

**THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
CENTRAL OKANAGAN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

CHAIRPERSON'S ANNUAL REPORT – December 13, 2017

Policy states that at the Board's Annual General Meeting the Chairperson of the Board of Education will provide an Annual Report to the District, and to the larger community, on the events of the previous calendar year.

This year the Board formally endorsed using and promoting our name "Central Okanagan Public Schools". We are proud that we are a public school system open to all students, regardless of their circumstances. "SD23" doesn't tell anyone who we are, or where we live.

Throughout the school year, the Superintendent of Schools provides reports and updates on a regular basis, so the Chairperson's Report will just touch on some of the major accomplishments and challenges we have experienced in 2017.

With approximately 22,500 students and 3,000 staff members associated with our 43 schools, the Central Okanagan School District is a large and complex organization. We are the largest single employer within the Okanagan, with an annual budget of over \$250 million. As the 5th largest School District in the province, we are also one of the very few districts which is not experiencing significant declines in student enrolment.

As a result of the Supreme Court Ruling, formal agreements (Memorandum of Agreement and Letter of Understanding) brought about a process for reinstating the Teachers' Collective Agreement language of 2002. Based on the MOA, the Government provided the School District with \$12.6 million dollars to hire 128 additional teachers. In addition, the School District received over \$3.0 million for Education Space Funding (new classrooms and learning spaces).

The Human Resources Department was faced with finding and hiring a significantly greater number of teachers than normal. Since January of 2017 over 200 teachers have been hired.

The Operations Department was tasked with creating 59 additional teaching spaces in an already full School District. The Department spent the summer converting existing spaces, moving portables, and buying portables, in order to complete the work for school opening in September. During the preparation of schools, staff also dealt with flooding and fires, and, as usual, succeeded in getting everything done on time.

On a positive note, after many years of budget cuts, the School District did not have to make any significant budget adjustments this year. This was partially due to good fiscal management that the Board put in place in the past, based on sound recommendations from our Senior Staff, and partially due to the additional funding that came into the education system with MOA and LOU No.17.

The replacement of Rutland Middle and Glenmore Elementary, the building of a new middle school in Lake Country, the building of a Secondary School in the Glenmore area, and the building of a new middle school on the Westside remain on the Board's top five capital

priorities. The timing and the order of these projects being approved is out of the Board's hands – the Ministry of Education makes those decisions, but we continue to promote the need for these capital projects.

The Board of Education has received approval to proceed with the construction of a 750 student middle school in the upper Mission. A public meeting was held to provide residents with information regarding the new school and to seek input on suggested names. Canyon Falls Middle School is scheduled to open in September 2019.

In 2017, public consultation meetings and/or surveys were undertaken regarding a catchment area review for A.S. Matheson Elementary, École Casorso Elementary and Raymer Elementary Schools and for flexible entry points to the French Immersion Program.

In June, the Superintendent reported that our Six Year Graduation Rate, inclusive of Evergreen and exclusive of one year visiting International students, is 96.4%, with the Aboriginal Graduation Rate of 73.8%. While we celebrated these increases, we continue to ask ourselves why close to 5% of our students did not graduate and we will not be satisfied until our Aboriginal students graduate at the same rate as all students and the overall rate increase. We are still awaiting the latest graduation numbers from the Ministry, and hope that they continue to increase, but we need to consider how our students reach graduation and what we, as a district, can do to meet the needs of each student so that they *can* be successful.

At Public Board Meetings, trustees have learned about many innovative programs in the School District; heard from students about how they are connected to their communities; and celebrated successes of students and staff members alike. *"Inside 23"* has become an important part of Board Meetings, and reminds trustees to focus on what's important – our students and providing them with the tools they need in the 21st Century.

As always, there is much to celebrate in our School District. While the Board often recognises outstanding staff members and students at our public meetings, we know that there are countless unsung heroes throughout the district - teachers, support staff and administrators who go the extra mile for the students in their care, and the students themselves who strive to be the best they can be, sometimes against great odds.

None of the things we celebrate could have been accomplished without our teachers, support staff, administrators and senior staff, as well parents and community members. Many of our employees work behind the scenes, keeping our 43 school sites in good working order; keeping our financial books straight; looking after payroll; and driving our school buses. Many of our staff members volunteer as well. Some coach our students, and give extra time to support them in a variety of different activities.

The Board appreciates the input received from our partner groups. The participation on committees and attendance at Board Meetings by representatives of the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association, the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3523, the Central Okanagan Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, the District Student Council, and the Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council is vital in helping the Board hear everyone's point of view before making a decision. Thanks to all our partners for their work in supporting public education and the students we all serve.

We also appreciate the community partnerships that have grown over the years. Community members volunteer their services, provide funds for projects at schools, and generally show a great deal of support to our schools and our students. These are non-profit groups, service clubs and individual volunteers.

From Early Learning Consortiums, to UBCO Programs, to partnerships with Okanagan College and BCIT, the Safe Schools Committee and the Health Promoting Schools Committee, our community partners bring a wealth of knowledge to the table.

I also wish to thank our senior staff for the exceptional work they do on behalf of our students each and every day. I should particularly mention the three staff members I have worked with most closely: the Superintendent of Schools/CEO Kevin Kaardal, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO Larry Paul, and Deputy Superintendent Terry Beaudry, and their Executive Assistants, Mona Essler, Helga Wendt and Michelle DesRochers. Their support and advice is greatly appreciated. We are sorry that Helga will be leaving us – we have all grown to appreciate her calm wisdom and outstanding work ethic, and wish her good luck as she takes more time to spend with family and friends.

Also, thank you to my fellow trustees for your commitment to the governance and oversight of our School District. You should be proud of your efforts on behalf of the students, parents, staff and community members of the Central Okanagan.

On behalf of the Board, we wish our Secretary-Treasurer/CFO Larry Paul all the best as he takes a new path in his journey of life. The Board has been extremely well-served by Larry's leadership over the past 20 years. The Board of Education looks forward to working with the new Secretary-Treasurer, Eileen Sadlowski.

Respectfully submitted
Moyra Baxter
Chairperson, Board of Education
Central Okanagan Public Schools