

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2022

RE: Director of Indigenous Learning Announced



Rocky View Schools' (RVS) Superintendent of Schools, Greg Luterbach is pleased to announce the appointment of Cindy Stefanato as Director of Indigenous Learning, effective Aug. 15, 2022.

"With 14 years supporting the success of Indigenous students, Cindy's professional and lived experience will make her a valuable addition to our leadership team," said Luterbach. "As the first director of this newly created branch, Cindy will be instrumental in guiding our division as we further our commitment to truth and reconciliation and continue learning about Indigenous Ways of Knowing. I extend my congratulations to Cindy and look forward to her work in this role."

A member of Fort William First Nation, Stefanato joined RVS in 2021 as assistant principal at Glenbow Elementary School in Cochrane. Before that, she served as a teacher, Indigenous education consultant and assistant principal with the Calgary Catholic School District (CCSD) since 2008. She was also a teacher in Ontario with the Thunder Bay Catholic School District from 2004-2006 and the Durham Catholic District School Board from 2006-2008.

In her four years as an Indigenous education consultant with CCSD, Stefanato mentored teachers in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and supported the success of Indigenous students. She also built connections and relationships with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and the wider Indigenous community in the Treaty 7 Territory. Prior to that role, she worked as a district-wide First Nations, Métis and Inuit teacher. Her work in this position included helping teachers understand the Indigenous experience and history in Canada, while also working directly with Indigenous students.

Stefanato holds a master of arts in counselling psychology from Yorkville University, a bachelor of education and a bachelor of arts in political science from Lakehead University, and completed a two-year program at Confederation College, formerly known as the Native Family Worker program.

As guests on Treaty 7 territory, Stefanato and her family have been fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in cultural programs and events for the past 15 years and are active members in the Indigenous community.

The new Indigenous Learning branch will be part of RVS' Learning Department and is tasked with supporting teachers and students in their learning journey towards truth and reconciliation. Created through RVS' 2022/23 budget – which was approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2022 – the branch will support all students in a division-wide commitment to truth and reconciliation, with specific supports for Indigenous students. Stefanato will be joined by two other staff in the branch.

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Initially, the three-person team will work with others develop a plan to support truth and reconciliation division wide while also responding to teachers' requests for supports. The team will work with schools and classrooms to invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper to support learning, listen to stories or engage with traditional practices; expand libraries to include books and materials that are reflective of Indigenous culture; or assist with lesson and assessment planning that incorporates Indigenous Ways of Knowing.

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