



Oct. 3, 2016

STAYING CONNECTED

~ A message from Official Trustee Mike McKay ~

To North Okanagan-Shuswap School District Community Members:

The busy September season and all of the school opening and class organization routines are now behind us and I want to thank staff, parents and students for all of the effort and good will that made this a positive start to the 2016/17 school year. Our enrolment is up and we anticipate that we will transition out of "Funding Protection" meaning that our additional students will generate more funding to provide services to enhance learning. Our final official enrolment count will be confirmed later this Fall, but our school by school analysis indicates that there are several sites with student populations that exceed projections.

As I mentioned in an earlier "Staying Connected" Bulletin and at Public Board meetings, I am committed to engaging with members of our communities this Fall and am inviting you to join me in a Community Conversation, taking place at each of the "central hubs" of our families of schools. Please see dates and times below and take the opportunity to participate in a dialogue about education in School District #83.

Community Consultation Dates

Saturday, October 29

- Parkview Elementary from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

- Pleasant Valley Secondary Theatre from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, November 26

- Shuswap Middle School from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

- A.L. Fortune Secondary Theatre from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Parents and the broader community are essential partners in our education journey and schools and districts have to reach out, authentically engage and build shared vision and momentum toward a preferred future. Your thoughts, opinions and concerns are important and you will have an opportunity at these sessions to share those, as well as learn more about the district's priorities for 2017 and beyond.

I hope for and anticipate a strong turnout of parents and other citizens from all areas of our district to share perspective and gather input on the School District's commitment to provide quality educational programming for students. Discussions will include but not be limited to: a budget update; learning priorities, student successes and areas for attention; long term strategic planning; enrolment trends; a facilities update; the status of current school closure motions; and transportation issues and recent developments.

~ Continued ~

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Our Partner Group Table, with representatives from parents and each employee group, meets prior to regular board meetings and is identifying high priority issues for discussion as we collaborate to enhance a positive learning environment.

I am also pleased to report that there is progress being made on the Special Advisor recommendations and I will be providing regular updates at board meetings as we work through the wide range of issues identified in that Report.

In other news, the school district has submitted a thoughtful and comprehensive grant application to the Ministry of Education for additional funding for student transportation. If the grant application is successful it will bring some much needed additional funds to the district, to allow a decrease in walk limits, some enhanced routes, increased accessibility for students with disabilities and the re-establishment of specific routes which were in place but were eliminated due to funding cuts in previous years. Our application focuses on using the funds to increase student safety and reducing ride times, especially for our students travelling the farthest. Our Transportation Department has indicated that they will activate changes as soon as possible once we hear about the status of our grant application. In some cases, those changes cannot be activated immediately but we will work diligently to ensure maximum positive outcomes for the balance of this year as well as going into future years. A comprehensive review of catchment areas and bus routes will help to inform our long-term planning.

As always I am available by email. Please contact me at trusteefeedback@sd83.bc.ca.

*Respectfully,
Mike McKay*

*Mike McKay
Official Trustee,
North Okanagan-Shuswap School District*

Questions? Feedback? Please send me an email at trusteefeedback@sd83.bc.ca