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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

Local company to build classrooms for Interior schools

KELOWNA - Elementary students at 14 schools in the Interior will find themselves learning in truly home-grown classrooms come September.

About 30 of B.C.'s bright new modular classrooms will be built in the Okanagan, and most of them will remain in the region once construction is complete. The others will be shipped to northern school districts awaiting new space for full-day kindergarten in the fall.

Construction of the modular classrooms at Kelowna's Freeport Industries is creating more than 25 jobs for workers in the area over and above its regular full-time employees. Shelter Industries hired Freeport as part of its \$30-million contract with the Province to build, deliver and install 140 modular classrooms in B.C. school districts by September 2011.

In all, 21 modular classrooms will create space at schools in the Interior - 15 in the Central Okanagan school district and three each in the Okanagan-Skaha and North Okanagan-Shuswap school districts. While these classrooms will be constructed at the Freeport plant, Shelter Industries is responsible for the overall project, including the delivery and installation of the new classrooms.

Quotes:

Westside-Kelowna MLA Ben Stewart:

"The partnership between industry and government is once again bringing jobs to the Interior and helping local families and the economy. It's great to know that elementary students in several Okanagan schools will learn and grow in classrooms that were built right here in the region by local workers."

Harold Clifford, chief operating officer, Shelter Industries:

"We are delighted to be able to extend our manufacturing capacity and geographic reach by working with Freeport. This sub-contractor agreement with the Okanagan plant has provided both of us with opportunities that we might not have otherwise seen, and this project will have profound economic benefits right across the province."

Todd Venier, chief operating officer, Freeport Industries:

"Thanks to Shelter bringing us in on the modular classroom project, we have added an extra 25 full-time jobs to our local economy. We are thrilled to be working with Shelter and the Ministry on this important project."

Quick Facts:

* Modular classrooms are part of the Province's \$144.5-million capital plan to provide classroom space for the approximately 40,000 students

expected to enter full-day kindergarten across B.C. in 2011.

* In October 2010, Shelter Industries of Aldergrove signed a \$28.5-million contract with the Ministry of Education to design, build, deliver and install 133 modular classrooms for school districts across B.C. to help support the introduction of full-day kindergarten programs in September 2011.

* Based on ongoing consultations with school districts around B.C., the ministry has approved seven additional modular classrooms in three school districts, bringing the total to more than \$30 million for 140 modular classrooms in 26 school districts. Additional modular classrooms include:

- o Three for North Okanagan-Shuswap (SD 83).
- o Two for Central Okanagan (SD 23).
- o Two for Prince George (SD 57).

* To produce and install the new classrooms in 26 B.C. school districts will take Shelter and Freeport Industries about 200,000 hours. That translates to seven months of full-time employment for more than 180 B.C. workers in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and Kelowna.

* The first modular classroom was delivered to Herbert Spencer Elementary school in New Westminster on Feb. 10, 2011.

* To provide learning spaces for full-day kindergarten, the Province is creating 128 classrooms through school additions and renovations, 140 modular classrooms, a new school in Langley and approximately \$10 million to furnish and equip classrooms, including the conversion of existing space.

Learn More:

Watch modular classrooms being built and delivered, and see how the Province is creating learning spaces for full-day kindergarten:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/capitalplanning/fdk_modular/

Learn more about full-day kindergarten programs:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/fdk/

B.C. Jobs & Economy site:

www.bcjobsandeeconomy.gov.bc.ca/2011/02/shelter-industries-strives-for-excellence-in-modular-classroom-construction/

Shelter Industries Inc.: www.shelterindustries.com

Freeport Industries: www.freeportindustries.ca

For a backgrounder showing full-day kindergarten capital projects at a glance, visit:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/docs/2011/bq_FDK-CapitalProjects_110315.pdf

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