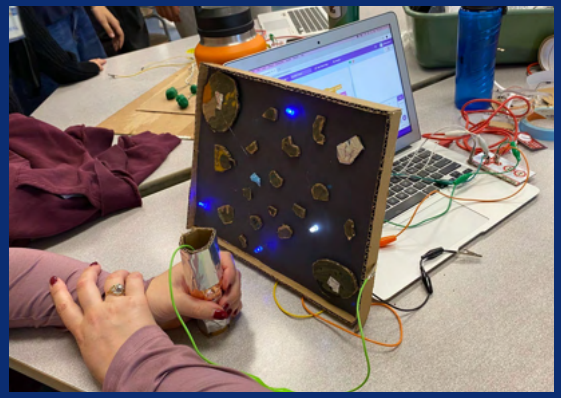


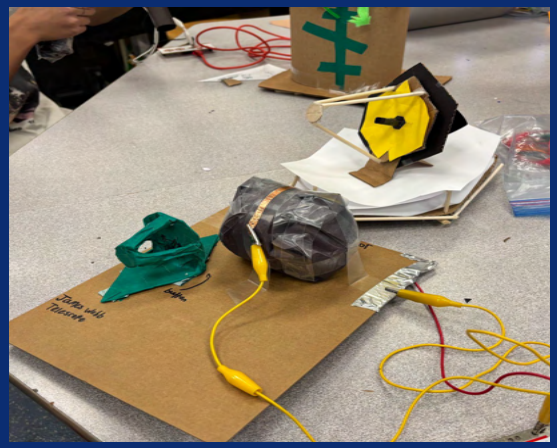
Grade 5 students explored the big idea of natural communities through observation, mapping, and construction of 3D interactive soundscapes utilizing scratch programming and makey makey.

Program Outcomes: Commitment to Creativity and Innovation







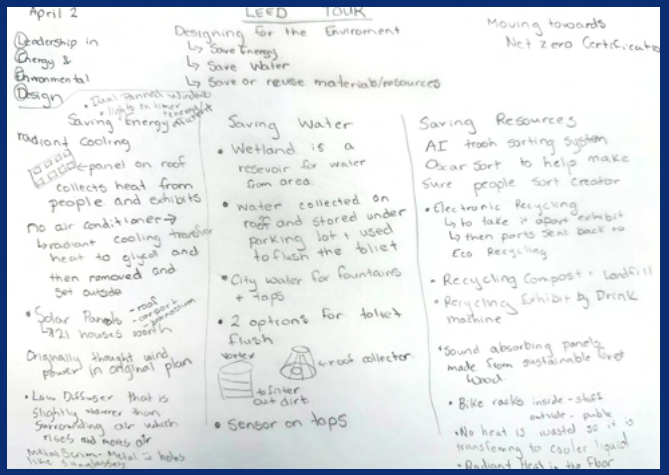


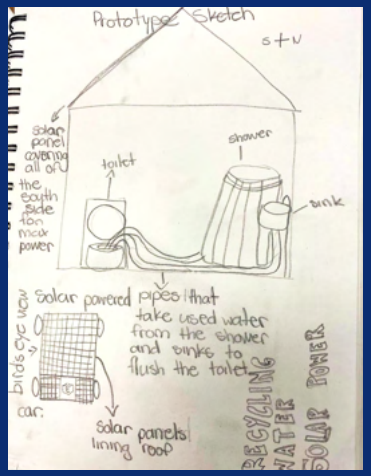
These Grade 9 students built mini displays/exhibits using makey makey and scratch to "inform" others about the science behind something they learned at science school as part of their big question of "How do we become informed citizens?"

Scan QR code for project video

TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE

Program Outcomes: Commitment to Courage and Collaboration Through Design

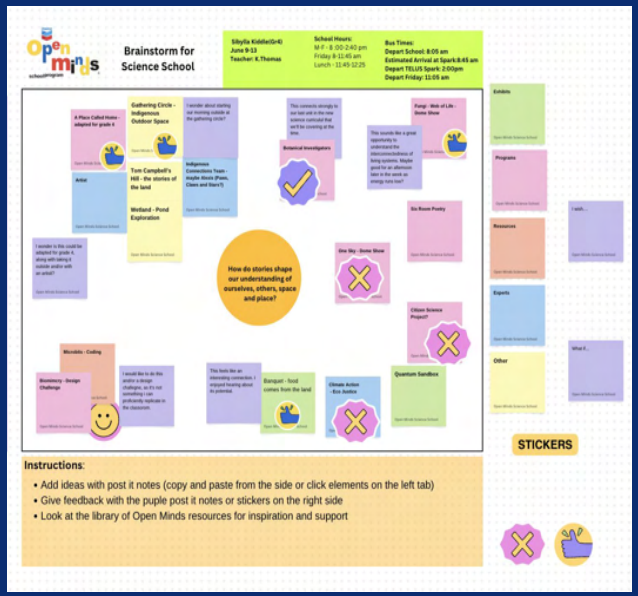


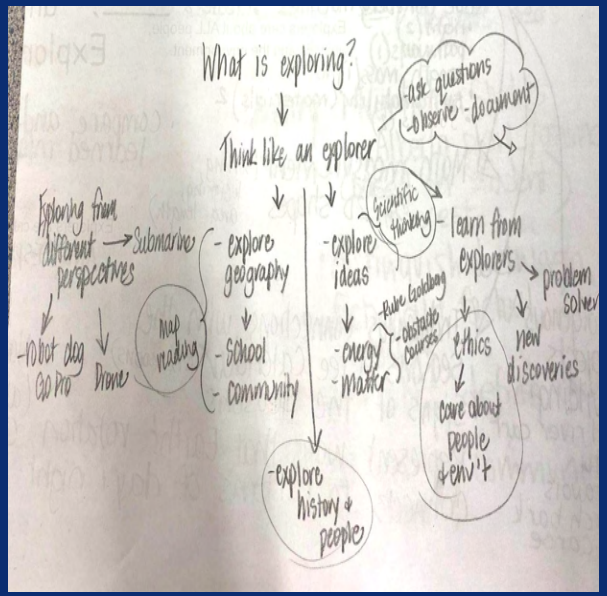


Students visited Behind the Scenes to learn the LEED features of Telus Spark and then prototyped their own sustainable structure designs.

TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE

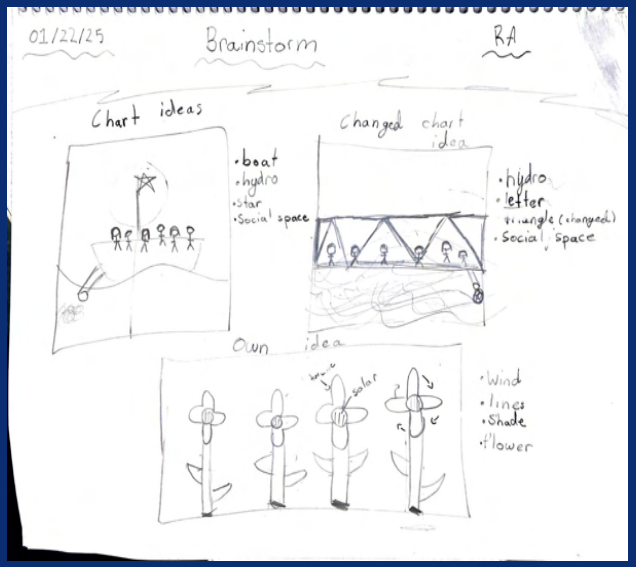
Program Outcomes: Commitment to Inquiry and Personalizing Learning (Planning for Science School)



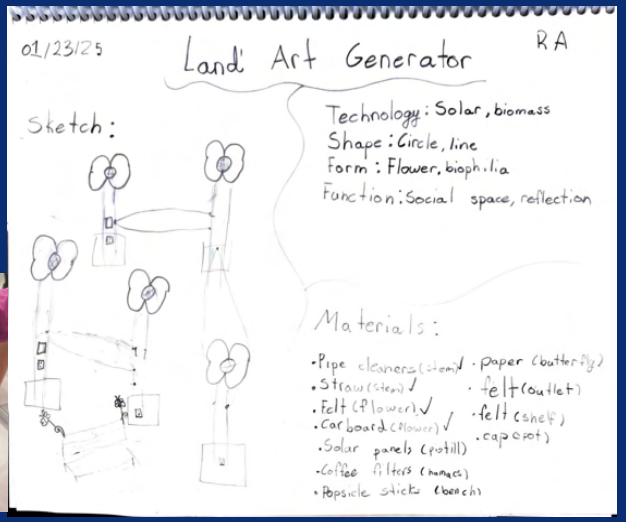


Personalizing learning involved creating unique weeks designed to meet the needs of the class and teacher involved. New digital tools, like collaborative whiteboard spaces, were utilized at planning meetings to help co-create ideas and allowed teachers and students to contribute and give feedback on ideas for their science school week.

Program Outcomes:
Collaboration for Innovation and Creativity



Grade 5 students learned from design experts, toured the design features of Spark, explored energy,and brainstormed and developed ideas for their Land Art Generator Projects.



2024 IMPACT REPORT

CHEVRON OPEN MINDS SCIENCE SCHOOL

LEARNING THAT CONNECTS TO LIFE

At TELUS Spark, we believe that the deepest learning happens when curiosity is given time, space, and purpose. That's the heart of the Chevron Open Minds Science School—a week-long immersive experience that invites elementary students to slow down, look closer, and think more deeply about the world around them.

Unlike a typical field trip, Science School transforms Spark into a living classroom. For five days, students explore exhibits, meet scientists and Spark staff, conduct observations, record reflections, and investigate questions that matter to them. Structured inquiry blends with open-ended exploration to create space for truly transformative learning.

In 2024, Science School empowered students to:

- Strengthen observation and critical thinking skills
- Connect curriculum to real-world STEAM environments
- Build confidence through inquiry-based learning
- Deepen relationships with classmates, teachers, and the centre

Students become scientists—not for a day, but for a week. Through journaling, sketching, questioning, and collaborating, they engage deeply with content and with one another. Teachers consistently report that the insights and inspiration from Science School last long after the program ends.

> ***"Science School is one of the most powerful learning experiences I've witnessed. The connections made—between students, ideas, and the world around them—are unforgettable."***
>
> **— Past Participating Teacher**

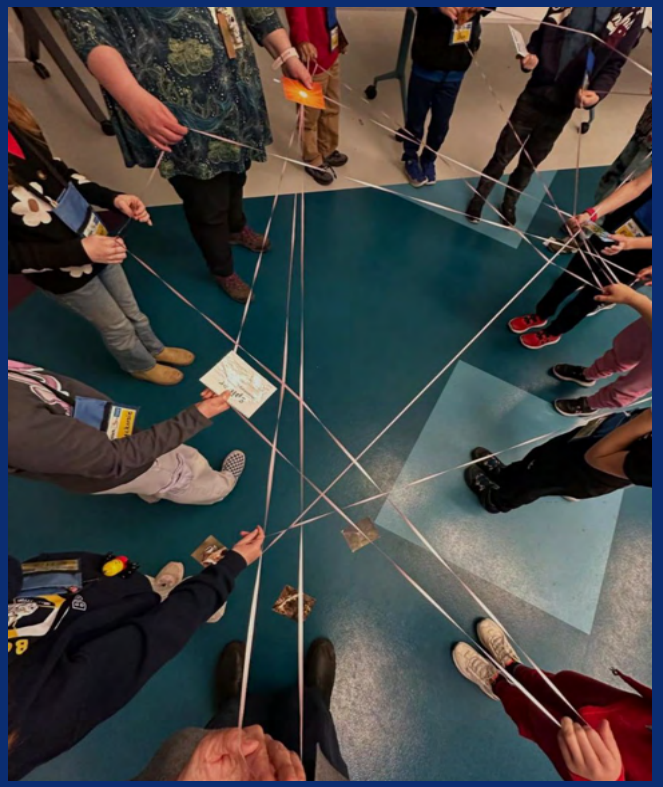
Chevron's continued partnership has been essential in sustaining this deeply meaningful program—one that not only fosters student growth, but also helps educators see their students in new and inspiring ways. When we give young minds the time to wonder, they show us just how far curiosity can go.

16

2022 Chevron Open Minds Science School

Telus Spark

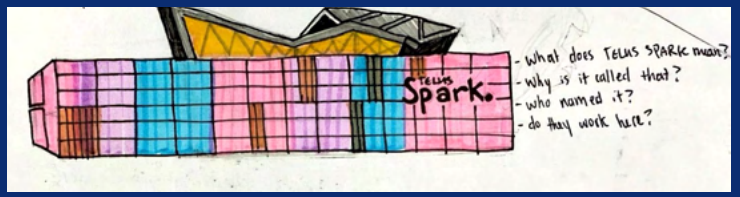
Impact Report 2024



For full report visit:

Impact Reports

Program Impact: Student Comments



My favourite part of Science School was the fashion fusion exhibit because I love designing and being creative. It was super fun to mix and match fabric to make cute outfits with my friends, and I wish I could do it again sometime. I also liked the Phenomena exhibit because of its ultra cool mirror maze. The winding paths of mirrors make it tough in a fun kind of way. All in all, Science School was an awesome experience that I wish I could participate in again. ~Makayla

I am more informed about the way chemicals react to eachother and how to work with circits and how electricity can travel threw your body.

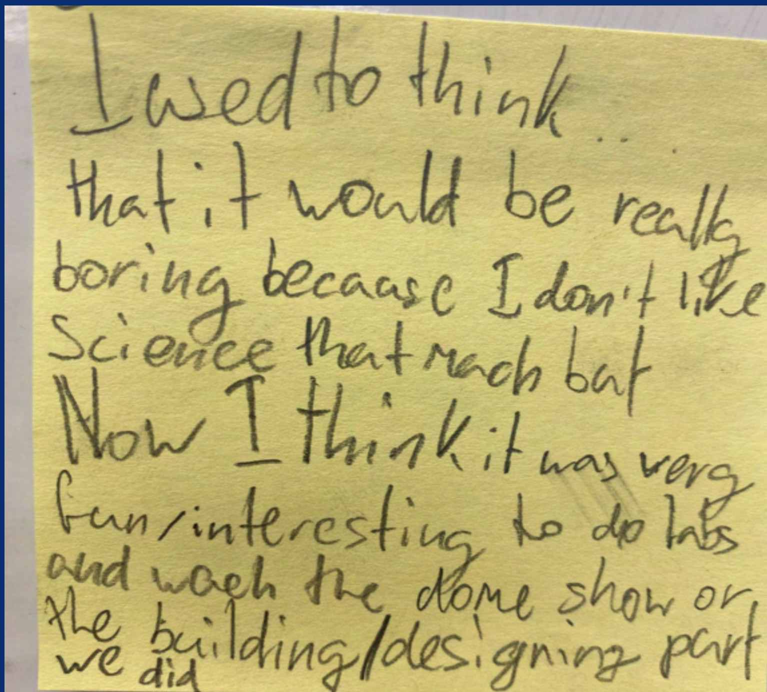
I learned that teamwork is the most important thing because imagan you were alone in this world so I really liked this activity.

1)Did this program open your mind? Why or why not? (Explain your answer)

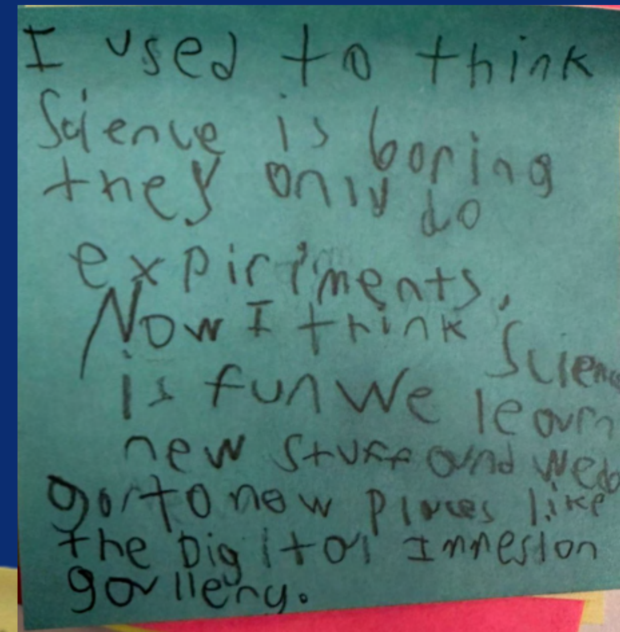
yeah, i feel like i learned lots of new things that i probably wouldnt have learned at regular school.

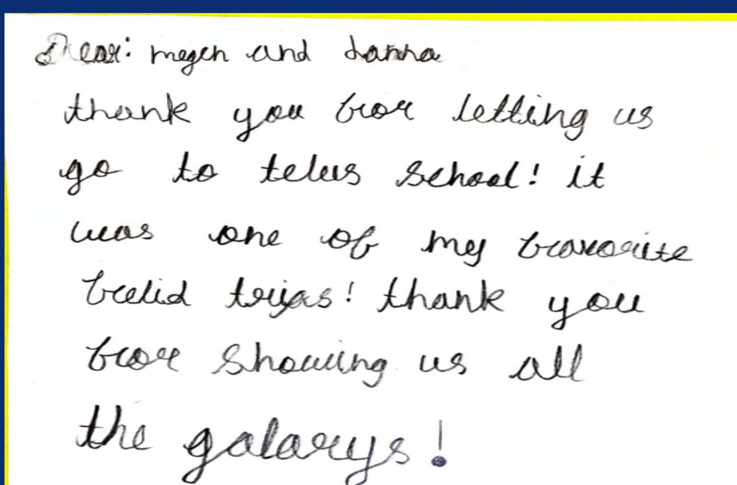
Program Impact: Student Comments

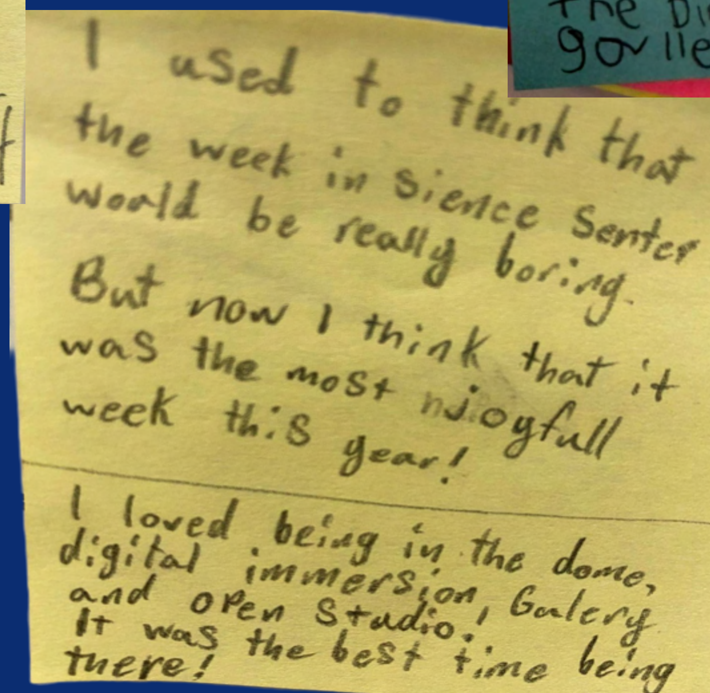
TELUS Spark SCIENCE CENTRE


I used to think...
that it would be really boring because I don't like Science that much but
Now I think it was very fun/interesting to do labs and wach the dome show or the building/designing part we did

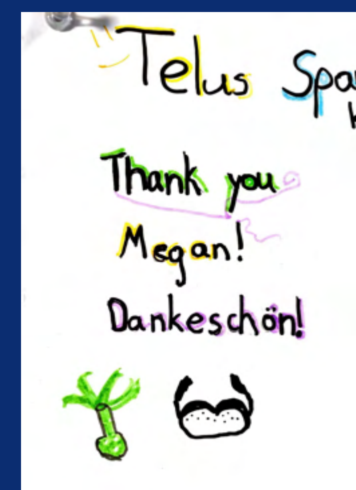

Dear Megan and Donna
Thank you for all your help.
I Loved phenomena so much.


I used to think Science is boring they only do expiriments.
Now I think Science is fun we learn new stuff and we go to new places like the Digital Immersion gallery.


Dear: megan and donna
thank you for letting us go to telus school! it was one of my favorite field trips! thank you for showing us all the galarys!

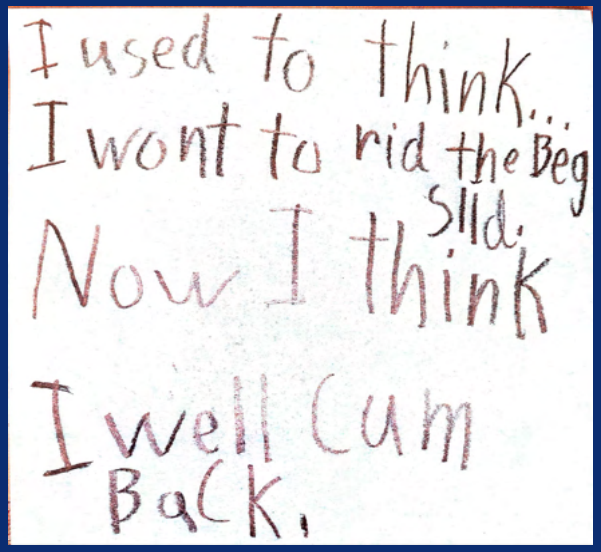

I used to think that the week in Science Sen~~ter~~ would be really boring.
But now I think that it was the most nd:oyfull week this year!

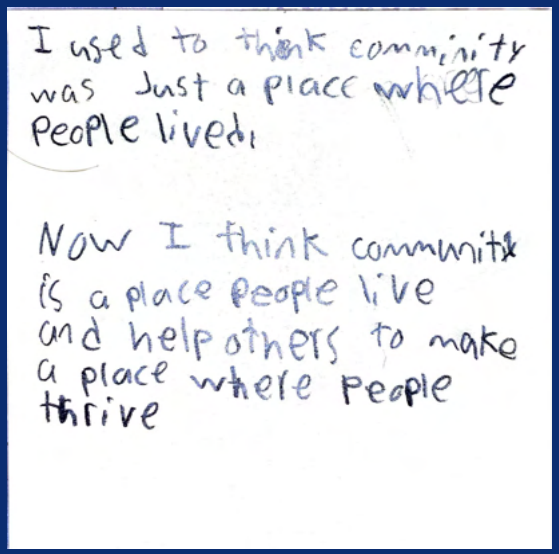
I loved being in the dome, digital immersion, Galery and open Studio. It was the best time being there!

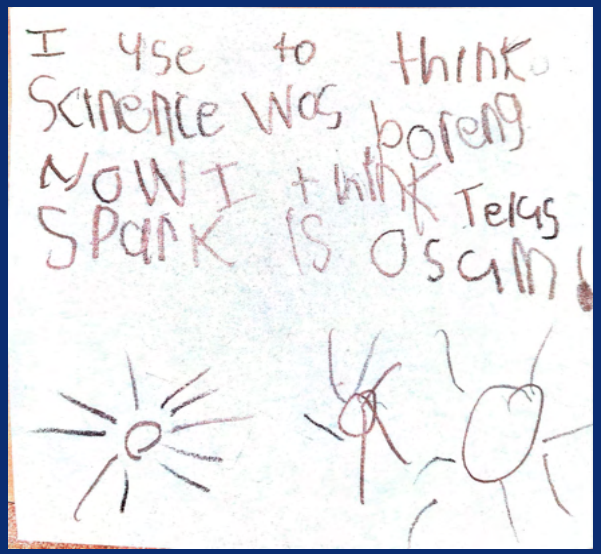

Telus Spark
Thank you Megan!
Dankeschön!

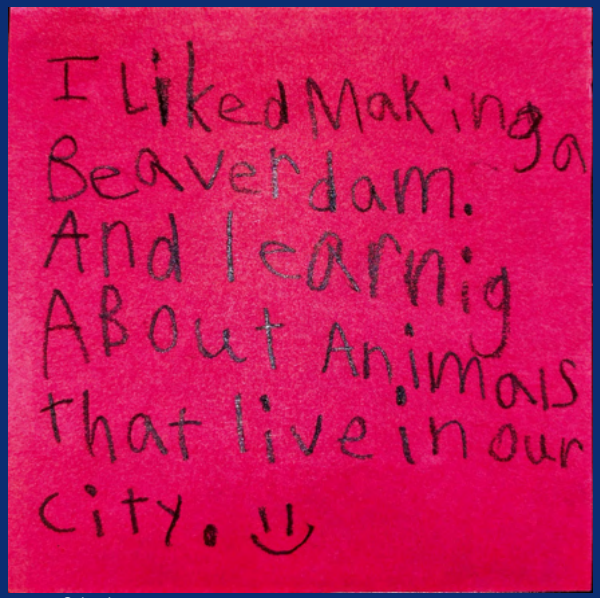
School

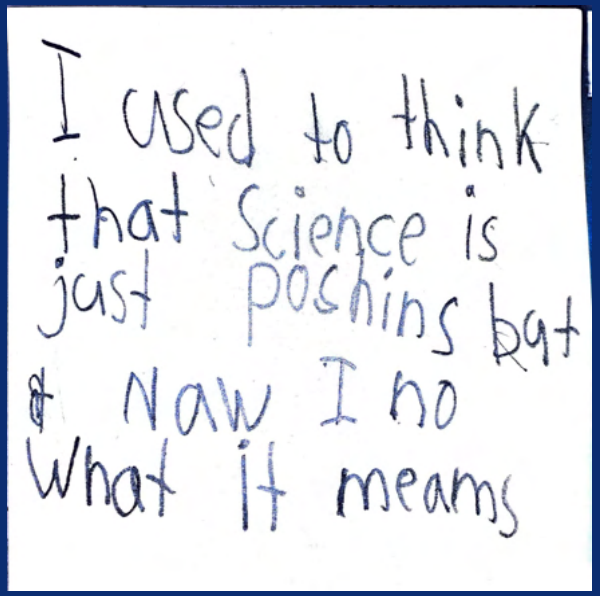
Program Impact: Student Comments

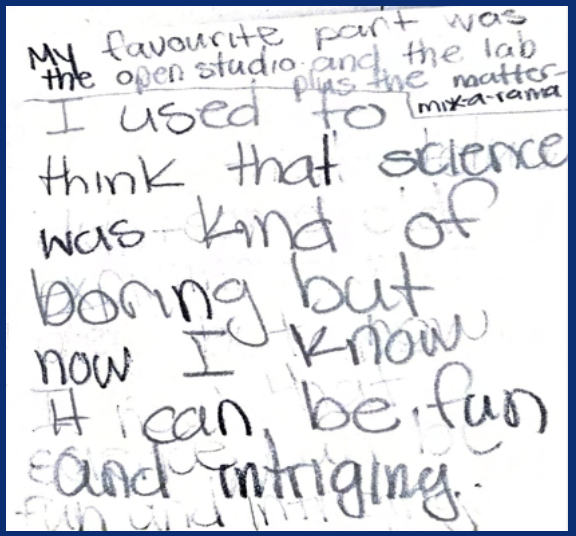












School

Program Impact: Student Comments