



PRESS RELEASE
March 2, 2026

Upcoming Retirements of Long-Serving District Staff

Nechako Lakes will have two long-serving and highly respected leaders, Mike Skinner and Mark Gauthier, retire this summer.

Both staff members have served the Nechako Lakes school district for decades. As they retire, their commitment to students, staff, communities, and the district's Strategic Plan has advanced education, equity, and inclusion.

Mike has spent his entire career with the district, beginning in 1993 as a teacher at Grassy Plains School. Two years later, he moved to Lakes District Secondary School, where he served for 20 years as a teacher, guidance counsellor, vice principal, and, for seven years, as principal. Mike subsequently joined the Board Office serving as Director of Instruction and in 2018 was appointed Assistant Superintendent, continuing the focus on Human Resources and Leadership. The Board was grateful that Mike also successfully stepped in as Acting Superintendent for many months in 2024. His years of knowledge, dedication, and supportive leadership have been influential to district planning and growth.

Mark began his educational career in 1991, initially serving in Bella Coola before joining School District 91 as a teacher at Eugene Joseph School in Tl'azt'en Nation. He subsequently transferred to Fort St. James and taught at Sowchea Elementary School. Later, he relocated to Vanderhoof where he taught at an alternative education program at Nechako Valley Secondary School and later served as a guidance counsellor. Mark advanced to vice-principal and principal positions in both Fraser Lake and Vanderhoof, including a nine-year tenure as principal of Evelyn Dickson Elementary School. In 2020, he was appointed Director of Instruction – Curriculum Services supporting key initiatives aligned with the Board's Strategic Plan. His steady, collaborative leadership and dedication to instructional excellence have contributed significantly to the district.

Mike and Mark would like to acknowledge the invaluable support provided by the countless staff members who significantly contributed to their professional development and learning. They are grateful to their families and spouses for their unwavering support, noting that they would not be who they are without them.

As they look ahead to retirement, Mike is eager to spend more time with his two sons and extended family, including his new granddaughter, to travel to some bucket-list destinations, and to continue exploring the beautiful outdoors this country offers. Mark

looks forward to enjoying time with family and the outdoors, including time at the cabin, mountain biking and flyfishing across British Columbia.

The District and Board of Education extend their deepest gratitude to Mike Skinner and Mark Gauthier for more than six decades of combined service to Nechako Lakes. Their extraordinary knowledge, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to students, staff, and communities have left a lasting impact on the district. Through their leadership, mentorship, and passion for public education, Mike and Mark have shaped countless lives and strengthened our schools in ways that will be felt for many years to come. The Board also wishes to express that it has been an absolute pleasure working with both gentlemen, and that through their leadership Nechako Lakes has been able to advance public education across the district. While their contributions will be deeply missed, we wish them every happiness and fulfillment as they begin this well-earned next chapter.

Superintendent Anita McClinton will provide additional information regarding postings in the coming weeks.

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For further information, please contact:

Darlene Tuner
Secretary Treasurer
dtuner@sd91.bc.ca