

# SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

November 7, 2023, Public Board Meeting



## Skwah Adult Education Program

On Friday, September 1, Skwah First Nations hosted a modest ceremony at the Skwah First Nation Band Hall to commemorate the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for the new [Adult Education program](#). This collaboration between the Chilliwack School District and the Skwah First Nation is aimed at creating educational opportunities for all learners in our community, allowing them to achieve their Dogwood Diploma while embracing the essential First Peoples Principle of Learning, which emphasizes the importance of patience and time in the learning process.

This program, available to all students in Chilliwack, commenced in mid-September. The program's primary goal is to offer ungraduated adults the opportunity to earn their Adult Dogwood High School Diploma, whether they reside on or off First Nation reserves. Additionally, it will provide access to vocational and trade programs through partnerships with the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and the College of the Rockies. This important partnership, coupled with the Sardis Secondary Adult Education program, will continue supporting ungraduated adults to successfully obtain their Dogwood Diploma and skills to thrive in an ever-changing world. I want to take this opportunity to thank District Principal Sean Wicker and Assistant School Superintendent Dr. Kirk Savage who met with Chief Administrative Officer Diane Janzen to ensure the vision became a reality and that all of the processes initiated were compliant with District requirements. To this date we have more than 90 adults enrolled in program.



This program coupled with SSS Continuing Education Business Program reflects commitments in the Declaration on The Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan, including actions 4.4 (equitable access to education) and 4.41 (upgrading skills).

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## Sardis Secondary School Farm Harvest

On Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 130 students, parents, and members from the school community were out at the Sardis Secondary School Farm on Richardson Road where they harvested 4,581 pounds of vegetables for the Salvation Army, Wilma's Transition House, and Stó:lō Nation community. This harvest was all part of the Salvation Army's inaugural Plant a Row For Us, a program where community members plant produce in their own garden and then donate it to the food bank throughout the summer. The food harvested on Oct. 19 was brought to the Salvation Army to put on the shelves of their free store called The Pantry.

On Oct. 19, about two-thirds of that 15,000-square foot plot was harvested, packaged up, and loaded onto a truck. The farm was divided into 4 areas, with different community groups overseeing harvesting in these different areas. Another group led the processing of food for shipment. Food was harvested, washed, packaged, and packed into a large truck. In addition to the 4,581 pounds harvested that day, the SSS farm has handed over approximately 1,000 pounds of vegetables every week through the summer.

Produce donated so far included potatoes, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, arugula, lettuce, carrots, parsnips, kale, celery, various squash, pumpkins, eggplant, cucumbers, hot peppers, leeks, onions, herbs, beans, Swiss chard, tomatoes, corn, fennel, artichoke, zucchini, and Brussel sprouts. The farm has donated 30,500 pounds of vegetables so far to the community.

The following community partners were at the fall harvest: Highroad Academy, Streams Foundation, Southern Irrigation, FV Health, Salvation Army, Wilma's Transition House, and Stó:lō Nation. The Honourable Pam Alexis, Minister of Agriculture, also attended the fall harvest at SSS. The SSS Farm is an excellent example of a competency-based, cross-curricular, place-based learning environment.

This farm would not be possible if not for the passionate leadership and dedication by Sardis Secondary Teachers Tania Toth and Joe Massie to whom we are grateful.

