



# Coast Mountains Board of Education School District 82

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News Release  
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## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Board of Education for Coast Mountains School District is pleased to announce the contract services of Colleen Austin, 'Wii Goot, as Indigenous Languages Revitalization Coordinator for the school district reporting to the Superintendent of Schools.

Indigenous languages are an integral part of the identity of Canada's Indigenous people. The Board of Education is pleased to support the engagement of Colleen's services towards the preservation, promotion and revitalization of the First Nations languages within the school district.

The Board of Education's objective in engaging Colleen's services is to build, develop and implement a Five Year Plan for Languages Revitalization for the four local Indigenous languages within the traditional boundaries of the school district. This initiative will be conducted in consultation with a network team of Indigenous Languages Leaders representing the ten local Nations within the school district, the Kermode Friendship Society and the Northwest BC Metis Association as well as other stakeholder groups as necessary. These representatives will form the Steering Panel for the Five Year Plan for Languages Revitalization Plan.

Colleen is highly respected as a knowledgeable and effective Indigenous educator and leader with experience in language revitalization. She has always demonstrated passion in her profession, an understanding and respect for local diverse cultures and the importance of community involvement in making a difference in the lives of young people.

During her tenure as Principal/Teacher with the 'Na Aksa Gyilak'yoo School (a K-12 BC Independent School) within the Kitsumkalum Nation from August 2005 to June 2019, she had the privilege to collaborate with Sm'algyax speakers, communities, families and educators to build a successful language school and community education program within the Kitsumkalum community. Colleen has held the positions of President and Vice President for the First Nations Schools Association of B.C. since 2014, which included the negotiation of the BC Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting Student Success that contributed significant additional funding for Indigenous language education, transportation, special education and technology. She was also a member of the school inspections team for the BC Ministry of Independent Schools responsible for Education Programs within Independent and First Nation Schools.

Colleen previously worked for the school district as a First Nations Support Worker, an Education Assistant and a Teacher on Call from 2002 to 2005. She holds a Master of Education Degree with a specialization in Indigenous Language Revitalization from the University of Victoria and she is a Certified Language Teacher.

Please join the Board of Education in welcoming Colleen back to the school district as she fulfills her services as the Indigenous Languages Revitalization Coordinator.

Janet Meyer  
Acting Superintendent of Schools