



May 14, 2019

To Parents/Guardians of our Graduating Students:

RE: Safety of Your Child at Non-Sanctioned Graduation Activities

For each of our grade 12 students, the graduation year is one of the most special and celebrated milestones of their lives to date. We want these final few months of their grad year to continue to be safe, fun and focused on learning.

The administrators, teachers, support staff, parents and community come together at all of our secondary schools to plan, organize and host a diverse range of graduation activities. These include such events as, dinner/dances, commencement celebrations, fashion shows, fundraisers, and other school-sanctioned celebratory activities. On each of these occasions, School District personnel are on site to supervise the students and to ensure their safety, as outlined in our School Board Policies and school Codes of Conduct.

Another significant event for our graduates is our Dry Grad. This event is sponsored and hosted by our hard-working grad parents, therefore, supervision is provided by members of the parent community.

Unfortunately, there are other **non-sanctioned grad events** that we do not supervise nor support. The activities organized and arranged by graduates themselves that include the infamous "grad kidnappings" and subsequent "bush parties" that take place in our region. The other growing trend is the organization of large group multi-school grad trips to winter and summer resort destinations organized for students by private travel companies that are not in any way connected to the School District.

We want to be clear that we have serious concerns regarding student behaviour and safety at all of the above-mentioned non-sanctioned events. There have been incidents of serious injury to students and we strongly caution and counsel parents to investigate non-sanctioned activities carefully.

The staff of the Central Okanagan Public Schools want the Grade 12 year to be positive and memorable for each graduate and their family. The safety of your son or daughter is of the utmost importance to us.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kaardal
Superintendent of Schools/CEO