



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

March 20, 2017

The Honourable Mike Bernier

Minister of Education

PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8V 9E2

The Honourable Mike de Jong

Minister of Finance

PO Box 9048, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8V 9E2

RE: Full funding for the outcome of the Supreme Court of Canada decision and BCPSEA-BCTF Memorandum of Understanding

Dear Minister Bernier and Minister de Jong,

Anticipating an agreement between BCPSEA, the Ministry of Education and the BCTF as to the implementation of the Supreme Court of Canada decision, BCSTA Provincial Council in February passed the following motion:

That BCSTA advocate for the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance to fully fund both the direct and the indirect costs of implementation of the recent Supreme Court of Canada ruling regarding class size and composition.

I know you both fully understand and appreciate that the costs of implementing the BCPSEA-BCTF long-term agreement regarding the outcome of the Supreme Court of Canada decision on removed collective agreement language will be considerable. This includes, of course, the salaries for additional teachers, but also the additional capital costs of providing more classrooms as well as the increased operating costs for adding custodial time, school and district administration, utilities, furniture, learning resources and educational assistants. Boards of Education are concerned that there will now be a downloading of costs to school districts as the Memorandum of Agreement is implemented, especially in regard to these required resources, services and capital investments beyond the hiring more teachers.

Our members do recognize that government has funded the significant cost of the additional teachers required under the interim agreement, and has made commitments to fully fund the final costs of the additional teachers required under the final long-term agreement. Through the motion referenced above, our members are seeking assurance that all of the other indirect costs of placing hundreds of additional teachers into the public education system be included in your final cost calculations and budgeting.

Additional teachers, while greatly needed and valued, also create the requirements for additional classrooms, teaching supplies, resource materials, custodial services, heat, light and furniture, etc. Certainly the cost of providing these necessities will be high, especially in growing school districts such as Surrey, Abbotsford, Langley and Sooke where there is very little, if any, vacant classroom space.

Our request is that you continue to work in cooperation with boards of education and school districts to determine the full cost of implementing the Memorandum of Agreement and that you reconfirm government's commitment to deal with the outcome of the Supreme Court decision in its entirety. It would be both unfortunate and unfair if the costs of addressing the outcome had an indirect negative impact on students. In short, we believe that government has a responsibility to ensure the full costs of implementing the outcomes of the bargaining process are covered directly and do not become the responsibility, even in part, of boards of education.

BCSTA remains committed to working with you and your staff to find practical solutions for the implementation of the agreement. We are, however, looking to government to ensure the costs of the Supreme Court decision and resulting Memorandum of Agreement are met as promised.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Rezansoff', with a stylized, overlapping loop structure.

Teresa Rezansoff

President

BC School Trustees Association

cc: Dave Byng, *Deputy Minister of Education*
Christina Zacharuk, *CEO, PSEC*
Renzo del Negro, *CEO, BCPSEA*
BCSTA Member Boards of Education