



June 21, 2024

Ref: 300057

Dear Educators, School Staff, District Leaders, and Trustees:

As we reach the end of the 2023/2024 school year, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to every individual who contributed to our school communities with hard work and dedication. I share my deepest gratitude to every educator, school staff, district leader and trustee and I hope you can reflect on your accomplishments this past year.

I am grateful for everyone who has played a role in making BC's schools safe, caring, and inclusive by working on these important issues in our schools. This includes making school environments safer by helping to support the implementation of access zones around schools so BC's K-12 students and staff will be protected by any disruptive protests or harassment. Ensuring every child and staff can access schools without fear or intimidation continues to be a top priority.

This is also why in the coming school year, all school districts are required to have a digital device policy in place to help keep young people safe while online. I know many independent schools address cell phone use by students, and I would encourage all independent schools to implement digital device policies. There is a time and place for cell phones, but by learning how to use devices like cell phones responsibly, students will be better able to develop healthy habits around technology and social media.

We know schools across British Columbia are facing unprecedented enrolment growth, and the challenges some schools and districts are facing. As a result, the Province has taken urgent action to make more spaces for students in fast-growing communities by funding new public schools and expanding our current schools through prefabricated additions. Prefabs are new to most of the school districts in the province, and we have funded several projects this past year as an innovative construction option to build school additions faster.

We have also remained focused on supporting students through initiatives like new early literacy screening for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 which will begin to roll out in 2024/2025 school year. This includes funding for provincial outreach teams that will provide resources and training for educators and school staff. The Province's Feeding Futures funding this year continued to support school food programs and young people who need it the most. None of this progress would have happened without the strong partnerships we have with schools and districts and all of your hard work to ensure BC's education system remains strong. .../2

As the Minister of Education and Child Care, it has been one of my greatest honours to see the growth of our school communities throughout the year. We have made significant achievements this past school year and I recognize there is more to do.

As the 2023/2024 calendar year ends, I hope you feel proud of the milestones we have reached and enjoy the next few months of your summer holiday. Once again, I am deeply thankful for your work. May everyone have a wonderful well-deserved summer break!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R Singh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Rachna Singh
Minister