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everywhere, every time.



May 19, 2021

Dear SD68 Trustees,

I am writing in support of maintaining the five Community School Coordinator positions in School District 68. Given the remarkable times ahead of us, a loss of these critical roles may undermine the important progress of recovery from the pandemic.

Island Health acknowledges and values the importance of the upstream and preventive community work in promoting positive mental health, a key area of concern for our communities during the current pandemic. Students require their emotional, physical, social, and spiritual wellness needs met in order to participate in their learning. Unfortunately, not all students have the supports they require to meet these needs. I recognize the pivotal role that Community School Coordinators have in ensuring that all students in School District 68 have access to these resources, especially as the community begins to address the secondary impacts of COVID-19 in our recovery plans.

According to the data from the 2017 Early Development Index administered through UBC, approximately 1/3 of students in our District come to their first year of school with at least one identified area of vulnerability. It can be challenging for families to access services outside of school. The coordinators play a key role in bringing services directly to students and families. The coordinators organize a variety of in-school programs to help students be ready to learn (food programs, mental health programming, physical activity programs, social-emotional programming). Additionally they represent the School District in community networks/committees, apply for grants, connect community partners/programs with school staff/students, and organize program logistics.

These critical roles are a bridge to community services; they build relationships with the community and bring the schools to community and the community into schools. Island Health teams value these roles as a partner in our work to support Comprehensive School Health.

Please consider the above in determining support for maintaining the five Community School Coordinator's (CSC's) positions

Huy ch q'u (Thank you),

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandra Allison', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Sandra Allison, MD, MPH, CCFP, FCFP, FRCPC
Medical Health Officer
Central Island