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For Immediate Release:

PUBLIC STATEMENT RE: SOCIAL JUSTICE

Parksville, BC – July 3, 2020

School District 69 (Qualicum) states that we, as a Board and educational institution, are actively committed to social justice and are working to develop and maintain an institutional environment free from discrimination. In the short-term we support the actions requested by racialized Canadians such as Black Lives Matter. Those requests include calls to further action regarding racism aimed at people of Black, Indigenous, and Asian ancestry. We absolutely support these movements that are currently contributing to a more just Canadian society. Beyond racism we also recognize that people may experience discrimination based on many differences, including but not limited to gender, ability, physicality, social class, country of origin, sexual orientation, spiritual or religious beliefs, and other barriers. Discrimination based on any factor reduces individual potential and does not contribute to the well-being of our community.

The Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) encourages all members of our community to work actively toward the eradication of barriers by learning about our varied histories, understanding peoples' lived experiences, and examining our places of personal privilege. In the long-term we call to action all community-based, municipal, provincial, and federal institutions to listen deeply and search determinedly for barriers to the creation of a socially just environment. This includes but is not limited to encouraging all disadvantaged voices to be heard, rather than questioned; including all peoples in governance; speaking out against intolerance; instituting the recommendations of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls inquiry and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; and continuing a reassessment of areas requiring improvement. For example, our policing institutions may be better served by a reallocation of funds that better support people who are in mental ill-health, which could allow for growth within the institution to become true keepers of the peace.

We recognize that there will be missteps along the way and that the path we are on is a long one. But actions of many kinds must be taken now to pave the way for a more socially just and equitable Canada. In actuality, differences contribute to the betterment of society for all of us. A socially just country, where all members of the human race are free from discrimination is a necessary goal.

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**For further
information please
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Chair
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