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June 20, 2012

Vancouver Board of Education
School District No.39
Board of School Trustees
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC
V6J 5K8

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 39 (VANCOUVER)
SECRETARY-TREASURER'S OFFICE

JUN 22 2012

RECEIVED

To _____ Cc _____

Attention: Patti Bacchus, Chairperson

Dear Ms. Bacchus,

Re: Changes to the Education Guarantee

I received your letter regarding the proposed changes to the Education Guarantee and the effects it will have on students. It was forwarded to my office from Don Davies' office, as it is a matter that falls under the Provincial Government's jurisdiction.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to share your concerns about the changes that were proposed and give you some information on the action that I and the New Democrat Caucus have taken in regards to the issue.

On May 9th, after it was discovered that the ministry was imposing changes to the Education Guarantee, Adrian Dix, the leader of the New Democrat Caucus, and I raised the issue in the House during Question Period. We questioned the government's decision to cut the funds, as they would negatively affect many adult high school graduates who are already facing limited opportunities due to a lack of qualifications and as a result, have limited financial means to pay for courses. I then urged the government to restore free access to these courses so that no British Columbians would be denied the education and training they need to maximize their potential.

On the 14th and 15th of May my colleague and MLA for Vancouver-Kensington, Mable Elmore, again raised this issue in the House. She further emphasized the importance of these courses being free and available in order to allow individuals to upgrade their education and skills, and enjoy rewarding careers.

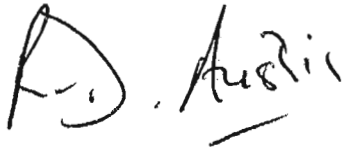
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Finally, on June 13th the Ministry of Education sent a letter out announcing that they were restoring funding for several additional courses that Adult Educators felt were essential: Physics 12, Chemistry 12, Calculus 12, Communications 11, Communications 12, First Peoples' English 12 and English 11. While they have not agreed to re-funding the complete list of courses that were previously covered, we feel that this will address at least some of the concerns.

I appreciate you taking the time to express your concerns and want to reassure you the New Democrat Caucus will continue to fight for fair and accessible education for all British Columbians.

If you have any further questions or concerns, or would like further information please do not hesitate to contact my Legislative Assistant, Joleen Badger, at 250-387-3614.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Austin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "A".

Robin Austin, MLA – Skeena
Official Opposition Critic for Education