



# News Release

April 29, 2010

## **Surrey school board reduces staffing outside the classroom to address budget shortfall**

*District enrolment growth will mitigate job losses*

The Surrey Board of Education will reduce staffing and services to address an anticipated \$12.3 million operating budget shortfall for the 2010/2011 school year.

With student enrolment projected to increase by almost 1,300 students in September—roughly equivalent to three elementary schools—most job reductions will be accomplished by reassigning some “non-enrolling” teachers (counsellors, librarians, career education and learner support teachers) to classrooms.

District-based teacher positions (curriculum and student support specialists) will also be reduced by reassignments into the classroom. In addition, many non-enrolling teachers, as well as child and youth care staff will not be replaced for short-term (three days or less) absences. Reductions also involve district administration, custodial, school clerical and operations & maintenance staff positions. Budgets for district services, supplies and learning resources will be reduced as well.

“It has been a difficult and painful process for our board to make these decisions, particularly since our district is already the most efficiently run in the province,” says board budget committee chair Terry Allen. “It is impossible to cut more than \$12-million from next year’s budget without affecting some jobs and services. The board has done the best it can to minimize impacts on students, as well as employees.”

While overall, approximately 100 full-time equivalent staff positions will be eliminated, district growth is expected to generate about 70 new positions, including a net increase of five FTE teachers. Retirements and attrition will also mitigate the potential need for layoffs. However, actual numbers will not be known until after student enrolment and other variables are known in the fall.

As another potential cost reduction, the board is seeking staff and school community feedback on a [proposal](#) to extend next year’s spring break by one week, as was done for this year. This would result in a savings of about \$500,000. If the local calendar is not adopted, other budget reductions would be required. The board votes on the local calendar proposal at its May 20 public meeting.

“This certainly it isn’t good news to share; however, I want to assure students and parents that while the learning experience and opportunities in our schools next year may be altered somewhat, they will be enjoyable, exciting and rewarding,” adds board chair Laurae McNally. “As a 25-year Surrey school district trustee, I can tell you staff throughout our district are passionate about supporting our students and making their education the best it can be.”

- 30 -

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