



# BOARD OF EDUCATION

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)  
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8  
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March 1, 2018

via email: [educ.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:educ.minister@gov.bc.ca)

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

Dear Minister Fleming:

The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) is writing to express concern regarding the cost implications of the recently announced employer health tax.

Our school district has faced funding pressures for many years and has had to make numerous challenging budget decisions. Upon your appointment as Minister of Education, we were encouraged to see that three of the priorities for the Ministry of Education included enhancement to K-12 education funding, additional annual funding for school supplies and the development of a stable and sustainable model for the K-12 education system.

The 2018 Provincial budget included the elimination of medical services plan premiums effective January 1, 2020 and the introduction of an employer health tax based on 1.95% of payroll effective January 1, 2019. While our Board will see a savings of approximately \$500,000 for the current school year, our Board wishes to bring to your attention that the employer health tax will result in an estimated increased cost to the school district of \$500,000 in 2018/2019, \$1,500,000 in 2019/2020 and an ongoing cost of \$1,000,000 in 2020/2021.

Given your Government's commitment to public education we are requesting that the increased costs associated with the new tax be funded. We also understand that you have indicated in the media that you are examining the issue and are hopeful that the impact can be mitigated. While our District is anticipating being able to balance our budget for the 2018-19 school year we still have areas that require reinvestment to support our students. We are particularly focused on the areas of inclusive education, mental health and operations and maintenance. The impact of the new tax will lessen our ability to address these areas.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to the matter being addressed in the near future.

Yours truly,

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

Edith Loring-Kuhanga  
Board Chair

cc: Board of Education  
Piet Langstraat, Superintendent of Schools  
Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer  
GVSD Partner Groups  
BC School Boards, c/o BCSTA  
Local Media