



News Release

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Special needs and inner-city students key beneficiaries of Surrey School Board's 2006-2007 preliminary budget

The Surrey School Board today passed its 2006-2007 preliminary operating budget with many classroom enhancements, particularly for students with special needs.

"For the third straight year, the board has focused on enhancing the quality of the programs and learning environments for Surrey School District students," says Surrey School Board Budget Committee chair Terry Allen. "This year, I'm particularly proud of the support we've been able to put into helping our more challenged students succeed."

A substantial portion of the total \$7 million in budget enhancements will go towards funding support for special needs and inner-city students, including:

- 10 new staff positions for "Learner Support Teams" at elementary schools with a high enrolment of students with learning disabilities and mild intellectual disabilities.
- Support for "at risk" students with three additional school psychologists, two youth care workers and a district behavioural specialist.
- Four full-day Kindergarten classes will be added to the 61 already in place for students requiring intensive English language support in their first year of school.
- Three counsellors to serve inner-city elementary schools.

Other spending initiatives to enhance student learning and the learning environment include:

- An increase of 5.375 full-time equivalent (FTE) teacher-librarian time for elementary and secondary schools.
- Support for Career Education with the provision of five additional full-time career facilitators for secondary schools and learning centres.
- A secondary school staffing increase of 7.125 FTE to support the Graduation Portfolio requirements and the Education Ministry's new Health and Careers 8/9 initiative.
- A renewed commitment to the Trading Up trades career fair.
- An allocation of \$126,300 for expansion of existing Safe Schools initiatives.
- Five additional full-time positions in the district's physical plant and maintenance department.

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The board is also allocating resources to support parent communications through district website and document translations enhancements. In addition, the District Parent Advisory Council will receive support to develop and pursue parent communications projects and improvements.

Summary

This year's preliminary operating budget of \$455,158,869 includes Ministry of Education funding of \$435,137,519, plus grants and district revenues of \$20,021,350. Funding is based on an anticipated 2006-07 enrolment of 62,507 full-time equivalent school-aged students and 1,363 adult students. The final school district operating grant will be based on the September 30, 2006 enrolment count and any adjustments to the preliminary budget will be made after that date.

In total, about 75 per cent of the 2006-2007 preliminary budget enhancements are allocated to increased staffing – including 50.725 FTE teachers – and 25 per cent to increased supplies and services.