



October 16, 2017

Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services
Room 224, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B. C. V8V 1X4
Attention Mr. Bob D'Eith, MLA and Chair

Dear Committee Members:

RE: Budget 2018 Consultations

First let me advise the Board of Education of School District No. 42 is most appreciative of your government's indication that Education is one of your highest priorities. We cannot agree more that it is the foundation for both a healthy economy and society in general.

We also wish to join the BC School Trustees Association, other Boards of Education and our education partners in expressing our support for the standing committee's previous recommendations that education funding fully address the increased costs faced by School Districts throughout the Province year over year. As has been shared previously adding unfunded increased costs to School District budgets necessarily results in significant cuts to student services. This was the common practice of the previous government and caused great challenges for many boards of education throughout the province.

Previously this Board has suggested there is a need for government to work more closely with local Boards of Education through the BCSTA, the BC Association of School Business Officials and the BC School Superintendent's Association to build an education budget from the ground up that truly reflects the needs of the system. We proposed a resolution to that effect to the 2015 BCSTA AGM which was adopted. It is our genuine hope that some progress can be made along those lines in the upcoming budget deliberations. For many years there has been too great a divide between those who have responsibility for delivering education services at the local level and those in government who set the budget for those services.

In our view the select committee should reinforce that resolution by recommending the establishment of an education financing task force involving the aforementioned parties, the purpose of which would be to examine such matters in detail including:

- what level of funding the k-12 sector needs in order to bring stability to the system, achieve the desired progress identified in forward thinking education planning, and fund appropriate responses to some of the emerging issues which are being faced by both the health and education systems like youth mental health;

- how long term planning and the expeditious implementation of capital work can be enhanced through the adoption of a relatively firm five year capital budget;
- taxation recommendations related to school property taxes and other taxation necessary to provide the required level of funding;
- the funding formula by which the Ministry's resources are distributed to School Districts throughout the Province; and
- how those responsible for the day to day delivery of public education can have a meaningful and ongoing role in identifying the requirements for and setting the provincial education budget.

We look forward to contributing in any way we can to the further discussion of these matters and thank you for your attention.

Sincerely



Mike Murray, Chairperson
Board of Education

Cc:

Board of Education, School District 42 - Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows
The Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education
The Honourable, Carole James, Minister of Finance
The Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism and Culture
Ms. Sylvia Russell, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer
Ms. Cathie Watkins, President Maple Ridge Principals and Vice Principals Association
Mr. George Serra, President, Maple Ridge Teachers Association
Ms. Leslie Franklin, President, CUPE local 703
Ms. Kim Dumore, Chair, District Parent Advisory Council
District Student Advisory Council
Mr. Gordon Swan, President, BCSTA
Ms. Patti Dundas, President, BCASBO
Mr. Tom Longridge, President, BCSSA