

## Penhold Crossing launches thrift store project, receiving strong community and student support

Students and staff at Penhold Crossing are working with their community to make a difference for students who could benefit from access to free clothing. The school has started a thrift store for clothing, with every item available for free to any staff or student.

***“The project was spearheaded by people in our building that noticed a need for our kids,”*** said Clark Peters, Principal of Penhold Crossing School. ***“It’s been tremendous to see our community come together to support this project. We’ve been overwhelmed with donations.”***

Peters said when Penhold residents make donations for clothing or to the food bank, those donations generally go to facilities in Red Deer. Yet, sometimes families in Penhold who could benefit from the donations may not have transportation to get to Red Deer.

Knowing that, Penhold teacher Kristy Blair and Educational Assistant Jane Greenwood took on the challenge of creating a thrift store in the high school. The community jumped in right behind them with a huge response. When the thrift store opened for the first time, and for two days, 412 donated clothing items found new owners.

***“Every time 4 more bags of donations came in, the place was buzzing,”*** said Peters. ***“It was almost overwhelming to manage, and the donations completely took over the storage room and a conference space for a while.”***



Top image: Students and staff responsible for running the thrift store at Penhold Crossing. Bottom image: students and staff browse clothing available

***“Students were excited when the store opened. ‘Thrifting’ must be pretty hot right now with the teenagers,”*** said Peters.

***“It was way better than we ever thought it was going to be. Students really liked it,”*** said Kristy Blair, teacher at Penhold Crossing School. ***“It was great to watch a variety of students head into the store and find clothing pieces. For instance, there was a Grade 9 student who found a golf shirt and told all his friends about it, and they came into the store too.”***



Blair said the equity piece was intentional; having the store be open to everyone to access and having the items be free of charge, **“totally removed any barriers for students who needed to access this resource.”**

Students were involved in running the thrift store as well. From sorting and organizing donated clothing to crowd control, students who were involved had the opportunity to learn new skills.

Peters said, **“Kristy has a knack for knowing who to engage and putting them into positions that played to their strengths and where they would succeed.”**

Billy Wilson, a Grade 9 student said, **“I liked showing people around, and helping with how many people could go in. I was the bouncer. The store made people excited.”**

Joden Stocker was one student who found clothing at the thrift store. **“It was pretty cool. I got some cool stuff. At first I wasn’t too excited, but then I went and I saw some good stuff,”** said Stocker, a Grade 9 student.

Kristina Gillrie also found value in the store. **“I’m good at thrifting. I like finding something to spice up an outfit and I like seeing items get reused,”** said Gillrie, a Grade 10 student.

**“I think it’s a good idea because some students might not be able to afford clothing. And it’s good that we are giving back to the community,”** said Gillrie.

**“The thrift shop really was a bright spot for us this fall,”** said Peters. **“Thank you to Kristy Blair and Jane Greenwood for taking the lead and running with this. The number of hours dedicated to this project was impressive. Thanks to the students who brought their enthusiasm and work to get it set up and going. Thanks also to our community for getting behind this project in a big way. We appreciate your support.”**

Penhold Crossing plans to open the thrift store for students to access one or two days a month.

Individuals who wish to make donations should call the school at 403-886-8604 to make arrangements for drop off.

**Blair said, “One of the keys to our success moving forward will be continued donations from the community. Thank you to our community for your generosity, and thank you for anything you can donate in the future.”**



# 40 local professionals share career journeys to inspire École H.J. Cody High School students

Students at École H.J. Cody High School in Sylvan Lake gained ideas about possible careers, thanks to a recent career event at their school.

Last week about 40 local professionals presented two half-hour sessions to students about their own careers.



The spotlighted careers spanned a wide variety of types of jobs: nursing, musician, marketing, marine biology, teaching, welding, accounting, Canadian armed forces, powerlineman, CT scan technologist, pipe trades, hair stylist, animal control, criminal law, tattoo artist, physiotherapy, medical lab assistant and more.

Each presenter shared what their job is like on a daily basis, what education or preparation they needed to get the job, and what their journey to that job was like.

Career day happens annually, for one hour during the school year. Students sign up in advance for two career presentations they want to attend.



***“Our intent is to let students explore what might be possible,” said Alex Lambert, Principal of H.J. Cody. “When students get excited about what’s ahead, they make connections to learning and are motivated about making the most of their high school experience.”***

Lambert and organizer Darla Bell are both grateful for the community support. ***“We could not have this successful event without our incredible community,”*** said Bell, a Career Practitioner at H.J. Cody.



***“Thank you to the presenters and to our community, for sharing your career journeys and inspiring our youth.”***

