

Superintendent's Report to the Board September 2023



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A Message from the Superintendent

Ama Sah & Welcome to a New School Year!

September is a busy month in schools with learners and staff alike getting to know one another and working to build meaningful relationships that support positive school and classroom environments. It is also an important time for relations to be established across the larger school community – including parents, guardians, caregivers and other partners in education – as the success for learners is absolutely dependent on our collective efforts. For learners and schools to truly thrive, everyone must be in the canoe together and paddling in the same direction!

Intentional efforts related to the implementation of the Board's visionary strategic plan are already well underway around the district. Like last year, a number of key commitments across the three overarching goal areas have been prioritized for the Year 2 Action Plan, including professional learning focused on evidence-based practices in K-3 Literacy, and enhancements to supports for learners identifying with Indigenous ancestry among others. The full list of action plan initiatives for 2023-24 can be found in this report, and the full strategic plan can be found on the school district website at <https://cmsd.bc.ca/strategic-plan>.

All of our school communities will be recognizing September 25-29 as the National Week for Truth and Reconciliation, with learners and staff engaging in dialogue and action honouring the survivors of Canada's residential schools, as well as remembering those children who did not return home. Community events too will be taking place through the week and on Saturday September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and all are encouraged to participate. To learn more about the ongoing impacts of the residential school system in Canada, visit the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at <https://nctr.ca>.

And finally, as I finish this report, members of our leadership team are preparing for our school district's day of professional learning on Friday September 22. The theme for the day is **ReconciliACTION – Indigenous Education For All - By All** with all Coast Mountains employees participating in a full conference hosted at both Caledonia Secondary School and the REM Lee Theatre. The gathering will bring together a number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous presenters who, through their stories, will inspire all participants to answer the TRC Calls to Action with their engagement in the Reconciliation process. T'oyaxsut nüüsm to Robert Clifton and Lindsay Harder for their superhuman efforts in organizing the event.

Sincerely,

Aaron Callaghan
Superintendent
Coast Mountains School District



Upcoming Dates

September 22 - ReconciliACTION District Inservice Day (No Classes)
September 25-29 - National Week for Truth & Reconciliation
September 29 - Orange Shirt Day
October 2 - National Day for Truth & Reconciliation Observed (No Classes)
October 9 - Thanksgiving Holiday (No Classes)
October 20 - Provincial Pro-D Day (No Classes)

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 & Ts'msyen Peoples.



Strategic Planning – Action Plan Commitments for the 2023-24 School Year

Below are the prioritized initiatives across the three goal areas for the coming school year:

All students will realize their full potential

- Engage early teacher adopters during the implementation of the K-3 Literacy strategy.
- Implement enhanced district services that support the achievement of Indigenous learners.
- Implement and support the use of an electronic dashboard to guide evidence-based decision making.
- In collaboration with provincial partners, engage in a robust teacher recruitment & retention strategy to secure a full complement of outstanding educators for anticipated 2024-25 teaching vacancies.
- Enhance school district communications through innovative practices.

We will honour and respect culture, diversity & inclusion

- In cooperation with Indigenous partners, deliver ongoing learning opportunities for all school district employees that support professional capacity to incorporate culturally respectful and responsive practices.
- Engage school and community champions in implementing an Anti-Racism campaign, including a learner-led Action Grant initiative.
- Collaborate with school communities and local First Nations to deliver enhanced experiential learning opportunities incorporating Indigenous worldview and knowledge systems.

We will facilitate well-being across the district

- Together with key partners, develop a K-12 Mental Health & Wellness Strategy, including a learner-led Action Grant initiative.
- Grow the professional capacity of school-based teams in Compassionate Systems Leadership.
- In collaboration with community and provincial partners, implement school and district practices that increase students' access to healthy food programming in all schools.

Watch this report for updates on our progress in the coming months.

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Sponsorship Announcement - Northwest Community Student Support Fund

The Coast Mountains School District is incredibly pleased to share news of a recent sponsorship agreement with LNG Canada, resulting in the establishment of a fund to assist families facing financial challenges with costs related to their child's participation in school. Valued at \$250,000, the **Northwest Community Student Support Fund** will be managed by the school district and is anticipated to help with expenses like school-based extracurricular or cultural activities, school supplies, winter clothing and footwear, and more. A **HUGE THANK YOU** is extended to our partners at LNG Canada for their support of the families served by Coast Mountains School District. Learn more about the fund at <https://cmsd.bc.ca/northwest-community-student-support-fund>.



Leadership Appointments

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

- Kassia Nameth – Vice Principal, Kitwanga Elementary School
- Phillip Barron – District Principal & Remote Principal, Kitwanga Elementary School
- Darlene Bragg-Hounsell – Principal, Cassie Hall Elementary School
- Joel Ewald – Vice Principal, Skeena Middle School
- Roberta Clarke – Interim Vice Principal, Suwilaawks Community School
- Taylor Murrell – Interim Vice Principal, Hazelton Secondary School
- Bill Lenuik – Interim Vice Principal, Caledonia Secondary School



International Student Program Expansion – Host Families Needed

Coast Mountains School District has recently made investments in its International Student Program with the addition of a community homestay component, providing increased opportunities for students from other countries to enroll in a local school and live with a host family. Initially, host families will be sought in the communities of Terrace and Kitimat, with further opportunities in Hazelton expected. Joe Dominguez, Vice Principal at Caledonia

Secondary, is supporting the expansion of the program and anticipates the arrival of secondary students from both Germany and Brazil in January 2024. More information about the International Student Program can be found at <http://international.cmsd.bc.ca/>. As well, you can reach Joe Dominguez by email at Joe.Dominguez@cmsd.bc.ca or our Homestay Coordinator Danielle Larson at Danielle.Larson@cmsd.bc.ca.

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This Month On Social Media...



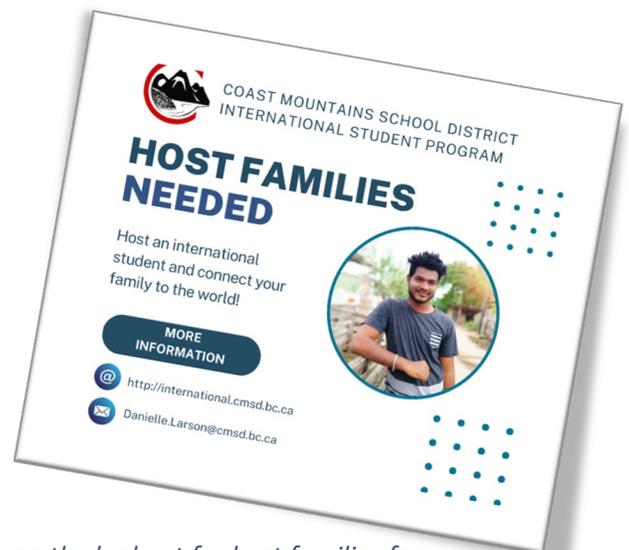
Like and follow Coast Mountains School District on social media this year to stay on top of our news and stories of impact from our school communities.



Coast Mountains School District supports members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community; you are valued and our schools are better spaces because of you.



Progress is being made on the Nechako Elementary School Outdoor Learning and Cultural Space.



We're on the lookout for host families for our growing International Student Program.