



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
PHONE (250) 475-4106 FAX (250) 475-4112**

October 28, 2016

Teresa Rezansoff
President
British Columbia School Trustees Association
4th Floor - 1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6J 5K9

Re: October 17, 2016 Media Release

Dear Ms. Rezansoff:

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) instruct the Chair to write a letter to the BCSTA President condemning the partisan letter issued to media after the dismissal of Vancouver School District's elected Board of Education.

As you can see from the motion, the Board is extremely concerned with your media release of October 17, 2016. Our concerns are related to the following three specific matters:

First, your letter appears to support the firing of a democratically elected Board of Education. While I understand that BCSTA supports Districts being treated in an equivalent fashion, there is no reason to support the firing of a Board of Education. This action is contrary to the co-governance structure that we strive for in public education in BC.

Second, you should have consulted with member Boards on the matter. There is no reason that such a release could not have waited until the provincial council meeting this week. Waiting for the provincial council would have allowed for debate to occur amongst member boards and the will of the membership would be able to direct the BCSTA accordingly. Since this matter is too important to all Boards in BC we do not want to encourage the Ministry to react in such a manner.

Finally, you have addressed a matter with a Board that is not a member of the BCSTA. While I understand that it is the goal of BCSTA to represent all Boards in this province, the reality is that it does not. As it stands the matter is between the Board of Education of School District No. 39 (Vancouver) and the Minister of Education. Interfering in this matter is beyond the mandate of the organization and we cannot support such action. Our Board has long supported the work of the BCSTA and feel the provincial voice of the organization is important for Boards. This action, however, undermines our confidence in that voice which is why the Board has chosen such strong language with respect to your communication.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your response.

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
Board of Education