



BOARD OF EDUCATION STATEMENT ON SAFETY AND INCLUSION

June 16, 2023

Kelowna, BC – After the recent incident at a District-led event in the community where the behaviour of adults negatively impacted young students, The Board of Education for Central Okanagan Public Schools re-affirms its commitment to safe and inclusive places to learn and work. Our trustees unanimously condemn any form of bullying, harassment, or intolerance in or around schools, including at District-led events in our larger community. The safety of students and staff is always the top priority of Central Okanagan Public Schools, and the harassment of any child, youth, or staff member in our district is never acceptable within schools or from adults in our community.

Our work in governance of BC's fifth-largest public school district is directed by our Strategic Plan, where our Purpose is to provide a safe, inclusive, equitable, and inspirational learning environment where each learner can flourish. Inclusion is key because each learner must have the opportunity to be a child, follow their dreams, and ultimately succeed in their individual educational pursuits.

Our district policies against bullying, harassment, and discrimination align with the BC Human Rights Code so that people can learn and work without fear of discrimination based on their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other aspect of their individual identity. We believe that our district's culture is a large part of why we're among the best-performing school districts in Canada for one simple reason: when individuals feel the safety of belonging, they are ready to learn.

We do not condone any political agendas, movements, or groups that are increasingly spreading intolerance and misinformation. While everyone is entitled to hold their own views, no one is entitled to express views or make false statements that defame, harass, or threaten our students or staff. We continue to strive to build a caring community, which includes anyone that is 2SLGBTQIA+.

As a public school system, we strive to reduce bullying and ensure that everyone can feel safe, cared for, and ready to learn. Any form of intolerance will never be welcome in Central Okanagan Public Schools. We encourage everyone in our community to reflect on how they can contribute to caring communities through kindness, inclusion, and acceptance.

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For comments, please contact:

Lee-Ann Tiede, Chairperson of the Board of Education, 250-258-3556