

For Immediate Release: March 27th, 2008

Proposed School Board Budget Maintains Educational Programs

The Greater Victoria School Board has released its proposed 2008-2009 budget which maintains all educational services at existing levels, avoiding any cutbacks for the fourth consecutive year.

"This stability is the result of difficult decisions made by the Board to protect student learning" said Board Chairman Tom Ferris.

However, because provincial government funding is tied to student numbers, the projected future decline in enrolment continues to be a serious concern to the Board.

During the past several years, the Board has anticipated this year's revenue shortfalls due to declining enrolment by putting aside one-time funds for future use. This year's budget will be balanced by utilizing these savings to offset a \$4.1 million dollar operating deficit.

However, future budgetary pressures will continue to grow as enrolment declines and the provincial per student grant fails to keep pace with all the additional educational costs.

"The School Board will continue to advocate for more resources for our children while prudently planning for the future." said Board Vice Chairman Mark Walsh.

The proposed budget will now be circulated to schools and the community for feedback. Budget details can be found on the Board's web page at www.sd61.bc.ca. The next public consultative meeting will be held on April 10 in the Auditorium at S.J. Willis School, 923 Topaz Avenue, Victoria. Please contact the School Board Office at 475-4106 in order to be placed on the Speaker's List.

The Board of School Trustees will debate the Budget on Tuesday April 15th, 2008 at 7:00 pm in the Boardroom at 556 Boleskine Road, Victoria.

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