



# Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

1580 West Broadway

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2013 November 25

The Honourable Christy Clark  
Premier  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

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

The Honourable Michael de Jong  
Minister of Finance  
PO Box 9417 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9V1

Dear Premier Clark, Honourable Fassbender and Honourable de Jong:

We are writing this letter due to our increasing concerns about education funding issues. We are specifically concerned about the increased costs to school districts that government is not funding — leading to cuts in staffing and programs that will erode the quality of our public schools.

The government's refusal to fund the salary increases negotiated by Peter Cameron with our support staff unions will cost the Vancouver school district approximately \$4.25 million in the next school year. That will result in a reduction of 25 – 40 full-time staff positions as outlined in the "savings" plan the Board submitted to government.

The Board recognizes the vital contribution of education workers, who have been without a wage adjustment for over four years. While this long-overdue increase is necessary, by the BC Government's own Cooperative Gains Mandate, the VSB cannot cut services to find 'savings'.

The Vancouver school district's finance department is already forecasting a budget "shortfall" totaling \$28 million for next year (see attachment "A"). This comes on top of \$47 million in spending cuts over the past decade, which includes a loss of 524 entry-level teaching positions and a \$15.5 million reduction in spending on supplies and services. That means less support for students, outdated and insufficient learning resources, textbooks and building maintenance and woefully inadequate infrastructure to support technology in classrooms.

#### Board of School Trustees:

Patti Bacchus - Chairperson

Mike Lombardi - Vice-Chairperson

Fraser Ballantyne Ken Clement Ken Denike

Cherie Payne Allan Wong Sophia Woo

Rob Wynen



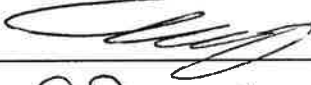

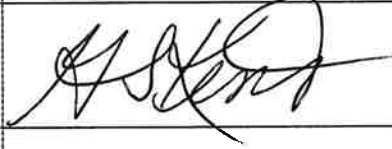


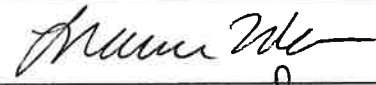
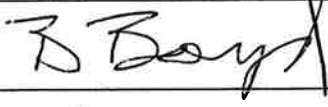

The VSB has worked to protect front-line services by keeping cuts as far away from classrooms as possible. A few years ago it brought in PwC to advise on ways it could reduce spending without compromising the quality of educational opportunities and we were able to implement many of their recommendations, but we are still in shortfall.

The district's management team continues to work on increased shared services and other cost-saving opportunities, but it is impossible to balance the district's budget without making some difficult decisions that will have an impact on students.

**We are urging you and your government to give serious consideration to increasing the per-student grants for 2014-15 to prevent further cuts to staffing, programs and learning resources and to ensure all students receive the opportunities they need to succeed. We cannot achieve prosperity in BC by cutting corners on our children's education.**

We thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

Patti Bacchus, Chairperson Vancouver Board of Education	
Monica Moberg, Chairperson District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)	
Chansey Chiang, President Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)	
Debbie Pawluk, President Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA)	
Gerry Kent, President Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA)	
Liz Kloepper, President Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice Principals Association (VEPVPA)	
Gino Bondi, President Vancouver Associate of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA)	
Leanne Toderian, President CUPE Local 15	
Brent Boyd, President CUPE Local 407	
Tim Chester, President International Union of Operating Engineers, Local Union 963 (IUOE)	

CC: BC School Boards  
Vancouver MLAs