

CHEAKAMUS

CENTRE

nature is in session

Excellence in learning, inspired by nature

Dear Educators,

At Cheakamus Centre, we are committed to providing excellence in teaching and learning in, for, and about nature. Our commitment reflects the North Vancouver School District's strategic goal 'to provide leadership in environmental education and sustainability practices'.¹

The SD44 learning community has a strong connection to place and understands its role as environmental stewards. Current research tells us that place-based education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active contributing citizens.²

As educators, we believe that a place-based approach promotes engagement and achievement through hands-on experiences in nature. Outdoor learning also serves to enhance cognitive and emotional processes required in all educational settings. This is particularly relevant in a residential environmental learning setting where exposure to the natural environment can enhance mental health and well-being, while promoting the development of social-emotional skills and capacities.³

We invite you and your students to find meaningful and engaging learning connections while exploring our 165-hectare ecological reserve. We look forward to collaborating with you to provide rich learning opportunities for your students and staff. Hopefully, your program experience will provide you with ideas and strategies to integrate place-based learning in your school community.

On behalf of the Cheakamus Centre instructional team, thank you for supporting outdoor environmental learning experiences for your students.

Sincerely,



Conor McMullan
Director of Educational Programs

¹ Strategic Priority #2, NVSD Sustainability Strategy

² Sobel, 2004, p.7

³ Louv, 2008.