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August 23, 2016

Edith Loring-Kuhanga, Chairperson
Board of Education (Greater Victoria)
Greater Victoria School District #61
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8

Dear Edith Loring-Kuhanga,

Thank you for your letter of July 18, 2016, sent to Honourable Michael de Jong, Minister of Finance and Honourable Mike Bernier, Minister of Education. Your letter has been forwarded for response to the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat (PSEC).

Government has made the effective management of public sector compensation a central focus of its efforts to control costs and balance the provincial budget. Prudent compensation decision-making has also played a key role in balancing the need to ensure effective, affordable public services with a commitment to providing fair pay for employees.

Over the last several months, employers have moved to a common public sector philosophy that brings a more consistent approach using a long-term, system-wide view to ensure compensation is sustainable. One of the guiding principles of the common public sector philosophy is a performance-based culture where compensation decisions are based on merit rather than the entitlement to an annual increase.

This move to a common approach to compensation recognizes the 'one taxpayer' lens through which public sector organizations are viewed. The Taxpayer Accountability Principles are the foundation for public sector organizations to strengthen accountability, promote cost-control, and ensure organizations are operating in the best interest of taxpayers.

As you know, as part of the move to the public sector compensation philosophy in 2015, employers were given some modest flexibility to address pressures of compression, inversion and retention of high-performing employees. In answer to your request to fund the increases, it is in keeping with the need for consistent application of policy across the public sector and in recognition of the relatively smaller number of eligible employees, that all employers, including K-12 school districts, have funded approved increases from within existing budgets.

Furthermore, now that 99.9% of unionized employees have settled agreements with modest wage increases under the Economic Stability Mandate and with the Province's fiscal circumstances

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Ministry of Finance	Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat	Mailing Address: PO Box 9400 Stn Prov Govt Victoria BC V8W 9V1	Location Address: 210 – 880 Douglas St Victoria BC V8W 2B7 250.387.0842
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continuing to improve, employers are now able to implement some further modest salary increases for management staff.

To that end, I am pleased to refer you to the recent communication distributed by the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) in which the next phase of this policy direction has been provided. For your convenience, I have attached BCPSEA's bulletin which contains detailed information on the next steps for districts in this 2016 direction. I expect that there may be a number of management employees in SD 61 that will be affected by this new direction and I encourage you to work closely with BCPSEA on requests for appropriate adjustments to employee compensation levels.

Thank you for taking the time to write, and appreciate the work that SD 61 demonstrates both in its commitment to employees and managing the district's strategic plan. We are confident that a common compensation philosophy across the public sector will provide a standardized foundation for these decisions which will lead to fair and reasonable salaries for valued employees.

Sincerely,



Christina Zacharuk
President and CEO

Attachment

pc: Honourable Mike Bernier, Minister of Education
Honourable Michael de Jong, Minister of Finance
Renzo Del Negro, Chief Executive Officer, BC Public School Employers' Association
Teresa Rezansoff, President, BC School Trustees Association
Ramona Soares, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education
Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer, SD 61