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**Subject:** NR: FIVE CLASSROOMS, 105 NEW STUDENT SPACES IN SAANICH  
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NEWS RELEASE

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FIVE CLASSROOMS, 105 NEW STUDENT SPACES IN SAANICH

SAANICH - Two elementary schools are scheduled to break ground on additions next month, thanks to a \$2.9-million investment that will add five new classrooms to the Saanich school district, announced Murray Coell, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands.

"The additions at Brentwood and Keating Elementary schools will add 105 student spaces to the district," said Coell. "This will help prepare the schools for full-day kindergarten in the fall, and will also give Keating Elementary more space for elementary students."

The Province is investing \$2.3 million for two classrooms at Brentwood Elementary and two at Keating Elementary to provide space for full-day kindergarten. The Saanich school district will also contribute close to \$609,000 for a third classroom at Keating Elementary.

"Five new classrooms at Brentwood and Keating provide space to accommodate our youngest learners in the full-day kindergarten program," said Saanich board of education chair Helen Parker. "We are happy that construction at the schools will soon be underway."

Brentwood Elementary has a current capacity of 80 half-day kindergarten and 375 elementary students in grades 1-5. The two-classroom addition at the school will increase the overall capacity by 40 student spaces to allow 80 full-day kindergarten students to start school there in September 2011.

Keating Elementary has a current capacity of 40 half-day kindergarten and 325 elementary students in grades 1-5. The three-classroom addition at the school will increase its capacity by 65 students - 40 full-day kindergarten and 25 elementary students.

Construction on both schools is set to begin in December 2010 and be completed for the fall of 2011.

"As schools look to September 2011 when full-day kindergarten will be available to all five-year-old students, the Province is delivering on

its

commitment to provide funding to support these programs," said Education Minister George Abbott. "We are happy to see additions like these moving forward throughout B.C., so all of our youngest learners will have great spaces to learn and play."

The \$144.5-million, full-day kindergarten capital investment, first announced in June 2010, is being provided in addition to B.C.'s three-year, \$280-million commitment to implement full-day kindergarten. Full-day

kindergarten programs have been associated with better social and communication skills, improved reading and math levels, and smoother transitions to Grade 1. The program is available for more than 50 per cent

of kindergarten students in school this year and will be available for every five-year-old starting school in 2011.

Since 2001, the Province has invested more than \$55.6 million in capital projects in the Saanich school district, including the new Kelset Elementary, the replacement of Royal Oak Middle school, and an addition to

Prospect Lake Elementary.

During that same period, the Province has spent more than \$1.7 billion to complete 80 new and replacement schools, 148 additions, 26 renovation projects and 22 site acquisitions across B.C. All new and replacement schools have been constructed to meet the latest seismic standards. By the

end of 2010-11, the Province will have committed more than \$3.9 billion in

school capital and maintenance projects throughout B.C.

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