



# Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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July 1, 2009

The Honourable Margaret MacDiarmid  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt,  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

## Re: Annual Facilities Grant (AFG) 2009/10

The Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) is writing to express concern with respect to the 2009/10 Annual Facilities Grant and the district's urgent facility needs.

In 1988/89, the Ministry of Education introduced the AFG to provide school districts with funding to maintain and upgrade facility assets throughout their anticipated economic life and prevent any premature deterioration of the assets. Ministry policy outlines that a school board is responsible for managing its annual facility grant and developing a long range maintenance plan. The Ministry has further emphasized long term maintenance planning with its introduction of the new capital asset management system (CAMS).

An approach of this sort requires extensive planning, hiring of consultants, preparation of tender documents and awarding of contracts. In fact some of the maintenance upgrade work which the VBE is currently involved with has been contractually committed to major seismic upgrading work with contracts spanning 2 year time frames. The board enters these types of multi-million dollar contractual obligations based on the Ministry's previously stated commitment to a stable flow of AFG funds.

It is therefore critical that the school district be able to rely on consistency in the Annual Facilities Grant funding. The ability of the district to meet its current financial/contractual commitments and to plan for future maintenance upgrades is jeopardized without substantial advance warning of any proposed revisions to the funding formula or schedule.

Your response to the concerns outlined in this letter is appreciated:

Yours sincerely,

Patti Bacchus  
Chairperson

cc:  BC Boards of Education  
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