



MEDIA RELEASE

May 12, 2020

Board of Education update- French Immersion Review

Backgrounder:

In the Fall of 2019, the Board of Education passed a motion to conduct a comprehensive review of French Immersion programming in School District 91. French Immersion is offered in the communities of Burns Lake and Vanderhoof.

The district contracted the services of Mrs. Anne Cooper from AZ Cooper Consulting to conduct the review and report with recommendations. The Board received the Phase 1 report in January 2020 and the final report, with recommendations in April 2020. At the April 20 Board of Education meeting, a motion was passed to enlist further feedback from parents, students and the community before a decision at a Special Board meeting on May 11, 2020.

Next Steps:

After reviewing the French Immersion final report and community feedback, the Board of Education has stated that they have confidence in the process as completed by AZ Consulting and the thoroughness of the final report and recommendations.

The Board recognizes the context and difficulty of transitioning any programming change amidst managing operation of schools amidst the COVID situation and appreciates the thoughtful feedback and submissions over the past few weeks. Because of these factors, the Board of Education has made two motions based on the French Immersion report recommendations. Firstly, the Board has accepted the recommendation of discontinuing the grade 7/8 French Immersion program at NVSS. This program did not operate this school year due to the inability to hire a qualified French Immersion teacher and NVSS has moved to offering enhanced French language opportunities for their middle year learners. The second motion passed, was to table a final decision on the recommendation for the William Konkin Elementary program until a time when BC education has returned to normal operations after the health pandemic.

As a result of this decision, schools will continue planning for 2020/21 school year based on current programming, budgeting, and enrollments.

The Board of Education would like to thank everyone for the feedback over the past few weeks and they acknowledge and appreciate the current challenges for students and families. Any future processes regarding French Immersion at William Konkin will be shared publicly to allow notice and an opportunity for continued feedback.

For further information please contact:

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