



Vancouver School Board

School District No. 39 (Vancouver)

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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November 19, 2007

Honourable Shirley Bond
Minister of Education and Deputy Premier
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear *Shirley* Minister Bond:

Re: Funding Formula Change

The Vancouver Board of Education would like to express its concern about the funding formula change with respect to Grade 10 - 12 students announced by the Province on October 18, 2007. In particular, the Board is concerned about the timing of the announcement and the lack of consultation with Boards of Education.

The timing of such an announcement is unfortunate as, like most Boards of Education, we have already structured classes and programs and allocated staff to schools based on September 30th actual enrolment and expected funding. We have limited options available to us mid-year to address any unexpected funding changes, whether they be positive or negative. The uncertain nature of our funding for 2007/2008 makes it difficult for our Board to develop a financially responsible plan.

Fiscal stability provides the backdrop for delivering quality education. This is certainly recognized by your government. As part of the moving three-year budgeting announced in Spring 2005, funds for boards to cover increased costs were established. It was anticipated by government that the funds would address increased costs over 2005/2006, 2006/2007, 2007/2008. The principle of supporting funding stability for boards was recognized by your government in the addition of budget to cover additional cost pressures from settlement of contract negotiations in 2006.

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Board of School Trustees:

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In addition, given the significant nature of this change in funding, it would have been beneficial if the Province had consulted with the Boards of Education prior to the announcement. Although funding by course has been mentioned as an option in the past, no real discussion has ever taken place with Boards of Education regarding the advantages, disadvantages and impacts of such a change.

The Ministry's unanticipated cost pressures from funding reimbursement of summer school fees and phenomenal growth in distributed learning is recognized but these had been largely factored in by individual boards into current budgets. One result is impact on distributional equity between and within districts. Taking funds, on a province-wide basis, to compensate for increased costs which exhibit a somewhat eccentric geography results in reallocation between districts and programs and cannot but influence fiscal efficiency and best practice for delivering quality education.

As it appears now that the Province is proceeding with this change, we would request that Boards of Education be advised of their funding impact as soon as possible and be provided with full information to understand the change for 2007/2008 and future years.

Stable and predictable long-term funding for Boards of Education will help to support student achievement.

Yours truly,



Ken Denike
Chairperson of the Board

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