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## **Board Report June 10, 2020**

I am pleased to share an update on the work of the Board since the last report in May.

### Capital Projects

On Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Education announced funding of \$57 million, including a \$5 million contribution from the district, for three capital projects in the South Surrey and White Rock areas. This includes a new elementary school with a capacity of 655 seats in the Sunnyside Heights area, a 190 seat addition to Morgan Elementary, and 195 seat addition to White Rock Elementary schools. We welcome this announcement and are proud of the work of this board of trustees, working in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other partners in obtaining funding support for these three major capital projects.

### Restarting BC's Schools

On May 15<sup>th</sup> the Premier and Minister of Education announced that schools will re-open on June 1<sup>st</sup> as part of the BC Restart Plan. With the size of our district, everyone will appreciate the amount of work that was required to be undertaken within a two week period to ensure that schools were safe and ready for staff, and students if they wished to attend on a part-time basis. I am pleased to report that thanks to the preparation work done by the district and the support provided by our partners, we have experienced a successful return to schools. The health and safety of our students and staff is always paramount, and the Board is optimistic that should we need to continue to implement the processes and procedures currently in place in the fall, we have a good template to work from at the start of the new school year.

### Community Engagement

During the pandemic, weekly communications and updates have been provided to the community and our educational partners. This past Monday, we hosted a live virtual event for parents. This provided the opportunity for Superintendent Tinney to share information on the current status, and the planning under way for the new school year. Over 500 attendees joined the hour long live event and we received approximately 200 questions. I am pleased to share that we received positive feedback on the event, and staff will continue to respond to questions as they come in, as well as continue with regular communications to ensure parents, and all stakeholders, have the latest updates.

### Celebrations and Recognitions

This year, due to the pandemic, graduation ceremonies and retirement celebrations are not proceeding as per usual. These events are a tradition and an important milestone in the lives of our students, staff and their families. While we are disappointed not to be able to personally meet with and celebrate the accomplishments of students as they graduate and staff as they retire, I know I speak on behalf of all trustees that we are pleased to participate in some small way and honour your successes through our virtual presence at the ceremonies that are taking place.

Looking further ahead in the month, June, 21<sup>st</sup> marks the National Indigenous People's Day. It is a time to celebrate the heritage, cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Metis. As a Board we are pleased to see the improvements being made to support the success and graduation rates of our aboriginal students. Our Aboriginal Education Department and teachers and support staff throughout the district play an important role in this regard and they will no doubt be planning to acknowledge this special day. As with all other celebrations at the current time, due to the pandemic, everyone is encouraged to celebrate at a distance and keep themselves and the community safe.

While the work will continue throughout the month of June and over the summer, tonight's Board meeting is the last Regular meeting for the current school year. Before I end, I would like to acknowledge the work of everyone involved with our district, and in particular the work that has been undertaken throughout this spring. These past few months have been unprecedented, unpredictable, challenging and, at times, very difficult. The cooperation and collaboration demonstrated by our staff and educational partners has been truly inspiring. This has been a trying time, and we don't know what lies ahead when we start another school year in September, but the actions of the past few months are a testament to how our district comes together as a community for the good of each other and our students. Thank you.

On behalf of the Board, I wish you all a safe and healthy summer.