

Dear Okanagan Waldorf School families and friends,

I instantly fell in love with the Okanagan Waldorf School (then Cedar Bridge School) on a brisk day in March 2014 as I entered the magical world of the Parent Preschool Program led by our well-loved Miss Barbara. The play yard was glistening as the winter snow had receded and the grass was touched by the early morning spring dew. My daughter and I were instantly 'at home' at the school and I never doubted for a moment that this was a place we would be for a very long time.

My journey with The Bridge Educational Society and OWS since that first early spring day in 2014 has been filled with joy, challenge, humility, and gratitude. I feel blessed to have been part of the extreme growth of the K-7 student body, the creation the school's first administration team, the rise of a strong Board of Trustees, the strength of our Board and Parent Association committee work, the creation of several buildings including the new Early Years Centre with its birth to three childcare initiative, and the steadfast endeavor of our school community to remain rooted in the simplicity of the seasons as we witness the children on our campus drawn to their future greatest potentials. It is astounding to look back and realize that in such a short time, together, we have come so far.

OWS is now ready for that next someone to step in and continue to work with the dedicated Faculty, Staff, and Board as well as the students and their families as we enter into the next 100 years of Waldorf education. I am deeply confident that the hiring committee will attract the exact someone that will inspire the community beyond imagination and continue to lead this uniquely contemporary BC Waldorf school to a fruitful future.

Although I could not foresee at the time of my initial introduction to OWS, as a parent, that I would be with the school today in the capacity that I have been, I can say that in my 20+ years in education and non-profit organizational management that I have never experienced such surety at every step of the way that I was exactly where I was intended to be, as I have these last 5 years. With that, I feel just as secure in my decision to step away from my current position, and I am excited to see what will unfold in the next few years for the school and Society. The warmth and acceptance that I experienced immediately on that first day in 2014 is something that I will hold close and cherish, forever.

With deep gratitude,

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

Andrea Thiessen