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For Immediate Release

## Langley School Board Reaches Fundraising Goal for Rainbow Crosswalk



(Langley, BC): The Langley community will soon see a symbol of diversity and inclusion outside of the Langley School Board Office. The Board's fundraising goal in support of the project has been reached, making a rainbow crosswalk bridging the District's office to the Langley RCMP detachment a step closer to reality.

On Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at its regular meeting, the Langley Board of Education announced \$12,000 dollars was raised over the course of two months.

"We know this rainbow crosswalk will help our students, staff, and members of our LGBTQ+ community feel seen, represented, and celebrated. We want everyone to feel that they belong. Langley School District belongs to everyone. Our District's vision fosters an inclusive and nurturing culture. We are so excited to work with our community partners to get this project completed," explained Langley School Board Chair Rod Ross.

"We are deeply grateful to have the support of the community," added Ross.

The funds were raised through the Langley School District Foundation. Donations were received from the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC), school PACs, businesses, organizations, and individuals. CUPE BC, which represents two of the school district's unionized employee groups, donated \$6,000, half of the funding needed.

"Ensuring our schools and our communities are safe, inclusive and welcoming to all is a top priority for CUPE BC and our members all across the province," said CUPE BC President Paul Faoro.

"When we realized that a relatively small financial contribution could help finish such an impactful and important project, our executive board had no hesitation in approving the donation. There is no room in any BC community for intolerance or hatred, and this rainbow crosswalk will be a lasting statement for all to see," explains Faoro.

The project is a collaboration with support from the Langley RCMP and the Township of Langley.

"As Canada's national police service, it is important that the RCMP strive to be a leader in promoting diversity and inclusion, both in relationships with the community and stakeholders and within its own workplace. The rainbow crosswalk is just one of many initiatives to help us keep moving in a direction to ensure all members of our community feel included," commented Langley RCMP Acting Officer in Charge Inspector Mike Bhatti.

"The Township of Langley is an inclusive community and Township Council is pleased to support the school board on this project," said Township of Langley Mayor Jack Froese.

The rainbow crosswalk which will be located at 48A Avenue and 222 Street in Langley is Township of Langley property. The Township has agreed to have their staff paint the rainbow crosswalk. Langley School Board and District staff will work with the Township on next steps.

The Langley School Board and District is taking this opportunity to thank all of our partners including the Langley School District Foundation, the District Parent Advisory Council, Langley RCMP, the Township of Langley, and CUPE BC. The Board and District appreciates the support from the community on this meaningful project.

*Background:*

*On May 28, 2019, the Board of Education approved the following motion:*

*"That the Board of Education works with the RCMP and the Township of Langley to create a rainbow crosswalk adjacent to the RCMP and School Board Office at the present crosswalk."*

*The motion was put forward by Trustee David Tod.*

*For the project to go ahead, it was agreed the funding for the cost of the rainbow crosswalk would not come from the Langley School District, Langley RCMP, or Township of Langley, and instead would come from other sources.*

*In December 2020, the Langley School District Foundation assisted the Langley School Board in accepting donations for the project.*

To arrange **media interviews**, please contact:

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