

Superintendent's Report to the Board

September 2022



A Message from the Superintendent

Ama Sah & Welcome to the 2022-23 School Year!

It is hard to believe that the first month of the school year has come and gone. For me, as the new Superintendent, it was a wonderful month of engaging with students, staff, parents/ guardians, and community partners throughout the school district. Thank you to everyone who has made me feel so incredibly welcomed and supported in this new role.

In schools, it was also largely a month of getting to know one another – students, staff and parents/guardians - in an effort to build meaningful relationships. Many teachers and staff have been working intentionally toward establishing a sense of community within classrooms and schools, checking in on students to get an understanding of the assets and interests they bring with them every day. In the months ahead, teachers will undoubtedly use what they are learning about students to engage them in their daily work and make personal connections to the curriculum.

As you may know, the School District 82 Board of Education has recently launched its new Strategic Plan titled “Engage, Ignite, Empower”. With a focus on student learning, wellness and creating truly inclusive and culturally rich learning spaces, now begins the work of bringing this vision to life in all of our schools. Action plans that align with these priorities are in development, and our district leadership team members are looking forward to sharing the stories of implementation as the year progresses.

As this report is being shared, be reminded that this Friday September 30th is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation across Canada – a day set aside to actively honour the survivors of Canada’s residential schools, as well as remember those children who did not return home. Many local events are planned throughout the northwest, and I encourage you to participate if you are able. For more information about the ongoing impacts of the residential school system, visit the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (<https://nctr.ca>).

Again, thank you for the warm welcome to Coast Mountains School District 82.

Sincerely,

Aaron Callaghan
Superintendent, SD 82

Coast Mountains School District acknowledges with respect the lands on which we live, work, play and learn as the traditional & unceded territories of the Gitksan, Haisla, Nisga'a & Tsimshian Peoples. Learn more at: <https://bit.ly/FirstNationsPeoples>



Upcoming Dates

September 26-30 ... Truth & Reconciliation Week 2022
September 30 ... National Day for Truth & Reconciliation - No Classes
October 10 ... Thanksgiving Holiday - No Classes
October 21 ... Provincial Pro-D Day - No Classes

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Strategic Planning – Engage, Ignite, Empower

Coast Mountains School District is entering the first year of implementation of its new Strategic Plan – “Engage, Ignite, Empower”. With strong connections to the Board of Education’s *mission* and *values*, and guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, the strategic planning process resulted in the identification of three overarching goal statements. They include:

All students will realize their full potential

What will
this look
like in
schools?

- Students are engaged in their learning, making clear connections to their personal interests, strengths, and passions
- Students are developing essential skills in numeracy and literacy
- Students are building 21st century competencies, including critical thinking and communication skills
- Students are demonstrating proficiency in education, career and life planning

We will honour and respect culture, diversity & inclusion

What will
this look
like in
schools?

- Students appreciate contributions of Indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as experience Indigenous ways of knowing and doing
- Students understand how cultural identity shapes world view
- The Coast Mountains School District workforce reflects the rich diversity in our local communities
- Inequities of outcomes are identified and barriers to student success are removed

We will facilitate well-being across the district

What will
this look
like in
schools?

- Learning environments are welcoming, trauma informed and culturally safe for all students
- Students are developing strong relationships with peers and caring adults
- Students are developing both socially and emotionally
- The well-being needs of students are met by professionals working in collaboration

Throughout the school year, SD 82 will share the stories that are closely connected to the aligned improvement efforts in schools in print publications as well as via social media platforms Twitter, Facebook and Instagram with **#EngageIgniteEmpower**, **#BeIntentional** and **#SD82**.

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Student & Family Affordability Fund Engagement

On August 29th the provincial government announced the **Student & Family Affordability Fund** (<https://news.gov.bc.ca/27361>), a one-time grant to school districts to help make life more affordable for families who are facing financial challenges and need temporary assistance with costs of school supplies and education related fees, as well dealing with food insecurity impacting children's learning. Coast Mountains School district received a one-time payment of approximately \$500 000 and will be hosting partner consultations in October to best determine how the funds should be allocated within the district this year. Parents/guardians in School District 82 can watch for an email communication with details of an online opportunity to provide their input in the coming days.

Recent Leadership Appointments

Congratulations to the following School District 82 team members on their recent leadership appointments:

Leader	Position	Location
Phillip Barron	District Principal	School Board Office
Darlene Bragg-Hounsell	Principal	Skeena Middle School
Robert Clifton	Director of Instruction, Indigenous Education	School Board Office
Christine Duncan	Principal	Hazelton Secondary School
Joel Ewald	Vice Principal	Suwilaawks Community School
Annette McAlpine	Principal	Cassie Hall Elementary
Tina McDonald	District Vice Principal - Early Learning & Child Care	School Board Office

Inservice Day Highlights- Friday September 23rd

Reading & Thinking Across the Curriculum

In the morning virtual session, literacy consultant Adrienne Gear led SD82 school-based staff in the exploration of deep thinking and comprehension across the curriculum. Discussions focused on the importance of establishing classroom environments where learners make connections to their content and actively build meaning and understanding. Many practical examples were shared across subject areas.

Participant feedback: "My takeaway from today... a student's ability to decode and or do written output does not reflect their ability to think. As a Resource Teacher, that is so powerful."



Geraldine Lawlor welcomes Adrienne Gear to the morning virtual session.

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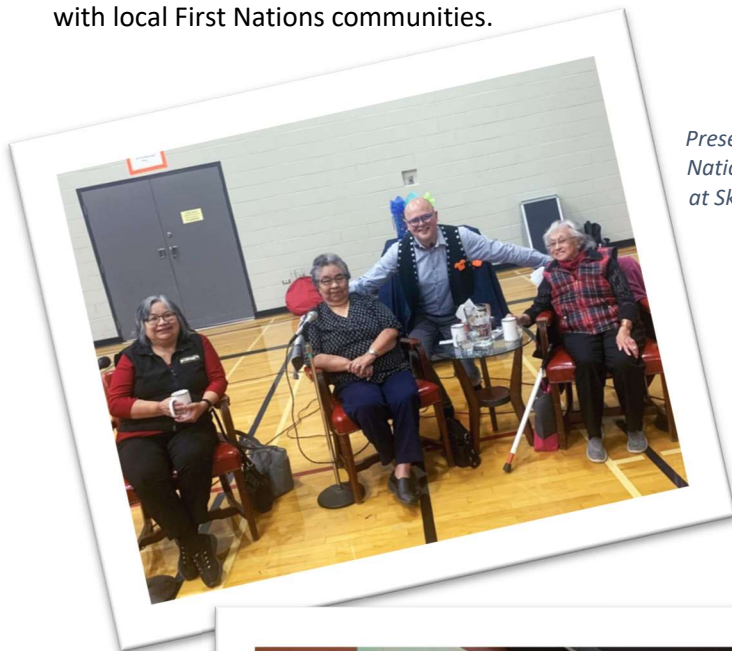
Walking Side-by-Side – Awakening Minds, Hearts & Spirits in ReconciliACTION

In the afternoon, all employees attended one of four in-person events around the district focused on Indigenous cultural awareness. Several local elders, knowledge holders and presenters representing the Gitksan, Haisla, Nisga'a, and Ts'msyen First Nations hosted conversations and shared stories to open participant hearts, minds and spirits for the ongoing work of ReconciliACTION. Although the programs differed slightly across the four locations, feedback indicated all were authentic and impactful, serving to build capacity related to the impacts of residential schools, support the understanding of local Indigenous culture and ways of being, and further strengthen relations with local First Nations communities.

"The devastation of residential schools goes far beyond the individual experiences of those who attended. Today, while there are no residential schools in existence, so powerful was their mission that the ghosts still haunt those who attended, as well as those who did not and future generations."

Dr. Jane Smith

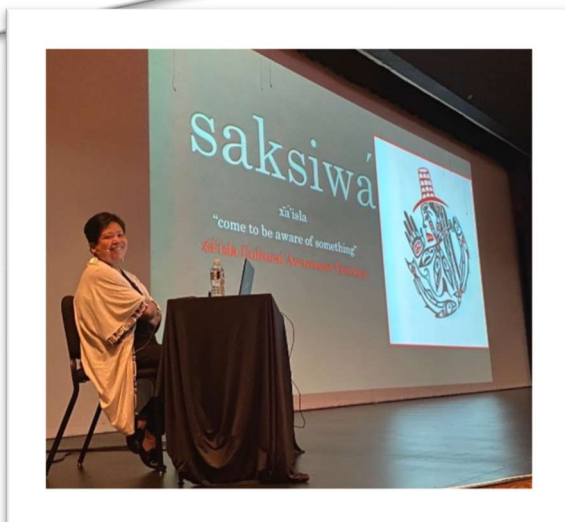
Presenter at Hazelton Secondary School - Gitksan Lax Yip / Territory



Presenters from Ts'msyen Nation smile for a picture at Skeena Middle School.



Dr. Jane Smith speaks to the audience at Hazelton Secondary School.



Presenter Shelly Bolton from Haisla Nation presents at Mount Elizabeth Middle/Secondary School.

Sharing a bit of Gitksanimx...

Amasilkswa
Good afternoon

Luu amhl good'y win gya'an
I am happy to see you

Thank you to Language & Culture Teacher Gwen Simms!