



# Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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2009 August 11

Honourable Margaret MacDiarmid  
Minister of Education  
Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy  
P O Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister MacDiarmid,

I am writing on behalf of the Vancouver Board of Education (VBE), to express our concern regarding possible reductions to provincial grants to the Vancouver Public Library (VPL).

Our school district has a close working relationship with the VPL, including collaborative work on Early Childhood and Early Learning initiatives and community literacy planning.

We recognize that the V P L's commitment to services for children and youth supports our work by focusing on developing literacy skills that enable children to grow into adults with the capacity to fully participate in the social, economic, political, cultural and intellectual life of the city and province.

We also recognize that VPL programs and services, particularly those for children and families, are the building blocks for strong communities. The VPL has a strong tradition of serving Vancouver's children and youth with innovative services and culturally relevant services. Their committed staff serves children and teens with dedication, knowledge and compassion.

VPL programs and services for babies, toddlers and preschoolers also help prepare children for kindergarten and provide support to parents for their children's learning.

We deeply value and respect the work of the VPL and support your government's commitment to increase literacy rates. The public library system, as the Premier and your government have pointed out, is essential to meeting that goal. We are concerned, however, that with reduced funding the VPL's effectiveness will be compromised through reduced service to the community and therefore, we request the immediate release of the \$17.7 million operating grant that funds province-wide library programs and services.

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Board of School Trustees:

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The VBE trustees understand that the government faces significant financial challenges. However, we believe that in these times we need to be investing in educating and supporting our children and youth, as education is the most effective "stimulus" investment. Spending reductions in education and library funding may bring short-term savings, but there will be larger long-term costs.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Patti Bacchus  
Chairperson

cc: Joan Andersen, Chairperson, Vancouver Public Library  
Trustees  
Laurie Anderson, Interim Superintendent of Schools  
Brenda Ng, Secretary-Treasurer