

April 7, 2015

The Honourable Michael De Jong  
Minister of Finance  
Province of British Columbia  
PO Box 0048 Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2

The Honourable Peter Fassbender  
Minister of Education  
Province of British Columbia  
PO Box 9045 Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2

Dear Ministers De Jong and Fassbender:

On behalf of the Board of Education (Richmond) and the staff, students and parents we serve, I would like to express our tremendous disappointment at the requirement that the sixty school districts in the province generate \$29 million in administrative cuts in the 2015/16 fiscal year, and then an additional \$25 million in the following year. The characterization of these arbitrary and enforced reductions as "low hanging fruit" is particularly galling, and disrespectful of the role that elected school boards have played in running our school districts in a constantly constrained budget environment while continuing to provide the highest quality of education to students in BC.

Over each of the next two years, Richmond will be expected to reduce our administrative costs by about \$1 million, on top of unfunded inflationary pressures which will impact our budget by close to \$0.5 million over the same period, and \$2.5 million in reduced operating grants due to declining enrollment. \$8 million over a two year period will mean significant job losses, because after so many years of reduced operating budgets and unfunded cost increases, there are no more easy cuts. Richmond has for many years been an active participant in shared services initiatives amongst school districts, and has had a long standing agreement with the City of Richmond that has generated significant cost reductions for both the City and the School District. The recent provincial focus on shared services for the education sector is not expected to generate any significant savings in Richmond, and may in some cases even lead to additional costs.

Our 2014/15 Amended Annual Budget, which was approved by the Board as recently as February, sets district administration costs at 2.9% of the overall operating budget. Such slim administrative costs should be held out as the model for efficient operations, instead of being used as a means to punish school districts.

**Board of Education:**  
*Eric Yung - Chairperson*  
*Debbie Tablotney – Vice Chairperson*  
*Ken Hamaguchi Jonathan Ho Sandra Nixon*  
*Donna Sargent Alice Wong*

We therefore urge you to reconsider the enforced administrative cuts, and instead focus on the recommendations of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to provide stable, predictable, and adequate funding to school districts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Yung", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Eric Yung, Chairperson  
On Behalf of the Board of Education (Richmond)

cc Richmond Board of Education  
Richmond City Council  
Richmond MLAs  
Leader of the Opposition  
Opposition Education Critic  
Presidents – Richmond Stakeholder Groups  
BCSTA - For Distribution  
Media Contacts