



Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

2010 May 11

Mike Lombardi
Chairperson, Committee I
Vancouver Board of Education
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6J 5K8

Dear Mr. Lombardi:

I am writing on behalf of VESTA to inquire about the status of the brief report requested by the 2009 June 22 meeting of Committee I regarding the potential banning of bottled water in the school district and the status of access to safe drinking water.

There were also other requests made by trustees and stakeholders at the 2009 June 22 meeting with regard to this particular topic.

VESTA continues to strongly urge the Vancouver Board of Education to become a bottled water free school district, and for it to ensure free and safe drinking water access at all worksites.

Please let us know the status of the brief report and the progress on the other questions identified at the 2009 June 22 meeting of Committee I.

Yours truly,

Glen Hansman
Vice President / Past President





Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

2009 June 16

Mike Lombardi
Chairperson, Committee I
Vancouver Board of Education
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver V6J 5K8

Dear Mr. Lombardi:

I am writing on behalf of VESTA to recommend that the Vancouver Board of Education ban the sale of bottled water in Vancouver schools, and for it to ensure free safe drinking water access at all worksites.

Likely you are aware of some of the decisions that the City of Vancouver has recently made around bottled water, and VESTA is encouraging the school district to work in conjunction with the city in this regard.

Other school districts across Canada have already gone in this direction, and it would be worthwhile for Vancouver to take a similar lead. There are many reasons to ban bottled water in Vancouver schools. Until very recently, bottled water was the fastest growing sector of the beverage industry, outpacing the consumption of coffee, tea, apple juice and milk. This global billion dollar industry – dominated by four large multinational corporations Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestlé and Danone – continues to rely on carefully crafted marketing campaigns, designed to manipulate consumers into believing that bottled water is healthy, pure, and even environmentally friendly.

The industry's marketing strategy has resulted in undermining public confidence in tap water. Images of pristine landscapes and snow-capped mountains on plastic water bottles and vending machines mask the real facts behind the bottled water trend. Bottled water uses vast amounts of energy and resources to produce and transport and their disposal in landfills pollutes the ground and atmosphere. Another worrisome fact is that bottled water is less stringently regulated than tap water and is up to 10,000 times more expensive.

Finally, bottled water also sets the stage for the privatization of water services by cultivating a consumer willingness to pay for water. Water is a resource essential to life and a fundamental human right and should not be viewed as a commodity to be bought and sold for profit.

The consumption of bottled water is a relatively recent phenomenon. Just ten years ago most people living in Canada and the U.S. obtained their drinking water directly from the tap. Getting a drink of water at school, on campus or in many other public buildings was as simple as using a



water fountain. Water fountains, however, are rapidly becoming a thing of the past – even in Vancouver schools. It appears that water fountains are being neglected in favour of the more expensive and less sustainable sale of bottled water.

Public awareness about the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of the bottled water industry is increasing, and the momentum to move away from it and get back to publicly provided tap water is growing.

Restaurants, as well as labour, environmental and faith based organizations, school boards and municipalities are all part of the growing movement challenging bottled water. In December, Toronto became the largest city in the world to pass a comprehensive policy banning the sale and provision of bottled water in city-owned and operated facilities and committing to accessible tap water by re-investing in public water services. There are also currently over 50 bottled water free zones on 21 campuses across Canada.

School boards can play an important role and demonstrate leadership in contributing to sustainability initiatives by becoming bottled water free campuses and prioritizing safe and accessible public water systems.

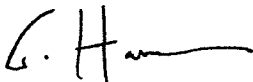
VESTA strongly urges the Vancouver Board of Education to become a bottled water free school district by banning the sale of bottled water in Vancouver schools, and ensuring free safe drinking water access at all worksites.

In addition we encourage you to install new water fountains and repair broken ones and commit to re-building, maintaining and upgrading water infrastructure in all of Vancouver's schools.

VESTA requests that this topic be put on an upcoming Committee I meeting for discussion.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely



Glen Hansman
President

cc. Paul Faoro, CUPE 15
Tim DeVivo, IUOE
Anne Guthrie Warman, VSTA
Gwen Giesbrecht, DPAC
Julianne Doctor, DPAC
Patti Bacchus, Chairperson, Vancouver Board of Education
Jane Bouey, Chairperson, Committee III

4. 2009-2010 School Plans

G. Little, Associate Superintendent – South Area, referred to a memorandum dated 2009 June 19 entitled *Vancouver School District – 2009-2010 School Plans*. He provided the Committee with background information on the process used for preparing the 2009-2010 School Plans and briefly reviewed the goals used to determine the success for each student. It was suggested information on the consultative process used by the schools to develop the School Plans be incorporated into the memo going forward to the next Board meeting.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the 2009-2010 School Plans for Vancouver Elementary and Secondary schools and Adult Learning Centres be approved.

5. 2009-2010 District Plan (Student Achievement Contract)

V. Overgaard, Associate Superintendent – Learning Services, referred to a memorandum dated 2009 June 22 entitled *2009-2010 District Plan (Student Achievement Contract)*. She briefly reviewed the Plan and primary goal, literacy.

The plan will be renamed *District Plan for Student Learning*.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the Vancouver School Board 2009-2010 District Plan (Student Achievement Contract) be approved as amended.

6. Annual Literacy Plan

V. Overgaard referred to a memorandum dated 2009 June 16 entitled *Annual Literacy Plan* and briefly reviewed the process used for preparing the Annual Literacy Plan.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the Annual Literacy Plan be submitted to the Ministry of Education in compliance with requirements.

7. Trustee Representatives to Other Organizations

Trustee P. Bacchus referred to a memorandum dated 2009 June 19 entitled *Trustee Representatives to Other Organizations* and reviewed the changes.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that the revised list of appointments entitled, 2008/2009 Vancouver Board of Education Trustee Representatives to Other Organizations, dated 2009 June 19, be approved.

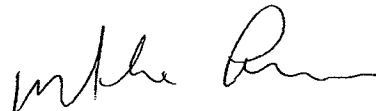
8. Field Studies Policy Revisions

V. Overgaard updated Committee members on the changes made to the Policy. Further consideration on commercial based excursions and summer excursions is required. The Field Studies Policy will be brought back to a future Committee I meeting.

This item was received for information.

9. Bottled Water – Letter from Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

Trustee M. Lombardi referred to correspondence received from the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA) requesting the Vancouver Board of Education ban the sale of bottled water in Vancouver schools, and for it to ensure free safe drinking water access at all worksites.

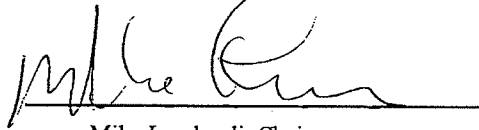


Trustees and Committee members requested the following: *

- o a brief report be prepared for a future Committee I meeting to include the implications to schools if the sale of bottled water was banned and the status of access to safe drinking water;
- o consideration be given to a reduction in the use of bottled water rather than an outright ban;
- o work with the broad student population to determine the impact on them;
- o consideration be given to preparing a report to Committee III on the education and sustainability initiatives schools are undertaking regarding environmental sustainability; and
- o obtaining input from national organizations who have banned the sale of bottled water.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of this Committee is scheduled for Monday, 2009 September 28 at 17:30 hours.



Mike Lombardi, Chairperson

Committee I Members Present:

Patti Bacchus, Jane Bouey, Allan Wong

Other Trustees Present:

Ken Denike, Carol Gibson

District Management Present:

Chris Kelly (items 1, 2 and 3), Brenda Ng, Laurie Anderson, Lynn Green, Gary Little (items 1, 2, 3 and 4), Val Overgaard, Paul Wlodarczak (items 1, 2 and 3), Jennifer Duprey

Association Representatives Present:

Glen Hansman, VESTA (items 1, 2 and 3)
Dianne Good, VASSA
Liz Kloeppe, VEPVPA
Gwen Giesbrecht, DPAC