

Superintendent's Report to the Board

February 2023



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A Message from the Superintendent

Ama Sah / Good Day,

This Wednesday February 22nd is **Pink Shirt Day** in Canada, an opportunity to raise awareness of anti-bullying initiatives, as well as promote kindness, empathy and compassion throughout our school communities. With 1 in 3 teenagers nationally reporting being a recent victim of bullying – verbal, social, cyber or physical – Pink Shirt Day conversations support much needed messages of allyship in our schools, and can serve to normalize a ‘speak up’ culture when bullying is witnessed. Pink Shirt Day reminds us that it is our collective responsibility - parents, caregivers, learners and staff - to create environments where all learners feel safe and accepted, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, culture or religion.

Unfortunately, many families in our district have been impacted in recent weeks by challenges experienced by our bussing partners at Diversified Transportation Ltd. Bus parts and service technician availability, have both led to the cancellation or combination of bus runs across all SD82 communities. New commitments made to the school district, however, should lead to improvements in bussing service, and our team will continue to work with Diversified to problem solve in an attempt to minimize the impact.

Prior to the Winter Break the Ministry of Education and Child Care published the **How Are We Doing? 2021-2022 Aboriginal Report** for school districts and the province. The report uses several important measures to specifically track the progress of the system in meeting the learning and well-being needs of Indigenous learners. In Coast Mountains School District, both opportunity and instructional gaps have existed for Indigenous children and youth, demonstrated through several key indicators including graduation rates, provincial literacy and numeracy assessments, and others. The district will be using the How Are We Doing? report, along with other evidence, as we work with rightsholders and community partners to make adjustments to our practices to improve outcomes for Indigenous learners.

Finally, with Spring Break just a few short weeks away, I'd like to wish learners, their families and our staff well as they use this time to rest and recharge.

Sincerely,

Aaron Callaghan
Superintendent,
Coast Mountains School District



Upcoming Dates

February 22 – Pink Shirt Day & School Board Meeting (Kitimat)
March 15 & 16 – Early Dismissal Day
March 20-31 – Spring Break (No Classes)
April 3 – Classes Resume
April 7 & 10 – Easter Holidays (No Classes)
April 12 – Education & Business Committee Meetings
April 26 – School Board Meeting

Coast Mountains School District acknowledges with respect the lands on which we live, work, play & learn as the traditional & unceded territories of the Gitksan, Haisla, Nisga'a & Ts'msyen Peoples.

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Engage, Ignite, Empower – Our Mid-Year Update

We have reached the mid-point of the school year and have made significant progress on several areas related to the implementation of the Board's Strategic Plan. Updates include the following:

Progress related to **“All students will realize their full potential.”**

- A district K-3 Literacy Strategy has been drafted and will be shared with elementary schools for input on implementation in April. Budget considerations are in place for 2023-24.
- The district is working to develop an electronic dashboard to support the use of varied student and school level evidence to support conversations and decision making.
- The district and province have engaged in an active teacher recruitment process for 2023-24 with participation in Information Sessions, Career Fairs, and in a Northern Recruitment Pilot Project.
- The back-end of the district's public facing website has been developed and content continues to be updated with the official launch now expected following Spring Break.

Progress related to **“We will honour and respect culture, diversity & inclusion.”**

- Programming for system wide professional learning related to local Indigenous cultural competency is underway, with multiple opportunities to be actioned in 2023-24.
- Several staff are becoming inclusion teacher mentors through ongoing professional learning.
- Planning and collaboration for increased outdoor learning spaces for students is ongoing.
- Professional resources for Inclusion and SOGI continue to be developed for district staff.

Progress related to **“We will facilitate well-being across the district.”**

- Student forums are underway at the secondary level, providing an opportunity for student voice.
- Principals and Vice Principals are participating in training related to Compassionate Systems Leadership.

Baseline evidence of our impact is being gathered throughout the 2022-23 school year using:

- Middle Years & Youth Development Instruments / Student Voice Forums / Student Learning Survey
- Foundational Skills Assessments at Grades 4, 7, 10 & 12
- Literacy & Numeracy district and school level assessments
- Attendance & Suspension evidence

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Student Transportation Update

Last week our Director of Facilities, Rob Schibli, provided an update to parents and caregivers on recent interruptions to bussing service throughout the district. Director Schibli has been in constant contact with our district's bussing partner, Diversified Transportation Ltd., and is supporting efforts to resolve their identified challenges. Several commitments have been recently made by Diversified, including the addition of busses to their local fleet, prioritizing mechanical support to repair existing busses, and enhancements to communications with families via both email and their mobile app My Bus Stop. With this news from Diversified, I am hopeful for the restoration of safe, reliable student transportation for all Coast Mountains' learners in the coming days.

Minister's Anti-Racism Action Plan

Recently the Honourable Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care, shared news of the provincial Anti-Racism Action Plan. Stemming from dialogue at provincial Community Roundtable events, as well as the Minister's Youth Dialogue Series in 2022, the plan aims to support the creation of school community conditions where students can thrive in learning environments that are anti-racist, safe and equitable for all. The multi-year framework for the plan identifies six priority areas: Community Voice, Removing Barriers, Raising Awareness, Collaborative Change, Capacity Building and School Support. As anti-racism efforts in Coast Mountains School District unfold over the next several years, they too will align with the Board's Strategic Plan goal of honouring and respecting culture, diversity and inclusion. Learn more about the Minister's plan at: <http://bit.ly/3kg5Ala>

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Black History Month was recognized in February – a time to celebrate & acknowledge the accomplishments of Black Canadians.



Student Forums are happening this month throughout Coast Mountains School District.