

Superintendent's Report to the Board

April 2023



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@CoastMtnSD

A Message from the Superintendent

Ama Sah / Ya'uc / Good Day,

Spring has arrived in the Northwest and the weather has certainly provided teachers and their classes increased opportunities to get outdoors and learn from the land. There are so many ways for learners in our beautiful communities to meaningfully engage with our entire provincial K-12 curriculum, including embedded Indigenous knowledge and perspectives, while enjoying nature.

Over the last few months, hundreds of our learners from grades 4-12 have told us about their experiences in school and in community through both their participation in our annual perception surveys and our in-person Student Forum events. For the school district, these engagements demonstrate the value we place on student voice and allow us to thoughtfully consider both what is working well and where improvements can be made from the learners' perspective. Our Coast Mountains children and youth are incredibly intuitive, and both schools and the district learn a great deal from their sharing.



As we begin to plan for the 2023-24 school year, the school district's Budget Working Committee will soon be coming together to provide input on the allocation of funds for next school year's operating budget. The Budget Committee is comprised of several members who are invested in the success of our students, including rights holders, trustees, school district employees, students and other members of our partner groups. I look forward to working with the committee members this spring as we collectively align funds with district priorities.

Wishing you all a wonderful month ahead.

Sincerely,

Aaron Callaghan
Superintendent,
Coast Mountains School District



Upcoming Dates

April 24-28 – Education Week in British Columbia
April 28 – National Day of Mourning
May 5 – Red Dress Day – Honouring MMIWG2S
May 10 – Business & Education Committee Meetings
May 11 – Moose Hide Campaign Day
May 22 – Victoria Day (No classes)
May 24 – School Board Meeting (Virtual)
May 26 – Professional Development Day (No Classes)

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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Student Forums

As part of this year's Action Plan, several in-person Student Forums were hosted in secondary schools this past month around the school district. District Principal Phillip Barron led the sessions in each school, providing students with an opportunity to share some of their thinking and experiences impacting their success and well-being at school. Students independently responded to prompts including 'Do you feel welcome at school?', 'When do you feel safe / unsafe?', 'Who believes in you or that you can succeed?' and 'Is there anything that would help you in school?' among others. Responses have been collated and are being shared back with school staff for discussions about possible next steps. Thank you to all learners who shared their voice and participated in the district dialogue.



District Working Groups Getting Underway

The School District is beginning to engage several staff and partners in focused working groups. Participants on these teams will work collaboratively and provide input on a variety of upcoming projects, including school food programming, K-3 Literacy planning, school improvement, employee wellness, partnerships with local Nations, new school administrator onboarding and more. Working groups are being led by district leadership staff who will report progress up to the Board through the Superintendent. Thank you to those individuals who are both leading and participating in these collective teams in support of system improvement.



Northern BC Teacher Recruitment & Retention Pilot Project

This year the district has partnered with the province to address the regional shortage of qualified teachers. Currently in Coast Mountains School District there are more than 30 teachers without their full teaching credentials, and approximately 200 in total throughout the northern part of the province. As part of the Northern BC Recruitment & Retention Pilot Project, district staff has begun to work with Talent Acquisition Specialist Jessa Chupik to address the shortfall. Jessa comes to the

province holding two degrees focused on Indigenous Studies and with many years of experience in the recruitment field, having worked on more than 400 executive searches across the country. Specifically, Jessa will be supporting the district in recruiting outstanding teachers for the Hazeltons. She is scheduled to visit the district in early May and is looking forward to meeting local stakeholders and learning more about our school communities to best inform her work in teacher recruitment.

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Planning for MyBusStop App

Our transportation partner Diversified Transportation Ltd. is in the final stage of development with the MyBusStop App. This App for mobile devices will allow learners and their parents and caregivers to gain information about their specific bus, including the location in real time and the history of stops, as well as support email notifications of delays, schedule changes or route adjustments. Parents and caregivers will receive an information package and registration instructions for the free software in the coming weeks. Thanks to Director of Facility Services Rob Schibli for his support of this exciting enhancement to the transportation services provided to learners and their families.



Moose Hide Campaign

Coast Mountains School District staff and students are encouraged to participate in this year's Moose Hide Campaign, taking place on Thursday May 11. The Moose Hide Campaign is an Indigenous led movement to end violence against women and children. The campaign is not new, having started more than 10 years ago along the Highway of Tears. The moose hide pin, being shared with all school district employees, is a way to signify your personal commitment to honour, respect and protect women and children and speak out against gender-based and domestic violence. Learn more about the Moose Hide Campaign, including available K-12 resources, by visiting: <https://moosehidecampaign.ca/>



School Food Programs

Throughout Coast Mountains School District, many thoughtful individuals are involved in food programming for learners, playing a significant role in ensuring students' basic needs are being met every day. This past month the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care made public information related to new provincial funding in support of school food programming. The 'Feeding Futures' initiative is a three-year investment that will see Coast Mountains School District receive approximately \$580,000 annually to enhance existing food programs, focusing on accessible,

healthy and stigma-free breakfast, snack and lunch options for learners across all schools. In the coming weeks, district staff and other partners will meet to collaborate on how we may best use this funding to both create efficiencies and improve opportunities for children. To learn more about the provincial funding, access the provincial news release at <https://bit.ly/FoodProgramming>

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Premier's Awards for Excellence in Education

The nomination window for the **2023 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Education (PAEE)** is now open. The deadline for nominations is Friday May 5. PAEE provides an opportunity for students, parents/caregivers, school staff, community members and other partners to recognize those who have a positive impact in our local school communities. For those familiar with the nomination process, note that revisions have been made this year that will require the superintendent to be aware and supportive of individual nominations.

This year award recipients will be chosen from the following ten categories: Community Engagement, District Leadership, Extracurricular Leadership, Indigenous Education, Outstanding New Teacher, Outstanding Support – School Community, Outstanding Support – Teaching Assistant, Outstanding Team Collaboration, School Leadership and Social Equity & Diversity. For more information, access the provincial website at <https://bit.ly/PAEE2023>

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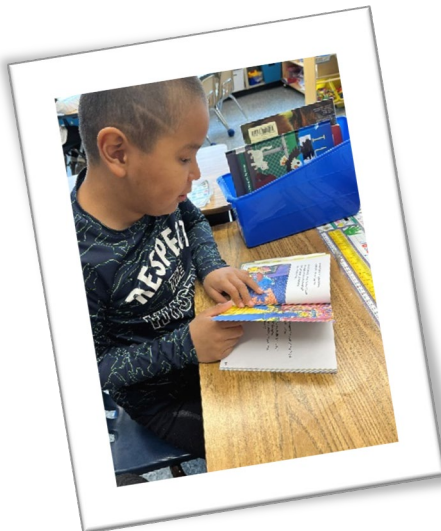
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Intentional instruction having an impact on Literacy skill development in Ms. Shore's classroom at Cassie Hall Elementary – whole group, small group and individual instruction every day.



Musicians in Ms. Hollett's classroom at Uplands Elementary prepare for the Pacific Northwest Music Festival April 14-29.