



Supplement to: September 17, 2019 Operations Committee Meeting

Date: September 17, 2019

Submitted by: Mark Gifford

Item: **Requiring Action** **For Information**

New Westminster Schools support for student Climate Strike on September 27

Background:

Climate change is one of the most significant challenges of our time, and an important priority for students, teachers and staff of New Westminster Schools.

On September 27, 2019, students around the world are organizing and participating in local Climate Strike events. Students invite everyone to hear and amplify calls for urgent leadership and action on climate justice, and to address the severity of the climate emergency we face. Many New West students plan to participate in local events, and seek support from parents, teachers, and school administrators.

New Westminster Board of Education can support the decision for our students to safely participate by providing students, parents, teachers and school administrators with an understanding of District support, expectations and response.

Recommendation:

That the Board of Education for School District No. 40 (New Westminster) support students in New Westminster to work with others across British Columbia, Canada and around the world, who have called on adults and peers to mobilize an international Climate Strike on September 27, 2019.

In solidarity with student efforts to amplify climate concerns, and in recognition of the unique importance of the Climate Strike scheduled to take place in Vancouver on Friday, September 27, the New Westminster Board of Education will:

- a) excuse attendance of any high school student that presents a permission slip, signed by their parent or guardian;
- b) excuse attendance of any elementary or middle-school student, if accompanied by their parent, guardian or authorized adult;
- c) not penalize any student who chooses to miss classes on September 27 in order to participate in lawful Climate Strike activities.



Furthermore, staff are encouraged to incorporate relevant climate strike information into educational programming, as appropriate, during week of September 23rd.