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April 22, 2014

Dear Parents:

This is to inform you that the union representing teachers in School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) has served 72-hour strike notice to the school district. This means that Stage 1 job action will start on Wednesday, April 23rd, 2014. It is anticipated that there will be no immediate school closures or disruptions to students. This first stage is expected to be administrative in nature only. Teachers will continue to teach, write report cards, communicate with parents, and participate in their volunteer extracurricular activities. (BCTF News Release, April 16, 2014)

The Labour Relations Board designated the following services as essential:

“...following the application by the BC Teachers’ Federation (BCTF) for essential services designations, the Labour Relations Board (LRB) was directed by the Minister of Labour to designate as essential those facilities, productions, and services that the LRB considers necessary to prevent serious and immediate danger to the health, safety, and welfare of residents of BC and to prevent immediate and serious disruption to the provision of K-12 education programs.” (BC Public School Employers’ Association, @issue No. 2-14-02 Essential Services Designations, April 16, 2014).

Consistent with the LRB order, the district will adopt the following procedures:

School opening

The schools will be open. The principal and (where applicable) vice principal will be available to ensure your child’s safety, and will supervise activities for your children. School district managerial staff will be deployed to assist schools in this process.

Safe arrival program and attendance

The safe arrival program will continue according to your school’s normal procedures and attendance will be taken in the usual manner. Please inform the school if your children will be late or will not attend.

For further information

In the event of further job action or a full strike, further information will be provided. Your school principal will also be able to give you information.

Thank you for your understanding. We want to assure you that the Province is determined to continue negotiations with the parties involved to search for areas of cooperation and compromise, and to resolve this dispute fairly and quickly. In the meantime, we will endeavour to keep you informed of developments.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Grant
Superintendent of Schools