

Board Report April 10, 2019

As Chairperson, I am pleased to report on the work of the Board of Education since our last report on March 13, 2019. While it has been fairly quiet for meetings and events due to the spring break, behind the scenes the work has continued.

Liaison Meeting with Surrey and White Rock Members of Parliament

At the March 13th Regular Board Meeting, the Board received information from staff regarding the new process in the Call for Proposals for the Welcome Centre federal funding. The Board immediately moved to meet with our local MPs to advocate for continued funding of the Welcome Centre. Following the Board meeting I wrote to our local MPs on behalf of the Board and a date for the meeting is being coordinated.

Funding Model Review

Recently, BC School districts were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the Funding Model Review currently being undertaken by the Provincial Government. The government report which has been circulated to all districts contains 22 recommendations and these recommendations may potentially have a great impact on the way in which our districts are funded and how in turn services may be provided. A key issue for our district is that the recommendations released to date are too broad to attempt to understand or estimate the impact that any potential funding model changes may have on our district funding and this lack of detailed information creates a challenge for Surrey and all school districts in BC to provide meaningful feedback and input.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I wrote to the Honourable Minister of Education last week providing broad comments on the report and urging the Minister to provide actual details on the funding model options being considered by government and to open a meaningful two way communication with districts on these specific funding model options prior to any decisions being finalized on a new model. As a Board, we believe the more information we have on the specifics of any funding model changes being contemplated, the better we will be able to provide meaningful feedback and input to the process.

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At the request of the Surrey Board of Trade, the Secretary-Treasurer and I attended the SBOT Workforce Development Team meeting to provide information on our districts' capital projects currently under way in the district and to respond to the committee's questions regarding the process for funding district capital and operating needs. The meeting provided an opportunity for the SBOT to further understand the work of the district and to strengthen our relationship as the SBOT continues to provide support and advocacy for education and students in Surrey.

Liaison Meetings

The next few weeks will provide opportunities for the Board to connect with our educational and community partners in person. We look forward to the Board's liaison meetings with our local MLAs, the STA, CUPE, SPVPA and our Student Leadership.

Day of Mourning

A number of years ago, the Board passed a motion to ensure that the District observes the Day of Mourning on April 28th each year. April 28th is a day we recognize and remember workers killed, injured or disabled on the job. In recognition, schools will be instructed to lower their flags to half-mast and encouraged to observe one minute of silence. For the Board of Education, worker safety is an absolute priority in our district, and we are committed to support and implement measures that keep our staff, and all of our school population, safe.