



**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 67 (OKANAGAN SKAHA)**

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In recent days, an article published through a local media outlet reported concerns regarding a specific student issue. While we are unable to respond to the particular details of any student matter, we would like to provide a more general response regarding our approach to providing care and support to students in our community.

The School District is dedicated to ensuring the safety and emotional well-being of all of our students. Planning for student safety, including understanding and addressing self-harm, is undertaken by a team of professionals based at our schools, and often involves other members of our larger multidisciplinary teams.

We approach all situations mindful of individual circumstances and best practices for safety, including self-harm and suicide prevention in our schools. In particularly complex cases, the District will also reach out to the Ministry of Education's provincial experts in the field of Risk Assessment and Trauma Response for additional guidance and support.

While we are unable to respond to the specific incident that was reported in the local media outlet, we would like to assure our community that we continue to approach each student issue from a lens of empathy and care. We will continue to support students in our District through the outstanding leadership and professionalism of our educators, and will work with our community partners to continue to respond to student needs on a case by case basis.

Mental Health resources are available to students in the District. The following supports are available:

- Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) Clinicians from the Ministry of Children & Family Development assigned to our schools to support students.
- Counselors in the Secondary schools are available to students at all times to support both the student and their families in accessing community resources.
- In acute situations, our Counselors connect with the Community Crisis Team at the hospital.
- Youth Workers who support identified at-risk students throughout the school year.
- Aboriginal Education support workers who work 1:1 with students and run workshops for families.
- In addition we utilize our formal Community Partners such as: Pathways, Interior Health, which provide Substance Use Counseling Services.
- GP for Me Program: youth with serious mental health concerns who are unassigned to a family doctor are referred to this program by a school counselor. This bridges the gap to health care for vulnerable students.