



## JOINT NEWS RELEASE



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### SALE OF GILL SCHOOL TO THE HUPACASATH FIRST NATION

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The Hupacasath First Nation and School District 70 Pacific Rim are pleased to announce the sale of the Gill Elementary School property on Beaver Creek Road to the Hupacasath First Nation, with the sale date effective April 2023.

The Nation and the Board of Education have been in ongoing discussions regarding this historically significant site for many years, and both parties express their gratitude to the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Ministry of Education and Child Care for their extensive work in bringing this dream to reality.

As stated by Hupacasath Chief Councilor Brandy Lauder, "Hupacasath has resided on the Ahahswinis Village site for more than 6000 years. When Gill School was being expanded from a log cabin to a proper schoolhouse, after breaking ground ancestral remains of Hupacasath members were unearthed and returned to our nation for reburial on our (now Reserve) Lands. Our members were clearly upset that our burial grounds were being disturbed, however we were thankful that the remains were returned. Slowly over the last 100 years Gill School has expanded to what can be seen now on the grounds. We are very happy to regain the school lands back to Hupacasath. We will conduct surveys and map any remaining artifacts and burials on the grounds and provide protection on those areas. We thank the School District and the BC Government for supporting Hupacasath in this endeavor".

School District 70 Board Chair Pam Craig adds, "The School District 70 Pacific Rim Board of Education recognizes the spiritual and cultural significance of these important lands to the Hupacasath First Nation. This has been a long time coming and our Board is excited and proud to be part of the historic shift of these important traditional lands from the school district to the Hupacasath Nation. We are proud to be part of true Reconciliation and wish to express our profound gratitude to the Hupacasath Hereditary Chiefs, Elected Chief and Council, members of the Hupacasath Nation, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and the Ministry of Education and Child Care for allowing and supporting this transfer to happen. We look forward to continuing good work with the Hupacasath Peoples and to strengthening our relations with all Nuu-Chah-Nulth and Indigenous partners".

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