



November 14, 2013

Ref: 170202

Peg Orcherton, Chair  
Board of Education  
School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)  
556 Boleskine Rd  
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8  
**Email: sorcherton@telus.net**

Dear Ms. Orcherton:

Thank you for your letter of October 9, 2013, expressing your Board's concerns about funding for support staff wage increases. I appreciate you sharing the views of the Greater Victoria Board of Education.

As you know, government is committed to controlling spending to ensure an overall balanced budget for the province. This requires difficult decisions to be made by all those who deliver public services in British Columbia. With respect to the recent provincial framework agreement, under the Cooperative Gains Mandate, the wage increase included in the agreement must be funded from savings found within existing school district budgets. I understand this presents challenges for all involved, and as a former trustee, I fully appreciate the difficult choices facing school districts in the current fiscal environment.

Nevertheless, I assure you that I am committed to working with trustees to achieve our shared goal of improving the public education system. To that end, in the 2013/14 school year, the Learning Improvement Fund will provide an additional \$60 million to support complex class composition, and the Framework for Long Term Stability in Education contemplates an additional \$100 million Priority Education Investment Fund in the third year of a long-term collective agreement with teachers.

Sincerely,

Peter Fassbender  
Minister