

A Community of Strong Minds and Good Hearts in a Time of Need



Our essence at Southridge has always been clear: to support and care for our students as individuals, while galvanizing compassion for the broader global community. This priority inspires our mission at the best of times, but during times of great challenge, it calls us into profound action as a school and as a community. This is one of those moments.

This was perhaps the most trying Spring Break in schools over the past 60-plus years. It seemed every day brought with it new measures and restrictions to help our communities, province, and country deal with a pandemic that escalated with unrelenting uncertainty and unpredictability. No doubt, we were all impacted in ways that caused considerable stress and anxiety – from social isolation and community constraint to a changing workplace environment and undiscerning economic upheaval.

This is an unprecedented time for all of us.

With the announcement that BC K-12 schools would suspend classes indefinitely, Southridge has spent the last two weeks responding to the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has presented. Ensuring the health and safety of our students is our top priority. It is also important that you know how deeply committed we are to continue supporting our students in the way we always have, but also in deeper ways now as we work together to meet new challenges in the weeks and months ahead.

Despite the hardships and adversity, we are all facing in our own lives, I know we will find strength of mind in the resolve and determination our Southridge community is known for. We will also have moments when those strong minds are challenged – when we're feeling uncertain, vulnerable, or insecure. There will be times when we are able to offer our strength and support to others, just as there will be times when we need the same kind of support from friends, colleagues, and loved ones. This compassion and connection is what makes us who we are.

Throughout the past few weeks I have seen how the good hearts of our community have provided the warmth, security, and assurances I needed to remind me that we will get through this difficult time together. Personally, I have felt buoyed during my own times of

stress and uncertainty by the strength of our community and the shared sense of commitment we have to one another and to our families.

I acknowledge that the impacts of COVID-19 are significant and widespread, but I also recognize that responding to the pandemic as a school community with purpose and resolve is an opportunity for Southridge to be a pillar of support for our students and their families.

Recreating our 'light-hearted place of serious purpose' in creative, new ways will remind us all that we need to be here for one another in a positive, optimistic, and uplifting manner. This is the power of our community; and in witnessing how well our school has already responded to the many challenges that the pandemic has presented, I know - without question - that we will continue to make a difference in the world despite the obstacles we may encounter in the weeks ahead.

As is the case in most things Southridge, I am confident that COVID-19 will validate our community's character - demonstrated by the way we choose to use our strong minds and good hearts. Our success, both individually and collectively, is not defined by the absence of challenge, but by the courage and resilience we show in the face of it. In the midst of this crisis is an opportunity for each one of us to choose how we use our influence, to demonstrate the power of bringing our school's values to life, and to leave Southridge a better place, having faced the gravity of adversity with an optimistic perspective and a community of soaring spirits ready to change the world.

Drew Stephens
Head of School