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June 18, 2014

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Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
PO box 9405 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender,

The Coquitlam Board of Education is concerned that negotiations between the BCTF and BCPSEA may have stalled. We were optimistic that an agreement would be reached prior to the move to a full strike. We wish to encourage the Ministry of Education to resolve this labour dispute as soon as possible and prior to the end of the current school year and the commencement of Summer School. We fear that the continued conflict will have negative repercussions for our students and our school district for the foreseeable future.

Teacher and support staff morale is low, administrators are overworked, students and parents are concerned about exams, report card marks, year-end activities, and their future. The community is concerned about our inability to conclude a collective agreement efficiently.

We, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools, feel that the current disruption is putting the reputation of public education in jeopardy. The loss of community faith in and commitment to the public education system may cause irreparable harm to our District Mission, our ability to accomplish government educational priorities, and the foundation of our society.

The Coquitlam Board of Education urges the Minister to appoint a special, mutually agreed upon, mediator to help the parties to come to an expedited negotiated settlement. Our educational community requires decisive leadership at this time.

Yours truly,

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)

Melissa Hyndes, Chair
Board of Education

c: Board of Education
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Mark Ferrari, Secretary-Treasurer
Charley King, CTA President
Jim Iker, BCTF President
Michael Marchbank, BCPSEA Public Administrator
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