



News Release

May 29, 2008

Despite budget shortfall, Surrey Board of Education dedicates over \$2M to classroom enhancements in 2009-2010 preliminary budget

There will be 13 more teachers and 41 additional education assistants in Surrey School District classrooms to start the next school year, according to preliminary budget figures approved by the Surrey Board of Education at the board's public meeting on Thursday.

"For the first time in five years, our board was faced with a budget shortfall and it was a substantial amount: \$9.5 million," says Surrey School Board Budget Committee chair Terry Allen. "Our board's priority continues to be supporting our learners and I'm very pleased to say trustees have been able to address the shortfall without cuts to the classroom and in fact, we have allocated more than \$2 million in additional funding directly to support learning."

The board made up the budget shortfall by applying an anticipated \$4 million budget surplus from the current school year; a reduction in administration/ management staffing and departmental budgets; and a six-day reduced local calendar to decrease staff replacement costs (with an increase of instructional time to make up the six days).

The board has allocated approximately \$2.3 million to support and enhance key board-priority programs, including:

- Expansion of English-as-a-Second Language, full-day kindergarten programs
- Additional Special Education Assistant time
- Safe School initiatives

The board's operating budget is allocated 86 per cent to instructional and classroom support, 11 per cent to fund operations and maintenance, two per cent for district administration and one per cent to transportation (rounded numbers)

The total 2009-10 preliminary operating budget of \$545 million includes \$521 million in Ministry of Education and other provincial government grants, and \$20 million in district-generated revenues and \$4 million from the current year budget surplus (rounded numbers).

The budget has been calculated based on the district's school-aged student enrolment projection (including on-line learners) of 65,243; an increase of 156 students over the previous year. The final school district operating grant will be based on the September 30, 2009 enrolment count and any adjustments to the preliminary budget will be made after that date.

– 30 –

For more information, please contact:
Doug Strachan
Manager, Communications
604-599-7468 (office)