



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
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December 12, 2014

The Honourable Michael de Jong
Ministry of Finance
PO Box 9048
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister de Jong,

The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) has reviewed the recommendations of the Report on the Budget 2015 Consultations published in November 2014 by the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. We were pleased to find that the Standing Committee recognizes some of the significant challenges facing the BC K-12 education system.

The specific recommendations for the K-12 system include:

- 1. Provide stable, predictable, and adequate funding to enable school districts to fulfill their responsibility to provide continued equitable access to quality public education, and to meet required repair and maintenance needs.*
- 2. Provide adequate capital funding to school districts for facility improvements, seismic upgrades, and additional schools in rapidly growing communities.*
- 3. Provide support for proposed new K-12 initiatives such as personalized learning and enhanced trades and technology training.*
- 4. Provide resources to identify and address the growing number of students with special needs and those with minimal English language skills.*
- 5. Restore the separate library line item in the Ministry of Education budget for public libraries, and commit to stable, ongoing funding.*

Standing Committee findings identify the growing inadequacy of current funding to meet the operational and capital needs of a public education system committed to the best in education. Citizens throughout the Province have called attention to the need for more resources to provide a "well-funded and accessible public K-12 education system".

At our Inaugural Board Meeting held on Wednesday, December 10, 2014, the following motion was passed:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the chair to write a letter to the Minister of Finance, copying the Minister of Education, requesting that the Minister of Finance heed the recommendations from the First Report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and increase the funding to K-12 education in the 2015 Budget.

The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) respectfully requests that the Honourable Minister of Finance support all five of the key recommendations of the Standing Committee's report and commit the resources necessary to provide school districts with the tools and facilities needed to provide high quality public education to BC's youth.

Sincerely,



Edith Loring-Kuhanga
Board Chair

Cc: Board of Education
The Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of Education
All BC School Boards, c/o BCSTA
Greater Victoria Teachers' Association
GVSD Unions and Associations
Sherri Bell, Superintendent of Schools
Debra Laser, Secretary-Treasurer