

June 30, 2010

The Honourable Margaret MacDiarmid  
Minister of Education  
P.O. Box 9045, Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

**RE: Submission of 2010/11 Needs and Opportunity Budget**

Dear Minister MacDiarmid,

On behalf of the North Vancouver School District, the North Vancouver Board of Education, the North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council, the Secondary Study Group, the Association of Elementary Administrators, the North Vancouver Teachers' Association and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 389, we present for your consideration a 2010/11 Needs and Opportunity Budget in conjunction with our 2010/11 Final Budget.

The 2010/11 Needs and Opportunity Budget estimates the additional expenditures required to preserve current services, restore services eroded by past budgets and address unmet needs. As each year goes by, we find the magnitude of cumulative years of underfunding not only forces further reductions in our service levels, but increasingly restricts our options to mediate the impacts upon our community.

It was at this time last year that the North Vancouver Board of Education addressed a funding shortfall of \$3.2 million for the 2009/10 school year. In August, we received word that the Annual Facilities Grant had been eliminated. By early fall of 2009, we were projecting a deficit of approximately \$6 to \$7 million for the 2010/11 year.

As a proactive response, we extended our budget planning process to span most of the school year. Through diligent communication with partner groups and parents, we were able to improve community understanding of the situation we faced regarding funding pressures. We sought stakeholder input on all proposed budget directions, and developed a representative process to discuss specific school closures. In this way, we were able to ensure adequate time for all manner of questions, ideas and alternatives to come forward.

It became clear through the process that staff layoffs and school closures would be necessary. At this juncture in our history, with successive years of restraint and careful fiscal management behind us, the Board had neither the latitude nor leverage to pursue significant new sources of revenue or sustain services at their current levels. As a result, we have had to cut into the basic delivery of programs and services that are highly valued by our community.

The directions we have had to take to present a balanced budget have created concerns about the Province's commitment to public education. And while we are pleased to be partnering with the

Ministry on several vital capital projects, the ability to provide the high standard of education services our community expects continues to be constrained by chronic underfunding.

We appreciate that the economic downturn has created an untenable situation for all levels of government and widespread hardship in many areas of the private sector. We have responded by finding efficiencies in all areas of our operations. Now we respectfully ask that as Minister, you will be able to champion the vital need for adequately funded public education as a component of a strong and revitalized British Columbia.

We share your understanding that maintaining and investing in a world-class educational system serves the long-term best interests of the province and citizens. We are optimistic, from the recent meeting you held with the School District's Board of Education Chairperson, Superintendent and Secretary Treasurer that we can collaborate on initiatives with the Ministry to ensure education programs and services continue to meet the needs of all students and society as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

NORTH VANCOUVER  
SCHOOL DISTRICT



John Lewis  
Superintendent of Schools

NORTH VANCOUVER  
BOARD OF EDUCATION



Susan Skinner  
Chairperson

NORTH VANCOUVER  
PARENT ADVISORY  
COUNCIL



Leslie Uehlenbruck  
Co Chair

SECONDARY STUDY  
GROUP



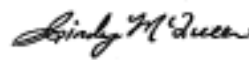
John McGowan  
Chair

ASSOCIATION OF  
ELEMENTARY  
ADMINISTRATORS



Karen Harrop  
Chair

CANADIAN UNION OF  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES  
LOCAL 389



Cindy McQueen  
President

NORTH VANCOUVER  
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Daniel Storms  
President