



**Media Release
For Immediate Release**

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MEDIA RELEASE

District Responds to Increased Kindergarten Enrolment at Neighbourhood Schools and Interest in French Immersion

VICTORIA, BC - Responsive to an increase in kindergarten registrations at neighbourhood catchment schools, the Greater Victoria School District has evaluated space and identified measures to accommodate all catchment students who registered in January for English kindergarten programs.

Over the past few weeks, a review of all 27 elementary schools identified where spaces could be modified to introduce new classrooms and where portables can be introduced. In some cases, permanent additions will be explored for the long term. Families with students entering kindergarten will receive confirmation letters from their catchment schools in the coming weeks.

“We are starting to see an increase in student enrolment that hasn’t been seen in Greater Victoria for many years,” noted Superintendent Piet Langstraat. “We are working quickly to respond to the needs of families across the District and accommodate neighbourhood students who have registered to attend their neighbourhood school.”

Recent real estate activity, population growth of kindergarten age children, and potential reduced class sizes as a result of the recent Supreme Court decision, resulted in line-ups for families registering kindergarten students in English programs at some schools this January. Based on current projections, the overall student population is expected to grow upwards of 2,000 students over the next 10 years.

In addition, the Greater Victoria School District continues to see a consistent demand for Kindergarten French Immersion. To accommodate this demand two additional French Immersion kindergarten classes are being added, one at George Jay Elementary School and one at Sir James Douglas School for the coming school year. These additional classes provide enough seats district-wide to accommodate all applicants who may not be able to attend their school of choice but are willing to accept placement at one of the other dual track elementary schools.

Added Langstraat, “we have a busy few months ahead of us as we prepare our schools for the September school year, and this spring we have some important decisions to make in collaboration with parents about student enrollment priorities overall.” In March, parents will be asked to provide input on what they value when determining student enrolment priorities for schools where space is limited.

Efforts will be made to accommodate new students that move into the neighbourhood prior to the school year, however, each new application will be reviewed based on space availability.

Families with students entering kindergarten to grade 12 who are wanting their child to attend a school outside of their catchment can apply to transfer until Friday, February 24 at 3 p.m. However, parents should note that due to increasing enrollment, space for accommodating transfers at all grade levels is limited at several schools.

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