



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

April 18, 2016

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

Dear Minister Bernier:

Re: April 15, 2016 Letter – Board Operating Budget

Thank you for your letter dated April 15, 2016 in response to my letter dated March 04, 2016, which addresses the Vancouver Board of Education 2016/17 Operating Budget and Long Range Facility Plan.

It is unfortunate that you feel it would be premature to meet to discuss the 2016/17 Operating Budget. The Board of Education will be meeting on April 28, 2016 to consider the final operating budget. All funding announcements have been received and incorporated into the budget calculations, and there are no other adjustments anticipated that would reduce the budget shortfall. The current budget proposals are addressing a \$24.03 million budget shortfall.

The Board recognizes that the *School Act* provides the Board until June 30th to approve the 2016/17 Operating Budget. However, like many other school districts, that date is far too late to effect staffing changes required in the various collective agreements. Our Board must finalize the operating budget by the end of April, so staffing processes can commence May 1st.

The Long Range Facility Plan consultation will result in refinements to the interim plan submitted. It will not, however, provide for any further facility efficiencies for the 2016/17 Operating Budget as broad consultation is required under the *School Act* and Regulations before school closures can be considered. The earliest the Board could close a school with enrolled students under our current policy would be effective September 2017. We could not comply with *School Act* consultation requirements and close a school effective September 2016. We have been able to achieve budget savings associated with three small school annexes that do not have students registered for the upcoming school year, but major changes to our facility infrastructure will not occur for at least a year.

On behalf of the Board, I would request that you reconsider our March 4, 2016 letter requesting a meeting with the Premier and yourself.

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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I will phone you tomorrow to follow-up on this urgent and timely matter.

Yours truly,



Mike Lombardi
Chairperson

c: VBE Trustees
S Robinson, Superintendent
R Horswill, Secretary Treasurer