

The Great Nanaimo Toy Drive

A Christmas for Every Child



September 21, 2020

Charlene McKay, Board Chair
Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools, School District 68
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Dear Board Chair McKay,

For many years the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools School District has partnered with The Great Nanaimo Toy Drive (GNTD) to help children in our community during the holiday season. It is our understanding that the Board of Trustees passed a motion that the School District would help the GNTD find space for our activities, and we are once again requesting your assistance as we are in dire need of a space. This site can be located anywhere in the Nanaimo area and would be needed for 1-2 weeks to sort and package toys for families. Ideally, we would like to be able to access the site during some evening hours and/or weekends to accommodate volunteers who work during the day. We will be following provincial public health protocols related to occupancy, physical distancing, masks, etc.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the GNTD will be different this year. In previous years we operated a shopping-based model. This year we will be operating a drive-thru model so no recipients will be entering the facility. We will be using the space to collect and sort toys (after they have sat for 72hrs), and then pods of volunteers will create toy packages for each child based on recommendations from the parents/guardians. To maintain the safety of our volunteers this step may take longer than our normal sort period (typically 4-5 days). During the two days of toy pick-up (distribution), volunteers will deliver the toy packages directly to the recipients' vehicles (much like the distribution of food hampers through the Loaves and Fishes organization).

We hope you might have a site available that we could use for 1-2 weeks in December. Ideally, the space would be a gym or even several classrooms in an empty school, such as Rutherford Elementary, or potentially a space near the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Schools Foundation site that is used for their food distribution.

As you know, our mandate is to provide toys to families who have no other means of providing toys for their children – the very same children School District 68 serves. Working together, we can bring some joy and hope to Nanaimo families in this time of uncertainty. We are committed to making this year's Great Nanaimo Toy Drive safe and successful, and we would be very pleased to work with you for the benefit of the children in our community. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Krista Simpson, Chair
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