



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
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July 8, 2015

The Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045, STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

British Columbia School Trustees Association
4th floor - 1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6J 5K9

Dear Minister Fassbender and Mr. Roberts:

Re: Required High School Course Regarding Residential Schools in Canada

On behalf of the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria), I am writing to you today to reiterate our support of a motion passed at the BCSTA 2014 AGM in April requesting that the Ministry of Education develop a 25 hour required high school course regarding residential schools in Canada for all students to complete prior to graduation.

At our Board Meeting held on Monday, June 15, 2015, the following motion was passed:

That the Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) write a letter to the Minister of Education and the BCSTA reiterating its support for the following motion, originally brought forward by Chair Loring-Kuhanga, and carried at the BCSTA April AGM: That BCSTA request that the Ministry of Education develop a required high school course regarding residential schools in Canada for all graduates in public schools similar to the 25 hour course that is offered to all graduating students in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The original motion that was passed in 2014 by the BCSTA AGM requested that the Ministry of Education develop a separate course that all graduates would be required to complete before they left secondary school. We strongly support the intent of that original motion. We feel that the motion has been watered down significantly by weaving residential schools curriculum throughout the grades as teachers will be able to choose whether or not that they want teach it. Having a separate required course would provide the focus on residential schools which would be taught to all students, regardless of ability, program or nationality.

We ask that you please address the original intent of the motion and develop a required course on residential schools that is similar to the Nunavut/NWT's 25 hour required course. We believe that this will be a way to address true reconciliation by not only your government but by all British Columbians! If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Edith Loring-Kuhanga".

Edith Loring-Kuhanga
Board Chair

cc: Board of Education
All BC School Boards, c/o BCSTA
Pieter Langstraat, Superintendent of Schools
Debra Laser, Secretary-Treasurer