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**JOHN GAIPTMAN, CEO AND SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
FOR GREATER VICTORIA ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT****SHERRI BELL TAKES OVER ROLE ON AN INTERIM BASIS**

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The Greater Victoria School District Superintendent of Schools and CEO John Gaipman will retire on February 14, 2014.

Superintendent Gaipman stated, "I came into this role in 2002 with a goal of being part of a team that would make significant improvements in literacy, numeracy, Aboriginal Education and graduation rates. I retire with the knowledge that the necessary initiatives and programs have been implemented and are proving to be successful. I have always said that I would choose my retirement date based upon the needs of the District. I believe that I leave the Greater Victoria School District with the necessary momentum, strategies and structures in place to continue to excel. Although I am retiring from the Greater Victoria School District, I am going to continue to work for public education."

Superintendent Gaipman has led the District through numerous changes including closing schools to combat decades of declining enrolment and implementing middle schools to Greater Victoria to improve instruction and student engagement. He developed a multi-faceted District-wide approach to improve the Dogwood completion rates. His success is evident in the number of students now graduating. Since 2008, the graduation rate for all students in the Greater Victoria School District has increased by 13.7% with the Aboriginal graduation rate improving by 14.4%.

Peg Orcherton, Chair of the Greater Victoria Board of Education said, "We will miss John Gaipman's passion for education. He has been our leader for almost thirteen years. He has been a motivator, a communicator and a strong advocate for students and public education. He was tireless in his support for the music programs. As Board Chair he was, at all times, a pleasure to work with and I speak on behalf of the District when I say that he will certainly be missed."

"Superintendent Gaipman and the Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils created a working and learning partnership that was the envy of school districts across the province," added John Bird, VCPAC President.

John Gaipman was hired to the Greater Victoria School District in 1993. He was Principal of Lambrick Park in the Gordon Head neighbourhood for five years. He spent four years in various roles at the Board Office before becoming Superintendent in 2002.

The current Deputy Superintendent Sherri Bell will be interim Superintendent of Schools. In 1996 Sherri Bell was hired to the Greater Victoria School District. She had previous experience as a principal, as well as working with the Ministry of Education and teaching at the university level. Since 2001, Sherri Bell has worked in senior administration and was named the Deputy Superintendent of Schools in 2012. "I look forward to continuing the focus on student success and working with our strong learning teams and stakeholder groups," says Sherri Bell.