



June 24, 2020

As we approach the end of the 2019-2020 school year, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our school community for your compassionate care and for pulling together to overcome the obstacles and challenges faced, and wish you a successful end to the school year. As we reflect on this year, I also want to take a moment to pause and send thoughts to those families that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and have lost a loved one – we are truly sorry for your loss.

The announcement by the Ministry of Education to suspend face-to-face instruction was one of the many strategies incorporated by Provincial Health Officer Dr. Henry and her team, and the Ministry of Health, to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and flatten the curve in B.C. The incredible efforts of all communities in B.C. to adhere to the health norms paved the way for students to return to partial face-to-face instruction.

Despite some of the initial obstacles and challenges faced upon returning from Spring Break, I am sincerely grateful to staff for their patience, flexibility, resiliency and collaboration as we transitioned through the variety of stages in the restart plan from April to June. Thank you, families, for your patience and understanding during these challenging times. I also want to take this opportunity to thank our system leaders: managers, principals and vice-principals, and district office leaders for their measured and calm leadership as we navigated these uncharted waters as a school community while ensuring that we adhered to robust safety standards given that student and staff safety is paramount in our school community.

Past events in our school community, as well as recent systemic racist and discriminatory events across North America, remind us of all our past and present wrongs, and the need to listen with an open heart so we can hear our own biases, prejudices and privileges, and share our stories about the harm caused by injustices so we can heal together as a community. As mentioned on our district website, we have a clear framework as we collectively embark on an action plan to deal with systemic racism head-on and create a better tomorrow for our school community.

To those who are retiring this year – I am sorry we could not celebrate in person. Thank you for your caring and for all you have done in supporting student success over the many years. We wish you the very best! For staff members who will be returning in September, this has been a challenging end to the school year. We wish you the very best for the summer with your family and hope that you have a relaxing and rejuvenating staycation. Finally, I want to thank the many staff members who will be spending their summer preparing our schools and facilities for September, no matter the stage. Thank you! Your dedication is sincerely appreciated, and I hope that you can also spend some time this summer with family and rejuvenate before the September startup. Stay safe!

Sincerely,

Rohan Arul-pragasam
Interim School Superintendent