



December 22, 2022

Happy holidays to all students, families, and our fabulous staff.

2022 has been a year where, as a learning community, we articulated our dreams, and I believe, we are well on our way to achieving them. *Dream. Believe. Achieve.*

To that end, I would like to guide you through some highlights.

Year-long highlights: With learning leading the way, we were able to improve our completion rates by 5% for all students.

Most of our learning community has embarked on personal journeys toward reconciliation with our Indigenous, Metis, and Inuit community members and we are much more conscious and purposeful in integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and learning.

We have continuously improved our services for, and supported more, Inclusion families as our understanding of accessibility for all grows.

Our students have achieved fantastic results in the arts and athletics in our district and in our province.

Most of all, we make a difference in the lives of our young people. Thank you all.

A look in the rear-view mirror ...

January 2022 brought further pandemic concerns and delays as we faced new elements with COVID-19. Does anyone remember “Omicron”? Somehow, it seems so long ago. Only 12 months back.

By **February**, we were on a roll again, deep in meetings, surveys, interviews regarding building our new *Strategic Plan* and directions for the district. We stayed true to our values of community & collaboration, trust and respect, personal growth, being inclusive, and equity.

In **March**, we went green as environmental solutions were sprouting up everywhere including district-wide organics collection, the salmon release program, and new LED retrofits, school gardens, and much more.

Since **April**, we have been focussed on wellness and mental health coming out of the pandemic. We cheered the return of athletics and field trips and quickly came out of our homes and isolation to form community again.

In **May**, we celebrated the arts through recess dance parties, *Battle of the Beats*, and Secondary Indigenous Drumming, and the unveiling of more amazing murals by David Wilson.

In **June**, we hosted “live” graduations for the first time in a few years. In addition, everyone was encouraged to get outside, do some land-based learning, and take advantage of this wonderful place we call home.

By **July**, we agreed to our *2022-2025 Local Education Agreement* (LEA) with the Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB).

Over the **summer months**, we targeted improvement on early learning, as we knew our role would be expanding later in the year. Child Care moved to the Ministry of Education to become the Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC).

By **Fall**, after eight months of collaboration and input from the entire community, the Board of Education rolled out their new Strategic Plan and renewed Visual Identity for the district.

In **September** we honoured our *National Day of Truth and Reconciliation* and *Orange Shirt Day* recognizing the impacts on residential school survivors, their families, and communities. We followed that up with, our provincial Indigenous professional learning day with Jo Chrona, and her book, *Wayi Wah*.

In **October**, we held a democratic election and now have a new Board of Education.

By **November**, we signed both Collective Agreements and we thank all involved for their positive negotiations.

December has been graced with terrific concerts, original plays, and dance recitals.

Our students rose to the challenge with *Passion for Fashion*; *City Kids Guide to Nature*, *Understanding Eco-Anxiety in Youth*, *Care Botanicals*, and many other incredible projects at the Climate Action Ripple Effect (CARE) Summit.

We celebrate the release of our *Indigenous Role Model posters* which will help to motivate and encourage all our students in many different career paths. Thanks to the Equity Action Plan and the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) for supporting this initiative.

Students have shared their feelings and dreams in student voice.

More than anything, our compassion has been on display. Our children are learning to care for others and have raised food for the needy in our community with organizations such as the Food Bank and Archway Society for Domestic Peace.

The Affordability Fund has helped us support our families more deeply than we have ever been able to before. For that, we thank the Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC).

It has been an incredible year. Thank you, all.

We wish you, and yours, lots of love and a restful, restorative, rejuvenating Winter Break.

See you in 2023, when we can embrace a whole new set of learning opportunities together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C Perkins", is displayed within a light gray rectangular box.

Dr. Christine Perkins | Superintendent & Chief Executive Officer (she, her, hers)

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