



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
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October 28, 2016

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

RE: SD61 Support of elected Boards of Education

Dear Minister Bernier,

At our regular meeting of October 24, 2016 the Board passed the following motion:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) write to the Minister of Education expressing their support of the democratic right of the public to an elected Board of Education. Therefore, the Board of Education call on the Minister of Education to amend the School Act to require the Lieutenant Governor in Council to order an election be held within six months in the event that an "official trustee" has been appointed to a District Board of Education.

It is the Board's opinion that democratically elected Boards of Education are fundamental to the success of public education. Furthermore, as the Ministry is committed to a "co-governance" model of public education, the lack of democratically elected Boards of Education undermines the basis of our joint governance..

Let me be clear that the Board is not supporting the firing of democratically elected Boards in BC. However in the event that you decide to fire democratically elected boards, we are encouraging changes to the *School Act* that would enshrine the requirement to call elections within six months of a Board being fired.

Since Boards of Education (and previously School Boards) have been a fundamental building block of Canadian democracy since prior to confederation, we believe that the election should be called in a timely manner. School Districts have a right to be guided by the public that it serves. Finally, the lack of a democratically elected Board undermines the decisions of a District and also undermines public education more broadly.

We look forward to a timely response to our request. Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edith Loring-Kuhanga".

Edith Loring-Kuhanga
Chair, Board of the Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Cc: Piet Langstraat, Superintendent of Schools
Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
Board of Trustees
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