



**SD 73 District Parent Advisory
Council**

Web: <https://dpac.sd73.bc.ca>

Email: sd73dpac@gmail.com

Facebook: [Kamloops-Thompson
SD73 PAC Discussions](#)

February 16, 2026

Dawn Armstrong
President, CUPE 500

Dear Dawn,

On behalf of our SD 73 families, I want to extend deep gratitude to your CUPE membership for their courage, professionalism, and compassion in the wake of the tragic events that occurred in Tumbler Ridge. I would also like to acknowledge the loss of one of your colleagues, Shannda Aviugana-Durand, who lost her life while caring for her students at Tumbler Ridge Secondary.

As families in BC, we have been fortunate to have less exposure to the dangers that other school communities face around gun violence and mental health emergencies. Watching a school community close to us go through these events in real time was extremely heart-wrenching.

Many caregivers experienced a lot of fear, anxiety and uncertainty when heading to school in the following days. As did many children. We are deeply grateful that waiting there to meet their needs the very next day were the caring people that make up our dedicated school community.

We recognize that school staff faced their own unique and very real fears returning to their workplaces after a school shooting. As many of us focused on the needs of our children, school staff around BC exemplified leadership. With calm, warmth, and strength, you put aside what was happening outside of schools and focused on the children in front of you, in the moment. It took extraordinary dedication to your students. Your commitment to guiding our children, while experiencing your own unique fears and grief, speaks volumes about the character and commitment of your members.

Please know how deeply appreciated you are. Our parent community stands with you, supports you, and thanks you for choosing to lead children. They need good leaders right now.

With sincere gratitude,

Bonnie McBride
District Parent Advisory Council
School District 73