

August 29, 2014

Layne Christensen
Editor
North Shore News
100 – 126 East 15th Street
North Vancouver, BC V7L 2P9

Dear Ms. Christensen:

RE: An open letter to the community from the North Vancouver Board of Education

The impacts of the labour dispute between the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) have been widely felt in our community, where high standards of education are the prevailing norm.

As trustees, we have heard from many students, parents and employees about the effects that the current job action has had upon their learning and their lives. We do understand the many frustrations that have arisen from the dispute and we are concerned for all our students, parents, teachers, support staff, and administrators if the current situation should continue into September.

We have also been asked about our role in the dispute and what we have done, as a board, toward a positive resolution. As an employer, the Board of Education is represented by BCPSEA and there are two trustees representing the views of BCSTA at the provincial bargaining table. Our provincial body, the BC School Trustees Association, developed a [Back to School Action plan](#) through provincial-wide Board feedback with the goal of having the school year begin on time on September 2nd.

We have been consistent in our message to all concerned that we want to see a negotiated or mediated settlement as soon as possible that provides long term stability for students. A record of our correspondence and advocacy can be found here: <http://www.sd44.ca/Board/Advocacy>. We also encourage members of the community to share their thoughts directly with the negotiating parties, and their contact information is available on our website.

Should the dispute continue into September, we are asking that the parties suspend any further lockout measures or strike action to allow teaching and learning to resume without impediment while bargaining proceeds.

.../2

We have a long history and a great deal to be proud of in the provision of public education in North Vancouver. Ours is a diverse community. There is a great strength to be found by recognizing that we share a common concern: students and their learning. All good school communities are built upon relationships. Individually and as a Board, these relationships are the cornerstones that will strengthen our ability to serve students when school is once again in session.

In the meantime, we thank everyone in the community for their understanding and patience through this challenging time. We remain optimistic we will be welcoming students back to school very soon.

On behalf of the North Vancouver Board of Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Franci Stratton".

Franci Stratton
Chair

cc.

John Lewis, Superintendent of Schools, North Vancouver School District
Georgia Allison, Secretary Treasurer, North Vancouver School District
North Vancouver Teachers Association
Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 389
North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council
North Vancouver Administrators' Association
The Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of Education
Mr. Michael Marchbank, Public Administrator, BC Public School Employer's Association
Mr. Jim Iker, President, British Columbia Teachers' Federation
The Honourable Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia
Ralph Sultan, MLA West Vancouver—Capilano
Jane Thornthwaite, MLA North Vancouver—Seymour
Honourable Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of State for Small Business, MLA North Vancouver—Lonsdale
Teresa Rezansoff, President, British Columbia School Trustees Association
Mayor Mussatto and Council, City of North Vancouver
Mayor Walton and Council, District of North Vancouver
All Boards of Education c/o BCSTA