



SCHOOL DISTRICT No.69 (QUALICUM)

February 19, 2020

Honourable Rob Fleming (via email)
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Honourable Carole James (via email)
Minister of Finance
PO Box 9048 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fleming and Minister James:

At its regular board meeting of January 28, 2020, the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) passed the following motion:

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) write a letter to the Ministries of Education and Finance outlining our funding needs to adequately maintain our school district and support vulnerable learners, including a reliance on unstable revenue streams such as the International Student Program. The letter will request the provincial government adequately fund public education.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela

In a world where we are collectively looking to our youth to lead us into a new paradigm it is imperative that they are offered every opportunity to capitalize on an educational structure that fully supports the 'educated citizen' described within the Ministry mandate as follows: "The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy."

This is a high calling and we are up to the challenge. BC already offers a strong public educational system. But we must be alert and act proactively to protect and nurture those elements that are strong while addressing areas that need attention. As part of that commitment we need to ensure that we retain and attract the best teachers. One of the ways to do that is to ensure that we provide fair compensation which includes the provincial government fully funding negotiated settlements and cost of living increases. We also call on government to fully fund management salary costs as set by PSEC, including increases that are tied to teachers' negotiated increases.

There is an ever increasing burden on families in this province. With an average of 1 in 5 children living in poverty in BC the school system continues to stretch out its hand to over-loaded PACs to fill in the short-fall in funding. Though an infusion of dollars into new playground equipment and some school supplies has been greatly appreciated, PACs continue to fundraise endlessly to help stock their schools' libraries and teachers' classroom resources, and to provide much needed food programs.

/2

Many school districts have become dependent on revenue received through their International Students Programs. While these revenues should have been considered supplemental, they are being used to fund learning supports, and to provide additional teacher and EA time. The current threat of the coronavirus could be disastrous for some districts who depend on the additional revenue to simply provide basic necessities and fill funding gaps. We call on government to provide funding at a level that fully funds education without reliance on these additional and unreliable sources of funding.

Finally, and with respect, we call on government to commit to an assurance that the eventual implementation of a new funding model will not only ensure continuation of the levels of service that have become prevalent in our communities, but will create new opportunities through even higher levels of funding in years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eve Flynn".

Eve Flynn
Board Chair

Copy: Board of Education (SD69)
Dr. Keven Elder, Superintendent of Schools (SD69)
Ron Amos, Secretary Treasurer (SD69)
BC Boards of Education

File: 0530-01