



June 25, 2014

## PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

### ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS

#### CORRESPONDENCE:

- Moyra Baxter, Chair, SD No. 23 (Central Okanagan)
- Robert McFarlane, Chair, SD No. 35 (Langley)
- Laura Dixon, Chair, SD No. 37 (Delta)
- Patti Bacchus, Chair, SD No. 39 (Vancouver)
- SD No. 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows)
- Melissa Hyndes, Chair, SD No. 43 (Coquitlam)
- Franci Stratton, Chair, SD No. 44 (North Vancouver)
- Betty Baxter, Chair, SD No. 46 (Sunshine Coast)
- Sharel Warrington, Chair, SD No. 57 (Prince George)
- G. Wayne Hunter, Chair, SD No. 63 (Saanich)
- Edie Heinrichs, Chair, SD No. 75 (Mission)
- Teresa Rezansoff, BC School Trustees' Association



"Together We Learn"

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

### SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23

(CENTRAL OKANAGAN)

1940 Underhill Street, Kelowna, B.C. V1X 5X7

Tel. (250) 860-8888 Fax (250) 860-9799

Website: [www.sd23.bc.ca](http://www.sd23.bc.ca)

June 20, 2014

The Honourable Peter Fassbender  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender:

#### **RE: Seismic/Capital Project Cost Sharing and Education Funding**

At a recent Public Board Meeting, the Central Okanagan Board of Education agreed to send a letter expressing concern over the budget pressures we are experiencing and the expectation that School Districts will be called upon to cost share major capital projects through the use of School District surplus funds.

Board discussion included concerns regarding shortfalls in funding, and additional municipal, provincial and federal cost pressures, e.g. employee benefit increases and utility increases. Stabilized funding for School Districts was also discussed, which would allow Boards of Education to complete long-range planning for future years, and it was agreed that opportunities should be explored for School Districts and the Ministry to work together, possibly sharing resources, which could lead to savings for all School Districts.

Regarding seismic/capital project cost sharing, the Board is pleased that you have clarified that each School District will be afforded careful consideration of their actual "surpluses" before the Ministry makes a decision on capital funding; however, for the record, we wish to provide you with the following information.

The Central Okanagan School District has already exhausted any capital reserves to purchase two properties that are needed for future middle schools. As well, our District is facing \$4 million in budget pressures for the 2014/2015 school year. Our preliminary budget for 2014/2015 includes all of the 2012/2013 surplus funds as well as a portion of the projected 2013/2014 surplus funds in order to provide a balanced budget.

#### **Board of Education - Trustees**

Moyra Baxter  
Julia Fraser

Joyce Brinkerhoff  
Christopher L. Gorman

Deb Butler  
Murli Pendharkar

Rolli Cacchioni

This Board has, for many years, embraced and supported Skills and Technical Courses. The Dual Credit Programs we have established with BCIT and Okanagan College are examples of this. The Ministry's focus on increasing Skills and Technical Training is therefore welcomed by our Board. However, we know that there is a cost to providing these specialized programs and we are finding it increasingly difficult to support them as we cope with budget pressures each year. We would ask that the Ministry commit to ensuring that Boards of Education are not expected, once again, to do more with less.

We are committed to working with government on behalf of all students and, as co-governors of BC's Public Education System, we send this letter to express our concern that we believe that the system is underfunded, and also to state that we believe we can find ways to work together to continue to provide the first class education system of which we are all so proud.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Moyra Baxter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Moyra Baxter  
Board Chair

cc: Central Okanagan Board of Education Trustees  
The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia  
Dan Ashton, MLA  
The Honourable Norm Letnick, MLA  
The Honourable Steve Thomson, MLA  
All BC Boards of Education c/o BCSTA  
CUPE Local 3523  
Central Okanagan Teachers' Association



"Together We Learn"

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

## SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23

(CENTRAL OKANAGAN)

1940 Underhill Street, Kelowna, B.C. V1X 5X7

Tel. (250) 860-8888 Fax (250) 860-9799

Website: [www.sd23.bc.ca](http://www.sd23.bc.ca)

June 23, 2014

The Honourable Peter Fassbender  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Mr. Jim Iker, President  
British Columbia Teachers' Federation  
100 - 550 West 6th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2

Dear Minister Fassbender and Mr. Iker:

The Central Okanagan Board of Education has been dismayed by how negotiations between the BCTF and BCPSEA have unfolded over the past year. Last July, we were shocked when the members of the BCPSEA Board of Directors were removed from office; however, we were still hopeful that a settlement could be reached with the new BCPSEA model in place.

Most recently, the public statements from both sides have only inflamed what were obviously very difficult negotiations. The impasse that has been reached is not in the best interest of the students we serve.

Over the past weeks, students, parents, teachers, support staff and administrators have all been placed in untenable situations, and our public education system is suffering.

It was then, with some relief, that we learned that government and BCPSEA were both in favour of the BCTF's request for a mediator to be involved in the negotiations. Mr. Vince Ready's reputation suggested that the stalemate could be overcome. However, as we all now know, Mr. Ready is unable to accept the position.

The Board therefore asks that both parties work together to seek another mediator, agreeable to both sides, to assist in coming to a settlement. There must be someone suitable and available.

The climate in our school district is at an all-time low. Over the years everyone has worked hard to build respectful, complementary relationships, and it may take a long time to build that trust again. We have heard that relationships in other districts are also deteriorating. We ask that, on behalf of all students in our public education system, both parties involved in provincial teacher negotiations work to find a solution to the current impasse.

Our students are worth it.

Yours sincerely,

Moyra Baxter  
Chairperson

cc: Central Okanagan Board of Education Trustees  
The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia  
BC Public School Employers' Association  
All BC Boards of Education c/o BCSTA  
Dan Ashton, MLA  
The Honourable Norm Letnick, MLA  
The Honourable Steve Thomson, MLA  
Central Okanagan Teachers' Association  
CUPE Local 3523  
Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council

### Board of Education - Trustees

Moyra Baxter  
Julia Fraser

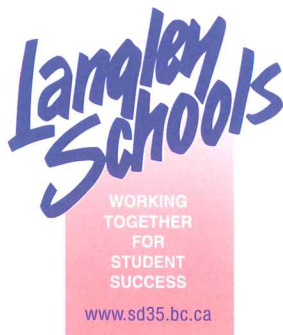
Joyce Brinkerhoff  
Christopher L. Gorman

Deb Butler  
Murli Pendharkar

Rolli Cacchioni

Additional Handouts - Page 3





June 16, 2014

Mike Roberts, Interim CEO  
BC Public School Employers' Association  
#400 - 1333 West Broadway  
Vancouver, BC V6H 4C1

Jim Iker, President  
BC Teachers' Federation  
#100 – 550 West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2

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

Dear Sirs:

**Re: Commitment to British Columbia Students**

I am writing to you on behalf of the Langley Board of Education to express the Board's concern in relation to the current state of contract negotiations between the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Public School Employers' Association.

It appears clear to the Board that the actions each of your organizations have taken to pressure the other to assume a more moderate bargaining position have not only failed, but have now reached a point where the well-being of the students of British Columbia and the success of our education system are both being adversely affected. The Board urges both the BCTF and BCPSEA to return to previous commitments to the well-being of students and to a successful education system in our province.

The Board also urges all concerned to recognize the ineffectiveness of current actions as well as the harm being done to those who are not a party to the dispute. The Board is of the view that both the BCTF and BCPSEA should endeavor to set aside their current approaches and work to develop a better strategy for reaching a mutually acceptable collective agreement.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Robert McFarlane, BBA, CIP, CRM  
Vice Chair  
Langley Board of Education

cc: SD35 Board of Education  
SD35 Partner Groups  
The Honourable Rich Coleman, Minister of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas Development,  
Minister Responsible for Housing, Deputy Premier and MLA – Ft. Langley/Aldergrove  
The Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Environment and MLA - Langley  
BCSTA (for distribution to All BC Boards of Education)



June 10, 2014

The Honourable Peter Fassbender  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Gov  
Victoria, BC V8N 9E2

Mr. Jim Iker, President  
BC Teachers' Federation  
100-550 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2

Dear Minister Fassbender and Mr. Iker,

The Delta Board of Education stands in strong support of BCSTA's *Stability for Students Action Plan*. We would like to emphasize statements made recently by BCSTA President Teresa Rezanoff, "*The Stability for Students Action Plan* remains as relevant and urgent as ever. A negotiated Settlement must be reached, and soon. The end of term for students must not be compromised – and a successful start of term in September is an absolute necessity."

We urge both parties to fully commit to the children of this Province and achieve a settlement at the bargaining table as quickly as possible to prevent further challenges to the excellent Public Education offered in British Columbia. In the event that an agreement has not been achieved by the end of June, we urge both parties to continue bargaining during the Summer until an agreement has been reached.

Through our Delta School District visioning process, a shared *Delta School District Vision* was developed to guide the future of education in the school district. Staff in Delta have been working on some incredibly important and exciting initiatives to help us achieve that Vision. We have serious concerns that continued instability in the system could negatively impact the exceptional work being done by staff in the Delta School District.

Regards,

Laura Dixon, Chairperson  
Delta Board of Education, SD37

cc: Mr. Scott Hamilton, MLA – Delta North  
Ms. Vicki Huntington, MLA – Delta South  
**All Board of Education via BCSTA**  
Mr. Keith Punshon, Chair – Delta Parent Advisory Council  
Mr. Paul Steer, President – Delta Teachers' Association DTA  
Delta Optimist  
South Delta Leader  
Surrey/North Delta Leader  
Surrey Now



# Vancouver Board of Education

School District No. 39

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

1580 West Broadway

Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8

Telephone: 604-713-5000

Fax: 604-713-5049

June 12, 2014

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

Dear Premier Clark:

At a special meeting of the Vancouver Board of Education today, the Board approved the following motion:

1. that the Vancouver Board of Education urge Premier Christy Clark to respond positively to the offer of BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) President for a meeting to resolve the teacher bargaining impasse;
2. that the Premier demonstrate good faith bargaining by providing the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) with a renewed mandate to bargain class size and composition into the collective agreement; and
3. that the Premier request BCPSEA and the BCTF to use the services of a special mediator with a view to reaching an agreement prior to June 16, 2014.

It is crucial that the Province provide leadership now to avoid the pending escalation of job action in the next week.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'P. Bacchus'.

Patti Bacchus,  
Chairperson

cc: Honourable Peter Fassbender, BC Minister of Education  
Vancouver MLAs  
All BC School Boards, c/o BCSTA  
VBE Trustees  
Steve Cardwell, Superintendent of Schools  
Rick Krowchuk, Secretary Treasurer

#### 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



June 23, 2014

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



Dear Minister Fassbender,

**Re: Education Financing**

Recently our Board of Education met with MLAs Doug Bing and Marc Dalton to review our financial situation and to make a number of requests of government. The intent was to provide our local representatives with the information they would need so that they may contribute meaningfully and frankly to the Liberal Caucus and any other forums addressing education financing in which they might find themselves. Our purpose in forwarding this letter is to follow up on that meeting and to forward the requests we made of our MLAs also to your Ministry.

The first item we reviewed at our meeting was the impact of the budget reductions we have had to make over the past several years. That impact goes well beyond the adjustments required as a result of declining enrollments.

Prior to the 2013/14 budget year this School District reduced its budget in a number of areas including the closure of six schools, the elimination of several resource and administrative positions (reducing support to teachers) and the reduction of maintenance to minimal levels. In 2013/14 the budget adjustments we implemented included (among other things) increasing class sizes, reducing teacher librarians in secondary schools by 50%, reducing financial staffing classifications and implementing increased rental fees for community use to cost recovery levels.

Our 2014/15 preliminary budget document, which outlines the cause and outcomes of our current fiscal reality, is enclosed along with all of the written feedback we received through our budget consultation process. As you review the feedback we received, please note we did make adjustments to our budget based on all the feedback we received after our initial consultations. We are providing this information to demonstrate the depth of our work on our budget each year and to highlight the specific challenges we are facing.

One of these challenges is class size. Class sizes in our district have been increased in each of the last two years, and are now very close to the maximum allowable levels. While we have seen research on both sides of this issue being identified at bargaining, the fact remains our teachers are dealing with more students – a challenge further complicated by composition issues. We are now at the upper end of the Ministry's own benchmarks.



On a related point, we have made great progress with trades training by collaborating with BCIT, VCC and other post-secondary institutions. Like many school districts, we offer first year trades apprenticeship programs in our schools taught by instructors from these institutions. Interestingly, the maximum class size BCIT and VCC will allow is sixteen. We aren't sharing this to suggest that is an attainable goal for the public education system, but to illustrate the degree to which our post-secondary institutions feel the number of students in this type of program is relevant to student success. We recognize the fiscal constraints we all need to deal with as we wrestle with this subject, but the fact remains: our class sizes are increasing and we are concerned about the impact of those increases in the long term.

Unless something changes, we will have to make further budget reductions over the next two years beyond what is required as a result of the decline in enrollment (which is beginning to level off in this district). We introduced school bussing fees this year at the upper end of fees being charged for bussing by other districts. This was an appropriate adjustment given the alternatives, but none of us relish the thought of the next conversation, considering whether or not to eliminate the service altogether. Unfortunately, given our location on the outer edges of Metro Vancouver, the transit authority is unable to address the need for several busses to be available at two very specific times a day in our rural area. Regardless, with very few options available these are the kinds of service we may not be able to continue.

The next question we addressed with our MLAs is what we cannot do as a result of our fiscal constraints.

First, to state the obvious, we cannot pay as much attention to students as we have done in the past. Following this year's cuts, special needs assessments will be delayed even further than they have been. Career planning support will be less. Larger classes will mean less individual attention. Reduced clerical support throughout the organization (by as much as 30% in some locations) will mean administrators having to complete routine clerical functions. That coupled with fewer school administrative staff will mean less time available for proactive interventions, teacher growth planning, etc. With this kind of strain on the system, we cannot begin to address the goals of the BC Education Plan with any great effect.

Fine arts and physical education programs are inconsistent in our elementary schools given the lack of resources to hire specialists in these areas. We cannot move ahead with new schools in developing areas as quickly as we should since the additional overhead costs of a new site would have to come from our existing funding envelope.

While the need for a new elementary school has been established and other adjacent schools are suffering from overcrowding, it would be very difficult indeed to add the overhead cost of \$375,000 for a new elementary school to our budget when we have been cutting over \$4M a year from the system over the past two years.

So here is what we have requested of our MLAs and are requesting of government:

1. Acknowledgement that we are managing our resources very carefully in a fiscally responsible manner, and that we have done so for many years. We are elected officials accountable to the citizens who elect us. We take an oath of office which requires us to adhere to the School Act and submit balanced budgets (which we do every year despite the significant challenges involved in doing so).
2. Acknowledgment that the cuts we are having to make now (and have made in the past few years) will have a negative impact on student success in the long term. Some budget adjustments we've made represent continuous improvement and reductions in doing something less critical so we could do more of something we collectively believe is more important. These choices have been made to move the system forward. However, we are now making budget choices based on which alternatives will have the least negative impact on student success. All of the choices we are making now have some negative impact on students and families. It is important for us to know that government understands that is the case. Not acknowledging that impact would demonstrate considerable disrespect for the work of those whose positions have been eliminated, suggesting their efforts had little value. We know that is not the case.
3. A commitment to encourage other Ministries to step up to meet their obligations to the children and families of this Province in terms of health assessments, social service needs, drug education, family intervention, child poverty, transportation etc. We know fiscal restraint has impacted all Ministries in their ability to respond to citizens, but school districts see the results of delayed responses by a variety of Ministries every day and deal with the consequences. We are literally trying to find the resources to feed hungry kids and we cannot do it all.
4. A commitment to:
  - a. fully fund additional costs over which Boards of Education have no control (like labour contract settlements and pension plan increases) and
  - b. cover inflationary increases (like BC Hydro rates).
5. A commitment to review and revise the current system of holding back funding budgeted by the Ministry for School District operations in concert with the BC Association of School Business Officials and the BC School Trustee Association. We need a commitment that government will not use that funding for anything other than rationalizing the distribution of funding due to the differences between projected and actual enrollment numbers. Boards of Education cannot adequately plan with any sense of certainty without that commitment.



6. A commitment to review and revise the current funding formula in concert with BCASBO and BCSTA to ensure the fairest possible distribution of available funding.

7. A commitment to review and revise the current system of capital planning in concert with BCASBO to allow for better long term planning of such major undertakings as the land acquisition, design and construction of new school facilities.

8. A commitment to review government's tax policy with respect to school property taxes. Municipalities have long understood that implementing a 0% property tax increase in an inflationary environment means cutting the services citizens have come to expect. It appears school property taxes have stayed constant over time while Municipal property taxes have increased considerably over the past ten years. We pass no judgments on the level of Municipal taxation, however, at the very least School property taxes need to be increased by inflationary amounts every year to generate additional government revenues for their intended purpose – education.

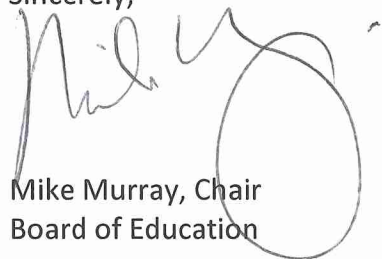
Despite the controversy involved in any discussion of increasing taxes, we believe government should have a courageous conversation with the public on this subject, with a view toward generating the resources required to sustain the essential services citizens need, achieve the goals of the BC Education Plan and maintain a healthy economy.

Please know the undersigned education partners share the concerns expressed in this letter by the Board of Education and are in full agreement with the requests we have made.

In closing, let me thank you and our MLAs for your attention. We need to have more direct and detailed conversations like these to fully understand the issues we need to address and the challenges both levels of government are facing. Of course we would be happy to continue this dialogue in person at your convenience.

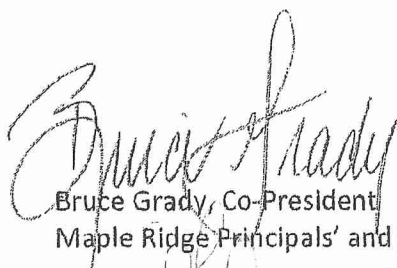
As you have said yourself, maintaining the status quo is not acceptable in a changing world. Nor is sliding backwards. We are concerned we may be headed in that direction without some bold leadership and intervention. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

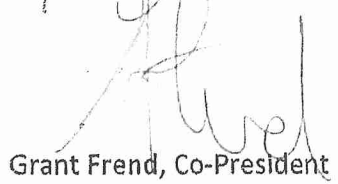


Mike Murray, Chair  
Board of Education

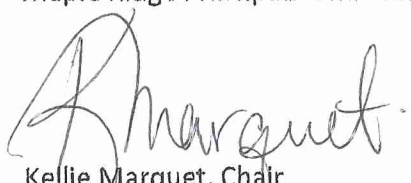




Bruce Grady, Co-President  
Maple Ridge Principals' and Vice Principals' Association

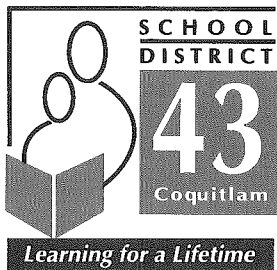


Grant Frend, Co-President  
Maple Ridge Principals' and Vice Principals' Association



Kellie Marquet, Chair  
District Parent Advisory Council

Cc:  
The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier  
Mr. Doug Bing, MLA  
Mr. Marc Dalton, MLA  
Board of Education  
Ms. Laurie Meston, Acting Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer  
BC School Trustees' Association



550 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, BC, Canada V3J 6A7 • Phone: 604-939-9201 • Fax: 604-939-7828

**CHAIR:**

Melissa Hyndes

**VICE-CHAIR:**

Holly Butterfield

**TRUSTEES:**

Gail Altj

John J. Keryluk

Brian Robinson

Judy Shirra

Diane Sowden

Gerri Wallis

Keith Watkins

June 18, 2014

Honourable Peter Fassbender  
Minister of Education  
PO box 9405 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender,

The Coquitlam Board of Education is concerned that negotiations between the BCTF and BCPSEA may have stalled. We were optimistic that an agreement would be reached prior to the move to a full strike. We wish to encourage the Ministry of Education to resolve this labour dispute as soon as possible and prior to the end of the current school year and the commencement of Summer School. We fear that the continued conflict will have negative repercussions for our students and our school district for the foreseeable future.

Teacher and support staff morale is low, administrators are overworked, students and parents are concerned about exams, report card marks, year-end activities, and their future. The community is concerned about our inability to conclude a collective agreement efficiently.

We, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools, feel that the current disruption is putting the reputation of public education in jeopardy. The loss of community faith in and commitment to the public education system may cause irreparable harm to our District Mission, our ability to accomplish government educational priorities, and the foundation of our society.

The Coquitlam Board of Education urges the Minister to appoint a special, mutually agreed upon, mediator to help the parties to come to an expedited negotiated settlement. Our educational community requires decisive leadership at this time.

Yours truly,

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)**

Melissa Hyndes, Chair  
Board of Education

c: Board of Education  
Thomas J. Grant, Superintendent  
Mark Ferrari, Secretary-Treasurer  
Charley King, CTA President  
Jim Iker, BCTF President  
Michael Marchbank, BCPSEA Public Administrator  
All BC Boards of Education c/o BCSTA

June 9, 2014

Teresa Rezansoff  
President  
BCSTA Board of Directors  
4th Floor - 1580 West Broadway  
Vancouver, BC V6J 5K9

Dear Teresa,

**RE: Request for assurances from negotiating parties in the current labour dispute**

On behalf of the North Vancouver Board of Education, I am writing to ask that the BCSTA formally request assurances from the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) that essential services for graduating students will proceed without impediment, most notably transcripts and summer school.

As you know, Boards of Education across the province are currently preparing contingency plans for the month of June, and into the summer, in the event that a settlement in the labour dispute is not achieved in the very near future.

While we remain hopeful for a full resolution to the dispute by the end of June, school districts, parents and students want assurances now that the timely completion of transcripts, the delivery of summer school and other essential services to support graduating students will not be impeded. Although many services to students have been impacted by the labour dispute, until this point no action has been taken that would directly interfere with students' abilities to graduate on schedule, or proceed with their course planning for September. The delay of transcripts and the cancellation of summer school for secondary students would impact those in need of courses for graduation, or for whom post-secondary acceptance is contingent upon further coursework over the summer.

For this reason we are asking that the negotiating parties pause to deliberate these critical components of service to students and provide their immediate and collaborative assurances that this year's program may proceed unimpeded by the actions of either party. We believe that BCSTA can take this stance in saying that job action should not be allowed to interfere with the graduation requirements for our students.

In making this request, we remain mindful that all boards are represented by BCPSEA and respectful of the process unfolding at the bargaining table. Should a shared understanding not be achievable, we would hope that the timely completion of transcripts and the delivery of summer school would be represented in BCPSEA's application for Essential Services to the LRB.

.../2





-2-

Thank you for your consideration of this important request; your earliest response would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

NORTH VANCOUVER  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Franci Stratton".

Franci Stratton  
Chair

cc.

Trustees, North Vancouver Board of Education

John Lewis, Superintendent of Schools, North Vancouver School District

Georgia Allison, Secretary Treasurer, North Vancouver School District

Scott Stanley, Director of Human Resources, North Vancouver School District

Stephen Hansen, Executive Director, British Columbia School Trustees Association

All Boards of Education



---

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Delivered via e-mail: [educ.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:educ.minister@gov.bc.ca)

June 11, 2014

Hon. Minister Peter Fassbender  
Ministry of Education  
Po Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender:

**RE: BCTF Bargaining**

The Board of Education for School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) has unanimously moved to write to you once more to express our grave concerns about the long and divisive labour negotiations with the teachers of British Columbia.

In our letter of March 17, 2014, we asked you to bring flexibility to the table and consider the needs of students and stability for education as paramount. Two months later we have a crisis in education in our province. In the midst of strike and lock-out activities, students are suffering and all our stakeholders – parents, support staff, community members and teachers – are desperate to see some responsible leadership. Very little movement on substantial issues and poorly thought out statements in the media that dismiss the other side, whether made by you, your premier, or the BCTF, are not helping the students of this province.

Once again, we ask you to support a freely negotiated agreement with the BCTF. Further, we ask you to do this by:

- ensuring that government apply more thought to BCPSEA's communications and consultation with the field before employing confusing, miscalculated directives such as the May 21, 2014 lockout announcement;
- instructing BCPSEA to immediately propose to the BCTF to re-affirm the Framework Agreement in Committee for the 2013 Round of Bargaining to: a) re-engage the common data study of data related to compensation, working conditions, demographics and relevant collective bargaining matters b) revise the date of the facilitator's report that was never issued last year to June 30, 2014;

- maximizing the use of Mark Brown as the mutually contracted facilitator, at a neutral bargaining location with no spectators/guests who are not senior decision-makers for their respective parties;
- committing sufficient funds to address the outstanding dispute over class size and composition and learning specialist ratios as new language at the bargaining table, rather than continue to drag the K–12 public education system down into a second decade of legal wrangling;
- ensuring that BCPSEA offers the BCTF a fair wage proposal in line with other BC public sector employees who have recently received raises.

The current approach of blaming each other in the media is hurting communities, parents and students. Minister Fassbender, you have the power to change this dynamic for the better. We urge you to give our suggestions serious consideration and it is our sincere hope that we will see responsible, respectful action at the bargaining table and a successful conclusion to negotiations for a collective agreement in the coming days.

Sincerely,



Betty Baxter  
Board Chair

p.c. Board of Education of School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast)  
Patrick Bocking, Superintendent of Schools  
Nicholas Weswick, Secretary-Treasurer  
Louise Herle, SCTA President  
Carolyn Smith, CUPE Local 801 President  
Nicholas Simons, MLA, Powell River-Sunshine Coast  
All Boards of Education, via BCSTA





## SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 57 (PRINCE GEORGE)

2100 Ferry Avenue, Prince George, B.C. V2L 4R5

Phone: (250) 561-6800 • Fax (250) 561-6801  
www.sd57.bc.ca

May 29, 2014

Ms. Teresa Rezansoff  
President,  
BC School Trustee Association  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor – 1580 West Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V6J 5K9

Dear Ms. Rezansoff:

At its regular Public Board Meeting of May 27, 2014, the Board of Education for School District No. 57 (Prince George) unanimously passed a motion requesting “that the BCSTA call on the BC Government to reconsider the lockout action and to actively seek a negotiated teacher contract, or failing that, appoint a mutually agreed upon mediator” one who has the authority from both sides to actively assert the mediation actions needed in this labour dispute.”

The action of government to initiate a partial lockout in response to the BCTF strike has not been done in consultation with boards of education. This action has only made the labour situation more frustrating and damaging for students, parents, and all school staff including our administration.

The decision of BCPSEA to move to a partial lockout and a wage reduction strategy causes us serious concern, we see this as a potential to inflict long term damage between boards of education and our employees.

We urgently request you speak on our behalf and urge the government to reconsider its lockout action. We ask you to urge the government to actively seek a negotiated settlement. Failing that we urge both parties to either redefine the role of Mr. Mark Brown who was appointed as a third party facilitator or appoint a new mutually agreed upon mediator, one who has the authority from both sides to actively assert the mediation actions needed in this labour dispute.

Your immediate attention to this matter is needed.

Sincerely,

Trustee Sharel Warrington, Chair

Trustee Tim Bennett, Vice Chair  
Trustee Betty Bekkering  
Trustee Trish Bella  
Trustee Sharon Bourassa  
Trustee Kate Cooke  
Trustee Brenda Hooker  
Board of Education,  
**School District 57, Prince George**

cc: Hon. Shirley Bond, MLA Prince George-Valemount  
Michael Marchbank, Public Administrator, BCPSEA  
Boards of Education through BCSTA  
Mike Roberts, Interim CEO, BCPEA  
Peter Cameron, Chief Negotiator, BCPSEA  
Jim Iker, President, BCTF  
Tina Cousins, President Prince George Teachers Association  
Mike Morris MLA Prince George-Mackenzie  
Rob Fleming, MLA Victoria – Swan Lake

SW/jc

# Saanich Schools

2125 Keating Cross Road, Saanichton, BC, Canada V8M 2A5

(250) 652-7300 Fax: (250) 652-6421

June 18, 2014

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

Dear Minister Fassbender:

The Board of Education of School District No. 63 (Saanich) passed all three readings of the 2014/2015 annual budget bylaw at a public meeting held on April 30th, 2014. In conjunction with the submission of this budget, the Board feels it is essential to provide the Minister with some additional information on the profound impacts of this, and previous, balanced budget submissions in School District No. 63.

The following reductions have been made in order to submit a balanced budget for 2014/15:

1. Teacher salaries \$1,410,500 – this will result in more than 14 FTE fewer teachers working with students in the upcoming year.
2. Teachers teaching on call \$120,000 – this will result in decreased teaching time during the summer for students enrolled in Distance Learning programs.
3. Support staff salaries and benefits \$314,000 – this will result in more than six FTE fewer support staff employees in school administration, human resources and the operations department.
4. Support staff relief salaries and benefits \$20,000 – this will result in a loss of replacement staff at the district board office when support staff are away sick or on leave.
5. School administration \$129,000 – this will result in one less vice-principal in our schools.
6. District administration \$20,000 – the district has reduced from a one FTE to a .4 FTE transportation manager and is now in partnership with School District No. 62 (Sooke) for this position.
7. Community Link program \$81,000 – the district will only provide program supports in the amount of specific Community Link funding received and will not supplement from operating grant revenue.

Saanich Schools



Visit us at our website: [www.sd63.bc.ca](http://www.sd63.bc.ca)



8. Federal French program \$22,000 – the district will only provide program supports in the amount of specific Federal French funding received and will not supplement from operating grant revenue.
9. Supplies and services \$786,500 – this will result in \$345,500 less supplies and services in schools and \$441,000 less supplies and services in district support departments.
10. Bus transportation fees \$160,000 – this will result in an increase from \$20 per student per month to \$30 per student per month to ride the bus to school.
11. International tuition \$40,000 – International tuition fees have been increased by \$275 per student.

This list totals \$3,103,000 or 4.3% of the 2013/14 annual operating budget of the district.

The following are the impacts of these reductions:

1. With 14 fewer teachers in Saanich there will be a corresponding reduction of divisions or blocks offered to students. Classes may be slightly larger and closer to maximums. Specialist positions will be reduced slightly, having an impact on service to students.
2. SIDES will scale back their service to students this summer, due to changes in funding for distance learning. We believe an overall reorganization at SIDES was necessary due to these significant changes implemented recently by the Ministry, such as changes to the Education Guarantee.
3. Fewer support staff will be allocated to schools, reducing service levels to students with special needs to some degree. Saanich has supported students with special needs over the years as a high priority, but, while legal, this level cannot be sustained any longer.
4. Non replacement of clerical staff may result in overtime costs or reduced service to the public, including response time to phone calls, concerns and school incidents.
5. The loss of an elementary vice-principal results in less overall school supervision. As well the particular school affected houses a seniors' centre and will undergo a seismic upgrade, situations that require administrative oversight. While government promotes reductions in administration, at the same time it has increased statutory requirements. The loss of a vice-principal reduces the ability of the principal to attend to these or to the increasing expectations of continual communication with parents.
6. Saanich will now share a transportation manager. Due to this reduction in time, jobs have been downloaded on the Director of Facilities and other employees. Staff leadership will be impacted and communication with the public will be reduced.

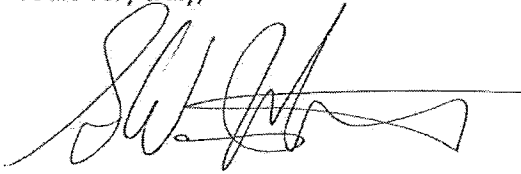
7. Over the years, Saanich added funding to support Community Link. This causes a reduction in Youth and Family Counsellors, and a corresponding reduction of service to students with mental health challenges and other complex needs.
8. The District will lose two employees who provide assistance to teachers in the Core French area.
9. When the supplies and services budgets are reduced by close to \$800,000 in Saanich, there will be less professional development, fewer resources for classrooms and the district office, less ability to train with (or purchase) new technologies, fewer minor repairs, and more pressure on parent organizations to contribute to field trips, buy school supplies and contribute to other opportunities for students.
10. Parents will be impacted by an increase in bus fees. This may result in fewer students riding buses and more congestion around schools. More parents will ask for this fee to be waived due to financial hardship.
11. It is possible that Saanich will lose some International students to other districts, due to the higher tuition.

While the 2014/15 operating grant is \$6.2 million higher than in 2002/2003, this increase is not sufficient to cover rising salary and benefit costs as well as increasing inflationary pressures over the same period. Since 2002/2003, in order to balance the budget, School District No. 63 has made reductions totalling 49 FTE teachers and more than \$1.6 million in supplies and services. Mitigating initiatives in this period include:

- The closing of six schools and consolidating populations of two into one new elementary school resulting in five fewer elementary schools, with corresponding reductions in administration
- Introducing a significant district technology plan with local capital to reduce operating costs
- Utilizing shared services for purchasing, energy management, WorkSafe claims management and bus transportation
- Improving our facilities to make energy cost savings
- Curtailing the expansion of playground space
- Leasing unused space to the community
- Moving one location of the Individual Learning Centre from a neutral, easily accessible location to a closed school
- Instituting and increasing bus fees
- Significantly increasing International student numbers

Over the years, the provincial public education formula has forced the board to make some very tough decisions that undermine the quality and effectiveness of services to students in Saanich. Additionally, Saanich School District is one of the largest employers on the Saanich Peninsula and sources many of its supplies and services locally. Reductions in these areas impact the financial health of our local businesses and the true cost is impossible to calculate. The Board of School District No. 63 (Saanich) respectfully requests the Minister to acknowledge and remediate the compounding negative effects on students and families of a provincial education funding formula that does not reflect increases to cover government imposed inflationary costs or other costs of services downloaded to school districts.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Wayne Hunter', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

G. Wayne Hunter  
Chair, Saanich Board of Education

GWH:klg:rd

cc: BC School Trustees' Association  
Gary Holman, MLA, Saanich North & the Islands  
Lana Popham, MLA, Saanich South  
Saanich Teachers' Association  
CUPE Local 441  
Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils of Saanich

June 13, 2014

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

Dear Honourable Minister Fassbender:

The Mission Board of Education would like to emphasize the importance of achieving a fair negotiated contract settlement with the British Columbia Teachers' Federation. We encourage both BCPSEA and the BCTF to work diligently to end this labour dispute and not allow it to interfere with service to students.

Please consider returning education money that is being saved back to School Districts and classrooms that have already lost so much. This round of bargaining has had a direct impact on the very students that we all say are number one. Let's put the money behind the words.

The current disruption to educational services is causing serious harm to our students and undermining faith in the public education system. Our District has worked diligently to restructure to more efficiently provide quality education for a very diverse student population. We need labour peace to continue improving public education in our District.

Sincerely,



Edie Heinrichs, Chairperson  
Board of Education  
School District No. 75 (Mission)

cc: Board of Education  
Mission Teachers' Union  
Canadian Union of Public Employees  
District Parent Advisory Council  
Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association  
BC Public Employers' Association  
BC School Trustees' Association (All Boards)  
MLA Simon Gibson  
MLA Marc Dalton



British Columbia  
School Trustees  
Association

June 23, 2014

Jim Iker  
President  
BC Teachers' Federation

Michael Marchbank  
Public Administrator  
BC Public School Employers' Association

Dear Jim and Michael,

I write to express BCSTA's extreme disappointment that we have arrived at the last week of school and are still at impasse. Your mutual agreement to use a mediator is a positive step forward but our students cannot wait while you search for one. Our public education system is in turmoil, relationships in our districts are fractured, and our students are caught in the middle. This is damaging, unnecessary, and unacceptable in the face of this mutual agreement. For the benefit of all students, teachers, administrators and parents I strongly urge you to immediately commit to non-stop, face-to-face bargaining away from the media.

Furthermore, until a mediator is found and can begin working with you, we urge both BCTF and BCPSEA to immediately suspend all strike and lock-out actions. Such a move would be an act of good faith by both parties and significantly increase public trust in the public education system. Most importantly, it would permit students to end their school year with their teachers.

Sincerely,

Teresa Rezanoff  
President

CC: Peter Fassbender, Minister of Education  
Mike Roberts, Interim CEO, BC Public School Employers Association