

Minister
of Citizenship
and Immigration

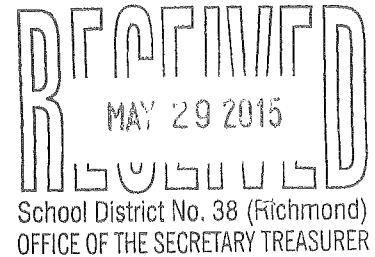


Ministre
de la Citoyenneté
et de l'Immigration

Ottawa, Canada K1A 1L1

MAY 26 2015

Dr. Eric Yung
Chairperson,
Richmond Board of Education
School District No. 38 (Richmond)
7811 Granville Avenue
Richmond BC V6Y 3E3



Dear Dr. Yung:

Thank you for your correspondence of February 11, 2015, which outlined the concerns of the Richmond Board of Education regarding settlement funding in Richmond, British Columbia (BC). I regret the delay in responding.

Our Government recognizes that integration is a process that encompasses early settlement and adaptation to Canadian life over the longer term. Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) Settlement Program is designed to support permanent residents or protected persons, and offers services to facilitate these newcomers in their initial steps towards their establishment. They include needs assessment, information, orientation, language training, labour market preparation and services that connect newcomers to their new communities.

Our Government has been proud to significantly increase settlement funding across Canada from less than \$200 million in 2005-2006 to almost \$600 million in 2014-2015. Please note that the settlement allocation budget for British Columbia was \$40 million in 2005, but has more than doubled to almost \$90 million in 2015-2016.

On April 1, 2014, the Government of Canada resumed management of federally-funded settlement programs in BC, to ensure that each region of Canada receives a fair share of funding and that immigrants have access to the same level of services, regardless of where they choose to settle.

A BC-specific Call for Proposals (CFP) was used to facilitate transition of the settlement program back to federal administration. The CFP process is competitive and designed to identify settlement provider organizations that can best provide newcomers with the services they need.

Canada

I have noted your concerns that the Settlement Workers in Schools would no longer be able to provide services for temporary foreign workers, inland refugee claimants, students and new Canadian citizens. Please note that under the Terms and Conditions of the settlement funding agreement, these groups are not eligible to receive settlement services. For 2015-2016, the Government increased its commitment to pre-arrival services so that immigrants and refugees who access Canada's settlement services prior to their arrival in the country are better prepared to work and integrate socially.

CIC will continue working with provinces and territories, as well as service provider organizations, to maintain high quality services for newcomers, improve accountability, and ensure that funding responds to the actual needs of newcomers.

With regard to the provision of settlement services in Canada, a future National CFP is currently being developed with an expected launch during the 2015/16 fiscal year. As this process moves forward and priorities are developed, additional targeted consultations will take place to ensure opportunities to identify service gaps and inform emerging priorities.

Thank you for writing and bringing your interest in this matter to my attention. I trust that this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Chris Alexander', with a stylized, flowing script.

Chris Alexander, P.C., M.P.
Canada's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration