



SCHOOL DISTRICT 63 (SAANICH)

2125 Keating Cross Road, Saanichton, BC Canada V8M 2A5
Phone: (250) 652-7300 Fax: (250) 652-6421 saanichschools.ca

November 29, 2022

Chief Constable Ian Lawson, Central Saanich
Chief Constable Dean Duthie, Saanich
Staff Sergeant Wayne Conley Sidney RCMP

Dear Chief Constables Lawson, Duthie & Staff Sergeant Conley,

In response to a [letter that was made public on Nov 25th by B.C. Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender](#), we want to acknowledge the value we place on the long-standing relationships that we have with each of your police departments and the support you provide to the students and families of the Saanich School District. Our positive relationship speaks to the sense of community we have developed with you and the four municipalities we all serve. This same community partnership also extends to the four Nations within the W̱SÁNEĆ territory for which we are grateful.

As the Human Rights Commissioner requested, we will be reviewing the research findings of Dr. Kanika Samuels-Wortley. However, in the meantime we want to express to you that our experiences with local police have been positive, productive and a definite benefit to our district. As the Human Rights Commissioner's letter states *"we all share the goal of creating safe and inclusive schools that uphold human rights"* and we are confident that, in our current relationships, we are meeting this goal and ensuring that we continuously and collectively strive to be even better .

When the Commissioner's letter was shared with our school trustees we emphasized that we are very fortunate to have these excellent relationships with all three local forces. As an example, we highlighted the spirit of community that was present when the Central Saanich Police and the Sidney/North Saanich RCMP were part of the recent student walk organized by Stelly's Secondary and the W̱SÁNEĆ Secondary Leadership School on September 29th in honour of Truth & Reconciliation. As another example, we are appreciative of the generous grant provided by the Victoria Native Friendship Center that was facilitated by the Saanich Police. This grant will enhance the Indigenous content reading materials being made available to students in Saanich Schools.

As suggested by the Commissioner, we are waiting to hear whether further research on police officers in schools will be conducted in British Columbia and will be interested to see if these findings reflect our own experiences of a mutually beneficial relationship.

I am sure our Board of Education will be discussing the Commissioner's report and how they may want to respond. In the interim, it was important for me to reach out to you to indicate how fortunate I feel we are in Saanich Schools to be working with you. We look forward to more opportunities to build upon our strong relationships - ones that help keep our schools safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DE', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Dave Eberwein
Superintendent & CEO, Saanich Schools District

DE/klg

cc: Tim Dunford, Chair of the Board, Saanich School District
Peter Westhaver, Director of Instruction, Saanich School District