



Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

1580 West Broadway

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March 4, 2015

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

Dear Minister Fassbender,

RE: 2015 Provincial Budget

At its March 2, 2015 meeting, the Vancouver Board of Education passed the following motions:

"That the VBE send a letter to the Government of BC, copy the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA), to amend the 2015 provincial budget to increase funding for the K-12 Education system by fully covering the costs of provincial collective agreements, employee benefit costs due to premium increases, BC Hydro increases, and inflation."

"That the VBE send a letter to the provincial government, copy the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA), to amend the 2015 provincial budget by rescinding the requirement for School Boards to make \$54 million in administrative cuts by the 2016-2017 school year."

With respect to the first motion, the provincial funding formula for school district operating grants continues to be insufficient to cover the increased costs related to provincial collective agreements, employee benefit cost increases, BC Hydro rate increases and general inflation on goods and services. Although the 2015 Provincial Budget states that the government has fully funded provincial collective agreements, the Province continues not to fund annual salary increments that are part of agreements for employees who have salary grids.

For 2015/2016, the VBE estimates that the above costs not funded by the Province totals \$3.5 million. This is part of our funding shortfall for 2015/2016 which is currently projected to be \$14-\$15 million.

With respect to the second motion, the Board is very concerned that the Province would target such a large funding cut to school district administration costs within weeks of our Board considering a preliminary budget for 2015/2016. The reduction in administration cost funding could result in a cut of \$2.9 million for the VBE for 2015/2016 and up to \$5.4 million for 2016/2017. This represents a cut of up to 10% of all administrative costs in our district.

Board of School Trustees:

Christopher Richardson – Chairperson

Janet Fraser – Vice-Chairperson

Joy Alexander Patti Bacchus Fraser Ballantyne

Mike Lombardi Penny Noble

Stacy Robertson Allan Wong

The Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
March 4, 2015
Page 2

After over a decade of budget cuts to administrative and other costs, there simply is no ability to make further cuts of this magnitude over such a short period of time.

We respectfully request that the 2015 Provincial Budget be amended based on the above-noted motions and that the Province implement the recommendation of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to "provide stable, predictable, and adequate funding to enable school districts to fulfill their responsibility to provide continued equitable access to quality public education, and to meet required repair and maintenance needs."

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher Richardson".

Christopher Richardson
Board Chair

c: All BC School Boards
Vancouver MLAs
VBE Trustees
Scott Robinson, Superintendent
Rick Krowchuk, Secretary Treasurer