



School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Board of Education of School District No. 71

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Office of the Superintendent of Schools

October 2, 2020

Dear Staff of SD71,

As we complete the first month of the 2020-2021 school year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for making this year's start up as smooth as possible given the global crisis we are currently facing.

I would like to acknowledge the Joint Health and Safety Committees throughout the District, thank you for the extra effort each of you have put into preparing our sites for our staff and students. Your hours of work have provided safe and orderly learning environments for everyone.

To all our teachers, thank you for being flexible and adjusting to new protocols, new timetables, and new ways of conducting business in schools. Your calm, compassionate and caring approach has been welcomed by both students and parents.

A huge thanks is also extended to our support staff in our schools. You have demonstrated caring and flexibility as you have learned new ways to support our students in this pandemic. You have changed your practices in order to meet the Health and Safety guidelines and you have done so in order to provide support for those who need it the most, thank you.

To our Principals, Vice-Principles, and administrative assistant staff, thank you very much for giving up much of your summer so that a restart plan for our schools could be developed. For many schools this meant a completed "re-do" of schedules, timetables, assignments, and procedures. The extra hours of work you provided to prepare your sites to welcome our students back is greatly appreciated.

Lastly, I would like to thank our maintenance, operations and custodial staff who spent their entire summer working hard making sure our buildings were safe and ready to welcome students back.

It is clear that the entire staff of SD71 has worked tirelessly so we could provide a safe, welcoming environment for our students and families. I am truly grateful to be part of such a wonderful organization.

As we move into the fall, we will face new challenges. Shortages of TTOC's, lack of replacement educational assistants, clerical as well as other support personnel may become problematic. As

a District we are continuing to hire for these positions. We have also asked schools, departments, and Board Office staff to develop back up plans for when we face real shortages. Our commitment is that we will do whatever we can to ensure we have a teacher in every classroom and our vulnerable students have the supports they need.

As a reminder to everyone, please continue to work with your sites Joint Health and Safety Committees as well as your Principals and Vice-Principals to address any concerns you may have regarding Health and Safety protocols and our return to school plan.

Thank you once again for all your work in making this a successful restart to the school year.

Please take care of yourself and each other.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Demeo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Demeo
Superintendent of School