

## **Board Report May 13, 2020**

As you know, the way in which business is conducted changed dramatically during this year's spring break when the public health emergency and provincial state of emergency were declared by the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Government respectively in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While our physical interactions have been restricted, the work of the district and the Board continues and I am pleased to share an update on the work of the Board since the last report in March.

### Capital Projects

We are pleased to confirm that the Ministry of Education has approved funding for a 10 classroom addition to Sunnyside Elementary School, which will provide 250 new seats when complete. We also look forward to receiving approval for additional capital projects in the near future and this remains the top priority focus for our Board as we continue to work with government and partners to increase our student capacity across the district.

### BCSTA and BCPSEA

The advocacy work of trustees has continued with virtual attendance at BCSTA provincial council and metro trustee meetings, as well as the continued representation on BCSTA and BCPSEA committees and boards. Much planning by boards of education has been done and is taking place during the pandemic around health and safety, employment continuity, and planning for reopening of schools.

### Liaison with Stakeholders

Liaison with stakeholders has continued through online meetings. On April 15<sup>th</sup> the Board met with the SPVPA Executive with a focus on the handling of the pandemic at schools, the challenges and the innovative solutions being implemented throughout the district. The Board also met online with DPAC on April 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss the implications of the pandemic for parents and families and to provide an update on our budget planning process to date.

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, the Board hosted a live event through Microsoft Teams for CUPE Local 728 members. The event was held to address pandemic related concerns and to respond to questions. Over 1600 members participated in this live online event.

### Staff and Students

Under normal circumstances, the month of May is the start to trustees' attendance at many graduation and commencement ceremonies throughout the district to celebrate the accomplishment of senior students who begin their transition to post-secondary education, life adventures and the start of careers. This year the ceremonies will not take place in their traditional way, but our students' rite of passage will continue and together with teachers, support staff, administration, families and the community, we look forward to supporting and celebrating our students' successes in the new and creative ways that are emerging.

Similarly, the traditional gathering for our long service employees will not take place this year, but we will find alternative ways to recognize and appreciate those who have dedicated many years of service to the district. The pandemic forces us to review, rethink, recreate, and we will do that because our desire to support, appreciate and celebrate all of those involved in our district is strong and does not diminish.

Before I end, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank everyone, whether it be students, staff, parents, volunteers and community members in our district for pulling together during this crisis and being united in all of the endeavours to support one another, uplift each other and every day move forward to get through this unprecedented, unforeseen situation that we all find ourselves in.

Thank you.