



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

February 10, 2021

The Honourable Mike Farnworth

*Minister of Public Safety and
Solicitor General*
PO Box 9010 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

The Honourable Jennifer Whiteside

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

Dear Minister Farnworth and Minister Whiteside,

Subject: Provincial Funding to Improve Access to Educational Programming in Correctional Facilities

At the October 24, 2020 meeting of the BCSTA Provincial Council, representing all 60 boards of education in our province, our members passed the following motion:

“That BCSTA request that the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General allocate special-purpose funding to school districts that have correctional facilities in their districts to provide year-round educational services in provincial correctional facilities based on the level of service required in each community.”

It is understood that low literacy and poor education are tied to increased crime rates. BC Corrections currently works with local school districts to assist people under supervision in improving their education. However, the current funding level is based on the funding model for continuing education, which does not allow school districts to maintain a consistent level of staffing to provide the educational services required to address the concerns raised by our membership.

If the desired outcome of rehabilitation is to have individuals re-enter society equipped to function as contributing members of society, then the level of educational programming offered should match that expectation. This can be achieved, in part, by leveraging the assets available to us and providing access to provincial resource programs in school districts where a correctional facility is located.

We are asking that the Ministry of Public Safety and the Ministry of Education collaborate and establish a special purpose fund to address this issue. On behalf of BCSTA and our membership, I wish to invite you to discuss these concerns with us to establish a clear understanding of the need and projected outcomes this funding could have.



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Not only would we be taking action to reduce future criminal activity, but we would do so by addressing a segment of the population that is often underserved by the education system by providing them with tools they can utilize to better themselves.

Thank you for considering this request. We look forward to your response

Sincerely,

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

Stephanie Higginson

President

British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: P120209.5

CC: Deputy Minister of Education Scott MacDonald
BCSTA member boards of education