



VIA EMAIL

Ref: 140316

June 10, 2010

Patti Bacchus, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 39 (Vancouver)
Email: patti.bacchus@vsb.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Bacchus:

Further to our meeting Tuesday and your draft response to the Comptroller General's report, I am concerned about the Vancouver Board of Education's apparent dismissal of many of the recommendations.

While we agree the Vancouver school district has excellent management staff, the Comptroller General found that the district's current financial circumstances could have been avoided had the Board been managing more prudently. The Comptroller General went on to make a number of recommendations aimed at finding savings, reducing waste and improving management practices that appear to have not been fully embraced by the Board.

As Minister of Education, I have a responsibility to ensure education dollars are being spent prudently and in the best interest of students. The Comptroller's recommendations, if acted upon, will help the Board develop a balanced budget that achieves savings, reduces waste and is in the best interest of students. As such, I am issuing the following Ministerial Directive Order to the Board:

The Board of Education for the Vancouver School District (School District #39) must:

- 1) Direct its senior management team to develop a balanced budget that:
 - a) takes full consideration of the recommendations directed to the Vancouver Board of Education set out in the Office of the Comptroller General's June 2010 "Report on The Vancouver School Board (School District 39);" and
 - b) is drafted with the best interests of students, student achievement and parents as the paramount considerations; and
- 2) On or before June 18, 2010, submit the draft budget to the Minister for her review prior to that budget being voted on by the Vancouver Board of Education.

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The Comptroller General has provided a comprehensive report with clear recommendations to better serve the 56,000 students in Vancouver. I am hopeful that this directive will allow all parties to now refocus their energy on meeting the needs of students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Margaret MacDiarmid", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Margaret MacDiarmid
Minister