

Superintendent Message
May 2020

Happy Summer Vacation 2020.

It seems like everywhere we turn, advice is offered about how to cope with this time of closure and uncertainty. Why? Because each of us is experiencing this differently. As a result people need different things, and most people are trying to be helpful while still taking care of their own needs. I have been inspired and encouraged by the generosity, caring and compassion of so many in our community.

As we move into summer, and hopefully brighter opportunities, there are four things that I have gleaned from just about everything I've seen, read or listened to. I think they apply very well as we continue to weather this pandemic as an education service district and a community.

Be kind~ Be kind to yourself. These are difficult times and everyone is trying to make sense of what has happened and what the future is going to be. Be kind to others because everyone is experiencing their own reality, and you don't know what that is.

Be generous~Be generous with yourself and others. Encourage, support and share when and what you can. Live with a generous spirit.

Be flexible~We have all had to learn new ways to be flexible. As we continue to adapt to the world around us remember that patience and flexibility are key traits. There is no perfect solution to what is happening; there is only hope and the need to be flexible.

Be optimistic~I have seen this happening as we adapt to new ways of "doing business". Teachers aren't teaching the same. Students aren't learning the same. We are all struggling in our own way. Many of us might feel overwhelmed at times. Seems to me that this is perfectly normal and okay. Remain hopeful and positive.

The 2019-2020 school year has not been school as we know it and it isn't going to be until we return to gatherings without restrictions. We may see lasting changes but our schools and the ESD will always be about working with children and helping them learn. Distance learning has gotten us by during this pandemic but it will never replace the value of being face-to-face with our students.

We miss all of you and look forward to the time when we'll gather again to enjoy the things we love most about our schools. In the meantime, thank you teachers, parents, school board members and communities for your help in adjusting to the changes and celebrating creative ways to educate our kids. And thank you students for adapting to these changes and embracing new ways to demonstrate just how resilient you are!

Charlie Mackery in his book The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and the Horse has a passage that sticks with me:

- “Do you have any other advice?” asked the boy. “Don’t measure how valuable you are by the way you are treated.” said the horse. “Always remember you matter, you’re important and you are loved, and you bring to this world things no one else can.”

Congratulations to the class of 2020 and have a safe summer!