

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 22 (VERNON)

January 7, 2010

BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
1401 - 15th STREET
VERNON, BRITISH COLUMBIA
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TELEPHONE 250-542-3331
FAX 250-549-9200

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

Dear Minister MacDiarmid:

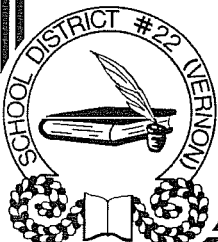
RE: Budget

The Board of Education SD No.22 (Vernon) has directed me to draw to the Honourable Minister's attention their increasing concern regarding the extreme financial hardships being placed on the Board's ability to provide a full range of educational services to its students due to the under funding of an ever expanding educational mandate and the suspension and/or elimination of various grants which, in reality, appear to be a form of downloading costs that would normally be assumed by the Ministry. This loss of revenue and the downloaded demands along with other increased costs come at a time when the base Ministry funding allocations to the district are inconsistent, random and unexpected in their application. The grants in question and other cost increases and their financial implications to the district are included in the following:

Annual Facilities Grant	\$1,685,000
Literacy Innovation Grant.....	\$ 65,536
Educators' Salary Adjustment.....	\$ 402,000
Teachers' Salary Grid Uplift for July 1, 2010.....	\$1,129,695
Teachers' Pension Fund.....	\$ 383,000
Carbon Footprint Offset and Cost of SMARTTool.....	\$ 50,000
Medical Services Plan Increases.....	\$ 40,000
Harmonized Sales Tax.....	\$unknown
B.C. Hydro Rate Increase.....	\$unknown

Our district is facing a potential shortfall of \$2.5 Million in its 2010/2011 operating budget. We are long past the point where we can make budget cuts that will not directly impact student learning. In essence, each of those \$2.5 Million dollars is taking a small piece or "chip" out of the very foundation of our educational support structures and at some point that foundation will begin to weaken and will fail our students. We urge the Honourable Minister to restore

.../page 2



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Page 2, Minister MacDiarmid
January 7, 2010

these grants in part or in full in order to fund the costs currently being downloaded on school districts so that we can again have the resources needed to provide our students with the best possible learning opportunities. Despite the financial hardships placed on our district, we will continue to strive to provide our students with the support required to achieve educational excellence but we are also conscious that we may now have reached the "tipping point" in our ability to do so.

Respectfully,



Wm. (Bill) Turanski
Board Chairperson

/lj

copy Trustees
B. Rundell, Superintendent
R. Hoffman, Secretary-Treasurer
Eric Foster, MLA