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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

### **NEW STANDARDS MAKE GRADUATION PORTFOLIO MORE FLEXIBLE**

VICTORIA – The Province will streamline and add flexibility to the graduation portfolio to better help students prepare for life after high school, Education Minister Shirley Bond announced today.

“During my school visits and consultations ministry staff carried out around the province, students, parents and teachers told us the portfolio was too complex and overly time-consuming for students to work through and for teachers to assess,” Bond said. “We’ve acted on those concerns. Starting in 2007/08, students will be required to meet three standards to graduate, and we will leave it up to school boards to decide how students meet those standards.”

Students in grades 10-12 must complete the following mandatory standards:

- 80 hours of physical activity
- A graduation transition plan that will help students set goals for post-secondary education or career pursuits
- 30 hours of work experience or community service.

Students who meet the standards will receive four credits that count toward graduation.

Boards may still choose to have students develop a portfolio to demonstrate they have met the standards or boards may use other ways to ensure students have met the standards. The Ministry of Education will provide school boards with information sessions and materials to support the standards, including a teacher resource guide and a student planner.

“We want students to be successful in school and to graduate with skills that will help them further their education, find jobs and achieve their goals in life,” said Bond. “The graduation standards will help students gain valuable life skills while offering more flexibility.”

The portfolio was introduced in 2004 as a mandatory requirement for graduation. In response to concerns, the portfolio was made optional for those graduating in 2006/07 and underwent a review.

Under the portfolio, students were required to provide portfolio evidence in six areas: arts and design, community involvement, career planning, employability skills, information technology and personal health. Students who completed the portfolio would receive four credits that counted toward graduation.

The new standards will help the Province achieve its goal of becoming the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent and support the Province's Pacific Leadership Agenda by improving our competitiveness and productivity through education and skills training.

Media        Corinna Filion  
contact:     Public Affairs Bureau  
               Ministry of Education  
               250 356-5963  
               250 812-7977 (cell)

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