

Robbins, Lia EDUC:EX

From: Preziuso, Carrie EDUC:EX
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2015 1:48 PM
To: Blonde, Sarah EDUC:EX
Cc: Robbins, Lia EDUC:EX
Subject: FW: BCSDCEDA Response to Funding Announcement of December 4, 2014

From: Chris Gilmour [mailto:cgilmour@vsb.bc.ca]
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2015 12:52 PM
To: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX; EDUC DM EDUC:EX
Subject: RE: BCSDCEDA Response to Funding Announcement of December 4, 2014

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| MINISTER OF EDUCATION | | |
| RECEIVED | | |
| DM.O. # | 179931 | □FYI |
| FEB 16 2015 | | |
| □DRAFT REPLY | □FILE | □MA |
| □OTHER | □AC | □DM |

Dear Minister:

While we did receive an email acknowledgement (see below) that our letter had been received on December 17, 2014, we are still hoping to meet with you as Minister or designate now that we have had an opportunity to further study the impact of the funding changes on the youth/adult learners we serve.

We would appreciate knowing when such a meeting might be possible.

Respectfully,

Chris G-Lammerse
President
BC School Districts Continuing Education
Directors' Association

Thank you for your email; I appreciate your taking the time to write. This automated response is to confirm that your email has been received and will be reviewed shortly. Where appropriate, I will respond to your email or have Ministry of Education staff respond to you directly. Please be assured your email will be dealt with as soon as possible.

Peter Fassbender
Minister

From: Chris Gilmour
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 4:18 PM
To: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca; DM.Education@gov.bc.ca
Cc: Janine Hannis; Winkelmans, Tim EDUC:EX
Subject: BCSDCEDA Response to Funding Announcement of December 4, 2014

Attached please find a response from our Association (BCSDCEDA) to the funding announcement of December 4, 2014.

February 23, 2015

The Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, B. C.
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender:

At the public meeting held on February 11th, 2015 the Board of Education (SD42 Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows) received a report from the District's Continuing Education Department on the impacts of the policy change regarding funding for adult graduated students taking academic upgrading courses. Following discussion of the report the Board instructed that a letter be forwarded to your office expressing the following concerns.

1. The policy is inequitable when it comes to supporting vulnerable adult learners with tuition free academic up-grading opportunities. We understand the commitment to supporting adult learners who are high school graduates from other countries with tuition free academic up-grading opportunities so that they can contribute more fully to our communities. These new Canadians do need assistance as they begin their lives in BC and tuition free academic up-grading is an appropriate support. However, we do not see a less compelling case for assistance and support for many BC grads who are, for example, single parents or vulnerable adults. These adults also need the opportunity to access tuition free academic up-grading in order to improve their employment opportunities and integrate more fully into the community. We serve BC graduated adults at two correctional facilities. The needs of this group of adults are apparent – and the reasons to provide access to tuition free academic up-grading would seem to be obvious. The Board ask why citizens of this province who have graduated in BC would not receive the same benefits of free access to academic upgrading courses as those graduating elsewhere?
2. The policy seems counter to the government's emphasis on jobs training since many of the adult graduated students taking courses for academic upgrading are doing so to enter trades and other post secondary employment oriented programs. In our view the policy adds a barrier to citizens accessing further training rather than providing encouragement to do so.
3. While the Board appreciates a grant program has been established to assist those unable to pay course fees we wonder at the cost of administering such programs and note that since most students are upgrading for employment purposes most are among the Province's most

vulnerable population. The Board wonders how many citizens will take advantage of the grant program since applying for the support represents yet another step necessary to achieve success in one's education.

4. The Board is having difficulty reconciling the reported increase in the grant program for low income learners of \$7.6 million with the reported refocusing of \$9 million towards its primary objectives in K-12 education. While the Board appreciates the need to look at all areas to increase the funding envelope for K-12 education we are not certain spending an additional \$7.6 million to save \$9 million while establishing new barriers for vulnerable citizens is the most effective way to achieve that end. If we have misunderstood these numbers and more funding will be available for the K-12 education sector as a result of the policy change how will that additional funding be made available for the K-12 education sector?
5. The policy change was made without consultation with Boards of Education or the BC School Trustees Association to determine the likely impacts of the policy change. The Board is concerned this is another example of the Ministry not honoring the co- governance relationship between Boards of Education and the Government.

We understand the new policy will be implemented in May of this year. Since it has not yet been implemented we wish to respectfully request that implementation be delayed and a further review be undertaken in consultation with Boards of Education throughout the Province to determine what the impact of the change is likely to be and whether or not it will achieve the desired end result or will simply result in fewer graduated adults taking academic upgrading courses. We know this is not the result the Ministry is looking for.

Sincerely,



Mike Murray,
Board Chair

cc.

Board of Education, SD42 Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows
Ms. Sylvia Russell, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer
Canadian Union of Public Employees
District Parent Advisory Council
District Student Advisory Council
Maple Ridge Principals'-Vice Principals' Association
Maple Ridge Teachers' Association
Honourable Mike de Jong, Minister of Finance
Mr. Marc Dalton, MLA
Dr. Doug Bing, MLA
BCSTA for circulation to all Boards of Education

School District No. 74 (Gold Trail)

PO Bag 250, Ashcroft, BC V0K 1A0
Phone: 250 453 9101 FAX: 250 453 2425
www.sd74.bc.ca



January 9, 2015

The Honourable Andrew Wilkinson
Minister of Advanced Education
PO Box 9080, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

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

Dear Ministers Wilkinson and Fassbender,

On December 15th, 2014, the Board of Education received notification from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education about changes to provincial funding for adult education courses. In response to this announcement, at their January 6, 2015 Open meeting, the Gold Trail Board unanimously passed a motion to write a letter expressing concern regarding this decision and the way this decision was made.

This announcement will make it challenging for adult learners who need to upgrade their courses so they can meet pre-requisite requirements to access post-secondary programs. Many of these adult students do not have the financial resources to pay tuition fees to upgrade while trying to support themselves and their families. Adult learners across the province face significant challenges when seeking further education, job training and employment. The British Columbia government should not be making these options and opportunities more difficult for these individuals. We are also concerned on the impact this decision will have on students in Grades 10 to 12 and their achievement. This decision will limit the options students see for themselves during course selection as they will no longer see upgrading as a feasible option in their future.

We also express our concern that this decision was made without consultation with the BC School Trustees Association and its members. This decision does not appear to reflect the spirit and intent of the recently signed Co-Governance Relationship Memorandum of Understanding agreed to between the Ministry of Education and BCSTA.

We request that you reverse this decision and ensure that the British Columbia education system is equitable and accessible for all people in this province.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF EDUCATION

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Ranta", is written over a horizontal line.

Carmen Ranta
Chair

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FOR LIFE



BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Chair: Edith Loring-Kuhanga Vice-Chair: Diane McNally
Trustees: Tom Ferris, Elaine Leonard, Deborah Nohr, Peg Orcherton
Rob Paynter, Jordan Watters, Ann Whiteaker*

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA)
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
PHONE (250) 475-4106 FAX (250) 475-4112**

January 22, 2015

The Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045, STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fassbender:

On December 4, 2014, a public announcement was made to eliminate funding for at least 20 upgrading courses for graduated adults in the K-12 sector. This decision was made unilaterally without consulting school boards throughout the province. Based on Greater Victoria's 2013-2014 enrolment figures, the new funding policy will reduce funding for graduated adult programs by an estimated \$199,000 and impact approximately 300 vulnerable students who will no longer have access to tuition-free upgrading courses.

For many of these learners, the financial barriers created by the Ministry's decision will prevent them from obtaining the necessary upgrading to access post-secondary education or to obtain meaningful long term employment. Charging tuition for adult upgrading will create significant hardship and barriers for our most vulnerable adult populations seeking the skills to create a better future for themselves and their families.

At our Board Meeting held on Monday, January 19, 2015, the following motion was passed:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Chair to write a letter to the Minister of Education calling upon him to reverse his December 4, 2014 decision to stop funding graduated adult upgrading courses through the Province's K-12 public school system.

The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) respectfully requests that the Honourable Minister of Education immediately reverses the decision to stop funding upgrading courses for graduated adults in the K-12 public school system and recommit to affordable and accessible education for all British Columbians, regardless of socio economic status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Edith Loring-Kuhanga".

Edith Loring-Kuhanga
Board Chair

cc: Board of Education
All BC School Boards, c/o BCSTA
GVSD Unions and Associations
Sherri Bell, Superintendent of Schools
Debra Laser, Secretary-Treasurer

Respectfully,

Chris G-Lammerse
President
BC School Districts Continuing Education
Directors' Association

2014-2015 BCSDCE
Annual Report
Report on the
Activities of the
BCSDCE
for the year
ended 31/03/15
The BCSDCE
is pleased to
present this
report to you.



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 62 (SOOKE)
3143 JACKLIN ROAD,
VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA • V9B 5R1
TELEPHONE: 250-474-9800 FAX: 474-9893
WEBSITE: WWW.SD62.BC.CA

March 6, 2015

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

Dear Minister Fassbender:

Re: Education Guarantee

At the Board of Education meeting on January 27, 2015, the Board discussed the impacts of the Ministry's policy change regarding funding for adult graduated students taking academic upgrading courses.

The Board is concerned about the negative impact this change will have on vulnerable adults in our community who need the opportunity to access tuition-free academic upgrading in order to improve their employment opportunities and gain the skills to be in line for jobs in the growing BC economy. This policy change seems to run counter to the goals of BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint, to make sure that British Columbians have a plan that takes them from high school through post-secondary education and right into the workforce. The Education Guarantee provided support to those who are struggling to gain a foothold in the job market or who face unique challenges such as single parents, adults-at-risk, persons with disabilities and aboriginal people.

We were encouraged at a Vancouver Island School Trustee Association meeting last year to hear you speak about the role of Trustees and the co-governance relationship between Boards of Education and the Government. It is disappointing to us that this policy change was made without consultation with Boards of Education or the BC School Trustees Association.

Given that the new policy will not be implemented until May 2015, we respectfully request that implementation be delayed and that Boards of Education be consulted to determine the impact of the change.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hobbs
Board Chair

pc: BCSTA

Trustees: Ravi Parmar, Bob Phillips, Neil Poirier, Denise Riley, Dianna Seaton, Margot Swinburnson



School District No. 20 (Kootenay-Columbia)

2001 Third Avenue, Trail, BC V1R 1R6
Tel: (250) 368-6434 Fax: (250) 364-2470

April 8, 2015

| | | |
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| MINISTER OF EDUCATION | | |
| RECEIVED | | |
| OM.O. # | 181288 | OFYI |
| APR 15 2015 | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER | <input type="checkbox"/> AG | <input type="checkbox"/> DM |

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

Dear Honourable Minister:

The Board of Education of School District No. 20 (Kootenay-Columbia) passed a motion on March 9, 2015 to write you with regards to the Ministry of Education's decision to eliminate funding for a number of academic upgrading courses that graduated adults may take from K-12 school districts. We are concerned that some adult learners will be prevented from engaging in the necessary coursework to allow them entry into post-secondary education or to improve their employment opportunities due to financial hardship caused by this policy change.

Like many other boards from across BC, we respectfully request that the December 4, 2014 decision to stop funding upgrading courses for graduated adults in the K-12 public school system be rescinded.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'D. Ganzert'.

Darrel Ganzert
Chairperson, Board of Education

cc: Trustees
All BC Boards of Education (via BCSTA)



Jonathan X. Côté
Mayor

June 5, 2015

Honourable Peter Fassbender
Minister of Education
Room 310
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC, V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Fassbender,

Re: Funding for Adult Basic Education programs

Adult Basic Education, which until recently comprised tuition-free secondary school level courses, assists many residents in New Westminster, including new immigrants, older workers, single parents and young people who did not complete high school.

Adult Basic Education is essential for people access post-secondary education, qualify for skills and trades programs, and realize careers that pay a living wage.

In December 2014, the provincial government reversed its policy to offer free basic education to adults. Beginning on January 1, 2015, colleges and universities are able to charge tuition for secondary school level courses and beginning on May 1, 2015, school districts will no longer be able to offer basic education courses to students who have graduated from high school but need to upgrade their marks or take courses for further study or work.

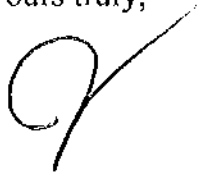
When the provincial government introduced free tuition for Adult Basic Education under the Education Guarantee in 2008, it was a recognition of its vital social and economic roles. Of note, enrollment increased dramatically, which speaks to the strong demand for this program and the fact that many students cannot afford tuition.

At a meeting of New Westminster City Council on Monday, June 1, 2015, Council heard a presentation from the Douglas Students' Union and the Canadian Federation of Students – BC regarding the "Don't Close the Doors, Campaign to restore Adult Basic Education." Council passed the following motion:

THAT the City endorse the Adult Basic Education campaign, and that a letter be written to Minister Fassbender requesting the Ministry reinstate the funds for the Adult Basic Education programs.

We look forward to your action on this matter.

Yours truly,



Jonathan X. Côté
Mayor

Cc: Douglas Students' Union
Canadian Federation of Students - BC