June 25, 2021

Dear SD43 families,

With the potential for record-breaking high temperatures this weekend and into Monday that could potentially hit about 40°C, I wanted to share some of the ways we plan to reduce the risk of heat stress and stay comfortable in schools with COVID-19 safety in mind.

Due to Covid-19 protocols, use of fans in schools for ventilation is limited to directing air out through doors or windows, not on or at students and staff. As you are likely aware, SD43 schools do not have air conditioning so classrooms may be warmer than usual for this time year. While drinking fountains are not available, taps and other school water sites can be used for refilling water bottles, as needed, and students will be encouraged to stay hydrated and drink lots of water.

The Fraser Health Authority has also provided some guidance for parents:

- Be aware of air quality or heat advisories.
- Send children to school with a large water bottle filled with cold water.
- Children should wear loose fitting, light coloured clothing.
- Children should bring a (wide-brimmed) hat to wear outside.
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen of SPF 30+.

At school, steps will be taken to mitigate the effects of this extreme weather by:

- Avoiding high intensity physical activity.
- Keeping classroom windows open and drawing blinds or drapes for shade, if appropriate.
- Placing fans by windows and doors to direct air outside, if possible.
- Moving classroom activity outdoors if there is shade and a breeze.

Due to the high heat, parents/guardians may wish to keep their children home from school. Not all individuals tolerate heat well and this may be a factor in choosing to keep a child home or send them to school. This is a family decision, and the school asks only that parents/guardians inform the school if their child is going to be absent.

Please stay safe this weekend!

Sincerely,

Patricia Gartland
Superintendent/CEO