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## **SD43 Board Approves Positive Budget for 2017-2018**

**(Coquitlam, B.C. – April 26, 2017)** The School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) Board of Education is pleased to announce it has approved the 2017-2018 budget which includes adding positions to enhance teaching and learning in classrooms and schools for all students.

Guided by Directions 2020, the district's strategic vision and goals, the Board of Education passed the \$352 million total budget, of which \$297 million is the operating budget, which includes additions of \$3.4 million for the 2017-2018 year.

Teachers, learner support and other support staff positions being added for the coming school year through positive incremental additions to the budget align with the district's goals and will further support the redesigned curriculum implementation, students with special needs, technology-enabled learning, and the maintenance of schools.

Of particular note is the elimination of the district's debt by the end of the present school year – ahead of schedule due to an accelerated repayment plan initiated by the Board of Education. This contributes an additional \$1.25 million to the annual operating budget for the 2017-2018 year, and on an ongoing basis

To ensure sufficient teacher staffing for 2017-2018, SD43 also eliminated the teacher layoff / recall process for the coming school year, and will continue building upon operational efficiencies and revenue generation sources to help direct more resources to schools and classrooms.

Another key outcome of the 2017-2018 budget is the establishment of two funds: one to enhance backing for technology initiatives for students and staff; and another to augment support for facilities improvements. This action, combined with closing the post retirement group benefit health care plan to future retirees, provides added stability to the school district's finances and reinforces the pathway forward to a healthy and sustainable future.

The budget process again utilized the strategic budget management method of multi-year planning with incremental changes implemented last year to allocate funds in the most effective way to maximize the learning and support for all students. This method allows for smoothing of future year budget fluctuations resulting from funding inadequacy and assists in managing unforeseen expenditure risks.

While not part of the budget process, the Memorandum of Agreement that was recently reached between the Ministry of Education, the BC Public School Employers' Association, and the B.C. Teachers' Federation on the restored language to the teacher's collective agreement will also be implemented for the coming school year. District office staff, school administrators and partner groups are working collaboratively through the complexities of it and work will continue throughout the coming school year as the agreement is fully implemented.

"Our Directions 2020 strategic vision and goals guided us and the strategic budget management method of multi-year planning with incremental changes allowed us to make responsible decisions on the allocation of resources to meet our budget objective," stated Kerri Palmer Isaak, Chair, Board of Education of SD43.

The Board of Education's budget objective is to maintain a financially healthy school district and provide long-term stability and sustainability through multi-year financial planning. The 2017-2018 budget helps achieve that and also helps maintain the school district's exceptional student achievement levels. SD43's six-year completion rates are again #1 in Metro Vancouver region and #2 in B.C.

"Over the past 3 years this Board and the District Leadership Team have helped our school district maintain high student achievement levels, eliminated our debt, and led us to a positive and stable financial position. Sound leadership and budget decisions, and the great work of our teachers, support staff, administrators, parents and other stakeholders contributes towards these positive outcomes," added Board Chair Palmer Isaak.

To supplement low Ministry funding the school district continues to seek alternate revenue sources including International Education which realized another banner year for enrolment and profitability. "We are pleased with the continued success of our international program and the global knowledge, cultural experiences and budget contributions it makes towards enhancing teaching and learning in our entire district," noted Patricia Gartland, Superintendent and founder of the district's international education program.

Details of the budget process, financial statements, FAQs, and other information can be found on the SD43 2017-2018 budget website at: <http://www.sd43.bc.ca/budget/Pages/Budget2017-2018.aspx>

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