



News Release

March 17, 2004

Envision Credit Union funds Surrey School District literacy initiatives

Envision Credit Union's has donated \$10,000 to fully fund another year of the Surrey School District's Visiting Author Program and support the district's "SPARK" family literacy project.

Envision has funded the Visiting Author Program since the program's inception in 2001. The donation is used to bring a professional local author into each of 18 South Surrey and White Rock elementary schools to make a presentation to students **about the importance of reading and the joys of writing**. The money is also used to purchase the author's books for the school library.

For each of the past three years Envision has also contributed between \$1,500 and \$2,000 to support SPARK, or Supporting Parents Actively Reading with Kids. SPARK was developed in 2003 by two Surrey teachers as a way of involving parents in their children's learning. Through SPARK, parents of English as a Second Language (ESL) students are invited to school for regular literacy sessions with their children. Parents are provided with **in-language information** about reading with their children, as well as books with stories in their native language and the English translations. SPARK helps students improve their English reading skills and helps parents become more comfortable with English and more involved with their children's school and education.

"With its continuing financial support for SPARK and the Visiting Authors Program, Envision Credit Union clearly recognizes that literacy is fundamental to a good education," says Shawn Wilson, chair of the Surrey School Board. "The school board is very grateful for Envision's support."

This school year, more than 4,000 students are benefiting from the Visiting Authors Program and more than 1,000 Kindergarten students are participating in SPARK.

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