

February 5, 2021

Honourable Jennifer Whiteside

Ministry of Education
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
E: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca

RE: Annual Facilities Grant

Dear Minister Whiteside,

At the October 26, 2020 meeting, the Vancouver Board of Education unanimously passed the following motion:

That the Board advocate to the provincial government for an increase to the Annual Facilities Grant (AFG) to specifically address school site upgrades.

The rationale for this motion was a result of the encampment at Strathcona Park and the impact it has had on the safety, security and cleanliness of Lord Strathcona Elementary School and the neighbouring community centre. There is also neighbourhood concern for the condition of the field.

The District fully utilizes the Annual Facility Grant allocated each year by the Ministry as per a maintenance plan; however, the maintenance for our buildings is getting to be more challenging due to the age of our buildings, inflationary costs and the minimal increase in the AFG over the past 5 years. The District's total grant allocation has increased 5% from 2016-17 at \$10,334,340 to 2020-21 at \$10,834,407, largely due to an increasing allocation to the operating portion of the grant and a lesser allocation to the capital portion. The total Provincial AFG Allocation has increased only 1.00% from \$114,495,587 in 2016-17 to \$115,495,587 in 2020-21. Even with the minor capital programs from the Ministry (SEP, CNCP, PEP), the District struggles to maintain its facilities as the average age of the VSB schools is 73 years, with 50% of the schools being more than 70 years old as reported in the District's recently approved Long Range Facilities Plan.

The Board fully supports the need for safe school spaces for students to learn and play and requires adequate funding to maintain the sites.

With regards,



Carmen Cho
Board Chair

cc: VBE Trustees
Suzanne Hoffman, Superintendent
J. David Green, Secretary-Treasurer

Board of Education Trustees:

Carmen Cho – Board Chair,
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