

Learning for a Lifetime

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August 28, 2014

The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier, Province of British Columbia
PO Box 9041, Stn Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

The Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045, Stn Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Re: Teacher Collective Bargaining and Use of Strike Savings

Dear Premier Clark and Minister Fassbender,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Education of School District 43 (Coquitlam) to urge you both to use the influence of your respective offices to facilitate and encourage the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) to urgently continue their bargaining efforts, with the full support of the mediation expertise of Vince Ready.

Further, we would like to share our grave disappointment with the Government's recent announcement to remove strike savings from public education. Like many other Boards of Education, we learned of the proposed \$40/ day childcare subsidy through the media. As co-governors of public education, an announcement of this nature should never come to Boards of Education as a surprise. When this happens it seriously undermines the trust required to work collaboratively to benefit the students of British Columbia. Further, it produces additional and completely unnecessary acrimony in the education sector.

The public perception of the chaos surrounding public education shifts focus away from the many strengths of our public education system.

Our Board strongly supports the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) Back to School Action Plan proposal that states that all strike savings be returned to the Learning Improvement Fund (LIF).


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We are sensitive to the financial hardship parents will experience as a direct result of the delayed start to the school year. The proposed \$40/ day subsidy will bring some financial relief to parents. With a shortage of regulated and affordable childcare spaces available in the Lower Mainland, however, we are concerned that unregulated "pop-up" childcare options may represent a safety concern for some children, particularly our most vulnerable.

We are in the eleventh hour but believe that a final opportunity to resolve the current impasse remains with the mediation support of Vince Ready. We are looking to all parties involved in teacher collective bargaining to focus on finding an immediate resolution that will benefit students, parents and teachers and ensure a September 2nd start to school.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Yours truly,
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)



Melissa Hyndes
Chair
Board of Education

cc: Board of Education SD43
Tom Grant, Superintendent
Mark Ferrari, Secretary-Treasurer
Ken Cober, President, CPVPA
Charley King, President, CTA
Dave Ginter, President, CUPE Local 561
Chuck Dennison, President, DPAC
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Mayor Richard Stewart and Coquitlam City Council
Mayor Greg Moore and Port Coquitlam City Council
Mayor Mike Clay and Port Moody City Council
Mayor Heather Anderson and Village of Anmore Council
Mayor Ralph Drew and Village of Belcarra Council
Mike Roberts, Interim CEO BCPSEA
Jim Iker, President BCTF
BC Boards of Education c/o BCSTA