

# community report

# 2014



North Vancouver  
**School District**  
the natural place to learn®

#### OUR VISION

We provide world-class instruction and a rich diversity of engaging programs to inspire success for every student and bring communities together to learn, share and grow.

Kindergarten students in the new Queen Mary Community School gymnasium

When we focus our combined efforts on areas of improvement, we can create real results and better outcomes for students.

# Message from the Superintendent



JOHN LEWIS

In December of 2013, the 2012 Program for International Assessment (PISA) results were released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. PISA focuses on the competencies of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science. The full report is available at: <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/>

Approximately 510,000 students from randomly selected schools world-wide took part in PISA 2012. PISA results affirm that British Columbia students are among the world's top achievers in all three areas of the study. Of the 65 economies represented in PISA 2012, BC

students ranked 12th in Mathematics, 6th in Reading and 6th in Science.

Innumerable methods and strategies to assess student learning and competencies exist in our world today. What makes PISA compelling is its design: PISA evaluates to what extent students are able to apply their learning to real-life. PISA also delves into the context of a student's life including their background, school and learning experiences and the broader system and learning environment around them. It's from this deeper exploration that several key understandings of student learning are reinforced. The 2012 results illustrate how nurturing top performance in students and the challenges of tackling low performance need not be mutually exclusive. A strong, fair, well-functioning system addresses both.

Engaged students make the most of the opportunities available to them. In many cases, it's not that opportunities aren't available, but that students haven't connected with them. Drive, motivation and confidence are essential if students are to fulfill their potential. Some students exhibit innate strengths in these qualities, others need them encouraged in

all aspects of their lives. Parents and teachers can help motivate and guide in ways that are mutually supportive and create the conditions that promote academic excellence and skill development.

When we focus our combined efforts on areas of improvement, we can create real results and better outcomes for students. In the North Vancouver School District's **Superintendent's Report on Student Achievement 2013-2014** it's recorded that six-year completion rates for students with special needs improved from 62% to 72%; eligible Grade 12 graduation rates improved from 95% to 96% for all students; and honours graduates increased from 50 to 57%. The full report is presented at [www.sd44.ca](http://www.sd44.ca) > Board of Education > District Achievement Contract > Superintendent's Report on Student Achievement.

The progress and accomplishments cited in this report highlight many examples of our expanded learning opportunities including new academies and courses to taking learning outside with a refined approach to outdoor learning spaces. As we grow in opportunities so too must we continue our efforts, at home and at school, to strengthen the connections between students and all that we have to offer in "the natural place to learn"

Sincerely,

**John Lewis**  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
NORTH VANCOUVER  
SCHOOL DISTRICT



With The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia; Craig Duffield, Associate, McFarland Marceau Architects Ltd.; Cathy Jenkins, Project Manager, Cheakamus Centre; Marie-Odile Marceau, Principal, McFarland Marceau Architects Ltd.; to receive the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia Award in Architecture, Merit level, for The BlueShore Financial Environmental Learning Centre, October 2013

# Message from the Chairperson

It's with pride and pleasure that we present our **2014 Community Report**. In addition to sharing progress and highlights of our accomplishments in relation to our 10-year **Strategic Plan**, the theme of this year's report is "Shared Values". As you'll read in the feature articles, shared values set the tone and guide us in how we relate to one another, how we learn together, and how we can depend on one another as we work to realize our Vision.

In 2011, the Board defined and adopted a set of four shared values: **trust, respect, responsibility and collaboration**. At the Board level, each trustee brings a unique perspective to the table. When our thoughts and opinions diverge, shared values can help to bring us back to the centre. In contemplating the

challenges of the School District and deliberating over difficult decisions, there are times when we don't always agree. These are the times when we need to be especially conscious of our values.

This past year, one of the moments when all four shared values came together was at the official opening of Mountainside Secondary School. The evolution of Mountainside, from a fractured grouping of alternate learning supports to a centralized school offering wrap-around services and best practices in "paving" a variety of pathways to graduation or school completion, is the epitome of all four values at work. The values reflect the learning environment, the way staff and students are expected to relate to each other, and the partnerships that support students. The collaborative atmosphere that permeates the entire school is not by accident, but by design. In November, trustees past and present joined over 100 other guests at the school's official opening, and we saw for ourselves how decisions, dating back several years ago, set the stage for something new and excellent to emerge.

The Great BC Shakeout event on October 17th was another opportunity to collaborate with the community. The media event for the Province was coordinated to take place at Ridgeway Elementary School. A team of individuals representing the School District, the Province, the BC Earthquake Alliance, and the

Insurance Bureau of Canada all worked together to ensure that the "Shakeout" safety exercise at Ridgeway was widely broadcast and highly effective in promoting public awareness of this

potentially life-saving drill. It was a pleasure to see how well everyone worked together to help elevate this important message, and we are particularly appreciative of Ridgeway staff and students for facilitating the event at their school.

We are now in the third and final year of the current Board's term. New trustees will be elected in November to carry on with the work that makes the North Vancouver School District a leader in public education in British Columbia. We are grateful to everyone in the community who supports our school district and wants to see the best for our students.

This is the high point of our common ground and our shared values are part of the continuum.

Sincerely,

**Franci Stratton**  
CHAIR  
NORTH VANCOUVER  
BOARD OF EDUCATION



FRANCI STRATTON



Great BC Shakeout event at Ridgeway Elementary, October 2013

# trust

## The truth about trust: it begins from within

After ten years of teaching in an alternate learning environment, you learn a few things about trust. For eight years, Caren Hall was a teacher at Keith Lynn Alternate Secondary School before joining the team of three Choices staff at Windsor Secondary in 2012. Offered at Argyle, Carson Graham, Handsworth, Seycove, Sutherland and Windsor Secondary schools, the Choices Program supports students at their home school who are struggling with social/emotional and behavioural issues. For some, the need for additional support is temporary; for others, it takes more than a term or two. It's in the long haul that Hall has observed several truths about trust that help guide her in working with, and relating to, students with diverse needs.

Mary Sparks and youth engagement worker Rob Carter – don't placate students with "it'll get easier". They know that life after adolescence is not one long, smooth downhill glide. Instead, the team focuses on strengthening "the lagging skills" that are holding students back academically and socially. It takes time and includes consequences. "We don't do everything for them," says Hall. "They have to learn to align what they say with what they do. And good or bad, every action has consequences and we don't shield them from those."

**Lesson number 2: what works to build trust in one student might be different for another.**

"What we focus on are healthy connections," says Hall. "Some students thrive on structure, others need flexibility. Some students can't be in groups – a traditional classroom setting or team project fills them with anxiety. But as long as students are forming positive attachments in school, there can be progress. There's always a way, and there's always somebody that they can talk to. It might be an athletics coach who drives them to do their best in a sport, a strict teacher, or a more lenient one."

Building trust with colleagues outside the Choices program is critical to the program's success. "Once we understand what a student needs, encouraging new approaches to their classroom learning follows." As the Choices staff learns what makes a student unique, they can communicate insight to their colleagues and address challenges that arise with strategies that are right for the situation.



PHOTO BY PAT SAMPSON

Caren Hall

**Lesson number 3: students have to trust themselves before they can trust others.**

The Choices Team works with adolescents who may not have the maturity or experiences to trust themselves. "Even a student with social anxiety can learn to navigate through life with the right skills," says Hall. "We teach them skills to build their confidence and capacity so they don't give up on themselves. They need to 'buy-in' to themselves first. They all have strengths, but sometimes their behaviour overshadows their abilities."

Choices staff help to balance out a student's self-consciousness. "They have to show up," says Hall. "And they need to be genuine. They can't pull anything over on us, and they learn that pretty quickly." Hall says the eyes-wide-open approach communicates caring, and every student needs to know they matter. "Our focus here is on building relationships," says Hall. "Teaching students how to communicate and to believe in themselves. There's always a way," she says from experience. "And that's exciting to me. That's what keeps me going."

WITH NOTES FROM KATIE JAPARIDZE

Finding a solution to a particular challenge not only helps students push through, it also gives them a reference point for confidence and resiliency.

**Lesson number 1: developing trust can be hard work.**

At the early stages in working with a student, Hall makes sure they understand that they are not perceived as broken and in need of being "fixed". Everyone experiences setbacks along the way of life, students in particular. "We all get discouraged," says Hall. "We help students to recognize that difficulties are part of life." Finding a solution to a particular challenge not only helps students push through, it also gives them a reference point for confidence and resiliency. Hall and her co-workers counsellor –



Students in the Best Buddies Club at Sutherland Secondary



PHOTO BY GLENDA ROBERTSON

## The Values

**TRUST**  
We act with integrity. We are open and honest in our communication with one another.

**RESPONSIBILITY**  
We are accountable for our actions. We support positive change, continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence.

**RESPECT**  
We relate to each other with care and appreciation. We honour diversity and recognize the exceptional in everyone.

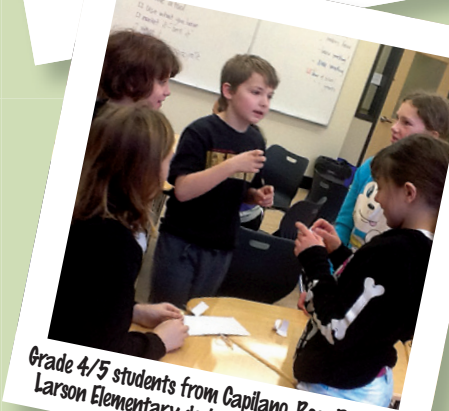
**COLLABORATION**  
We develop relationships and affiliations to achieve shared goals and consider each other in our decisions and actions.



Scientific Inquiry at Upper Lynn Elementary

### Progress and Accomplishment Highlights

In the North Vancouver School District 2011–2021 Strategic Plan ([www.sd44.ca](http://www.sd44.ca) > Board of Education > Strategic Plan), six high-level strategic goals address our intentions for growth, innovation and development over the next ten years. With this report, we are pleased to provide highlights of our progress in the third year of implementing the Plan.



Grade 4/5 students from Capilano, Ross Road and Larson Elementary design a new kitchen utensil

# responsibility

## Put a stamp on it and make it your own

BY TATIANA FORTIN

In the law and social studies classes he teaches at Sutherland Secondary, Jeffrey Aw-Yong has adopted an engagement tactic designed to give students a say in their own success. First, he ensures the expectations for learning in the unit are understood. He asks his students to outline for him what they think should be considered in the evaluation. "Then I ask them: 'If you were to

grade your assignment, how would you grade it?'" It's not an idle exercise. Aw-Yong follows through by including their input as a guide in his marking.

It's a tactic with several positive effects. For one, it helps students engage in the outcome from the very beginning. For another, it builds upon their sense of responsibility to the task at hand. Students feel more accountable towards a project where the goals are shared and agreed upon by both themselves and the teacher. Aw-Yong may also ask his students for feedback on the process for an upcoming project, and take some of it into account, engaging them even more in their assignment.

Kat Thomson, who teaches English at Carson Graham, describes how when the students take away something more from the course than just the content, they are developing the life skill of responsibility. "It's not just earning an A, or a certain percent," says Thomson. "It's really taking away a deeper understanding.

"I try to make my classroom fairly democratic, especially with my senior classes," says Thomson. "If students have a choice, if they have a say in how they are learning, they become more responsible about it because they feel that they actually have a voice in what they're producing."

Corrine Kinnon, a science and mathematics teacher at Windsor Secondary, affirms that giving students a say in what they're learning can go a long way in terms of developing responsibility. Confidence, she says, is one of the foundations of responsibility. "If students feel confident they're going to be successful; they take more pride in the work they do."



Jeffrey Aw-Yong with students Julia and Nick

"In being proud of their work, in being excited about what they've presented, students usually get excited about handing it in," says Aw-Yong. "They're proud of what they've created and they want to show it to you. That helps in terms of accountability and responsibility."

Thomson agrees. "If it's not interesting to them, they care less," she says. "If they're proud of it, it's more like their own stamp is on it; there's a real sense of ownership of what they've done."

The three teachers agree that some students have a personal drive that propels their work forward, "others need that extra prompt," says Aw-Yong. "We work with such a diverse group of kids, some kids are super excited, and some are less enthusiastic. Finding that motivator is the trick; you could call it the Holy Grail of most teachers."

Aw-Yong believes responsibility is much more than the reflection of a personal work ethic. The bigger question for his students is social responsibility: "Do you understand that the world out there has problems? Do you feel we all have a responsibility to do something about those problems?"

"I believe we're teaching life skills as much as we are teaching skills in essay writing," says Aw-Yong. "Being responsible is a part of being human. When I see responsibility take root in a student, I definitely see progress over the course of the school year."



Corrine Kinnon

Pride is a significant factor in getting work handed in, and handed in on time.



Kat Thomson



Mountainside Secondary's Social Justice Squad in action

### GOAL

Expand the availability of best instructional practices and enriched curriculum

- Developed numerous information resources to support best practices and standard procedures including the *Handbook for Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting*, to provide School District-wide clarity and consistency for assessing, grading and reporting
- Achieved candidacy status for Queen Mary Community School from the International Baccalaureate Organization
- Secured new partnerships including Volleyball Canada, Deakin University, and the Canadian Federation of University Women to support program diversity and opportunities for students
- Launched the Literacy 44 eBook sampler of comprehensive literacy lesson plans for primary, intermediate and secondary classes

### GOAL

Encourage the growth of collaborative, adaptive and personalized learning environments

- Introduced Collaboration Time at all schools to bring staff together for activities and discussions that support and enhance student progress and achievement
- Launched new website platform ([www.sd44.ca](http://www.sd44.ca)) with expanded tools and resources for electronic collaboration and sharing across the School District
- Focused teacher training and resources through our Safe and Caring Schools Program to support the Province's ERASE Bullying initiative and revised school codes of conduct to ensure alignment with ERASE

## Progress and Accomplishment Highlights

# collaboration

## Mountainside Secondary: what's on the inside counts

BY CARLY MADELEY

From the outside, Mountainside Secondary looks much like many other high schools of its era in British Columbia. What's inside tells another story. Natural light is maximized at Mountainside for its positive effects on the school's atmosphere and student well-being. Classrooms in the newly renovated school feature wall-to-wall windows and floor-to-ceiling windows along the main foyer let in sunlight long into the afternoon. No lockers line the halls. The new "Learning Commons" library/multi-purpose space and open-concept cafeteria are designed to bring people together. Wrap-around care services including a doctor's office, a professional counsellor's office, and rooms for youth workers to meet with students are provided for community service partners in a dedicated new wing that strengthens connections between the school and the community.

are sick or suffering. Staff at Mountainside are trained in recognizing the signs of depression and anxiety and instead of pointing students off-site, are able to guide them to school-based professionals where they can get help without delay.

Church describes Mountainside as a relationship-driven environment that aligns students and staff. It's a place where students who struggle in a traditional learning environment can thrive. Mountainside employs a unique integrated learning model that allows students to combine their academic and elective courses. At Mountainside, the electives are given greater curricular emphasis and the "academic and elective courses support each other." This allows students to take more ownership of their education. Through collaboration with teachers and staff, the intent is to empower them to succeed in life, not just in school. Staff strive to remove barriers

and "help students create a good footing for success in the future," says Church. It takes a team with the potential to ignite a passion for learning that can consistently encourage students towards lifelong learning.

Church says he doesn't want the "alternate" label to define Mountainside, and the staff is actively striving to create a school that students are "proud to put on their transcript." The courses taught at Mountainside fulfill curricular criteria with collaboration as a key learning tool. Teachers "work with the students to find the learning" in the subjects they love. In creating Mountainside, the idea was to "change practices to meet students needs" and to put them more in charge of their own education.

It takes a team with the potential to ignite a passion for learning that can consistently encourage students towards lifelong learning.

The renovations reflect a collaborative, community-based system designed to ensure that students who are in need of help are more likely to get it. The focus on health and nutrition teaches youth to take care of their bodies as well as their brains. Jeremy Church, Mountainside's principal, says that there are times when "academics come second to health" because students cannot learn if they



Jeremy Church with students in the new cafeteria at Mountainside Secondary

The school's motto – own your journey – firmly establishes the personal responsibility a student must tap into to succeed. Which is not to say they go it alone. Every student is able to benefit from the unique on-campus support network that is available to them at Mountainside.

According to assistant superintendent Mark Jefferson, Mountainside is considered something of a pioneer for its exemplary project-based, collaborative learning model that other schools can learn from. "Mountainside's consolidated, innovative

program puts students on a good footing for success in the future," says Jefferson.

Collaboration-based learning continues to gain more momentum throughout the School District through positive examples like Mountainside, and because of its potential to reach students in ways that are relevant to their needs and interests. Collaboration demonstrates how to do more than follow direction; it prepares students for the next stage in their life journey and how they relate to others along the way.



Robotic programming at Blueridge Elementary



Organizing food and clothing donations from Sutherland Secondary for the Harvest Project



PHOTO BY LEE MILLAR

### GOAL

Nurture an inspiring and healthy work environment

Significant facilities revitalization included:

- Official opening of Mountainside Secondary on November 14, 2013
- Certificate of Recognition received from the 2013 Heritage BC Awards Program for the rebuilt and restored Ridgeway Elementary
- Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia Award of Merit in Architecture received for The BlueShore Financial Environmental Learning Centre
- Return of staff and students to the newly rebuilt Queen Mary Community School (January 6, 2014)
- Piloted and introduced new, more economical and environmentally sound techniques for facilities cleaning

### GOAL

Develop and promote innovative and sustainable programs

- Three new academies approved for September 2014: Dance Academy at Windsor Secondary; Basketball Academy at Seycove Secondary; and Elite Hockey Academy at Sutherland Secondary
- Seven new Board/Authority Authorized courses approved for September 2014: Chamber Choir 10; Chamber Choir 11; Chamber Choir 12; History of Rock and Roll 11; Rock Band 11; Self-Efficacy 10 and Self-Efficacy 12
- Continued expansion of the work experience and careers programs to include new employers and opportunities for students



PHOTO BY ALEX BOMBAY

## Progress and Accomplishment Highlights

# respect

## Going beyond the dictionary definition

BY LAUREN SYKES

A typical dictionary definition of respect might read as: "a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements". While it may be a fairly straightforward concept for most adults, for children, the concept of respect is still in the developmental stages when they enter Kindergarten. Every class needs a foundation of respect if the students are to get along and learn together. But how do you teach five-year-olds to comprehend respect at a stage in their development where their lives are still "all about me"?

"Children have different strengths and needs. Diversity in the classroom helps us learn to respect people for who they are."

Teaching methods vary but most educators would agree that the best way to grow understanding of respect is through conversations and practise. Claire Spofforth, a Kindergarten teacher at Lynnmour Elementary, says that Kindergarteners, "need to feel like they belong, before you can start teaching them about respecting others. They need to think outside of themselves to see the bigger picture."

"Developmentally, young children are learning about their place in a larger group," says Spofforth. "They can be egocentric in their thinking and need support to see other points of view." Establishing a sense of belonging in the classroom and making sure the students



Claire Spofforth

PHOTO BY JENNA BURGESS

are comfortable working together is important before teaching about respect can be effective. Leading with empathy comes first. Then come conversations. Spofforth says the all-day

Kindergarten model is important because it allows time to practise showing empathy and respect. The 9 – 3 schedule allows more time for "strengthening connections between the kids, and a sense of trust between them" to flourish.

The Kind Word Chart in Spofforth's classroom helps to "celebrate when respect has been shown and focus on the positive." The chart began when Spofforth observed a student at play who made a kind comment to another student.

"I thought that deserved to be noticed. I put it on the chart and now we add more words as they happen – and the list just grows."

"Children have different strengths and needs," says Spofforth. "Diversity in the classroom helps us learn to respect people for who they are."

At Cleveland Elementary, teacher-librarian Sandra Santarossa says that to foster respect, it's up to the teacher to establish a good connection with each and every student and support them in their efforts to be respectful

to others. "If you have respect for yourself, you automatically have it for others, for the world, for life in general, but you have to have it for yourself first," says Santarossa. She is careful to note the difference between egocentric respect and a spirit of respect for the wider world. The ego side of it has "respect for toys, celebrities, friends... it's all about me, me, me. What needs practise in young children is respect for elders, instincts, feelings, the environment, life's many intangibles... That's the spirit side."

"When we feel worthy, we are self-compassionate; we honour our feelings," says Santarossa. "Once we feel comfortable with that, we're then able to extend this spirit of generosity towards others and the world in a more consistent and positive way." She cautions it's not a straight route up to the tip of enlightenment, however. A student's understanding of respect is influenced by their varying moods, perspectives, and life situations.

"As respect grows, we begin to understand that we can learn from others, and others can learn from us, no matter how old we are," says Santarossa. "We influence each other. We all gain by living in a respectful environment."



## Collaborating with care: when trust, responsibility and respect all work together

It's been almost a year since Tracey White received the formal diagnosis of her son Ryan's autism, but the confirmation didn't come as a surprise. "I knew. I'd known for a long time," says White, who had begun looking into autism and Asperger's syndrome not long after Ryan began showing behavioural and learning difficulties in primary school.

By Grade 2, Ryan was struggling with everything from self-regulation to coping with what, for him, was the overwhelming stimuli of a traditional classroom setting. Then there were the challenges of completing work and containing his energy. As a parent, White's sense of **responsibility** to advocate for her son led her to seek out professional guidance to ensure Ryan could realize his potential. "He's bright," says his mother, "and I knew he deserved a place at school, but it was getting harder and harder to find where he belonged."

A breakthrough early in Ryan's Grade 3 year has offered a new, **collaborative** approach to supporting Ryan that involved School District professionals working closely with school-based staff. "Everything the team promised, they delivered upon," says White. "Together we consulted new resources and tried new strategies. It was hard work, but gradually we began to hear more about Ryan's successes than his challenges."

Tracey doesn't doubt there will be more challenges ahead, but the past few years have proven to her the importance of patient and respectful perseverance and gratitude for when things go well. "**Trust** is two-way. I **respect** the professionals who can help Ryan, but my perspective as a parent has value as well. I may not have a PhD, but I know my son."

### GOAL

Provide leadership in environmental education and sustainability practices

- Policy 806: Outdoor Learning Spaces adopted by the Board of Education in May 2013 to support learning activities beyond the conventional classroom
- Continued energy conservation efforts towards reducing electrical energy use in the NVSD by 13% by 2015
- Introduced "Cheakamus Centre" offering expanded programming, events and conference services at our 420-acre ecological property near Squamish
- Learning in Nature working group created to review the School District's vision and direction in pursuing excellence in environmental education

### GOAL

Strengthen and expand reciprocal community relations

- Supported career connections for students through special events including the "Parents as Career Coaches", "Take Our Kids to Work Day" and "Ticket to Your Future" information nights for parents and students
- Initiated a new phase of the "Land, Learning and Livability" public engagement process to focus on the future of the Cloverley school and Lucas Centre sites
- Renewed community partnerships with Vancouver Coastal Health, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and Parkgate, Capilano and North Shore Neighborhood House Youth Services to create wrap-around services for students at Mountainside Secondary, including donor support through the Lions Gate Hospital Foundation to furnish clinic rooms



PHOTO BY ALEXA SMITH

Boundary Elementary Cross Country Team

# 2013/2014 North Vancouver School District Snapshot

- 15,762 students enrolled in Kindergarten to Grade 12
- 8,927 Elementary and 6,600 Secondary students
- \$140 million operating budget for 2013/14
- \$4.5 million capital budget for new construction, renovation and improvements
- 2,318 employees (full-time and part-time) – 1,090 teachers, 202 TToCs,

732 non-teaching staff, 170 casual staff, 90 administrative staff and 34 management staff

- A comprehensive K–12 education program consisting of over 200 provincial and locally developed educational programs and services in the Humanities, Mathematics/Sciences, Physical Education, Fine Arts and Applied Skills
- Early French Immersion and Late French Immersion enrolling 2,492 students

- Dance, Digital Media, Hockey Skills, Soccer, Volleyball and Artists for Kids Studio Art Academy and VCC Culinary Arts Level 1 for secondary students

- Locally developed programs and resources, including Band and Strings, Our Turn to Talk, Reading 44, Firm Foundations, Writing 44, Math 44, and the ELF (Early Learning Foundations) affiliation with pre-school and child-care providers

- Over 1,300 students enrolled in 2013 Summer School for comprehensive elementary and secondary remediation and review, full credit senior secondary school and English Language Learning (ELL) courses

- A variety of support services and programs for students with special learning needs

- An International Education Program, attracting over 500 learners from around the world

- The Artists for Kids Trust housing a collection of contemporary Canadian art and providing award-winning fine arts enrichment programming and scholarships

- 25 elementary schools

- 7 secondary schools (including one alternate Secondary school)

- Experiential environmental education at the North Vancouver Outdoor School at the Cheakamus Centre, located near Squamish, BC

- The North Vancouver Distributed Learning School, working in partnership with our mainstream high schools, to provide 35 academic and elective courses for both youth and adults requiring credits in Grades 10, 11 and 12

- 7 StrongStart BC Centres with over 780 registered early learners

## Building community all year long

In August, before the doors are thrown open to the excitement of a new school year, Principal Arlene Martin and staff at Brooksbank Elementary are already on site and preparing for September. Working alongside them is a small group of students. Some are new to the school, some are nervous about the beginning of a new grade, but together staff and students take the first steps of the year towards leadership and community building.



PHOTO BY JENNA BURGESS

This welcoming spirit continues throughout the school year. Parents and students alike are greeted at the front door each morning by the principal and staff. Several times throughout the year students of different ages and grades are brought together to create, design and learn as a group. Younger students work alongside older students and come to know different teachers and make new friends. The underlying message is clear and is reflected in a short but powerful set of goals for parents and teachers alike. "Our school plan is built on belonging and engagement," says Martin.

Leadership qualities are encouraged in students, who often lead the school in finding ways to serve others. In feeling secure that they will be supported by fellow students and school staff, new ideas take hold and flourish. Sometimes the most powerful instances of student leadership happen in the quiet moments where an older student volunteers to help a younger student to feel welcomed, safe, and appreciated.

By the time the school's Family Appreciation Ice Cream Social takes place in May, there is an emerging notion that through helping others, school is fun, empowering, and a place that students can call their own.



PHOTO BY GLENDA ROBERTSON

## About the features...

Every year, the North Vancouver School District facilitates work experience opportunities for over 650 secondary students interested in exploring a wide range of career pathways. Business, fitness, tourism, trades, health and science are just a few of the areas where work experiences are created. Employers on the North Shore are essential partners in offering these opportunities and we greatly

appreciate their support of our students. A new, student-produced video is now available on our website that shares the perspectives of students, parents, employers and school counsellors on this valuable program.

As the largest employer on the North Shore, the School District also provides direct work experience opportunities for students. For

the third year in a row, the annual NVSD **Community Report** has provided a work experience opportunity for several Grade 12 students interested in pursuing careers in journalism, photography or communications. As always, we extend our thanks to the work experience facilitators, teachers and district administrator Marcia Garries, for their support and assistance in helping to create this year's editorial team.



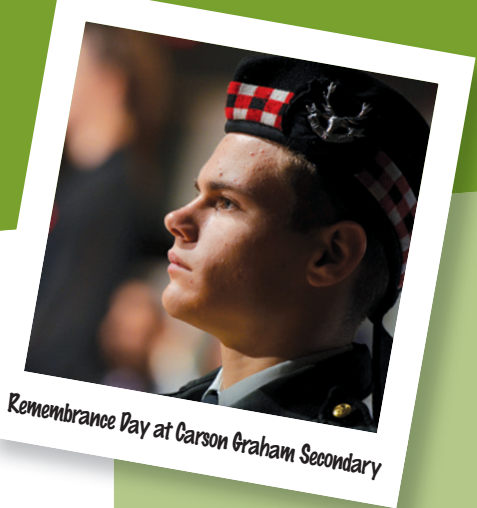
In the library at Norgate Community Elementary



Volleyball Academy students at the Grade 7 to 8 Information Night, January 2014



"The Artist Among Us" art immersion program at Braemar Elementary



Remembrance Day at Carson Graham Secondary

The collection of photographs from staff and students presented throughout this report proudly celebrates a diversity of student activities that took place in "the natural place to learn" over the past year. From community relations to inclusive learning, here is a small sampling of what it looks like to learn, share and grow in the North Vancouver School District.

To request copies of this report, or for more information, please contact:

North Vancouver School District  
2121 Lonsdale Avenue  
North Vancouver BC V7M 2K6  
TEL: 604.903.1254  
WEB: www.sd44.ca

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PHOTO BY GLENDA ROBERTSON

Terry Fox Run at Capilano Elementary



PHOTO BY GLENDA ROBERTSON

"Biome in a Box" animal and habitat study at Capilano Elementary



PHOTO BY CHERYL TOMS

Dress rehearsal for Carisbrooke Elementary's 2013 Christmas Concert



Norgate students speaking on stage at the 2013 Walk for Reconciliation



An "egg-speriment" that involved a 16.5 metre drop at Dorothy Lynas Elementary (with thanks to the District of North Vancouver Fire Department)



PHOTO BY ALEDA SMITH

Sutherland Student Leadership members visit CBC studios



A Kindergartener's first day of school at Ross Road Elementary, September 2013



PHOTO BY SIDDIHARTH SURI

Windsor Dukes celebrate a win



PHOTO BY MIKE WAKERFIELD

Students at the official opening of Mountainside Secondary on November 14, 2013

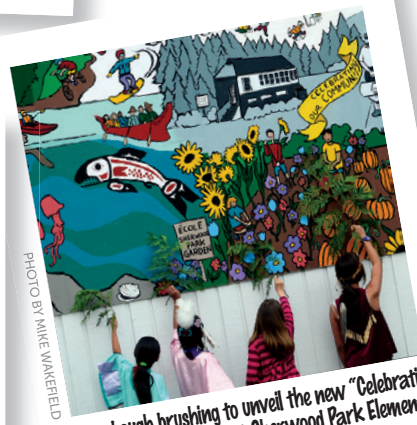


PHOTO BY MIKE WAKERFIELD

Cedar bough brushing to unveil the new "Celebrating Our Community" mural at Sherwood Park Elementary



Westview Elementary "Bandstand"



RIs with a Purpose at Larson Elementary



North Vancouver School District  
the natural place to learn®