



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

May 21, 2014

The Honourable Minister Cadieux
Minister of Children and Family Development
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Cadieux:

RE: Victoria Youth Detention Centre

The Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) wishes to express our concerns regarding the recent Ministry of Children and Family Development announcement, of plans to close the Victoria Youth Detention Centre. The relocation of vulnerable youth from the Victoria Youth Detention Centre to facilities in Burnaby and Prince George creates significant impacts for Victoria young offenders and their families.

The Greater Victoria School Board respectfully requests a review of this decision in consideration of the considerable challenges faced by our young offenders. We ask that the Centre be kept open to both young male and female offenders, and that young female offenders who have been relocated to other centres be returned to Vancouver Island.

Young offenders, particularly young female offenders, often have no voice in society. These children are frequently marginalized, with multiple issues including substance abuse, physical and emotional abuse, and the effects of poverty. The further they are taken from their homes, the greater the risks they face.

The Victoria Youth Detention Centre plays an essential role within our region, not one measured by occupancy statistics, but by the humanity of a society that values that every child deserves a place in our community.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Orcheron".

Peg Orcheron
Board Chair

Cc: Board of Trustees

Sherri Bell, Superintendent of Schools
All BC Boards of Education, c/o BCSTA
Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia
Peter Fassbender, Minister of Education
Carole James, MLA Victoria-Beacon Hill
Rob Fleming, MLA Victoria-Swan Lake
Maurine Karagianis, MLA Esquimalt-Royal Roads
Dr. Andrew Weaver, MLA Oak Bay-Gordon Head
John Horgan, MLA Juan de Fuca
Lana Popham, MLA Saanich South
Frank Leonard, Mayor, Corporation of the District of Saanich
Nils Jensen, Mayor, Corporation of the District of Oak Bay
Dean Fortin, Mayor, City of Victoria
Barb Desjardins, Mayor, Township of Esquimalt
Graham Hill, Mayor, Town of View Royal
Jane Mendum, Mayor, District of Highlands
Media