

For Immediate Release

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Coquitlam Residents and Students Benefit from City-SD43 Agreement**

**COQUITLAM, BC, Jan. 17, 2018** – Coquitlam residents and students will continue to benefit from the shared use of high-quality publicly-owned sports fields, as well as parking lots and other amenities, thanks to a new agreement between the City of Coquitlam and School District 43.

The Master Joint Use Agreement provides for community access to school amenities, such as sports fields, when not required for educational purposes, and allows student access to certain City facilities during daytime hours when community use is typically low.

“I believe our residents expect the City and School District to work together to be as efficient as possible,” said Mayor Richard Stewart. “The new Master Joint Use Agreement not only benefits Coquitlam residents, but maximizes the investment in publicly-funded infrastructure. It’s a great example of how partnerships can help enhance our services to the community.”

The master agreement reflects the longtime collaborative relationship between the City and School District, which have been working together to optimize the use of publicly-funded facilities since the 1950s. Both the City and School District 43 reap the benefits of sharing resources, including City access to more than 40 acres of sports fields and City investment into School District assets to ensure their long-term usability and sustainability.

“This partnership maximizes the use of and streamlines the access to numerous exceptional facilities for SD43 students,” said School District 43 Board Chair Kerri Palmer Isaak. “We are pleased to again collaborate with the City of Coquitlam in support of all our students and community members in the region.”

Over the years, the City and School District have developed a number of joint-use agreements for specific facilities, including Centennial Activity Centre, the Dr. Charles Best Secondary School artificial turf field, and most recently, the joint use community centre space and sports field at Smiling Creek Elementary School, which is scheduled to open in September 2018.

The two parties began working together on a formal Master Joint Use Agreement to provide long-term certainty and accountability, to formalize each party’s responsibilities, and to ensure proper long-term planning and resourcing.

The new deal will not replace any existing joint-use agreements, but will guide the City and District's overall partnering arrangement for the use of any remaining or future sites on matters such as:

- Access to certain school facilities for recreational use;
- Shared use of sports fields by students and community sports groups;
- Shared use of parking lots and other facilities; and
- Maintenance and replacement of School District and City facilities.

The resulting agreement ensures both the City and the School District benefit equally, while clearly laying out the obligations and arrangements related to each of the joint-use sites. A formal facility-sharing agreement was also negotiated for the continuing joint use of the Summit Middle School/Community Centre site.

The agreement has a five-year term, with an option to enter into another agreement for a further five years if both parties agree.

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