



News Release

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United Way supports Surrey School District's new Community-Schools Partnership Initiative

Inner-city schools form neighbourhood service hubs

United Way of the Lower Mainland is contributing funding and expertise to an innovative Community-Schools Partnership Initiative launched by the Surrey School District.

The United Way is providing \$90,000 to support the program in its first year. The organization is also represented on the Community-Schools Partnership committee that oversees development of this important work.

"Everyone involved is passionate about the Community-Schools Partnership concept and very excited about the real difference this initiative can make in improving the lives of our community's children and their families," says Surrey school board chair Shawn Wilson. "The board is extremely grateful for the United Way's contribution of financial support and expertise, both of which are of enormous benefit to the program."

The goal of the Community-Schools Partnership Initiative is to establish designated schools as neighbourhood centres. The centres weave together an array of local services, resources and expertise to complement and enhance the school district's educational mandate and address the needs of children, families and the broader community. By consolidating services such as health, social, recreation and literacy, families benefit from easier access to important resources and community support.

Says United Way of the Lower Mainland president and chief executive officer Michael McKnight, "United Way sees a lot of potential in the Community-Schools Partnership Initiative for promoting the overall health and well-being of the community. It's a priority for United Way to invest in children and, in this case, support children's access to out-of-school care programs."

The district recently hired four Community-School Partnership coordinators who are working with many partners to establish community-school hubs in the Guildford, Whalley and Newton neighbourhoods.

The City of Surrey has partnered with the district to lead the Community-Schools Partnership Initiative as one element of the city's 'prevent and deter' component of the city's crime reduction strategy and as part of its ongoing commitment to child, youth and family cultural and leisure services.

The partners hope to expand the initiative to provide community school hubs through-out Surrey.

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