

August 29, 2014

Dear Parents and Students,

I am writing this letter to update the community on Langley School District's plans, in light of the current labour dispute between BCPSEA and the BCTF, regarding the scheduled opening of schools on Tuesday, September 2nd.

The Possibility of a Resolution

The District remains hopeful and optimistic that the labour situation can be resolved this weekend so that students can begin the 2014-2015 school year next week. The involvement of mediator Vince Ready is good news along with the fact that the BCTF and BCPSEA are meeting again today. The District Leadership Team and the Board of Education, like parents, teachers and support staff, want a resolution and I personally am very pleased to hear that the two parties are meeting again.

Next Week

We recognize that parents, students, support staff and teachers all want to be back in school as soon as possible. At this time, and given no other information as I write this letter, Langley School District will wait until Monday evening to determine whether or not schools can open Tuesday morning. If this is the case, Tuesday would be a shortened day as has been the case over the past number of years. Parents, please refer to your own school's website to see Tuesday's hours of operation.

Principals, vice-principals and support staff have done the best they can to prepare for the school year. There are, however, a number of practical realities that have limited their ability to fully prepare schools for the year ahead. Some flexibility and patience will be required and appreciated as certain tasks involve the valuable input of teachers such as timetables being completed, class organizations being reviewed and staffing assignments finalized. We are confident that we will be able to open doors, begin opening routines and welcome staff and students back to school, even if things are a little unsettled to start.

Another consideration for parents to be aware of is that the resolution between the BCTF and BCPSEA may include a plan, which both parties agree to, providing guidelines for school start-up. In light of no information as to what this might look like, the District is communicating its own plan at this time.

In the event schools remain behind picket lines, schools will not be able to re-open to students. Please listen to the media reports and monitor the School District's website and social media feeds as information will be posted as soon as it is available.

Looking Ahead

With respect to your child's education, the past few months have been an incredibly stressful time compounded by the uncertainty of what the days ahead may bring. I have every confidence that the Langley School District will continue to provide outstanding educational opportunities for students in classes in Langley schools and I am looking forward to these opportunities becoming realities.

To our teachers and support staff, you are greatly appreciated and we look forward to all of us working together soon; we recognize that this has been a difficult time for you and I am sure you are eager to resume your work in schools and classrooms throughout the District.

I hope the long weekend provides the opportunity for a positive resolution to the current labour situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Hoffman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Suzanne Hoffman
Superintendent of Schools