

Scherk, Ellen M EDUC:EX

From: Liddy, Eleanor EDUC:EX
Sent: Friday, March 07, 2014 8:33 AM
To: Eric Maitland
Cc: Macauley, Andrew EDUC:EX; Farrell, Casey I EDUC:EX
Subject: Re: Saanich OpenStudent Announcement

Yes. Just happened yesterday. We have been busy answering questions As you can imagine

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 7, 2014, at 8:13 AM, "Eric Maitland" <Eric.Maitland@ca.fujitsu.com> wrote:

<https://www.sd63.bc.ca/news/2014/03/press-release-regarding-openstudent>

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Press Release Regarding openStudent

06 March 2014

Over the last two years the Saanich School district has been developing a new electronic student information system called *openStudent* to be made available to all British Columbia schools. This project was undertaken because the current system called BCeSIS was to be decommissioned in 2015. At the same time the Ministry of Education entered into a contract with a commercial vendor from the United States. The Saanich School District continued with its development using local capital funds, as it believed that a BC non-profit solution would be much less costly and more suited to the real educational needs of BC schools. The core module of *openStudent* is now complete with excellent feedback from local partner districts and pilot schools.

Unfortunately the Ministry of Education has just informed the Saanich School District that any new information system must now integrate with the new BC Service Card, and this interoperability will be at a high cost to Saanich, in the millions of dollars. Given this cost pressure, the Saanich Board of Education made a very difficult decision at its meeting on March 5 to cease funding further development of *openStudent*.

The Saanich Board of Education is extremely disappointed with this outcome. Over the last five years, school districts have been encouraged by the Ministry to explore entrepreneurial ventures, shared services, revenue generation and innovation. Saanich has one of the largest Distance Education schools serving thousands of students across BC. The Saanich International Student Program has quadrupled in size in 7 years. Our Business Company subsidiary called Online Learning Canada is now selling courses abroad. We have implemented a diskless client technology plan, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in service and energy costs. Above all, Saanich is a leader in terms of its educational programs, innovative teaching and learning initiatives and support for students with special needs. *openStudent* was not only innovative, but provided a practical option at a time of fiscal restraint in the education system and in the province of BC.

The Board wishes to extend its gratitude to the *openStudent* staff who worked diligently and creatively to build a product of such high quality and for believing that a small group of people had a chance to make a difference.

The *openStudent* code remains the property of the Saanich School District as the Board of Education explores further options for its use or sale.

Attachment

Size

Attachment	Size
Press Release openStudent.pdf [1]	94.31 KB