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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SD43 Board Approves Budget for 2019-2020

**(Coquitlam, BC – April 23, 2019)** The School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) Board of Education is pleased to announce it has approved the 2019-2020 budget which will maintain a financially healthy district and provide long-term stability, sustainability and certainty as part of a multi-year financial planning strategy.

Guided by the district's strategic visioning and planning document, *Directions 2020* the Board of Education passed the nearly \$400 million balanced budget. For the third straight year, no teacher layoffs have been implemented and, instead, the budget has absorbed a labour settlement funding shortfall as an outcome of the funding model change without impacting student support levels and included incremental teacher and educational assistant staffing to support our most vulnerable students and support student success.

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) has a history of success and student achievement levels continue to be exceptional and among the top in Metro Vancouver and the Province. Teaching excellence, strategic leadership and sound financial decisions are all contributing factors toward these positive outcomes.

Key elements guiding the 2019-2020 budget process are the Ministry of Education financial governance and accountability best practice requirements and the six taxpayer accountability principles of cost consciousness, accountability, appropriate compensation, service, respect and integrity. The Board of Education has also been committed to financial transparency and accountability in making decisions, including engaging in stakeholder consultation throughout the process.

Operationalizing the requirements of the restored teachers' collective agreement language implemented in 2017 regarding class size and composition is complex and ongoing. As a piece of budget planning, determining staffing requirements, creating the required physical classroom space and securing the required ongoing funding are all major components in meeting this obligation.

SD43 Board of Education Chair Barb Hobson said, "Trustees have successfully worked together to meet the needs of students and staff within the district. Engagement with stakeholders has been a priority throughout the budget process and the board is proud of the positive relationships and mutual respect that are a cornerstone of the SD43 community." The strategic goals and objectives of the Board of Education are set out in the *Directions 2020* document which clearly outlines three main goals: Achieve Student Success, Enhance Learning Through Technology and Foster a Sustainable Educational Organization. As Board Chair Hobson continues, "in order to accomplish the goals of the Board of Education in supporting increasing success in life for all, a sound financial foundation is necessary. The 2019-2020 budget provides this foundation for the coming school year and beyond."

Superintendent of Schools Patricia Gartland went on to say, "Once again, we've been able to bring forward a budget that supports all staff and students to reach their potential and continue to enjoy academic success. The district is in a stable

and financially sound position and I am confident this will continue. The strategic approach to budgeting undertaken by this board and district leadership helps ensure this stability and certainty for future years.”

In addition to Ministry of Education funding, SD43 continues to pursue alternative income sources to supplement funding for students. Coquitlam Continuing Education and the International Education department continue to operate profitably and contribute to the positive financial position of the district. Enrolment in these programs continues to grow and the increased funding supports a number of programs including the purchase of technology for the classroom and other student resources. “While the financial benefits of the International Education department are amazing for students, it doesn’t end there” noted Superintendent of Schools Patricia Gartland, “local students enjoy exposure to other cultures and perspectives as they become more globally aware citizens.”

Details of the budget process, financial statements, FAQs, and other information can be found on the SD43 2019-2020 budget website at: <https://www.sd43.bc.ca/budget/Pages/Budget-2019-2020.aspx>

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