

PRESS RELEASE

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Commitment to a Policy Governance Model of School Board Leadership Critical to Future of School District

Veteran school trustee John Sutherland has announced that he will be seeking a tenth term on the Abbotsford Board of Education, citing 'leadership' as the key issue. "Solid policy-driven leadership, not micro-managing, overrides every other issue. Trustees must know how to both listen and lead."

"Our operating budget is \$155 million. The City of Abbotsford's budget is less than \$125 million. We are one of the biggest employers in town with about 2,000 employees. We run 47 schools and a major bus fleet. It's a big operation."

But just as important as professionally governing the district, trustees must listen carefully to the families of its 18,500 students. "Parents are ultimately responsible for the education of their children. It is not a small thing that they entrust us with helping them with this task. But as we saw in the debate over the two-week Spring Break, parents often feel that they are not listened to. This is wrong."

Sutherland regrets that more people don't vote municipally, and even if they do, fail to cast a vote for school trustee.

"Education is one of the most vital facets of city life. Star Wars producer George Lucas said this: *Apart from my parents, my teachers have done the most to shape my life. From kindergarten through college, their struggle -- and it was a struggle -- to help me grow and learn was not in vain.* Please get out and vote on Nov. 19.

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