

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

## Greater Victoria School District Seeks Input on Building Inclusive Schools

**VICTORIA, BC** – The Greater Victoria School District is launching a survey to collect input on how it can create the most inclusive school communities, where every student can be successful in the classroom. The School District strongly believes in diversity and inclusion and strives to create learning environments that provide an equal opportunity for all of its students to reach their greatest potential.

“Diversity and inclusion are fundamental values of the District, and must be actively pursued and practiced on an ongoing basis for the benefit of all our students,” said Board Chair Jordan Watters. “The District sees inclusion as a way of thinking and acting, grounded in the belief that, with the right supports, every learner can be successful in their classroom and school.”

In 2018, the Board of Education allocated \$33.5 million to create inclusive schools that support all students and their development in the academic, social-emotional and physical domains. An additional \$1.1 million went towards creating fluid flexible learning spaces in schools to support learners with diverse needs. To make classrooms more accessible, assistive technology, ramps, lifts and sensory spaces and supplies were added to schools.

“The District wants all students to have an authentic sense of belonging in their school community,” said Superintendent Shelley Green. “In achieving this, we understand the importance of student, parent, and staff voice. We all have an important role to play in supporting an inclusive school model. We are now turning to our learning community to better understand their experiences and needs so we can move forward together in building the most inclusive schools.”

The District is asking parents, guardians, staff and students to share their thoughts, experiences and perspectives on inclusion and diversity by participating in a five minute survey.

**SURVEY:** [www.surveymonkey.com/r/InclusiveSchools](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/InclusiveSchools)

*The survey will close on Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4 p.m.*

In November, the School District hosted its first ‘Diversity and Inclusion Forum’. The forum was specifically created to generate dialogue and increase shared knowledge of a spectrum of topics under the umbrella of diversity and inclusion. A wide range of participants took part, including representatives from the Metis and Songhees Nations, the provincial government, advocacy groups, leading academics, not-for-profit organizations, parent groups, students, District administrators and more. Together, the group developed a set of guiding principles, which informed the Inclusion Survey. For more background information visit: [www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/media-releases/title/greater-victoria-school-district-hosts-diversity-and-inclusion-forum/](http://www.sd61.bc.ca/news-events/media-releases/title/greater-victoria-school-district-hosts-diversity-and-inclusion-forum/)

**For more information contact:**

**Lisa McPhail**

Communications & Community Engagement

Greater Victoria School District

Office: 250.475.4103

 [www.sd61.bc.ca](http://www.sd61.bc.ca) |   @sd61schools

One *Learning* Community

