



**Media Release
For Immediate Release**

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

\$1.25 million investment will put 2,300+ Chromebooks and iPads in students' hands this September

VICTORIA, BC – Come September, an influx of more than 2,300 new Chromebooks and iPads will mean every elementary and middle school in the Greater Victoria School District will have at least a 4:1 ratio of students to a tech device. High schools will have at least one iPad or Chromebook for every six students. The devices will be configured and delivered to schools in late August, in time for back to school.

Whether it is learning how to code, bringing ideas to life through animation, or exploring problems online, technology helps students work together, think differently and work in other physical areas than just the classroom. This significant investment is facilitating a shift from fixed personal computers to mobile devices, supporting the new curriculum in more collaborative learning environments.

1,770 Chromebooks and 585 iPads will be purchased through a \$1 million investment in technology for students. An additional \$250,000 will be invested in upgrading wireless infrastructure across the District. This investment builds on the Technology for Learning initiative in 2016 that saw 1,600 laptops and iPads provided to teachers and educational assistants. In addition, each classroom in the District has been equipped with a digital projector, screen and speakers.

“Investing in technology opens up more doors for student learning,” noted Piet Langstraat, Superintendent of the Greater Victoria School District. “Collaboration and hands-on learning are pillars of the new curriculum. Mobile technology facilitates opportunities for students to work in groups and to explore concepts outside of traditional classroom environments.”

With 880 high-tech firms in Greater Victoria and a growing knowledge-based economy, investments in technology offer a variety of benefits that can position students for future careers in the Capital Region and abroad.

Langstraat added, “Ensuring our students have access to technology and the skills required to responsibly and effectively harness it is key to their development as lifelong learners and leaders in a global economy.”

"Parents, both individually and via Parent Advisory Council fundraising efforts, have been providing technology to schools for a number of years. The gap between schools where this is successful and others where it is not has created imbalance in the opportunities for our children throughout the district," noted Audrey Smith, President of the Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils President. Smith added, "VCPAC is pleased to see grant funding provided to the District by the Ministry of Education going toward student use devices. This is a good use of this grant, as it will help to equalize the learning experiences for all students."

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

150 Grade 4 and 5 students will “pitch” how they would teach their favourite science topic through a video game they have coded on Chromebooks. *Coding Quest* weaves together applied design skills and technology, coding, and the new science curriculum. It highlights what is possible when students have access to technology for learning.

What: *Coding Quest*
Where: SJ Willis Gymnasium, 923 Topaz Avenue, Victoria, BC
When: Tuesday, June 20, 2017, at 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Who: Superintendent Piet Langstraat and Dave Shortreed, Vice-Principal, Learning Team

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