



STUDENTS FIND HOPE ON HARMONY DAY

February 16, 2022

Kelowna, BC – Central Okanagan Public Schools students and staff celebrated the 15th Annual Harmony Day today with a virtual Living Library and the theme of HOPE – Harmony, Optimism, Perseverance, and Empathy. People such as nationally renowned Indigenous artist Carey Newman (traditional name Hayalthkin'game) and local teenage singing sensation Scotty Berg connected with students through virtual presentations throughout the morning.

"Hope is also the theme for our entire district this year," said Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO. "More than ever, we need to find hope and we need to create mutual understanding and respect for each other. We're grateful for the diverse panel of presenters who will share their stories with our students and inspire the hope and empathy we all need right now."

The nine "living books" (presenters) at the virtual Living Library offer a variety of stories for students to learn and explore identity. The goal is to better understand and appreciate culture and lived experience, allowing students to make personal connections and realize that everyone has a story.

Across the district, students and staff can also be spotted wearing the official Harmony Day 2022 t-shirt, designed by Grade 12 student artist Neela Radar. "My design was inspired by the idea that hope and harmony create one another," said Radar. "I chose to make the lines and colours simple to allow the message and symbolism to be seen clearly, and to encourage them to speak for themselves. I invite people to explore what hope means to them, and how they can use it to inspire harmony. We all must paddle together!"

Harmony Day recognizes that citizens of the Central Okanagan come from all over the world. It is an annual opportunity for the community of Central Okanagan Public Schools to celebrate our culturally diverse society and commit ourselves to mutual respect.

For more information and bios for the Living Library presenters, visit the [Harmony Day website](#).