
Re: With Gratitude and Respect – Response to Your Message from stqa?tkwłcniwt (Windy Bay)

From Lois Beischer [REDACTED]

Date Fri 2025-06-27 7:23 PM

To Julia Fraser <Julia.Fraser@sd23.bc.ca>

Cc Wayne Broughton <Wayne.Broughton@sd23.bc.ca>; Amy Geistlinger <Amy.Geistlinger@sd23.bc.ca>; Lee-Ann Tiede <Lee-Ann.Tiede@sd23.bc.ca>; Lisa Guderyan <Lisa.Guderyan@sd23.bc.ca>; Chantelle Desrosiers <Chantelle.Desrosiers@sd23.bc.ca>; Valene Johnson <Valene.Johnson@sd23.bc.ca>; Jon Rever <Jon.Rever@sd23.bc.ca>; Kevin Kaardal <Kevin.Kaardal@sd23.bc.ca>; Delta Carmichael <Delta.Carmichael@sd23.bc.ca>; Lise Bradshaw <Lise.Bradshaw@sd23.bc.ca>

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Way tansi hi

I am so touched by your words. I have been contemplating for weeks how to respond in a way that expresses my gratitude for your words and solidarity.

Words seem inadequate - perhaps conveying that your words have been dancing through my mind, with tears flowing down my cheeks, and having a full heart might express how your message had touched me .

Let's continue this work for speaking the truth as we stand in solidarity

Limlimt

Thank you

Maarssi

Lois

On Jun 13, 2025, at 5:05 PM, Julia Fraser <Julia.Fraser@sd23.bc.ca> wrote:

Dear Lois,

Tansi way, limlɛmt and thank you — for your words, for your truth, and for the spirit with which you so generously reached out.

On behalf of the Board of Education for Central Okanagan Public Schools, I want to express our deep gratitude for your message and for the powerful solidarity you offer.

Your reflections — shared from stqa?tkwłcniwt, Windy Bay — are rooted in lived experience, profound wisdom, and a love for community, land, and all living things. They moved us deeply.

We hold with reverence the truths you have shared: about the ongoing trauma of colonization, the strength found in intergenerational healing, and the richness of cultural diversity within families like yours. Your words affirm for us the essential work of education — not only as academic instruction, but as a path toward empathy, truth-telling, and justice.

Our district remains unwavering in our commitment to the Syilx Okanagan Nation, to Indigenous sovereignty, and to advancing reconciliation through action. When hateful, misinformed, and harmful public statements are made — especially by those in positions of influence — it is not only our duty but our responsibility to speak clearly and courageously in opposition.

We are honored to know that your children were supported through their time in both Sensisysten and our public schools. That our schools were able to provide a space of acceptance, cultural understanding, and belonging means everything. It speaks to the relationships and the shared journey we must all continue — every student, educator, support staff member, family, and leader.

Your support, as a community member, as a CUPE member, and as someone deeply committed to the 94 Calls to Action and UNDRIP, strengthens us. Your voice is not only heard — it is honored.

Together, we will continue to walk this path — to listen, to speak truth, to restore, and to create a future grounded in respect, dignity, and reconciliation.

Maarsii. Limlœmt. With heartfelt thanks and solidarity,

Julia Fraser

Chair, Board of Education

Central Okanagan Public Schools

Warmest Regards,

Julia Fraser

Board Chair & Ex-Officio of All Committees,

Central Okanagan Board of Education

Resolutions Committee Chair,

BCSTA Thompson-Okanagan Branch

Cell: 250-681-0269

Email: Julia.Fraser@sd23.bc.ca

*I respectfully acknowledge that I live,
work & play on the ancestral,
traditional and unceded territory of
the Okanagan People.*

From: Lois Beischer [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 3:47:11 PM

To: Julia Fraser <Julia.Fraser@sd23.bc.ca>; Wayne Broughton <Wayne.Broughton@sd23.bc.ca>; Amy Geistlinger <Amy.Geistlinger@sd23.bc.ca>; Lee-Ann Tiede <Lee-Ann.Tiede@sd23.bc.ca>; Lisa Guderyan <Lisa.Guderyan@sd23.bc.ca>; Chantelle Desrosiers <Chantelle.Desrosiers@sd23.bc.ca>; Valene Johnson <Valene.Johnson@sd23.bc.ca>

Subject: June 11 SD 23 board meeting Solidarity

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Tansi way' hello

Please hit reply to acknowledge you received this email.

I compose this message from stqaʔtkʷłcniwt , also known as Windy Bay, or the Anglicized place name of Westbank. Through sharing a bit of my story I offer solidarity and gratitude to the SD 23 Board of Education.

Let us come with respect for this land, the unceded traditional area of the Syilx peoples. The Syilx people have been caretakers of the land for thousands of years. Let us honor these ancestral grounds and celebrate N̓səl̓xci̓n̓ (language), wisdom, captíkʷł , and resiliency of the Syilx nation, as well as their ongoing relationship to tmxʷúlaʔxʷ (land) and tmixʷ (all living things).

I wish to speak to SD 23 board and trustees offering solidarity and support for recent statement on Central Okanagan public school statement on Indigenous Solidarity as a care filled response to 3 MLA's hate filled, racist comments that undermine the work of inclusion and reconciliation, pillars of SD 23. These statements repudiating sovereignty must be responded to with care, respect and truth as this disinformation is not only violent but perpetuates dispossession in the most problematic manner. "No need to recognize Aboriginal title or sovereignty " as Armstrong states is adamantly not the message we wish children in our school district to hear.

I would like to speak to this from several levels first and foremost from a purely humanitarian perspective embracing and living in the spirit of reconciliation. I uphold the 94 Calls to Action, UNDRIP and both Canadian and Indigenous laws.

Our family brings with a diversity of ancestors- First Nations, Metis, and those of European descent. From that diversity within our family I know it is possible to hold various distinct traditions and perspectives that together, create a harmonious richer perspective.

Armstrong message does not hold that possibility.

I speak from personal lived (and ongoing living) experience of the inter-generational trauma resulting from colonization and these insidious continued and ongoing perspectives like Armstrong promotes that deny the genocide and resultant trauma that our ancestors experienced, a trauma not by their choice.

My children attended Sensisysten , and then transitioned into public school, where I was so grateful to have a school district that acknowledged, believed , and lived with acceptance of the many levels of genocide and abuse inflicted on our elder. On a personal level having that perspective which provided cultural sensitivity and was integrated into their learnings for my children was of great importance and to that I offer gratitude to SD 23.

As a community member I passionately offer education on reconciliation, specifically diving deep into the 94 calls to action. I must speak in solidarity and adamant opposition to the 3 MLA statements that feed disinformation and breed a climate of hate and racism. I thank SD 23 for speaking the truth and bravely countering such misinformation and devastating discourse from individuals like MLAs Dallas Brodie, Jordan Kealy, and Tara Armstrong.

As a CUPE member I stand in solidarity with CUPE brothers and sisters in SD 23 who bring a spirit of reconciliation to the places of learning and gathering in SD 23.

I thank the school board and staff for their openness to giving a meaningful voice to those whose voice is not heard or for those who are unable to speak.

Together we must speak to the truth and live it in our daily actions and words as we establish lasting relationship, restore identity and culture and honor our ancestors tmx^wúla⁷x^w (land) and tmix^w (all living things).

Thank you, Maarsii, Limlimt

Lois Beischer,

stqa⁷tk^w†cniwt , Windy Bay, Westbank

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