

# Good things are happening

New Westminster Schools 2018-19



New  
Westminster  
Schools

A photograph of a man and a young girl in a school hallway. The man, wearing a black t-shirt and a white cap, stands behind the girl. The girl, wearing a green vest over a dark shirt, holds a large, colorful sign. The sign reads 'ASHDEEP'S 1ST DAY SEPT. 4 GRADE - 2'. The background shows a hallway with a door labeled 'B' and another person in the distance.

# A sign of excitement

*Grade 2 Queen Elizabeth student Ashdeep was so enthusiastic about her first day back to school in September, she made a sign to celebrate the event.*

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ASHDEEP'S  
1ST DAY SEPT. 4  
GRADE - 2

# Good things are happening at New Westminster Schools

## Building Momentum



Mark Gifford,  
Board of Education

### *Her excitement was ours too.*

At New Westminster Schools we've had a whole year of firsts and new beginnings, of bold initiatives and inspired ways of doing things – inside our classrooms and out. This year, too, we welcomed a newly elected Board of Education and a new district leadership team to set directions for student success.

Now, as we prepare for 2019-2020, we are on the cusp of launching a Strategic Plan that will chart our course for the next five years.

Our plan? To build on the momentum that is transforming our students' learning experience; to be richly connected to our diverse communities; and to lead the way to the future for our next generation – open to change, willing to take risks, and inspired to be the model we want the world to be.

At New Westminster Schools, we can do no less. As the fifth densest community in Canada – we are a district where diversity is a source of our strength, where three of our neighbourhoods are growing faster than the national average, and where some 65 languages are spoken at just one of our elementary schools alone.

Already, we are in the midst of a transformation in education, with BC's redesigned curriculum now fully implemented from kindergarten to grade 10 – and due to roll out for students in grade 11 and 12 in the coming year. For all students, the emphasis on critical thinking skills, social and personal responsibility, and communication skills is a key to deeper engagement and lifelong learning in a rapidly changing world.



Karim Hachlaf,  
Superintendent



# Our bold initiatives

*In supporting our students, teachers, and staff at the frontlines of change.*

Our Board of Education is also taking the lead in tackling head-on the impacts of poverty and the barriers to inclusion for our most vulnerable children and families.

**Last year, we were the first school district in BC to adopt a sanctuary schools policy to welcome all children, regardless of immigration status.**

This year, we launched a groundbreaking, universally accessible school lunch pilot program: an extraordinary commitment to ensure no child is hungry at school and all children eat healthy.

Our comprehensive review of special education is now underway to help us fundamentally improve our practices – so that all students with complex and exceptional needs feel fully welcomed and valued as unique individuals who have the right to reach their learning potential.

Our third Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement for 2018–2023 not only makes key strides to support our Aboriginal students academically, socially and culturally with a sense of pride and belonging, it also commits every one of us in the district to the healing work of Reconciliation.

And in its first initiative as a board in 2019, trustees took the unprecedented step of addressing stigma, shame and financial burden while ensuring equity, by making menstrual products available for free for all of our students at all of our schools – an idea that within weeks was picked up across the country.

We're particularly proud to be opening up new pathways for our students to share their voices, perspectives and experiences when it comes to their own education as we strengthen our commitment to full consultation and responsive listening.

In the meantime, BC's largest high school – a state-of-the-art \$106.5 million replacement for New Westminister Secondary School – is literally rising up out of the ground for the entire community to see. It's due for completion in May and will open in September 2020. At the same time, a new replacement for 90-year-old Richard McBride elementary school is in the design phase and will be unfolding in the coming year. And, with projections for significant growth in the city, our long range planning for the future of New Westminister Schools is now underway...

## VALUES IN ACTION

Welcome to the story of our learning journey for 2018-2019! In each of these steps, it is our aspiration to see our values – of collaboration, equity, integrity, innovation, inclusion and engagement – in action no matter where we look.

This booklet introduces you to the growing evidence for that hope:

- In our changing classrooms.
- In the work of our teachers and staff on the frontlines.
- In the momentum for a focused, relevant, and inspired plan for our future.



New  
Westminister  
Schools

*Where students love to learn*

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New Westminister Schools recognizes and acknowledges the Qayqayt First Nation, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories we live, we learn, we play and we do our work.

**New Westminister School District**

School Board Office School District No 40

811 Ontario Street New Westminister, BC Canada V3M 0J7

604 517 6240 | [info@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:info@sd40.bc.ca) | [newwestschools.ca](http://newwestschools.ca)

