



News Release

December 13, 2007

District's record high graduation rate highlight of Superintendent's Report

Report outlines successes and challenges of previous school year

In the Superintendent's Report to the Surrey Board of Education for the 2006/2007 school year tabled at this evening's public board meeting, Superintendent Mike McKay says district students demonstrate success at a high level, based on both local trends and provincial comparisons.

The report cites several record results for the district, including the graduation rate (students graduating within six years of entering Grade 8). The report says the graduation rate in the Surrey School District "*was the highest ever in 2006/2007 at 83.4 per cent and exceeds the provincial average of 81 per cent.*"

"It is important to honour the work of educators throughout the Surrey School District learning community for the successes being achieved, for the progress being made on our highest priorities, and for the honest reflection and adjustments where the need for change is evident," McKay says in the report.

Other highlights include:

- A district record number of student provincial scholarships, estimated at more than 450 (final ministry figures have not yet been released),
- A record 293 district student scholarships,
- A record high 393 students enrolled in apprenticeship programs,
- A 14 per cent increase over the previous year of student participation in Fine Arts events

In addition, the report says district students met or exceeded the provincial pass rate in seven out of eight courses requiring provincial exams. For Grade 12 courses with optional provincial exams, district students met or exceeded the provincial pass rate in 12 of 14 courses.

The report also points to successes in strategies aimed at improving reading skills for early learners, with a more than two-thirds reduction in the number of students deemed at risk of developmental reading difficulties by the time they completed the school year.

.../2

“The board is impressed by the overall achievements of our students and commends the district leadership and our educators for their work and successes,” says Surrey Board of Education Chairman Shawn Wilson. “Trustees also look forward to progress on the challenges described in the report, particularly Aboriginal education.”

While 2006/07 Aboriginal student graduation rates improved substantially over the previous year to 47 per cent, McKay notes the results do not meet expectations. The report says a key priority for the district is for Aboriginal students to achieve at the same high level as their non-Aboriginal peers.

Several initiatives are cited to support Aboriginal student success, including an “Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement” being developed in collaboration with the Aboriginal community and to be signed early next year. The report also noted recommendations from an Aboriginal program review are being finalized later this month.

The Superintendent’s Report to the Surrey Board of Education is based on data in the 13th Annual Report of the Student Learning Committee also released at today’s board meeting. Both reports are available on the Surrey School District website at www.sd36.bc.ca/general/reports.

For more information, please contact:

Doug Strachan
Manager, Communications
604-599-7468 (office)
778-772-5032 (mobile)