



**Board of Education  
School District No. 38 (Richmond)**

7811 Granville Avenue, Richmond, B.C. V6Y 3E3

Tel: 604-668-6000 Fax: 604-668-6161

April 27, 2010

The Honourable Margaret MacDiarmid  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt,  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9E2

Dear Minister MacDiarmid:

This letter is written in response to your letter published in the April 14, 2010 edition of the Richmond News. It's important to set the record straight in terms of the funding provided by government for School District #38 (Richmond). While your comments regarding funding for education were accurate as far as they went, they do not reflect the complete reality of our situation. Below we have attempted to respond to your statements and provide relevant additional information.

*"Our government is proud to be able to fully fund full day kindergarten and the last year of the negotiated teachers' contract.*

*In fact, BC school districts will share an additional \$112 million next year despite the districts' own estimates that there may be 6,000 fewer students in Grades 1 to 12."*

We acknowledge the increase in funding of \$112 million for British Columbia school boards.

We also note that \$54 million of this amount is slated for fully funding the fifth year of the provincially negotiated settlement for teachers. The remaining \$56 million funds full day kindergarten on a per student basis, and full day kindergarten is also a Ministry mandated initiative.

Thus, we believe these amounts do not represent an increase due to new money. Instead they give school boards the resources they need to provide the Ministry's expected level of service, as both of the initiatives noted above are obligatory for school boards.

*"The Richmond school district will receive \$2.4 million more funding next year, and per student funding in SD 38 will be 27 per cent higher than in 2000/01."*

Regarding the funding increase that school district 38 received for 2010-2011, we note the following:

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**Monica Pamer**  
Superintendent of Schools

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[www.sd38.bc.ca](http://www.sd38.bc.ca)

**Ken Morris**  
Secretary-Treasurer

- 69% relates to increased enrolment and labor settlement funding, the latter increasing as a result of the number of students increasing. These monies are therefore earmarked for the additional costs associated with classroom instruction.
- Approximately 30% of the increase is due to salary differential funding. However:
  - In 2009-2010, the district *lost* \$1.1 million in salary differential funding mid-year.
  - The “increase” received for 2010-2011 — approximately \$800,000 — therefore does not cover the loss in funding we experienced this year.
- None of the \$2.4 million addresses the following 2010-2011 additional cost pressures:
  - Carbon offset costs
  - MSP premium increases
  - Teachers’ Pension Plan employer share increases
  - Deterioration of facilities because no Annual Facilities Grant funding was provided in 2009-2010.
  - Energy cost increases
- We do acknowledge that approximately 1% of the funds do comprise a true increase for the Richmond school district:
  - \$23,000 for transportation
  - \$10,000 for unique geographical factors

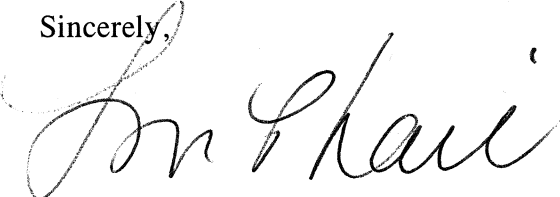
*“As a result of our prudent approach, the Ministry of Education is also able to provide \$110 million in annual facilities grant (AFG) funding to help boards of education maintain school properties.*

*Richmond will receive almost \$4 million in AFG funding to maintain local schools.”*

- School District # 38 (Richmond) did not receive *any* AFG funding for the 2009-2010 year.
- Due to the lack of AFG funding in 2009-2010, we have had to bear emergent costs in the amount of \$900,000 related our building infrastructure for the 2009-2010 year from our operating fund.
- It is somewhat misleading to note that the entire \$110 million is available to school boards, as it is not: only \$56 million has been released to school boards; the remainder of \$54 million will be released, as per Ministry staff, “...prior to March, 2011”
- As a result the Richmond Board of Education to date has received \$1.8 million AFG funding rather than \$4 million.

While the funding you described in your correspondence is welcome and appreciated, we respectfully request that you rescind your letter of April 14, 2010, as it does not completely reflect the funding realities in School District #38 and in fact, could be perceived to imply that our school district has misrepresented or misunderstood its financial situation. We ask that the factors presented above be acknowledged in any public correspondence regarding the realities of education funding in School District # 38 (Richmond).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Son Phau".

Mrs. Linda McPhail, Chairperson  
On Behalf of the Board of Education (Richmond)

cc Trustees  
M. Pamer, Superintendent of Schools  
Rob Howard, MLA Richmond-Centre  
Linda Reid, MLA Richmond-East  
John Yap, MLA Richmond-Steveston  
BCSTA  
Editor, Richmond News