



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

October 31, 2019

The Honourable Rob Fleming

Minister of Education

PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC

V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fleming,

RE: Opportunity for modelling and feedback should a new Funding Distribution Model for K-12 education be implemented

At the October 26, 2019 meeting of the BCSTA Provincial Council (representing all 60 boards of education in our province), members passed the following motion:

“That BCSTA urge the Ministry of Education to ensure all boards of education are provided the opportunity to model and / or pilot the new funding formula recommendations prior to implementation in order to provide feedback on the positive and negative implications of the proposed recommendations, the impact on the ability of our districts to strengthen success for all students and the ability to ensure a system that is equitable, predictable and fair for all school districts.”

While BCSTA remains fully committed to our position that the current funding model must be modernized, and to the jointly established guiding principles for change, we also recognize the need for individual boards to see and fully understand the impact of any changes that cabinet may authorize over the coming weeks. We believe the best way for this to happen is by providing modelling of any approved change, in order to help facilitate meaningful feedback regarding the implementation process, prior to the March 15, 2020 funding announcement to school districts.

Boards of education have had the opportunity to provide feedback during the establishment of the guiding principles for a new funding model, during the independent panel input process and during the review of implications of accepting the panel recommendations, but have not received, or had the opportunity to respond to, the implications for their school district of any modernized model that might be adopted.

I appreciate that this cannot and should not happen until cabinet has made their decisions as to whether or not the model will actually change and what form that change may take. It is important, however, that boards receive that information, including some basic modelling, in order to advise on how such a new model might best be implemented beginning in March 2020.



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The opportunity to modernize the current funding formula is significant, but we also want to ensure that the implementation of any new formula does not have any negative financial impacts on individual school districts; nor on student achievement. There is also the question of how best facilitate a positive transition in the various complex processes that directly or indirectly flow into and out of the current funding distribution model. Boards of education, and the school districts they serve, will be in a much better position to respond to questions in this regard if they can see the potential impact of changes before they are actually implemented.

Thank you for your consideration of this important motion. We appreciate the tremendous amount of work that has gone into this project, as well as the importance of 'getting it right.' We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff in order to establish the best possible funding distribution model possible for the students and school districts of BC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Higginson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephanie Higginson
President
British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion Reference: P12019L10.1

CC: Scott MacDonald, Deputy Minister
Reg Bawa, Assistant Deputy Minister, Resource Management Division