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CONCERNS RAISED OVER STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT 61

Victoria, British Columbia - June 20, 2011

On June 13, a committee of trustees from School District 61 (Greater Victoria) voted to receive the strategic facilities plan from Stantec Consulting Ltd. The school district is paying \$49,000 plus taxes for the document, yet a review of the plan appears to show at least seven instances in which text was copied from government web sites without attribution.

The Ministry of Education mandates that each school district develop a long term facilities plan. School District 61 contracted out the development of their plan to a private consulting firm (Stantec) which appears to have completed parts of the document by cutting and pasting text from public web sites.

For example, page 13 of the plan includes the following recommendation:

“School districts are encouraged to consult with community partners and organizations to find unique and innovative ways to design schools with community use in mind and create places where people have better access to educational and community services.”

This same text can also be found on the following web page:
www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca/about/welcome.php.

More text examples can be found here:
<http://www.bratzer.net/plagiarism.pdf>

David Bratzer will raise this issue at the final board meeting of the school year (scheduled for Monday, June 20 at 7:30 PM at 556 Boleskine Road). **June 22 update - a five minute audio recording of the presentation can be found here:**
http://www.bratzer.net/school_board_june20.mp3

“If a high school student did this, would they get a cheque for \$49,000? No. This document may put the academic integrity of the school board in jeopardy,” Bratzer stated, adding, “Trustees should reject this plan and withhold any further payments to the consulting firm.”

David Bratzer is a Saanich resident who intends to run for trustee of School District 61 in the November election. He is the coordinator of the IdeaWave Scholarship Program and an executive board member of the Quadra Cedar Hill Neighbourhood Association. His positive vision for School District 61 includes a strategic facilities plan developed through broad, vibrant and meaningful community consultation.

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