



**Central Okanagan  
Public Schools**

Together We Learn

### **BOARD STATEMENT – TUMBLER RIDGE TRAGEDY**

As we collectively mourn the recent tragedy, our thoughts remain with the victims, families, and entire community of Tumbler Ridge. As a school board, as parents, and as British Columbians, our hearts are broken. Our focus is now on the suffering of those directly impacted, the safety and well-being of our own school communities, and the shared sorrow felt across our province.

We are saddened to see hatred emerging in the wake of this tragedy. Even as families waited to hear of their children's status on that terrible day, there were some who revealed their own motives by speculating and assigning blame to the suspect's identity. While we all seek answers in times of grief and uncertainty, it is never acceptable to target a community or assign blame to someone's identity.

The Board of Education remains committed to making sure schools are safe and welcoming for everyone. All students, staff, and members of our school communities are welcome for who they are. To ensure safety, our policies will continue to uphold the BC Human Rights Code; discrimination against any aspect of a person's identity has no place in our schools or facilities. To those who feel unsafe or are concerned about others due to recent rhetoric, know that our Board remains committed to your safety and well-being at school.

While some wounds of this tragedy may never heal, we know our only path forward is compassion and togetherness. To echo the words of some of those directly impacted, we urge our community to focus on the lives cut short and those who must live with immeasurable loss. In our schools, in our workplaces, and in our homes, may we continue to champion the kindness we all need right now.

#### **Board of Education – Trustees**

##### **Valene Johnson, Board Chair**

**Amy Geistlinger  
Lisa Guderyan**

**Chantelle Desrosiers  
Julia Fraser**

**Lee-Ann Tiede  
Wayne Broughton**

*Valene Johnson*

*Chantelle Desrosiers*

*W.J. Broughton*

*Amy G.*

*Tie S.*

*Julia Fraser*

*Tiede*