



April 30, 2023

Saanich District School Board

Delivered by Email

Dear School Trustees,

The Peninsula Track and Field Club Board members would like to apologize for comments made by a club coach at recent North Saanich Council meetings regarding the School District. The Board asked a handful of representatives to speak favourably in support of the School District's track resurfacing project; specifically, asked that critical statements and/or personal opinions regarding the situation be avoided. Unfortunately, a club coach decided to speak independently, sharing his own views and should not have been in representation of the club or our board members. We are holding this coach accountable and have followed up with this.

Our Board remains behind the efforts of the School District to replace the track. In addition, we have offers from local non-profits to contribute toward current and future improvements. We also hope to continue to maintain the long jump pit and invite Parkland High School's track team to access the track equipment at the site. As a community group, we have been supportive of the track replacement project, and we apologize for any actions that may have suggested otherwise.

Peninsula Track and Field Club, is a non-profit society that is entirely volunteer driven, and has operated on the Saanich Peninsula for nearly 40 years. The Parkland Track has always been our primary training site – except for the past two years during the construction of the new track. We recognize that the track replacement project was a large and challenging endeavour for a School District, and we fully appreciate your effort in taking it on. We also understand there have been some negative feelings between individuals within our respective organizations at various points over the years, as there have been many different people and personalities involved with the club and/or property. Our current board took over one year ago, bringing a lot of new energy and enthusiasm toward rebuilding a program for our athletes after several years of decline and pandemic restrictions, and we wish to move forward positively with you and with the property.

We understand that at this time the School District no longer wishes to enter into an agreement regarding the Club's presence on the property. We are hoping that this can be reconsidered in the best interest of the athletes, who are mostly students in SD63 striving to meet their personal goals at a local and provincial level.

If the School District wishes to enter into an agreement to collect funds for annual maintenance in exchange for on-site equipment storage, the Club does have funding to contribute to such an agreement. We have also set aside \$10,000 from recent

sponsorships and partnerships for helping with the track replacement project that can be utilized in this agreement.

In closing, we want to emphasize our common core values. Regardless of our roles as trustees, board members, School District staff, or coaches, we are all on a mission to serve and improve the wellbeing of our local youth. This time of year, we see firsthand, three days a week, around 80 local athletes building friendships and confidence, many finding a first-time love for recreation, and improving their mental and physical wellbeing. They are growing in all kinds of ways and it's remarkable. As a board, our mandate is to serve them, and we keep their best interest at the forefront of our decisions. We hope that we can reestablish a positive relationship with the School District to ensure a robust program for our shared student athletes and community.

Sincerely yours,

Derek Haynes

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