

**Board Report
February 10, 2021**

I am pleased to report on the work of the Board since our last update in December.

New Beginnings

The start of the New Year saw the official opening of Edgewood Elementary School in South Surrey. Funding of more than \$27 million was provided by the Provincial Government and the district is very pleased to have 27 new classrooms and 655 seats in the rapidly growing area of Grandview Heights.

On January 18th, we saw the official opening of a new playground at Old Yale Elementary which was made possible through a \$125,000 provincial grant. We know the importance and positive impact of outdoor physical play for children and the new accessible playground is a welcome addition for our students and the local community.

After many years of commitment and hard work, I am pleased to share the district will be offering its second International Baccalaureate diploma program this September with applications starting later this week. This is great news as, together with the current offering at Semiahmoo Secondary, we can now offer students wider access in both the north and south of Surrey.

Advocacy and Liaison

On January 22nd, Board Chairs came together with the Ministry of Education and BCSTA for a session to discuss the impact of and lessons learned from the pandemic to date, and to plan for the months ahead.

On January 27th, the Board met virtually with the Ministry of Education and City of Surrey for its Surrey Summit meeting which has a focus on how we can continue to work together to accelerate capital projects. The new Minister of Education continued the commitment to expediting school expansion projects and to provide better learning spaces for students. As a Board we are proud of this strong partnership and the benefits of collaborating with the Ministry and City to address the needs of our students and community.

Over the past few weeks, Trustees have represented the Board and district at BCSTA Metro and Committee meetings, the BCPSEA AGM, and various district and stakeholder committees and meetings.

Earlier this evening the Board met with Surrey MLAs and had the opportunity to share with them the impact of the pandemic on our schools and students, and discuss funding, budgets, and capital.

District Wide Initiatives

The Board has very clear policies around anti-discrimination and human rights, bullying, harassment, racism, and is firmly committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment in all our schools and sites. As a Board we are proud to support our staff, teachers and students when they recognize and celebrate diversity in all forms and raise awareness of the important work around these issues. Some examples of such initiatives during January were “Black Shirt Day” and “No Name Calling Week”, and coming up in February on the 21st is “Pink Shirt Day” and on the 24th “International Mother Language Day”.

We are pleased to continue our journey on reaching out to our community and partners to explore how we can make sure our system is equitable for all learners and free from discrimination or bias. This past week, the senior educational team met to design a process of engagement with the community and there will be further information on this important initiative at future board meetings.

Thank you.