

Career Center

RUPA GOPINATH [rupagopinath@hotmail.com]

Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 1:57 PM

To: Andrew Kowal

Hello Mr. Kowal,

I am sending this in support of not closing down the Career Centers in high schools.

I am extremely sorry and disheartened to learn that the school board is even considering closing down Career centers in high schools. The Career Centre provides unique program which helps children reflect upon what they have achieved and learnt during their high school period. This program helps students to try and figure out as to what options are available to them after they graduate from high school. The scholarships, the opportunities that are available to all the students who enter the university, college or a trades school are clearly explained to both students and parents.

Students feel comfortable and it is less intimidating when they have to approach a familiar face at school when they have questions, fears as to what they can expect in the real world outside. The Career Center staff at school take the time and patiently guide all the students individually to help them succeed in whatever path they choose. The Career information evenings, arranging visits from universities colleges are extremely important to students and parents also as they do not have a clear picture as to what really is going on. The rules, regulations and admission requirements change continuously every year and it helps immensely when you have someone to guide you on a regular basis. The GTP presentations done at Maple Ridge Secondary are extremely well done in a very professional manner and the students take great interest and care in presenting themselves to interviewing panel. They work for months with the guidance and support of the Career Center staff. I have been on this panel and seen students presenting their achievements in a very professional manner. The work experience program is also a great program which helps students to step out of the comfort zone at high school and venture out into the real work place atmosphere.

Now as an ex -parent of Maple Ridge Secondary School , I can wholeheartedly testify that the GTP panel presentation, Work Experience program, Information sessions and career advising that we received were invaluable. I would highly recommend that the Career Centers should not be closed as this would most certainly shut down hopes and aspirations of our future generation which as we all know has to be nurtured , preserved and provided with the best opportunities so that the society, community can benefit from them in turn. Thanks and hope that you will consider this appeal and continue supporting the Career Center.

Sincerely,
Rupa Gopinath

RE: WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Rob Taylor [rtaylor@murraygmabbotsford.com]

Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 2:53 PM

To: Andrew Kowal

Andrew:

It is truly frightening, on so many levels, to hear of that the board is considering closing the Career Centres.

Having been invited to be a panelist for the Grad Transition Presentations on several occasions, I always walk away with a renewed faith that our young adults are getting the coaching and mentoring that is needed in order to make that first REAL LIFE decision... "What to do after High School?" I have witnessed these Grade 12 students' present clear plans for their individual futures that are months if not years in the making. I am encouraged as a potential future employer of these youth that they are aware of ALL of the options available to them beyond June 30th of their Grade 12 year.

As a father, I am encouraged to know that our children have access to Professional Career Counselling, within the walls of the school. I have witnessed kids at these presentations that have ZERO support at home to help with making decisions about their future. Without the assistance that the Career Centre provides, they would not have the bright future that seemed inevitable during the presentation. Even with strong parental support, there is only so much assistance that a parent can provide their child in the area and there is only so much assistance the child is willing to accept. Knowing that the Career Centre is in the school is a true comfort to a parent.

I can appreciate the fiscal position that our Education System is experiencing but the commitment to the student, by our schools and the Board, needs to continue beyond graduation. One of the ways to provide this commitment is with the continued support and funding of the Career Centers.

Rob Taylor
General Manager
Murray GM - Abbotsford
Murray KIA - Abbotsford

Career Center

HIREKATUR [gopi_hirekatur@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 9:37 AM

To: Andrew Kowal

Hello Mr. Kowal,

I am sending this in support of the Career Center. Please do let me know if you need me to add anything else. Thanks

I just cannot understand how anyone could stop something which is so good for the students. Every year a large number of students graduate from high schools and are not sure as to what the future holds for them and they surely need someone to help them with proper guidance.

The Career Center in the schools help the students bridge this gap and guide them through the process by giving them options, suggestions and help to prepare them for the real world. There are lot of students who come from disadvantaged families where no one in the family has gone to University or college and have no idea what to expect and it is in these cases that without the Career Center's help the students will be completely lost.

I had the privilege of being on the panel for the GTP presentations at Maple Ridge Secondary and saw that the students had worked so much and were so well organized. They told us that the Career Center staff guide them individually and help them come up with the wonderful presentations which reflect their achievements and experience at high school. The work experience, career information sessions, University information evenings that the schools organize are extremely useful. Something which is so good and helpful to the students should most certainly be continued so that we have young responsible well informed students who step out into the world. Thanks and hope you will consider my appeal favorably

Sincerely,

Dr. H.V. Gopinath

Re: Proposed Cuts to District CPA positions

I am writing in hopes that the Board will reconsider their plan to cut the Career Assistant positions in SD42.

I have worked with the CPA's for many years and have seen firsthand the many critical things they do to support students, including the Special Needs Students that I work with. The Career Planning Assistants support students with accessing information and delivering documentation, that the students would find very difficult and labor some to find on their own. This information can be career information, post-secondary information, scholarship information, work experience opportunities, SD42 partnership and trades apprenticeship opportunities. The district CPA's work tirelessly to ensure the students get the best opportunities for their life after high school as well as supporting the Work Experience Coordinators and Counsellors in the district.

Please reconsider cutting these critically important positions, as it will be the students who will suffer the consequences of this erroneous decision.

Thank You,

Dennis Lacroix

District Special Needs/Work Experience Facilitator

SD42

Proposed Career Center Closings

ANDREA D'ANDREA [a.dandrea@shaw.ca]

Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:26 PM

To: andrew kowal [andrew_kowal@sd.42.ca]

Past and present Boards of School District #42 have stated that their priority was to place student needs ahead of all other considerations. It seems appropriate, if the above statement is true, that reductions should be found in areas that are the farthest away from direct interactions with students. Maybe it is time to restructure the entire organization of the district. For example, if school administrators have been wisely selected for their competence, then they should be given more responsibility for the management of their schools thereby reducing the need for a large District staff. Meetings of school administrators and the superintendent would result in meaningful sharing of the district's aims and needs. The outcome would be the assignment of areas of concern to school based administrators for discussion and solution. The downsizing of the District office would result in significant savings and make cuts to staff providing valuable service directly to students unnecessary. The removal of those individuals who work directly with students wishing guidance to a place in the adult world is unwise and does not address the needs of the students, their parents or the country in which they live.

Ron D'Andrea

Career Center Closing

ANDREA D'ANDREA [a.dandrea@shaw.ca]

Sent: Monday, April 14, 2014 2:09 PM

To: andrew kowal [andrew_kowal@sd.42.ca]

Andrew, I am appalled to hear that the school district is considering closing the secondary school Career Centers. As the department head of Counselling at MRSS for many years, I witnessed the evolution of the Career Centers and know the essential role these centers play in the preparation of students for post secondary and/or work life after grad. The Career Center helps students identify possible careers, ensures that students are aware of schools offering appropriate programs, meets with students to make sure they know when and how to apply and plays an instrumental role in helping students find funding. This process is ongoing from Grade 10 to the end of Grade 12. School based counsellors are already spread so thin that they could only, at best, pay lip service to this process. The Mandate for the School System, Province of British Columbia Mission Statement(Aug, 2013) states " The purpose of the British Columbia School System is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire knowledge, skill and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous economy" . Goal three of the three Goals of Public Education - Career Development - "to prepare students to attain their career and occupational objectives" Student Duties, Rights and Responsibilities - " the opportunity to determine their career and occupational goals". Clearly, the Ministry of Education has stated that assisting students prepare to achieve their career goals is an essential component of the school system. Cutting the Career Center staff is a violation of the rights of students to assistance in preparing for life after secondary school whether it be work or further education. While there are many worthwhile programs administered through the district office, it is my opinion that when such drastic cuts need to be made, we need to look to staff who do not sit face to face with students each day. While their contributions are valuable, I do not see many of them as essential. Access to Career Counselling is mandated by the Ministry of Education - it is imperative. I, therefore, respectfully suggest that the Board look to staff who do not directly interact with students each day offering mandated programmes to determine where to begin making necessary budget cuts.

RE: WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Timo Juurakko [tjuurakko@mapleridge.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 1:39 PM

To: Andrew Kowal

Hi Andrew,

I am very concerned that the suggested cuts to Career Centre staff at the high schools will have many unintended consequences which will impact the students directly and also have a ripple effect on many community partners.

The grad transition presentations at MRSS have been an outstanding part of the graduating students' growth. Having been involved in these events since the beginning I have seen presentations that have covered the spectrum in terms of quality but have all shared great pride in terms of accomplishment and reflecting on the value of time spent in the school system. The fact that students wish to make these presentations, even if they are not leaving with a Dogwood says something about the program and how it's perceived by students. The four hours that I spend at each event are simply the culmination of tons of work by staff over a number of years. The finale is yet to be seen as many students await word on success of scholarship applications, university acceptance, career choices... Student success would not be the same without the efforts of Career Centre staff.

A further concern is that these cuts could also affect work experience programming. I have been involved with the Youth Academy program which is a yearlong work experience program with the Fire Department. This program exposes participants to firefighting, traditionally a male dominated occupation. Since 2000 we have had girls participate in the program every year but one. In fact, 2010 saw the girls outnumber the boys in the academy that year. Our work experience program is somewhat unique in that Career Centre staff recruit applicants, guide them through the extensive application process, prescreen applicants and prepare selected applicants for a rigorous interview. Maple Ridge Council is well aware of the Youth Academy program and I can confidently say that they are proud of the students and their contributions to the community during their time with the Fire Department. Council provides significant, annual funding for the Youth Academy program. Approximately 10% of the program's graduates have gone on to a career in the emergency services; most, directly in the fire service while a few have gone on to careers in dispatching for emergency services. One of our female graduates is now a paid-on-call member with the City of Pitt Meadows Fire Department! In program evaluations all students have indicated that this work experience program has helped them mature and become better citizens with a much stronger appreciation of the community and their role within it. This June we will graduate our 126th student from the Youth Academy. Losing this work experience program would be a tragedy.

In my opinion the cuts to Career Centre staff are simply the wrong thing to do as the staff contributes so significantly to the success of students. These cuts would fly in the face of School District 42's vision statement: "Our vision is for every individual to feel valued and for all learners to reach their full potential."

Sincerely,

*Timo Juurakko
Assistant Chief - Community and Administrative Services
Maple Ridge Fire Department*

604-476-3051

From: Andrew Kowal [mailto:Andrew_Kowal@sd42.ca]

Sent: Friday, April 11, 2014 12:00

Letter to Ridge Meadows District - Possible Cuts

Patricia Seto [Patricia.Seto@kpu.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 5:41 PM

To: Andrew Kowal

Attention: Ms. Laurie Meston, Superintendent, Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows School District

Subject: Possible Cuts to Career Centres in High Schools

Dear Ms. Meston,

I understand that there is a proposal being considered by the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows School District to close the Career Centres in the schools as a cost saving measure. I ask that the School District consider other options rather than closing the services provided by these centres.

Planning for careers and educational options comes much earlier in a student's life in high school. Career Planning Assistants are crucial in the planning process. They explain career options to them, they share information to help students select possible post-secondary institutions that might be a good match to their career goals, they guide them through the application process, assist in scholarship applications, and many other issues that high school students face.

At the university I work at, we do try to provide support and assistance to students in the transition to post-secondary but the Career Centre Assistants really work with these students on a daily basis to provide the support they need. Many people think that high school students are computer savvy and can find the information they need on careers and post-secondary on the internet but really this is far from the case. If it were not for the work of the staff in the Career Centres, I know there would be a lot more confusion and students being lost. Students now more than ever need guidance and assistance in looking at careers in an uncertain environment. The Career Centre Assistants really provide a crucial service to high school students in helping them best prepare as much as possible.

For these reasons, I ask that you do not cut the services of this crucial area in the schools.

Regards,

Patricia Seto
Manager, Student Recruitment
Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Career planning centres support

Jennifer Gjaltema [jennifer.gjaltema@ecomm911.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 6:18 PM

To: Andrew Kowal

Good afternoon,

I have had the honor of reviewing the grad transition projects as a panelist twice in the past year.

One of the reasons these students are so well prepared, in tune with their future and such great communicators is the preparation, coaching and support they receive over 3 years from their career planning centres.

As a team manager at a 911 dispatch centre, I have been the hiring manager for many positions and have interviewed many candidates. The lifelong preparation and learning the students receive will serve them well in these scenarios, and help them find their career goals and aspirations through exploration and support.

I believe in preparing our youth for the future and giving them the opportunity to truly reflect upon their career and life planning choices, it is our job as the adults of the present to fund this important part of our children's development.

I am a parent and strongly appreciate the guidance and support the experts that work in the career centres will provide for my children.

It would be an absolute disservice to pull funding from this key piece of the development of all of our futures.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Gjaltema
Team Manager
Fire Dispatch E-comm 911
Sent from my Blackberry Wireless Device

Maple Ridge Board of Education
22225 Brown Avenue
Maple Ridge, BC
V2X 8N6

Dear Trustees;

I am writing to voice my concerns over the potential closure Career Centers in the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows High Schools. I strongly feel that the elimination of the services provided by the Career Staff is a short sighted convenience that would have long-range detrimental effects on the students in our District.

As a parent, I was grateful for the wonderful service my eldest child received from the staff at the MRSS Career Center. Not only were they able to guide him through graduation; they also encouraged him to apply to university. Through their guidance, he was successful in securing entrance and scholarships to the University of Victoria. The excellent advice and service given to my younger child has allowed him to chart a path towards an appropriate education and career after he graduates. They encouraged and guided him in course choice to fulfill his goals. This type of commitment and desire to help students is an extremely difficult thing to replace. With the multitude of options available to students and the ever increasing complexity of vocational and educational choices our children have to face, the counselors are invaluable mentors to help guide children to make decisions that are best for them.

I have had the opportunity to see the results the effective guidance of the Career Center Assistants have on children. As someone who has conducted job interviews for Grade 10 students in their Planning 10 course and in their Grade 12 Grad Transitions Plan; I was overwhelmed at the depth of knowledge, the breadth of interests and the level of skills that these students bring with them. I have participated in Parent Information Nights, Education and Career Fairs and have instructed students in work experience placements within the district. Although the students were successful, it was apparent that these successes were guided and assisted by the capable, caring and skillful staff members of the Career Centers.

I strongly believe that the elimination of the Career Centers and Staff will have a detrimental effect on the success of our students. Their services are vital and essential to students to help them realize their potential and assist them along the path to becoming productive citizens.

My hope is that you will re-consider this short-sighted approach to saving money and consider the disastrous effect it will have on students who need guidance and support to determine what life will hold for them post-graduation.

Sincerely,

James Clelland, M. Ed. CD, BA, PDP,

Firefighter