



September 28, 2020

Ref: 236800

Janet Fraser, Chair  
Board of Education  
School District No. 39 (Vancouver)  
**Email: Janet.Fraser@vsb.bc.ca**

Dear Ms. Fraser:

Thank you for your letter of August 21, 2020, regarding the Vancouver School Board's K-12 Restart Plan. Government is currently in an election period through to October 24, 2020, when the provincial election takes place. I am pleased to respond as Deputy Minister.

On August 26, it was announced that school districts have the flexibility and certainty to find options that work for families in their return to school plans. This includes the authority for all school boards to offer remote options to students within their districts, as well as the tools they need to increase their existing programs to meet demand.

To support the health and safety of students and staff, the Ministry of Education is providing one-time funding of \$45.6 million to school districts and independent schools for enhanced cleaning and supplies. This includes \$3 million to support remote learning for students, \$23 million to support increased cleaning and \$9.2 million for enhanced hand washing and hand sanitization stations.

In addition, on August 26, the federal government announced \$2 billion in additional funding for provinces and territories to ensure they have the resources they need to see a safe return to class in the fall and to protect students and staff. British Columbia received \$242.36 million of this funding, of which 50 percent was made available in this month.

In total, School District No. 39 (Vancouver) is received \$21.9 million through the supplemental federal and provincial funding. Boards of education have the flexibility to use this funding to implement a variety of health and safety protocols and learning resources to address local needs and circumstances. Spending of this funding should be aligned with your school district K-12 Restart plan, which may include improvements to school air systems and ventilation.

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Regarding the collection of 1701 data, the process for the 2020/21 school year will be consistent with previous years. Under Section 13 of the *School Act*, parents/caregivers must enrol their school-age children in an education program by September 30. If a student is receiving instruction from a certified teacher in a school program, then the school district is eligible to claim funding for the school year in that program.

Students who intend to return to their local school during the school year, but need additional time to transition back to school, can be claimed as a student in their local school. If a student does not intend to return to their local school during the school year, they should be claimed as a home-schooling or distributed learning student as appropriate and boards of education have the flexibility to ensure that students who opt for these methods of learning can return to their local school for the 2021/22 school year if they desire. Further details are in the 1701 Process Document that was provided to school districts on August 28, 2020.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Scott MacDonald', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

D. Scott MacDonald  
Deputy Minister