



## Media Release

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April 22, 2004

For Immediate Release

### ALARMING BUDGET

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Greater Victoria School District Trustees are taking a stand against chronic underfunding in Public Education. The District is performing strongly in its education mandate but this growth and education needs sustained funding.

Last night, as fire alarms rang, the Board of School Trustees of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) adopted a parallel budget built on full funding of \$5m in provincially driven – and unfunded – cost pressures.

“While the alarms were false, the danger that Public Education will be eroded by underfunding is very real”, said Charley Beresford, Board Chair. “It’s about our students. As a community we need every student to fulfill their potential. Provincial underfunding is putting this goal at risk.”

Trustees will file a Parallel Budget based on full funding of unfunded cost pressures alongside a balanced budget that contains \$2m in cuts.

The Parallel Budget contains an addition \$5m – the amount arising from Provincial decisions not funded by the Province. Since 2001-02 per student costs in School District 61 have increased by \$431 while funding has only risen by \$85 per student.

“The decision to legislate teachers back to work and then not fund the settlement has had a lasting impact on school board resources. It continues to impact services to students and makes the growth in education achievement in our district even more remarkable. These achievements cannot be sustained in the current climate of cuts”.

- 30 -

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