



## Ucluelet Secondary School

October 6, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to affirm our support for the continued designation of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region, established in 2000. Our region has worked together for the past decade to advance the objectives of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve program. As a partner of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, our organization has been able to contribute to achieving the objectives of sustainable development and reconciliation, through education, research and collaboration.

School District 70 (Pacific Rim) covers the geographical area of the Alberni Valley and a portion of the west coast of Vancouver Island where the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve is located. School District 70 (SD70) has three public schools located within the biosphere. The three schools (Ucluelet Elementary, Wickaninnish Elementary/ Community School and Ucluelet Secondary) provide educational services to the following communities within the biosphere: Tofino, Opitsaht, Tyhistanis/Esowista, Hitacu, Macoah, Hitacu, and Ucluelet. All three schools and communities have benefited from support from Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT). This letter of support has been written on behalf of all three public schools located in Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Clayoquot Biosphere Trust began their support of local youth with the establishment of an annual scholarship program in consultation with staff from Ucluelet Secondary School. That scholarship program is still in place to this day and has been expanded over the years to include a second annual scholarship available to graduating students who may live within the region or outside of the region and have Indigenous ancestry connecting them with one of the many First Nations bands within the biosphere region. Another scholarship program CBT support is the sponsorship of a student from our region to attend the annual arctic expedition through the Students on Ice Program.

Some initiatives that CBT has financially supported over the years include programs many of us are familiar with such as school gardens at both elementary schools, Roots of Empathy, and Project-Based learning programs. They have partnered with USS to offer a series of Parenting Workshops that align with the Family Studies 12 curriculum and are to open USS students and community members seeking credits towards their adult grad diploma; CBT has since found a community partner to provide funding for USS to offer this program a second time. If CBT is not able to directly fund programs they feel are beneficial for our youth they have helped seek out funds through other sources.

CBT supports programs that allow our students to get outside the school into nature through the creation of the "What I Learned About My Biosphere" program, which supports local schools, so they can get students outside to experience the biosphere reserve first hand. Through this program each school within the region receives \$1000 annually to help cover costs for field trips taken within the region. CBT also understands the benefit in sending our secondary students on longer trips to experience culture in other provinces and countries. CBT has supported trips for USS students to Quebec and various trips overseas through our Global Education 12 class including trips to China, Mexico, Peru and Guatemala. Many of these trips have included visits to other UNESCO Biosphere Reserves or World Heritage Sites.

The elementary schools have had support to run programs such as CALL — A youth leadership program at Wickaninnish Elementary or the Intermediate Sustainability Class focusing on food security at Ucluelet Elementary. Grade School Gourmets; Food Skills for Families — youth edition; and the Salt Water Aquarium are some other elementary school programs that CBT has supported along with Nuu-chah-nulth Language and Culture programs at all three schools.

A very large project supported by CBT resulted in a totem raising ceremony at an Aboriginal Day celebration involving all three schools in 2010. The totem was designed and carved by USS students with guidance from a master carver and stands in front of the USS gymnasium welcoming all.

Ucluelet Secondary School has organized several international service trips in which the CBT staff have been able to participate and arrange for our students to visit and learn about other UNESCO reserves and UNESCO heritage sites in countries such as Peru, Guatemala, and China.

CBT has partnered with SD70 and USS to provide training and capacity building programs for local youth. CBT provided ongoing direct financial support or assistance in leveraging financial support to the USS Kayaking 11/12 program for more than 10 years: a program in which students have the opportunity to gain skills and certifications required to work in the local eco-tourism industry. CBT aided SD70 in developing our Sustainability Studies 12 BAA curriculum which provides a framework for learning about local issues such as food security, sustainable development, ecosystem-based management and civic engagement. Most recently SD70 partnered with the West Coast N.E.S.T. to conduct a feasibility study investigating the possibility of offering a semester long Outdoor Ed program at Ucluelet Secondary for local and international students and aided in finding funding to get this program started. And in the past few years CBT has begun providing more opportunities for youth to build capacity by inviting them to be members on the CBT community advisory granting committees and inviting them to participate in programs such as Art of Hosting. Our students directly participate in the CBT Vital Signs research as well.

Other recent projects within our communities include a Youth Companionship Education and Training opportunity for youth interested in volunteering with the Pacific Rim Hospice Society; the Connecting Students with Wildlife- Monitoring Program offered at all schools within the region which provides students a hands-on experience with collecting and interpreting scientific data in the field. Youth Art Workshops provided by the Pacific Rim Arts Society and Summer Science Camps led by the Ucluelet Aquarium are a couple other youth-targeted programs supported by CBT.

There is no way we can possibly name every single program or class project CBT has been involved in, but what we do know is that our staff and students benefit greatly from their support and are very thankful for all the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust staff and Board of Directors for their support over the years.

School District 70 is proud to support the continued Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere designation, and looks forward to participating in the next ten years of activities in our region. Please feel free to contact me if you require more information about the support Clayoquot Biosphere has provided the youth in the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol Sedgwick', written in a cursive style.

Carol Sedgwick  
Principal  
Ucluelet Secondary School