

March 11, 2022

Dear North Vancouver School District Community,

Today, on my last day as Superintendent of the North Vancouver School District, I would like to take the opportunity to share what an honour and a privilege it has been to serve in the community I also call home.

During my time with the school district, first as Assistant Superintendent, and then as Superintendent, I have had countless opportunities to watch what happens when students are afforded exceptional learning opportunities through the efforts of an outstanding network of educators and staff.

The highlights of this role are many, the memories are plentiful, and I will cherish them all. I will particularly hold dear the ones that demonstrate what we have achieved together as a community. Whether overseeing capital projects that have led to the building of three new schools (Argyle, Handsworth and Mountainside); focusing efforts to align with district priorities, including Indigenous Education and Social Emotional Learning; pushing forward in truth, healing and reconciliation and anti-racism initiatives; or facilitating the introduction of a bold new 10-year strategic plan, together we have ensured schools are more kind, compassionate and inclusive spaces where all have the opportunity to thrive and achieve success on their own terms.

The last two years in particular have shown the strength of our community. What could have been a period marked by challenges alone, instead we saw how once again, the school district community came together for the benefit of students, for teaching and learning, for the K-12 public education system, and for one another. Even though we had our differences, which could have created a significant rift to our system, we put our common interest – students – first. In doing so, we kept our schools open, and we kept our school communities teaching and learning together.

To our school-based teaching and support staff (including crossing guards, office, custodial and maintenance), I have seen first-hand your commitment to the teaching profession, to your colleagues and to the students and families of our school communities. It takes courage to embrace changes to the curriculum; to teach truth, healing and reconciliation and embed Indigenous ways of knowing; and to acknowledge and begin to address systemic inequalities and barriers.

To our senior executive team, directors, management, district-based education and corporate staff, I have also witnessed how no matter the situation, you are able to come together and share your strengths and perspectives to solve a challenge or realize an opportunity. The school district system is strong, and I look forward to seeing where you lead the system from here.

To the North Vancouver Board of Education, thank you for giving me the opportunity to lead the school district in the capacity of Superintendent. It has been a deep honour to serve the community and work with you on matters of governance.

To rights holders, Skwxwú7mesh Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation; North Vancouver Teachers' Association; Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 389; North Vancouver Administrators; North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council and District Student Leadership, thank you for your support, advocacy and feedback, as it has made the school district a better place.

In closing, my sincere hope is that I have left the school district in a strong position and better place. I now very much look forward to seeing where the North Vancouver School District goes from here, but as a parent and resident of North Vancouver.

I would like to wish you all both a healthy and relaxing Spring Break and a strong finish for the school year. I would also like to leave you with this quote from Nelson Mandela, *"It is in your hands, to make a better world for all who live in it."* Keep well, continue to push forward, and do keep in touch.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Pearmain".

Mark Pearmain
Superintendent of Schools