



June 2023

Superintendent Year-end *Thank You* Letter to All

Dear Students, staff, and families,

Congratulations on a terrific school year. Our achievements in the first year of our new strategic plan demonstrate our commitment to student success, leadership excellence throughout the district, and of course, our building of strong community connections. We thank our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit community elders and leaders. A special thank you to our partners and rightsholders, the Okanagan Indian band (OKIB). Thank you to our community partners across the district, and surrounding area, the Ministry of Education and Child Care, and the media, for supporting SD 22 in communicating and leading learning for future generations.

Fall 2022 was our first public opening since the pandemic started. We were 99% ready to welcome students and families back. We had some challenges and you all rose to the occasion. Our Director of Facilities, Archie Stogianos, and our maintenance team moved two French Immersion classrooms from Alexis Park Elementary to Beairsto Elementary over the Labour Day weekend to create room for an influx of families to Alexis Park Elementary, all, in time to start school on Tuesday. Thank you to teachers Genevieve Haiworonsky and Christine Molaison and all involved. Many students had never experienced the first day of in-person school or what it was really like to move on to high school. Some of our kids had never ridden a school bus and some of our kids did not know how to line up! And, at BX Elementary school, they had to open the year with new traffic changes in the area. We thank everyone for their patience, help, and support during that time. Lastly, we moved vLearn into new facilities at Fulton Secondary School. A recent celebration of learning confirmed all went well with one person saying, “The Fulton Family has welcomed us with open arms. We love it here”. Change is hard but you all did it. Thank you.

Thanks to a lot of input, help, and support from all of you, at the beginning of the year, our previous Board of Education approved the new Strategic Plan and new district logo. We moved forward with a new mission, vision, and motto. *Dream. Believe. Achieve.* was born – thanks to listening to student voice, and all who participated the previous year in the development of the new plan. We set about trying to meet the goals of the new Strategic Plan and have had a good first year.

On October 15th Gen Acton (Chair), Jenn Comazzetto, Lori Mindnich, Vanessa Mitchell, Mark Olsen, Kelli Sullivan, and Tom Williamson (Vice-Chair) became the new Board of Education. The Board of Education immediately tackled a complete review and update of all Bylaws and Board policies (Section 100), formed the Education Policy Advisory Committee (EPAC) and updated Sections 200 and 300 over the course of the year. Some of these items had not been revised since 1978, so the process was long

overdue! Thank you to all involved. The new Board also attended their first Career Education Fall Conference (CES), the provincial BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) Academy, and BCSTA Spring Conference and AGM. In the Spring, they also signed our new Local Education Agreement with Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), whom we travel along-side in education.

Provincially, we were absolutely thrilled to be the first jurisdiction to ratify our Collective Agreement with CUPE 5523. We were also able to announce a successful ratification of our Collective Agreement with our teachers. Thanks to Gray Boisvert (CUPE 5523), Cori Huizer (VTA), Malcom Reid (Director of Human Resources), Erica Schmidt (Assistant Director of Human Resources), and all involved.

While bargaining was going on, our students were coming up with great ideas to save the planet. We had more than 200 students from grades 7-12 create almost 50 projects that were displayed at the *CARE – Climate Action Ripple Effect* in December at the Vernon Recreation Centre. Almost half were focused on preserving and protecting nature and biodiversity. Thank you to all the community members who helped support students learning and this worthwhile project.

Winter Break brought a much-needed pause. While winter Break was refreshing, we were still concerned and prepared for the potential return of pandemic-like conditions. Luckily the flu season, COVID, and other respiratory diseases that slowed us down in November and December subsided in the New Year. We started to feel the weight of it all lifting yet, for many, stress levels and mental wellness had taken a hit. Our district focussed on connections to self, others, and the land by emphasizing the importance of getting outside to learn, taking breaks, self-regulating, and we supported as many wellness speakers, professional learning opportunities, and initiatives as we could.

We played host to the BC Winter Games in March of 2023 and want to thank all our students, principals, host schools, incredible maintenance and transportations teams, SD 22 retirees, and SD 22 volunteers and Director of HR, Malcolm Reid, who served as the school district liaison officer. We want to congratulate all our athletes. We are so proud of your participation and achievements.

In April, we were delighted to announce SD 22 has been selected as part of the *Integration Inquiry Project* with the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The Integration Inquiry Project will explore the role of school districts in expanding childcare on school grounds, discover the complexities of blending childcare and education cultures through a single service delivery location, and emphasize quality early childhood education experiences. This project will bring \$880,000 per year (2.64 million over three years) into the district and will be under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent, Katherine Oviatt and District Principal of Early Learning, Jennifer Friesen. SD 22 joins Peace River North and West Vancouver in this project.

In May, we were honoured with a personal visit from the new Minister of Education and Child Care, Rachna Singh, who toured the Venture Training Centre where our Brown Bag lunches are prepared. She then formally opened the new playground at Alexis Park, our last school recipient of the playground equipment program (PEP); and listened to student voices representing our high schools on the topic of anti-racism.

June has been a month of celebration. W.L. Seaton's Lana O'Brien, will be the recipient of the *Premier's Award in Teaching Excellence* for her tremendous work in education – honouring her work in the arts. We have a terrific staff at School District 22 and we are proud to have Lana represent us at the Fall ceremony in Victoria.

Speaking of ceremony ... a huge thank you to all the students, staff and families who organized and helped us celebrate the achievements of our Graduates. We are proud of all 650 of you. And we are thrilled to award over 381 of our graduates with nearly \$292,000 in bursaries, awards, and scholarships. A massive thank you to those who complete all the hard work behind the scenes: Mel Maglio, Steve Plecas; Sandra Glinsbockel; Dave MacKenzie; Christopher Colclough; Raelyn Bauer; Kayla Coble, Tim Agnew; Christina Fenn; Lori Knight; and Corinne McWhinney.

Throughout the year, there was a whole lot of learning going on. Please read our latest Framework for Enhancing Student Learning for process and progress (<https://sd22.bc.ca/fesl2023/>). We thank our team in the Early Learning, Learning, Inclusive education, Indigenous Education, International Education, and Technology departments in celebrating the work of this year and communicating the plan going forward. Thank you also for the many professional development opportunities offered throughout the year.

None of it would happen without the tremendous support behind the scenes from our Finance, Maintenance, Facilities, Transportation, and Human Resources departments. Thank you to all of our unsung heroes in CUPE, the VTA, our Principals and Vice-Principals, our host families, all Exempt staff, and to Trish Kielan, who makes all things work behind the scenes.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to our amazing students and families. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, you are simply the best. You came back, after a global pandemic, to our first full year of face-to-face learning and embraced all that their schools had to offer. Thank you to our youth leaders – Indigenous Leadership, SOGI, student trustees, student voice, and all those who completed capstone projects, district project scholarships, and all other public presentations of learning in the music, theatre, dance, sports, teams, and academies. Thank you to our new *kindies* who were successful in their first year, to all our graduates who have completed their 13th year, and all those learners in between. We wish you all a wonderful summer.

Lastly, I want to personally thank the new Board of Education. As a community, we ***dreamed*** and ***believed*** we could do great things together and I am proud to say, we have ***achieved*** what we set out to do. The future looks bright at School District 22 thanks to all our students, staff, and families. Thank you all. Have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,



Dr. Christine Perkins | Superintendent & Chief Executive Officer

Proud to live, work, learn, and play on the ancestral, unceded territory of the syilx nation.

(she, her, hers)

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