



January 28, 2016

Ref: 185600

Debbie Tablotney, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 38 (Richmond)
Email: dtablotney@sd38.bc.ca

Dear Mrs. Tablotney:

Thank you for your letter of January 8, 2016, requesting the Ministry of Education's support in acquiring a property in Richmond's City Centre for a future school. Minister Bernier has asked that I respond on his behalf.

We appreciate the efforts and progress that Richmond School District (the District) is making to develop a long range facilities plan, and recognize the efforts that the District is making regarding the difficult decision around possible school closures. To balance possible closures in some areas of decline while adding capacity in areas of growth can be challenging.

In terms of support for a new City Centre school, the Ministry of Education has three areas that it focuses on when developing Capital Planning Priorities:

1. Safety - through seismic upgrades, damage repair and safety replacements.
2. Maintaining Current Infrastructure – through the Routine Capital Program, Building Envelope Program, the Carbon Neutral Credit Program and the Annual Facilities Grant; and
3. Meeting Rapid Growth – to add capacity to existing schools or support new schools in areas of increasing enrollments

As you've noted in your letter, City Centre is experiencing growth and increasing enrollment such that you've made a new school in this area your number one priority and I applaud your proactive approach to begin the process of acquiring the properties necessary for a new school. The Ministry of Education is supportive of this project and will be seeking funding approval in order to cost share with the District on the site acquisition. I would like to encourage you to continue to move forward on this initiative in order to complete the purchase prior to March 31, 2016.

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**Ministry of
Education**

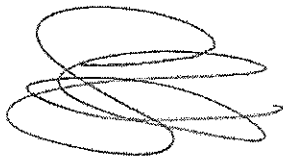
Planning and Major Projects
Division

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5th Floor, 620 Superior St
Victoria BC V8V 1V2

Again, thank you for writing. I appreciate the opportunity to review your comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Shanna Mason
Assistant Deputy Minister

pc: Renée Mounteney, Executive Director, Ministry of Education
Lesley Ballman, Regional Director, Ministry of Education
Rob Drew, Planning Officer, Ministry of Education
Superintendent of Schools
Stakeholder Presidents
Richmond MLAs
House Leader, Official Opposition
Education Critic, Official Opposition
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