



**Professional and
Administrative Staff Association**

**International Union of
Operating Engineers, Local 963**

February 16, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

The Vancouver Board of Education was extremely thankful for the Safe Return to Class Fund your Government provided to the Province of British Columbia for the 2020-2021 school year. Our District's share of the fund for the first half of the year, as allocated by the Province, was \$10,190,217 and we look forward to receiving a similar amount for the second half of the year.

The funding provided allowed the Board to put the necessary health & safety measures in place for the safe return of our students to school in September – some physically and some remotely. The funding has been used for a multitude of purposes, including ventilation upgrades in buildings, staffing for remote learning programs, outdoor education programs, health and safety staffing, enhanced transportation costs and purchases of cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, masks, face shields and plexiglass barriers.

While the distribution and administration of vaccines has begun, the Board is concerned that, with the ongoing pandemic and the Government's projection that all Canadians who wish to get a vaccine would be able to get one by the end of September, there will be lingering pandemic health and safety concerns for the 2021-2022 school year. At the Board of Education's Public Meeting held on November 30, 2020 the Board adopted the following motion:

That the Vancouver Board of Education write a letter to the Prime Minister to request that adequate and stable funding for schools to respond to the COVID pandemic be included in the next Federal budget.

Accordingly, the Board is requesting your consideration of extending the Safe Return to Class Fund to the next school year to ensure, to the extent necessary, that the measures put in place this year to address the health and safety of students and staff can be maintained while the vaccination programs continue, and the impact of the pandemic is lessened.

With regards,



Gord Lau, Chair
DPAC



Carmen Cho, Board Chair
Vancouver School Board



Catherine Thomas, President
VEPVPA



Tyson Shmyr, President
PASA



Tim Chester, President
IUOE, Local 963

cc: VBE Trustees
Suzanne Hoffman, Superintendent
J. David Green, Secretary-Treasurer