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Subject: \$11.7-MILLION NEW GREEN SCHOOL HUB FOR SFU'S UNIVERCITY
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NEWS RELEASE

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\$11.7-MILLION NEW GREEN SCHOOL HUB FOR SFU'S UNIVERCITY

BURNABY - Education Minister George Abbott was joined by Burnaby-Lougheed MLA Harry Bloy, students, parents, teachers and community officials today to celebrate the grand opening of University Highlands Elementary, which will support families as part of the UniverCity community atop Burnaby Mountain.

"This is a state-of-the-art green school with many features that embrace the ideals of personalized learning," said Abbott. "There is even a classroom set in the woods nearby where students can learn hands-on about the environment."

Total cost of the school was \$11.7 million, with funding of close to \$8.8 million from the provincial government and \$2.9 million from the City of Burnaby and SFU Community Trust, which also contributed land and the existing building.

The new school, which opened in September, has space for 40 full-day kindergarten and 275 elementary students in grades 1-7. The existing building received extensive seismic upgrades and renovations designed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) gold standards. Some of University Highlands green features include:

- * A demonstration green or "living" roof to teach children how vegetation lowers air temperature.
- * Solar panels on the roof supply 20 per cent of the school's electricity.
- * A heating and ventilation system that uses stale warm air being released outside to preheat fresh air coming in.
- * A series of ponds designed to absorb rainwater into the ground.
- * An outside classroom set in the woods where students can experience

hands-on learning about the environment.

University Highlands was designed to support inquiry-based learning with lots of opportunity for conversation, contemplation and collaboration. Classrooms are arranged in a pod-like fashion, with several opening onto one large common space to foster a sense of community amongst students.

"From day one, advocating for the creation of this school has been one of my top priorities," said Bloy. "This school has become a reality as a result of all the partners that have worked together to make it happen, people who deserve to be proud of their great achievement. In the short time that University Highlands has been open, it has already proven to be a valuable addition to the UniverCity area as well as the school district."

"This innovative partnership project with SFU Community Trust, City of Burnaby and the Ministry of Education has turned a 20-year-old existing building into a new, vibrant school that embraces the very best in environmental sustainability and creates a place where our students will be inspired to be lifelong learners," said Burnaby board of education chair, Diana Mumford.

SFU Community Trust oversees the development of UniverCity, adjacent to the SFU Burnaby campus. To date, more than 1,000 homes have been completed, along with the first phase of the town centre. UniverCity is currently home to approximately 3,000 residents and is planned to accommodate more than 10,000 when completed.

"This new school directly supports UniverCity's sustainability and community development goals through its green construction and curriculum, and by reducing vehicle use," said Gordon Harris, President and CEO of the SFU Community Trust. "UniverCity is home to 3,000 residents and I know that University Highlands has already become a key part of the daily lives of many in this growing community."

Since 2001, the Province has invested more than \$102 million to complete 13 capital and seismic projects in the Burnaby school district. During that time, 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 across throughout B.C.

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