



NEWS RELEASE

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FUNDS SAVED DURING TEACHERS' STRIKE TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

School District 48 (Howe Sound) has received two grants totaling \$570,000 from the Ministry of Education, representing the district's share of the moneys saved during last fall's teachers' strike. The funds will be used to support student learning initiatives and to address class size and composition issues.

Howe Sound received one grant of \$414,000 which is based on \$50 per student to the district and an additional \$50 per student to each school. All education partner groups, including parent and teacher representatives, were consulted in the development of spending plans, both at the district and school level. The district's share of the grant will be spent on computers, library books, learning resources and professional development for both teachers and support staff. Most school spending plans targeted their portion of this grant to textbooks, software and other learning resources.

The district received a second grant of \$148,000, which is SD 48's share of the \$20 million provincial mediator Vince Ready recommended to address class size and composition issues. After extensive consultation with teachers, the Board and Howe Sound Teachers' Association agreed that the full amount of this grant would be used to create additional teaching time, including more learning assistance and resource room support for almost every school, and additional classes for two schools. The School Board increased the grant by \$9,000 to cover the full cost of the spending plan.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Rick Erickson said he is very pleased with the consultation process and the decisions that were made. "*Student Learning - all learning, all students*, is our number one priority, and all of the partner groups kept this goal in mind as we determined how best to allocate the funds," Dr. Erickson said.

HSTA President Carl Walker said, "Teachers are very pleased that the actions we took last fall on behalf of our students have now led to direct improvements in students' learning conditions. While the timelines for developing the spending plan were tight, teachers were able to identify immediate needs in their schools, and the spending plan reflects these priorities."

For further information, contact Superintendent of Schools Dr. Rick Erickson (604-892-5228) or HSTA President Carl Walker (604-892-3056)