

To: Board of Education, SD61
From: Trustee Duncan and Trustee Whiteaker
Date: June 22, 2020
RE: Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee (the “Committee”) met on four occasions in the 2019-20 school- year:

- October 29, 2019
- January 27, 2020
- March 3, 2020
- June 1, 2020

The Committee had previously identified four areas of priority:

1. Children in Care
2. Child Care and Early Learning
3. Mental Health Literacy and Mental Wellness
4. Current motions that come forward from the Board of Education

In the early part of 2020, the Committee’s focus was the motion below, referred to the Committee following the Education Policy and Planning Committee meeting of January 6, 2020:

That the Board of Education of Greater Victoria (School District 61) instruct the Chair to write a letter to the Minister of Education, the Premier and the Treasury Board, asking the Government to increase public education funding via a significant increase to the per pupil amount in the 2020 Provincial Budget in order to realistically meet the needs of students in BC Public Schools.

The Committee recommended that the Board of Education write to the Minister of Education to advocate for the following funding requirements: supporting StrongStart, resourcing the new K-12 curriculum, and the funding of tools to further develop student mental health initiatives. The Board supported the Committee’s recommendation and a letter was sent on behalf of the Board to the Minister of Education in March 2020. It is of note that there were significant overlaps between the funding requirements identified in that letter and the \$1.14 million Equity of Opportunity Supplement that the District received from the Ministry of Education in May 2020. More recently, the Committee has been reviewing a motion referred by the Board of Education which addresses assessment and reporting of student progress while operating under the Ministry of Education’s current Continuity of Learning Framework. The Committee’s initial recommendations will be presented to the Board of Education on 22 June 2020.