



Education Committee of the Whole Report
Tuesday, November 17, 2020
VIA ZOOM
3:30 p.m.

Mandate: *To discuss and make recommendations to the board on the general directions for education in the district, and to serve as a vehicle for regular reports to the board on educational programs and services.*

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES

2. OPENING COMMENTS

3. SHARED LEARNING:

a. International Student Program (ISP)

An overview of the business and history of our International program was given by Ronda and Ross. They outlined the journey the program has gone from the early 1990s to 2019 with almost 200 students from 20 countries in the last school year. COVID-19 has hit Canada hard with the loss of students and the revenue it provides to both the Districts and Provinces. Some points of interest;

- 31 students in September, 30-50 more for February depending on visas and protocols around COVID
- Very clear procedures around quarantine and COVID procedures for students coming to the district
- 169 applications for Sept 2021
- 60% of homestay families remain as part of program

It was noted that an inequity exists in the province with only one school district being legally allowed to offer BC Curriculum to non-residents. Advice was requested from the ISP principals for wording for a motion to write a letter to the Minister of Education outlining this inequity which gives that district an unfair advantage and requesting that all districts be allowed to offer BC curriculum to non-residents.

4. INFORMATION

a. District 69 Backpack Program – Ornament Fundraiser/Drive Through Event

Virginia Worcester spoke of the wonderful program that she started in 1997 (All They Want for Christmas) and which continues, as the District 69 Backpack Program, to provide food and support to vulnerable families in our schools. A backpack of food is given to a student in the family to take home on Friday which provides food for the family for the weekend. This year the district has 50 families receiving a back pack and over the Winter break, there will be 20 more added to the list. A current fundraiser in collaboration with Robert Held and his beautiful glass ornaments is currently underway with proceeds going back to the program. The local artist has stated that he will create another unique ornament each Christmas.

b. Graduation Rates 2019/2020

A high level look at our grad rates for resident students, 5 year grads and 6 year completion. Inquiry questions and deeper digging as to why not every student walked across the stage, how is success measured. Our grad rate is 78% as of June 2020 but principals informed senior administration that 11 more students graduated after that date, which raises the grad rate to 82%. Staff will continue to look deeper into these numbers as some of the inquiry/curiosity questions are answered.

c. Education Committee Start Time

It has been determined that, due to the district's early school dismissals, the start time of the committee could be shifted from 3:30 to 2:30. This would also allow for student participation and provide flexibility for a lengthier meeting, if necessary. This will be a temporary time adjustment which will begin in January 2021.

5. DISCUSSION

6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION

- A motion will be provided to the regular board meeting to write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that all districts in the province be given the opportunity to provide BC Curriculum to non-residents.

7. QUESTION PERIOD

8. NEXT MEETING DATE

- Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 2:30 via Zoom (*Note Temporary New Start Time*)