



BOARD OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA V8Z 1E8
PHONE (250) 475-4106 FAX (250) 475-4112

February 17, 2014

The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Clark:

The impact of the decision of the BC Supreme Court on school district collective agreements with teaching staff is causing a great deal of uncertainty as we work through the process of determining what changes are needed.

At its February board meeting the Greater Victoria Board of Education passed the following motion:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) write a letter to Premier Clark strongly urging the Provincial Government to return to the bargaining table, in good faith, to negotiate class size and composition language and to fully fund the agreed to language.

In an effort to resolve the issues related to class size and composition, it is important for Government to immediately begin genuine, good-faith bargaining with the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and to fully fund the agreed to language.

School boards throughout the Province have been facing annual provincial funding shortfalls, declining enrolment and additional costs, which have led to service level reductions in the K-12 sector. Over the past ten years, this Board has closed schools, reduced staffing, cut discretionary budgets, participated in shared services initiatives and worked to develop additional sources of revenue. For the 2014/2015 school year, our district is facing a structural deficit in excess of \$8.0 million and budget reductions will have to be made. Given our difficult financial position, it is paramount that Government provides adequate funding to all school districts to enable them to be in compliance with the collective agreements that are now back in effect.

Government must take full financial responsibility for any costs arising from the ruling of the BC Supreme Court to ensure that our students continue to benefit from a robust public education system.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P. Orcheron".

Peg Orcheron
Board Chair

Cc Board of Education
The Honourable Peter Fassbender
All BC School Boards, c/o BCSTA
Greater Victoria Teachers' Association
British Columbia Teachers' Federation
Sherri Bell, Acting Superintendent of Schools
Debra Laser, Secretary-Treasurer