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Phone (250) 475-4241 Fax (250) 475-4238

Dear Parent and/or Guardian:

You are receiving this letter because counselling services have been requested for your child by family, self-referral, or a staff member. Your input and knowledge about your child is greatly valued. If you would like to meet with your child's counsellor, please email or call for an appointment.

**What to expect from counselling:**

- School based counselling may include individual and/or small group support.
- The goal of school based counselling is to support your child in developing skills to support their social-emotional wellness. Some of these areas of focus may include: emotional regulation, friendships, self-esteem, anxiety, dealing with social conflicts, classroom supports, grief and loss, and separation/divorce.
- Counselling is expected to be a voluntary, confidential relationship (see limits on the reverse side of this letter) which involves developmentally appropriate and evidence - based strategies to explore specific goals.
- A counsellor has an obligation to ensure that students understand the goals of the counselling session(s), limits to confidentiality, and the potential risks and benefits of counselling.
- A student has the right to end counselling at any time.

**Potential Benefits and/or Risk to counselling:**

- Better understanding of self and others which supports a sense of wellbeing and positive mental health.
- Improved relationships with peers and adults.
- Increased connection to and engagement with classroom and school activities.
- Unanticipated and/or strong emotions that may arise from remembering and discussing upsetting events.
- Limits to confidentiality may lead to unforeseen consequences.

**Parent/ Guardian Consent:**

- If a student is not of the age to fully understand ongoing informed consent, parental/ guardian permission for counselling is required.
- It is most often in the best interest of the student to have parents/guardians informed about counselling (while content remains confidential), with the child/youth's consent.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Counsellor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/ Guardian Name (if applicable, see above):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/ Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Limits to Confidentiality:

- Concerns about abuse (sexual, physical, emotional), and/or neglect of a student legally require a report to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- If a student has knowledge regarding criminal activities, and/or knowledge of someone being harmed, the counsellor must inform the police.
- If a student has a plan to harm themselves or others, confidentiality may be breached to ensure safety.
- When subpoenaed to court, a counsellor must share relevant information as requested by legal authorities.