



BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Chair: Peg Orcherton Vice-Chair: Bev Horsman
Trustees: Catherine Alpha, Tom Ferris, Elaine Leonard
Edith Loring-Kuhanga, Michael McEvoy, Diane McNally, Deborah Nohr*

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
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September 09, 2014

RE: An Open Letter to the Community from the Greater Victoria Board of Education

The impacts of the labour dispute between the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) have been widely felt in our community. As Trustees, we have heard from many students, parents and employees about the effect that the current strike has had upon their learning and their lives.

We have also been asked about our role in the dispute and what we have done, as a board, toward a positive resolution. As an employer, the Board of Education is represented by BCPSEA and there are two trustees representing the views of the British Columbia School Trustees' Association (BCSTA) at the provincial bargaining table.

Our Board has repeatedly called on government to properly fund and resource public education. We have called for good faith bargaining, negotiation of class size and composition, mediation, and a renewed focus on finding a solution that will provide long term stability for students. Most recently a letter concerning binding arbitration has been written. A record of our advocacy letters can be found at <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/AdvocacyLetters.aspx>. In addition, as Board Chair, I have participated in numerous media interviews (print, radio and television) expressing our commitment to students and our desire for the parties to negotiate a fair agreement.

We have a long history and a great deal to be proud of in the provision of public education in Greater Victoria. We believe that there is a common purpose that is shared by all parties — the recognition of the value of public education for our youth in British Columbia.

We thank everyone in the community for their understanding and patience through this challenging time. We remain optimistic that we will be welcoming students back to school very soon.

On behalf of the Greater Victoria Board of Education,

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

Peg Orcherton
Board Chair

Cc: Media
Sherri Bell, Superintendent of Schools
Trustees
Michael Marchbank, Public Administrator, BC Public School Employers' Association
Jim Iker, President, British Columbia Teachers' Federation
Teresa Rezansoff, President, British Columbia School Trustees' Association

All Boards of Education, c/o BCSTA
The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier
The Honourable 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
John Bird, President, Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
Nicole Makohonuk, President, British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
GVSD Unions and Associations