



# Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

1580 West Broadway

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December 21, 2015

## **via email and mail post**

The Honourable Mike Bernier  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt.  
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Bernier:

On behalf of the Vancouver Board of Education (VBE), I would like to thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to meet with trustees on November 25, 2015 and sharing your perspective related to several challenges the Board is facing. While you did provide government's rationale for not including the VBE as part of the \$35 million Routine Capital Program disbursement, the Board continues to question why government chose to exclude the VBE simply on the basis that the VBE received support for seismic mitigation projects. It is our understanding that of the 53 districts whose routine capital program submissions met the provincial criteria, Vancouver was the only district that received no funding.

To suggest AFG as a means of addressing some Routine Capital Program issues is unreasonable given the VBE has the largest inventory of aging school buildings with an average FCI rating .483 and a deferred maintenance accumulated cost of \$700m. Even with the estimated savings that have resulted from seismic projects, Vancouver still has by far the greatest need for routine capital program funding.

The Board of Education requests the Minister reconsider the decision to not provide any funding from the 2015-2016 Routine Capital Program envelope.

Seismic and routine capital related programs have two very distinct criterion. Currently, there are 69 schools within the VSB that have been assessed by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists BC as having high seismic risk. With the restrictions imposed by the Ministry related to supplementary work being done as part of a seismic retrofit, VSB staff prepared an extensive list of improvement projects that clearly met the objectives of the Routine Capital Program initiative. For example, energy and mechanical upgrades specific to Queen Mary Elementary and Lord Strathcona were included to maximize existing seismic investments. The VSB submission also included roof and floor replacement projects to address health related matters that conform to the Ministry's objectives for the Routine Capital Program to extend the life of various schools throughout the district.

Board of School Trustees:

Mike Lombardi – Chairperson

Janet Fraser – Vice-Chairperson

Joy Alexander Patti Bacchus Fraser Ballantyne

Penny Noble Christopher Richardson Stacy Robertson Allan Wong

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We thank you for your consideration in this matter and look forward to receiving your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Lombardi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" being more prominent than the last name "Lombardi".

Mike Lombardi  
Chairperson

c: VBE Trustees  
Scott Robinson, Superintendent of Schools  
Guy Bonnefoy, Interim Secretary Treasurer  
Vancouver MLAs