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## **Surrey Board of Education continues focus on classroom spaces for district students**

Surrey Board of Education trustees expect the new capital project team to get to work quickly on expediting the prioritization, planning, construction and completion of new school spaces.

“The new project board is the result of extensive work and discussions over almost a year between our board and the Ministry of Education,” says Surrey Board of Education chairperson Shawn Wilson. “Trustees have long identified the need to develop a “made in Surrey” solution to the phenomenal enrolment growth in our district so we can work together to have spaces ready for the students we already know are coming, and we’re thrilled to have achieved that in collaboration with the provincial government.”

“The Surrey School District has done a great job of making us aware of their issues – and helping us build a creative partnership to tackle the always pressing need for new school spaces in the community,” Education Minister Mike Bernier said. “This new investment of \$217 million is helping us build a strong B.C. by making sure we have the school spaces needed for the families coming to Surrey because of our strong economy.”

Trustees have also met with City of Surrey councillors to explore ways to effectively work together to add new classroom spaces for students in both the short and longer term.

In addition, several years ago the board took the unprecedented step of providing advanced funding for architectural work to get projects shovel-ready sooner. Normally, such funding is not provided until the ministry authorizes the project.

“Our board of trustees has been innovative and persistent over the years in finding solutions and working with the ministry to address classroom space challenges,” adds Wilson. “And now, with what may be the largest single capital funding announcement in our district’s history, the project board can get to work immediately and effectively to meet the need for classrooms and schools.”

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