



# News Release

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## **Board establishes senior position to oversee district sustainability and environmental initiatives**

The Surrey Board of Education has invested in the district's long-term environmental stewardship and sustainability by establishing the position of director of energy management and sustainability.

Alasdair MacKinnon assumed responsibilities for the new role in May this year while transitioning from his former position as director of instruction in the Surrey School District. He will not be replaced in his original position; however, Mr. MacKinnon will retain responsibility for some aspects of his earlier role.

Reporting to the superintendent and secretary-treasurer, the director of energy management and sustainability is responsible for identifying energy savings, managing the implementation of energy-saving projects and minimizing the district's 'carbon footprint' in a district-wide, "continuous improvement" approach. The position is subsidized through a BC Hydro grant program that also provides planning and other resource support.

"Trustees recognize that, particularly for a district our size, we need to make an investment if we're to be effective in our commitment to energy and environmental conservation," says Surrey Board of Education chair Laurae McNally. "There are obviously financial benefits to efficient operations and minimizing carbon offset charges, and there are social benefits to operating in an environmentally responsible way, and beyond this, students will see and learn as the district 'walks the talk' around environmental stewardship".

Early initiatives to be pursued by the new director include development of an energy policy and related energy reduction targets, and energy awareness campaigns and training for students, parents and school and district staff. As part of a communication plan, construction of a district sustainability website is also underway.

"Without much cost, substantial energy efficiencies can be achieved through education and sharing ideas and information to promote awareness and positive behavioural change," says MacKinnon.

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