

Notice of Meeting

A Meeting of the **Plenary/Education and Student Services Committee and Finance & Legal Committee (Joint Committee III/V)** will be held in room 180, VSB Education Centre, 1580 West Broadway, Vancouver, British Columbia, on

Monday, April 10, 2017 at 5:00 pm

Dianne Turner, Official Trustee
Student Trustee: Isabella Preite

Scott Robinson, Superintendent of Schools
Guy Bonnefoy, Interim Secretary-Treasurer

Senior Staff:	Nancy Brennan Murray Doucette Catherine Jamieson	Magdalena Kassis Adrian Keough Brian Kuhn	Lisa Landry Jim Meschino David Nelson	Julie Pearce Ellen Roberts Rob Schindel
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Comm III Reps Trish Mugford, VSTA
Heather Allison, VESTA
Alison Ogden, VASSA
Janis Myers, VEPVPA
Cheryl Douglas, PASA
Farah Shroff, DPAC
Perveen Engineer, CUPE Loc 15
Tim Chester, IUOE
Ken Chohanik, Trades
Brent Boyd, CUPE 407
Kaitlin Wong, VDSC

Alt:
Laura Rudland, VESTA
Iqbal Gill, VASSA
Darren Mitzel, VEPVPA
Audrey Van Alstyne, PASA
Amanda Hillis or Erin Arnold, DPAC
Tammy Yazdanyar, CUPE 15
Tim DeVivo, IUOE
Raymond Szczecinski, Trades

Comm V Reps Terry Stanway, VSTA
Heather Allison, VESTA
Annette Vey-Chilton, VASSA
Jonathan Weresch, VEPVPA
Harjit Khangura, IUOE
Olecia Walker, DPAC
Maureen Cowin, PASA
Warren Williams, CUPE 15
Charleen Ann Derzak, CUPE 407
Eugene Jeoung, VDSC

Rory Brown, VSTA
Allan Haley, VESTA
David Bach, VASSA
Janis Myers, VEPVPA
Tim DeVivo, IUOE
Shaun Kalley or Alex Dow, DPAC

Other Reps: Kevin Land, VASSA
Susan Nichols, VEPVPA
John Pesa, Trades
Vince Bacarac and Micealla Koan, VDSC

Chloe McKnight, VESTA
Marisol Petersen, PASA
Nathan Wilkes, DPAC

Others: Secretary-Treasurer's Office
Maisie Louie, Learning Services
Communications
Chris Allen
Lynda Bonvillain

District Parents
Ed Centre Building Engineer
Rentals
Cafeteria
Kathie Currie, CUPE 15
Gail Johnson, CUPE 15

COMMITTEE MEETING

**PLENARY COMMITTEE III/V –
FINANCE & LEGAL / EDUCATION & STUDENT SERVICES**

Monday, April 10, 2017 at 5:00 pm
Room 180, VSB Education Centre

REVISED AGENDA

The meeting is being held on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh Coast Salish peoples.

Call Meeting to Order

Delegation from Stakeholder Groups re: 2017/2018 Preliminary Budget Proposals

- The time allotted for delegation presentations will be 10 minutes each and every effort should be made not to exceed this time.
 - The Official Trustee may direct questions for clarification through the spokesperson for the delegation.
1. Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA)
 2. Vancouver Secondary School Teachers' Association (VSTA)
 3. International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), Local No. 963
 4. Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local No. 15
 5. District Parents' Advisory Council (DPAC)

Date and Time of Next Meeting

At the call of the Official Trustee



International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 963

Submission to Vancouver Board of Education

Re: 2017/18 VBE Preliminary Operating Budget

April 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to address you regarding the 2017/2018 Preliminary Operating Budget. We would also like to acknowledge the work of VBE senior staff at this busy time of year. Our comments will be brief.

Operating Engineers would firstly like to acknowledge and thank each and every member of the BCTF for being resolute in their belief that government acted illegally. During this 12 year period of illegality an entire generation of public school students was deprived of the same educational opportunities that were available prior to the contract stripping in 2002.

Had the BCTF and its membership not taken on this multi-year year court battle this school district would not have received its portion of the improperly titled "Classroom Enhancement Fund"- actually a court remedy- of more than \$57 million dollars.

Let's be perfectly clear, the court remedy would not have happened without teachers investing much time and funds to correct the wrongs of the provincial government. Thank you, BC's public school teachers.

The VBE Preliminary Operating Budget 2017/2018 & Abridged Five-Year Business Plan

The Five-Year Business Plan¹ states "with the CEF this year, the VSB is able to realign all costs related to the implementation of the Supreme Court of Canada decision from the fall of 2016, reducing the need for further reductions in 2017-2018. Given this situation, the forecasted deficit for this year is now at \$2.13 million." This forecast is of course subject to ministry approval, including oversight of the \$7.1 million transfer from the fund to the operating budget.

No Restoration Budget

This year's preliminary budget did not include a restoration budget as has occurred in the past. Recall that last year's restoration budget identified \$79.4 million that would need to be added to restore the same level of service as was in place prior to the 2002/2003 budget cuts. Even with teachers' court remedy, it is clear there is still a gap of more than \$20 million to actually restore what has been cut from Vancouver students. A restoration budget documents cuts. A restoration budget provides taxpayers

¹ Abridged Five-Year Business Plan, page 3.



April 10, 2017

To: The Official Trustee Dianne Turner and Senior Staff of the Vancouver School Board

From: Warren Williams, CUPE Local 15 President

Thank you for the time that you have allotted for feedback regarding preliminary budget proposals on behalf of the members of CUPE Local 15, whose livelihoods are at risk.

You are all aware of the important roles that our members provide to the students and their families of the VSB along with supports to staff and admin throughout our district. It is extremely disheartening that I sit before you once again advocating on behalf of those employees slated to have their positions cut due to another budget shortfall. Over the past several years I have sat before you doing this very thing with the knowledge that the reason continually is due to the chronic underfunding by the Provincial Liberals. Funding which of all the provinces only PEI is lower than BC per student. We have watched the VSB go through audit after audit at the behest of the MOE and each time no wrong doing on the part of senior management or the former Trustees has been found. It has always come back that public education in this Province, and in particular the VSB, is chronically underfunded by the Province. I have always felt that we were all paddling upstream in the same boat hoping for a turn in tide that favours public Education. Unfortunately that has not been the case so here we are once again, although this time I'm not sure we are paddling together or even in the same boat.

The proposed cuts in purchasing OSB support, finance admin support, adult education support, and Career Information Assistants are all integral to the operations of the VSB. It seems unconscionable to me that given these proposed cuts that the Associate Superintendants would be receiving a 7% increase and that the Superintendant of Schools would see an increase of 5%. These increases are retroactive to July 2016 at a time when we are contemplating budgetary constraints for a total annually of \$52,582.98.

Add to that the proposal to affiliate with the BCSTA at a cost of \$90,000 for a total of \$142,582.98. Furthermore, the \$150,000 taken from Aboriginal Education Department due to not being able to find personnel to utilize that subsidy provided as a budgetary enhancement by the VSB over the past several years, you can understand my confusion. It seems the funding is available so I question the need for the proposed cuts.

The CIAs provide direct services to students and I question who will provide this much needed service in the future. The CIAs are respected for the necessary work they do throughout the Post Secondary community as was attested to during last year's budget discussions. Further, cuts to this department will mean further losses to student success rates. The budget speaks to similar districts as a lens to creating the need for these positions to be cut. I would like to point out that the Delta SD has a CIA in every high school and the Richmond SD has the same.

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DPAC Statement to Joint Plenary III/V Committee

April 10, 2017

We would like to begin with the survey, and in particular the question about priorities. The survey asks us to identify up to 7 out of 15 given programs and services as priorities, with an additional option provided for a write-in response. I, and others, provided a single response using the write-in option: "All of the above". The message being propagated by the survey is: a robust education system should contain all of the programs and services listed, but we've being constrained into only being able to offer less than half of them, so start fighting amongst yourselves to determine which ones we're going forward with and which ones your kids are never going to get. It's ugly and it's divisive. It's taking a responsibility that the provincial government has downloaded on school boards and downloaded it again on parents and the community at large and we won't participate in it. If you don't believe that there is sufficient funding to offer all the programs and services listed, then you need to vigorously advocate for that funding from within the school board. (We'll come back to this point when we take note of the proposal to have the VSB rejoin the BCSTA.) But please: don't ask parents and members of the community to do the government's dirty work of selecting programs and services to cut. We therefore ask if consideration has been made to pull the survey effective immediately and disregard any results obtained to date.

The presentation last Thursday used the phrase "Non K-12 Mandate items" in a list of "Future Areas to Consider". This comes across as rather ominous, especially given the cuts to adult education being proposed. The implication is that adult education, and very likely other services, will be completely eliminated by the end of the 5-year budget cycle that begins with this proposal. What other "Non K-12 Mandate items" are under consideration for elimination? The idea of focusing on *just* K-12 services was debated and defeated by the previous board; at the very least there should be a public conversation and justification if there is to be a narrowing of the scope of the VSB's activities.

With regards to the proposed cuts to adult education, while we understand the potential financial savings from consolidation, we question whether this meets the purpose of retaining 3 sites when adult education was cut in the previous budget, namely that it preserves access to the service for individuals who are otherwise already disadvantaged.

It was noted in the presentation last Thursday that “VSB has significantly more space per student FTE than the Subset”. First, let me state that I think we can handle real numbers rather than rounded ones. The EY report lists Vancouver’s square footage per student at 157.1 sq ft as opposed to the 160 sq ft given last week, and the EY report lists the subset square footage per student at 122.7 (as opposed to 120) sq ft, for a differential of 34.4 (not 40) sq ft. So while there is a differential, it doesn’t need to be inflated; the EY report, in fact, chose to represent the differential conservatively as “more than 30 square feet above the Subset Districts average” rather than 40 sq ft. The EY report states that “under the terms of collective agreements, the number of VBE maintenance staff is directly correlated with the square footage of school space” which clearly ties the physical space to the budget. However, the question that parents have been asking for at least the last two years is: how much physical space *should* there be to appropriately implement the curriculum? The constant implication is that more physical space is anathema to children receiving a better education.

Concerns have been raised by parents about the elimination of career advisors. While the proposal states, “If these positions were eliminated, their responsibilities would be reassigned”, it is not identified to whom they would be reassigned and what priority those responsibilities would be given. This statement seems euphemistic for “we won’t provide this service any more”, so some specificity is required, please.

The proposed cut to the supplemental Aboriginal education budget is also of concern. When asked last Thursday, it was stated that the funds were to be used to hire additional staff but that the VSB has been unable to find qualified applicants. We would like to ask what the VSB is doing to improve their outcomes in this regard and whether the hiring of skill-specific staff represents the only possible use of these funds.

The proposal to rejoin the BCSTA raises several questions. It was stated last Thursday that a pros-and-cons list was constructed which indicated that rejoining would provide a net benefit. Can this “cost benefit analysis” (also mentioned in the budget proposal) be transparently enumerated? Can the benefits that would be received (e.g., legal counsel, professional development, governance training) be obtained without rejoining BCSTA? Has the BCSTA *really* been an effective advocate, and, more importantly, can it advocate for issues that are

Vancouver-centric more accurately and effectively than local advocates, e.g., trustees? Given that this was a specific recommendation in the Milburn report, this proposal is being met with a certain level of cynicism.

The proposal overview notes that “overall costs are increasing due to salary increments, employee benefits increases and inflation on utilities costs”. Is the Ministry not obligated to provide full funding to cover these costs, and, if so, how is the VSB currently advocating for the full funding of these costs and others?

Finally, we would like to make a request for more information. We would like to know how well schools and students are coping with the cuts from last year, i.e. the loss of admin staff for some choice programs, the loss of mentors, the loss of the majority of career information assistants, the reduction of school flex budgets, the reduction in maintenance. We would further like to know if positions that were only retained in the last budget for a single year, such as the Anti-Homophobia Teacher Mentor position, are being retained in the current budget, and also whether the nearly \$2.1m that was borrowed from school balances last year and promised to be returned this year will indeed be returned.

Closing the two adult education facilities will prove to be a huge disservice to the adult learners in those communities who are already finding it difficult to pursue their post secondary goals because of the closure to other adult education facilities during last year's budget. I am hard pressed to understand considering we are always talking about budgets that take into account direct services to students.

Where will the work that is done by my members in support of these students be off loaded to putting further stresses on a already venerable system?

In purchasing the elimination of OSB support and the creation of two TRC positions sound promising but where will the office admin support be picked up and by whom?

Finance Admin support the position is not just about donations when the VSB receives a donation the steps are as follows:

1. Donation
 - . Purchasing Cards
 - . Special Purpose and School Accounting Accounts Payable
 - . Deposit funds
 - . Prepare voucher payable to the school
 - . Cheque issued payable to the school.

It's not just a matter of donations in the form of checks it requires in school accounting, finance admin support issue undetermined amount of cheques to school and staff from areas such as General Accounting, Accounts Payable, School Accounting and Special Purpose Accounting. Someone will still have to input this data. It's not just a matter of electronic transfers as is being suggested.

In closing I would like to acknowledge once again the position the Province has put the VSB in regarding putting together this budget proposal. Since 2011 across Canada there has been an increase per capita student funding of 12.3% in BC during that same time we have only seen a 1.3% increase. In BC we are \$1000.00 below the national average which in itself is very disturbing, however given the present budget proposals I can't see a need for the proposed cuts to CUPE 15 positions.