

Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

1580 West Broadway

Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8

Telephone: 604-713-5000

Fax: 604-713-5049

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Dear VSB staff member:

As you may be aware, the Vancouver school district is facing a \$7.12 million funding shortfall for the 2009-10 school year.

The majority of our funding comes directly from the Ministry of Education, and while we've received a small increase, it will only cover provincially approved collective agreement increases. It will not cover increases in our employee benefits, the costs of staff moving up their salary grids or inflation on goods and services. We also expect 500 fewer students next year, which will have a significant financial impact as we are funded on a per-student basis, and many of our costs are fixed and consequently do not decline proportionately with enrolment declines.

As we are legally required to submit a balanced budget to the provincial government, spending reductions are required. After cumulative years of budget shortfalls in our district, this will be very difficult to make further spending cuts.

As we work through this challenging process, it is the goal of this board to minimize the impact on our students and keep reductions as far away from classrooms as possible. But this will be difficult to do — there is no fat to trim in our very lean system.

This board is committed to advocating for our school system so that we have the resources we need to meet the learning needs of every student. We are working hard toward that goal and we've been meeting with Vancouver MLAs to brief them on our financial challenges. We have also placed a renewed emphasis on the work of our Advocacy Committee and we have welcomed our stakeholder groups — including employee group representatives — to participate in our budget process (for dates and meeting times, please go to www.vsb.bc.ca/districtinfo/meetings/Budget+Process+2009-2010.htm).

As we prepare a budget that will comply with our legal obligations, we will also be preparing a parallel "needs" budget that will outline the resources we believe are required to appropriately ensure success for every student.

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Board of School Trustees:

Patti Bacchus - Chairperson

Jane Bouey - Vice-Chairperson

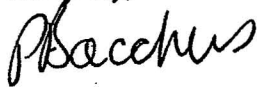
Allan Blakey Ken Clement Ken Denike

Carol Gibson Sharon Gregson Mike Lombardi

Allan Wong

We appreciate that this is a difficult and stressful process for everyone in our district and assure you we will be working hard, in consultation with employee group representatives, to develop our budget as carefully and effectively as we can, despite the challenging financial circumstances within which we find ourselves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pacchus", written in a cursive style.

Patti Bacchus
Chairperson

cc. Trustees

Chris Kelly, Superintendent of Schools
Brenda Ng, Secretary-Treasurer