

SD73 Trustee and Superintendent DPAC Report- September 19, 2023

Trustees Hickson, Trustee Kang, and Superintendent Nixon

1. PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT THE PLANNED PROTEST: [LINK](#)

Parents, students, and staff are aware of the planned protests on September 20th. In preparation for ensuring the safety of our schools, Assistant Superintendent Mochikas has worked diligently with school administrators to ensure that they have contextually relevant messages for parents, students, and staff. We will prioritize the safety of students and staff and have steps to ensure everyone's safety. We have made a public statement that you will find at the link by clicking on "Safe, Caring, and Welcoming" schools on the front of our public website.

2. DISTRICT LEARNING PLAN

The Kamloops-Thompson Board of Education approved the [District Learning Plan 2023](#) to submit to the Ministry of Education. 2022-2023 was the first year of living our 2022-2027 District Strategic Plan, which emerged from consultation that started and ended with cycles of ongoing review with the Aboriginal Education Council. We invite you to review a one-page summary of key results. [Read more.](#)

We highlight that we have seen continuous progress across K-12 in literacy, numeracy, grade-to-grade transitions and high school completion. SD73 students typically outperform the province. While we are proud of these positive results, we acknowledge that SD73 Aboriginal students compared to non-Aboriginal have not historically had the same life chances to progress. Additionally, SD73 students who have diverse abilities have not always performed as well as their provincial peers. We continue to see improvement in students feeling safe, welcome, and connected to two or more adults. We see slower gains in students feeling a sense of belonging. Each department provides areas of success, need, and adjustments to continue to improve. We invite you to learn more either through the PDF document (linked above) or on our website— [here](#).

3. ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

In May, 2023, DPAC learned about progress on the Accessibility Committee to fulfill the requirements of the [BC Accessibility Act](#), which includes having a committee that is comprised of at least 50% of its members identifying as persons with disabilities or representing organizations that provide services or programs to them. The committee met on May 10, 2023, July 14, 2023, and September 6, 2023. They have developed a Draft Accessibility Action Plan, which was approved by the Board on August 28, 2023, and is available on pages 62-76 of the [Regular Public Board Meeting agenda](#). To offer feedback, please: complete an online survey or access a printed copy of the survey, mailing a letter to the school board office, calling the school board office, or emailing accessibilityplan@sd73.bc.ca. At the last committee meeting,

other means to gather feedback were shared by the members and we look forward to increasing opportunities beyond a survey. Thank you to Bonnie McBride, Vice-Chair, DPAC, who continues to serve as a member on this committee.

4. WILDFIRE RESPONSE

The Board of Education was deeply concerned about the out of control wildfires that took hold on August 18, 2023, leading to a state of emergency declared by B.C. Premier David Eby. During the morning of Saturday, August 19, 2023, the SD73 district administration struck a Wildfire Response team (district management), and they met to plan how best to support a coordinated response at the district level. The team has remained in close collaboration with the First Nations communities impacted as well as with the Thompson-Nicola Regional District (TNRD) and Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) to identify SD73 families on Evacuation Order and to share updates about emergency response requirements.

District staff have continued to meet with Principal Greg Gartrell, Chase Secondary School, and Principal Colleen Topolovec, Haldane Elementary School to review and revise communication for their families about an evacuation order plan. Assistant Superintendent Mochikas and District Principal Bowden are communicating regularly with the education managers of Skwlāx te Secwepemcúłecw and Adam's Lake Indian Band to coordinate supports such as backpacks of food and gift cards for necessary items such as clothing and shoes through the school and working with Secretary-Treasurer Cassidy on providing transportation from Rayleigh Evacuation Centre to SD73 schools in Chase and Chief Atahm for these families. The District will continue to support families and staff from a trauma-informed lens and seek to provide stability and normalcy as everyone continues in school.

5. PINEVIEW VALLEY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Kamloops-Thompson Board of Education has advocated for a new school in Pineview Valley due to notable enrolment growth and space pressures in schools in the south west sector of Kamloops. On February 22, 2023, the Ministry of Education and Child Care announced funding for a new school in Pineview Valley. At that time, the Board had been working with the McGowan Future Growth Planning Committee to problem solve what could be done if space pressures continued in that school (160% capacity utilization). The Board of Education is looking forward to the much-needed opportunity to have families experience the opening of this new school in 2026.

We are especially excited about this unique location because it is located by Python Lake which is known for its natural beauty, protected species (Painted Turtle), and varied plants (mariposa lilies, yarrow, and giant wildrye) and animals (a variety of butterflies, songbirds, and ducks, as well as deer and many small mammals). This

location opens up so many opportunities for land-based learning and outdoor education, and we are excited to be part of the development of this school.

The Board initiated the Pineview Valley Community Engagement Committee with representatives from Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, Aboriginal Education Council, KTTA, CUPE, Pineview Valley community, parents, staff, District Parent Advisory Council, City of Kamloops, Ministry of Education and Child Care, and Trustees to work together with Station One Architects and SD73 staff to review and provide feedback on draft plans for the new school. We aim to meet in a cycle of gathering feedback, working on plans to respond to feedback, and then bringing plans back to the group. The goal is to truly collaborate by listening to concerns and co-problem solving. [Read more.](#)

6. RURAL LOCATIONS FOR BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Education represents 12 communities that are located across 27,000 square kilometers of diverse rural and urban contexts. It is important for the Board members to travel and experience these diverse locations and we do that through board meetings, celebrations like graduations, and liaison meetings throughout the year which are informal school visits to learn firsthand about how we are achieving the District mission and priorities in the District Strategic Plan. As per Board Policy 7, Board Operations, section 3, Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on Mondays, with exact dates and times established by motion of the Board, in the boardroom at the Board Office, 1383 9th Avenue, Kamloops, BC. At least once annually, the Board shall meet in a community represented by each rural trustee. There must be at least one meeting during each month of the school year. The Board of Education has been establishing, by Board Motion, a Schedule of Board Meetings in three year cycles since 2016-2017. This allows for better attendance at meetings and effective planning for Education Topics and Board Reports. To see the schedule of rural board meeting locations, view the [2023-2026 Board Meeting Schedule](#).

7. STUDENT AND FAMILY AFFORDABILITY FUND

In the 2022-2023 school year, SD73 families benefitted from accessing \$760,237 of the \$1,656,000 Student and Family Affordability Fund provided by the Ministry of Education and Child Care for food and fees for courses, school supplies, activities, athletics, and field trips. This year, the School District carried forward \$746,000 of the Student and Family Affordability Fund to support families with school fees. These remaining funds are available to assist students and families with school fees. [Read more.](#)

8. FEEDING FUTURES

In August 2022, the Ministry of Education and Child Care allocated \$60 million to support families in BC through the Student and Family Affordability Fund. This fund aimed to help with school-related expenses like meals, supplies, and activity fees such as field

trips, athletics, and fine arts. You may recall that in November of 2022, SD73 received \$1.65 million.

By December 2022, the District's Student and Family Affordability Fund program had assisted over 284 students, and \$11,309 (0.68%) was allocated to cover student fees and expenses. In January 2023, the District worked with six pilot schools to offer a \$40 student fee rebate to families from the fund. By March 2023, over 17,000 families were contacted, with 3,859 families consenting to the rebate. As of June 30, 2023, the District reported to the Ministry of Education and Child Care: \$252,746 of funding was spent on food security resulting in approximately 3,900 additional student meals served to students; \$184,804 of funding was spent on supplies and equipment helping students and families approximately 5,900 times; and, \$322,687 of funding was spent on fees helping students and families approximately 10,343 times. Nearly \$900,000 will carry forward into the 2023-2024 school year, and we have set aside \$150,000 to support families on evacuation order who may require extensive supports.