

July 3, 2019

School District 72 Disaster Risk Reduction Program

Campbell River, BC – In 2015, Canada along with 187 countries throughout the world signed on to the Sendai Disaster Risk Reduction framework which emphasized in a whole of community approach to reducing disaster. It stated that children and youth are agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction, in accordance with legislation, national practice and educational curricula.

“Disaster risk reduction (DRR) includes disciplines like disaster management, disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness, but DRR is also part of sustainable development,” explains Strathcona Regional District (SRD) Protective Services Coordinator Shaun Koopman. “Thus, DRR involves every part of society, government and professional and private sector. Following these best practices, the SRD and School District 72 (SD72) have partnered together to offer a credit-based curriculum titled Disaster Risk Reduction in the 2019-2020 school year. This program is relevant to anyone in the area who wants to explore careers in public service and help the community in case of a disaster. “

The SD 72 Disaster Risk Reduction curriculum consists of local partnerships of facilitators and subject matter experts from all levels of government, private organizations such as McElhanney Engineering, SuavAir, Strategic Natural Resources, non-profit organizations such as the Salvation Army and emergency volunteer teams such as Emergency Support Services and Emergency Communications. The curriculum is open to grades 9-12 students.

“As the past chair of the SD 72 Board of Education, I support any opportunity to collaborate to increase educational opportunities for students,” says Strathcona Regional District’s Chair Michele Babchuk. “This curriculum is an interdisciplinary collaboration among youth and practitioners working in the field of disaster risk reduction. One of the easiest disaster risk reduction measures we can take as a community, is to empower youth and ensure they are actively involved in disaster risk reduction and contributing to making their communities resilient to disasters.”

"Remember the Fort McMurray fires? Remember the tsunami warnings from our fierce winter storms? Ready for the often predicted "big one"? What would you do in case of a disaster?" asks Diana Camerin – School District 72 Counsellor. “Students from Timberline, Carihi and Robron are excited to be able to answer these questions as they pursue a new Disaster Risk Reduction program starting in the fall. As SD72 continues to explore opportunities in the new curriculum and community partnerships, we are ever more able to be creative with the type of programming we can offer our youth.”

“We are looking forward to launching this new endeavor in the fall and grateful to the Strathcona Regional District (SRD) and Shaun Koopman, SRD Protective Services Coordinator for their ongoing commitment to our youth,” says Diana Camerin – School District 72 Counsellor.

To register for the Disaster Risk Reduction Program contact Diana Carmerin at diana.camerin@sd72.bc.ca. For more information contact Shaun Koopman at skoopman@srd.ca or 250-830-6702.

The Strathcona Regional District is a partnership of four electoral areas and five municipalities providing services to approximately 44,000 residents.

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