



Winter/Spring 2015

### Principal's Update

We are on the precipice of great change in education and Rick Hansen Secondary School is leading the way. While the winds of change can be quite slow when you are shifting a whole system, we are responding quickly to ensure that we are setting the example for others to follow.

Our staff and students recognize that the skills to carry students forward in the future are their ability to collaborate, communicate, and think critically in a digital world. The subjects that have traditionally been taught in isolation actually have a strong correlation between their objectives and that the power in learning actually comes from identifying those correlations as opposed to isolating them. Gone are the days where content memorization on the night before an exam measured your recall ability the following morning. Now we are expecting our students to discover the applications of their knowledge to solve real world problems and demonstrate that learning to a community that is engaged in finding the solution.

Our students can't sit idly by and be passive recipients of information. It is not what our parents, educators, universities, communities and the workforce demands of them. Collectively we hold out hope that the education systems produces innovators, problem solvers and collaborators. Unfortunately, our ideal and our intent stands in stark contrast to our reality. We are determined to create difference makers not note takers.

Fortunately, we are changing that. Next year at Rick Hansen our students will be working in an inquiry based environment, as we begin to transform ourselves into the high performance school the workforce and universities are demanding. Students will be expected to pursue knowledge to prove their understanding as they solve real world problems that ignites a passion in them. Our grade nines will be in a cutting edge interdisciplinary model where math, English, science and digital literacy are taught in unison, not isolation. They will advance through the years building on their collaboration, critical thinking and communication skills. In grade 11 they will have the distinct advantage over the competition and be able to choose one of our two prestigious schools, the School of Business or the School of Science. This will allow them to deepen their understanding and pursue their passion in one of those areas, if they choose. When the top universities are knocking at the door and recruiting our graduates with lucrative scholarships and employers are seeking our students as their future leaders, you will know you have made the right choice in a school.

We are leading the revolution in education and we want you to be part of the journey.