



From the Desk

of Silke Yardley
Superintendent, Southeast Kootenay
School District



June 19, 2020

Dear parents/guardians and all staff:

This will be my last report until the fall. As Sunday is National Indigenous Peoples Day, I wanted to send this out today so you can see this wonderful video created by Faye O'Neil, Aboriginal Education Coordinator. This [video](#) is an example of why I am so proud and pleased to be the Superintendent of SD5.

Summer is almost upon us and we will be going camping, relaxing at home, enjoying our beautiful landscape and having a well-deserved break. I reflected yesterday at our wonderful "social distanced" retirement party hosted by our Human Resources Department, about how strange these last few months have been. We now have new language like "social distancing" and "Covid-19" as well as a new way of operating, not only in education but in our day to day lives. It seems so long ago that we heard from the Premier of our province that we were now going to be learning from home, but it really was not that long ago. On March 12th things shifted, not only in education but in our day-to-day lives as well. That day will forever stay with me.

There were many things that changed: people wearing masks in public, our social bubble got smaller, some of our families lost employment or businesses, our children no longer played with their friends, or came to school, we couldn't see our loved ones or our friends and family and we were all worried about what was coming.

Slowly things started to shift again, we started to have a new normal and the good news for our province is that it appears that we were on the right track. Our cases of Covid-19 were low as we continued to follow the advice of Dr. Bonnie Henry, our Provincial Health Officer.

Then we welcomed our students back to school. I wondered how it would be having some students and staff back in school. How would staff and students feel? How many children would come? Could we do both online and in school learning? How could we manage?

I am proud to say that we managed very well! I heard from a vice principal just yesterday, on how pleased he was that we did go back to school and that staff are feeling positive and that children are enjoying coming back. I have heard many positives from teachers and parents.

What will September bring? Our Deputy Minister of Education, Scott MacDonald, has indicated that we will not know what phase we will be in until closer to mid-August and that we will continue to take



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direction from our Provincial Health Officer. The Deputy Minister also indicated that the Ministry of Education would be working through the summer to help support and prepare us for the fall.

My hope for you all is to take the time to have a restful holiday and please be assured that we will be ready for whatever the fall will bring. We now have experience in phase 4 and phase 3 of the "Covid-19" Education Plan and will be ready for phase 1 or 2 if needed.

I have been very proud of our district, from the trustees to staff to parents to students; everyone has worked together in order to support our children. Yes, graduation looks different, yes our retirement party looked different, the end of school goodbyes look different, but everyone has worked hard in this "Covid" world to do the best they can for our kids and for that I am grateful!

A BIG THANK YOU to all of you!

Please take time to enjoy what the summer brings and we look forward to seeing you in the fall.

All the best,

Silke

