

> > > From: megan faulkner [mailto:megan-faulkner@hotmail.com]

> > > Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 4:56 PM

> > > To: Hawes.MLA, Randy

> > > Subject: BC education cuts

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> > > Dear Randy Hawes,

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> > > I am writing to ask you to save our schools. Secretary Treasurers of school districts across the province have warned of an unprecedented number of unfunded liabilities imposed by the Provincial government for 2010-11. As a result, Boards of Education will be forced to close schools, cut deeply into every classroom across the province and leave vulnerable students behind unless you act immediately to cover all these costs in the upcoming provincial budget.

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> > > This unprecedented crisis was not created by Boards of Education. Faced with ever-rising costs that the Province's Education funding formula does not cover, many communities have already suffered the loss of viable schools and critical programs as Boards struggle to cope.

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> > > Premier Campbell and his Cabinet decide how much funding Boards of Education receive each year. The Provincial government also largely determines the costs of operating BC's public schools. The \$300 funding shortfall facing our public schools for 2010-11 arises from a series of decisions, all made by the provincial government:

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> > > - Loss of the Annual Facilities Grant

> > > - Teacher salary and benefit increases (provincially negotiated)

> > > - New Carbon Tax and carbon offset charges

> > > - Increased MSP and WCB premiums

> > > - New costs for implementing all day kindergarten

> > > - Additional costs of provincially-legislated class size limits

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> > > Boards of Education are required by law to balance their budgets. Unlike you, the Province don't have the option of running temporary deficits to cushion the impacts of an economic downturn. And fiscal responsibility isn't just about balancing budgets – it includes taking responsibility for the cost implications of one's decisions. When your government imposes new costs and fails to fund them, it is the children of this province who are short-changed. That is not fiscally responsible.

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> > > In the 2009 provincial elections, all the parties promised to protect education. In the 2009 Throne Speech, Premier Campbell told British Columbians: "Education is the best economic development and health promotion program ever invented. In tight economic times, it is only smart to maintain and expand educational investments."

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> > > Those were wise words and we urge you to stand up for them. You promised to protect education when you were elected and it's time to stop cutting school programs, closing rural and small schools and leaving behind those of our students who need extra support to succeed. We don't think that is the legacy you want to leave BC's children.

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> > > Public education is the best investment we can make. British Columbians have consistently reaffirmed that we are willing to pay for it.

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> > > Please respond urgently advising what you intend to do to ensure that the Provincial budget to be presented on March 2 fully funds all new provincially-mandated costs for 2010-

11 and beyond, thus providing our local Boards with the stable foundation they need for sound management of our public schools.

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> > > Signed: Megan Faulkner, Dewdney BC

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> > > From: Randy.Hawes.MLA@leg.bc.ca

> > > To: megan-faulkner@hotmail.com

> > > Date: Fri, 19 Feb 2010 09:52:37 -0800

> > > Subject: RE: BC education cuts

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> > > Can you explain how we can keep schools open when we are down by between 50 and 60 thousands students provincially. That equates to about 2500 or so classrooms--- gone! That many students gone means schools must close. Funding has increased every year since 2001 in spite of the drop in student count.

> > >

> > > Randy

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> > > From: megan faulkner [megan-faulkner@hotmail.com]

> > > Sent: Friday, February 19, 2010 3:21 PM

> > > To: Hawes.MLA, Randy

> > > Subject: RE: BC education cuts

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> > > Perhaps if we decided that our public schools were much more important then our private schools and made some changes in our private funding it might help. Private schools enroll approximately 12% of BC's K-12 population (70,000 students), in 351 schools. Most of these schools (319 of them) are group 1 and group 2 schools, the group 1 students (255 schools with 54,000 children) recieve 50% of the funding that our public school children recieve and the group 2 student (64 schools with 14,000 children) recieve funding at the 35% level. If we were to stop funding these private schools perhaps the numbers would begin to rise in our public schools. It does not make sense to me that our provincial government is supporting the privatization of our education system.

> > > Also, if you adjust the amount of money according to inflation, we are spending less of our revenues on public education then we were in 2001.

> > > Anyways, even if our numbers are dropping, we need to do everything we can to support the children in our province. Education is the best investment we can make for our future and our provincial government needs to make sure our children get what they need.

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> > > To: megan-faulkner@hotmail.com

> > > Date: Sat, 20 Feb 2010 08:08:22 -0800

> > > Subject: RE: BC education cuts

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> > > And just maybe if ALL politics stopped in public schools parents (many of whom cannot really afford the cost) would stop taking their children out of the public system.

> > > Randy

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> > From: megan faulkner [megan-faulkner@hotmail.com]

> > Sent: Saturday, February 20, 2010 1:23 PM

> > To: Hawes.MLA, Randy
> > Subject: RE: BC education cuts
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> > I have 5 year old twins and I have become horrified by the funding situation since they began kindergarten in the fall. Public schools have been dwindling away since 2001, when I was in grade 11. I was a student at Hatzic Secondary and I personally suffered because of the cuts that took place in my last 2 years of highschool, I was unable to take a lot of classes that I felt I needed and therefore became a dis-interested student. I had no idea about how much worse things had gotten until my own children began school and now I am scared for all of these students who are not getting everything they need and I fear that many of them will become dis-interested as well. Now, in saying that, I could very well pull my children out of the public system and place them in private schools for peace of mind, doing that may fix the problems I am facing personally but it is irresponsible for me not to stick up for the people who cannot afford this option at all. So, if in your opinion people are upset about the politics in our public schools then isn't it our responsibility to remove the problems that adults are having so that our children can prosper? It seems to me like you are avoiding the real issue at hand here, this needs to be fixed before the whole public education system gets flushed down the toilet! Problems need solutions, and in this case it is our provincial government that needs to come up with that solution.

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> > From: Randy.Hawes.MLA@leg.bc.ca
> > To: megan-faulkner@hotmail.com
> > Date: Sat, 20 Feb 2010 16:27:48 -0800
> > Subject: RE: BC education cuts
> >

> > The courts have ruled that the BC Teachers Federation has the right to send politically charged material home with children and also post it within schools. I have met numerous parents who find this unpalatable and as a result have left the public system. Many go to private schools and yet others choose to home school.

> > I am not sure what you feel your children are not getting but I can say that since 2001 funding for the system has increased every single year. You mention "cuts" but I am not sure where these are when funding has increased. Public school student numbers have been falling all across the country and it has nothing to do with funding levels.

> > I do however hear from parents who have chosen the private system because they believe the discipline and the teaching is superior to the public system.

> > I would be interested to know what it is you feel your children need that they are not getting in the public system.

> > Randy Hawes

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> From: megan faulkner [megan-faulkner@hotmail.com]
> Sent: Saturday, February 20, 2010 5:27 PM
> To: Hawes.MLA, Randy
> Subject: RE: BC education cuts
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> Again, these are problems that need a solution, what I am asking you is what can we do to fix this situation? We can not simply sit back and say "oh well". If we are to save our public schools, something must be done and everyone needs to come up with a solution. Maybe the provincial government should take that \$458 million they are using for a retractable roof on BC place to spruce it up for the Grey Cup and dump it into our schools.

> My children personally are receiving everything that they need, at the kindergarten level that is not hard to achieve. However, I am constantly being asked for money either in the

form of donations or fundraising. It is the older students that I have concern for.

> I am interested to know if you feel like these schools have enough funding, and I would also like to know why there is a \$300 million shortfall for the 2010-2011 year when Gordon Campbell promised that education would be a priority. I want to know why when money is needed in other areas it is available, but when it is needed to protect our future it is nowhere to be found.

> We seem to have the money to showcase our province and put on a giant 2 week party for all the rich people in the world to come to, we seem to have the money to have a fancy stadium when we put on the grey cup, yet we have no money for our 2 most important things, education and healthcare. Both of these things are in danger of becoming privatized and the government doesn't seem to care.

> I guess what I am asking is why should I have any faith in my government when it is failing our society on so many levels? Do you people care about how your public feels about you? What are you going to do to fix this problem and how are you using your position to better our province?

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> From: Randy.Hawes.MLA@leg.bc.ca
> To: megan-faulkner@hotmail.com
> Date: Sun, 21 Feb 2010 10:49:18 -0800
> Subject: RE: BC education cuts

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> I believe there is ample funding in both education and health care. What is missing perhaps in better use of the funds. We are working to correct this and ensure funds are spent in the classroom and in health care: on patients.

> Things like the Olympics and even ensuring that BC Place meet modern standards are what brings cash flow into our economy and builds a tourism industry. That is where the money to pay for health care and education come from.

> With respect to a \$300 million shortfall, I am not sure where that number comes from but I would suspect it is politically derived.

> Randy Hawes

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From: megan faulkner [mailto:megan-faulkner@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 21, 2010 12:03 PM
To: Hawes.MLA, Randy
Subject: RE: BC education cuts

I am happy to hear that you are working on correcting the problems and would like to know what you are doing exactly.

You seem to have a problem with the BCTF, when all they are trying to accomplish is the well-being of their students. Perhaps you should set your politically biased opinions aside and begin to serve those you swore you would when you ran for MLA. As for the information you provided me with in your first response, I would like to inform you that your numbers are off. Total provincial K-12 enrolment since 2001 is down by just over 41,000 students (less than 6%) – not 50-60,000 as you claim. Also, school-age populations are also expected to start rising again and to keep rising. By 2021—in just 10 years, we will be right back to where we were in 2001, and the numbers are expected to climb steadily after that. Here is some information about the Mission school district:

Mission's total school-age population declined by just 465 students between 2000 and 2009 –(8306 to 7841 children), which represents a total loss of just 465 students (5%) – or less than the enrolment of one average school (Source: BC Stats)

Total decline in public school enrolment (FTE) for SD 75 (Mission) between 2004/05 and

2008/09 was 559 students (= 8% of total enrolment) Net loss of public schools in SD 75 during the same period: 5 schools (21%). So Mission has lost THREE times as many schools as could be explained by enrolment losses alone. In 2009-10, Mission's public schools had 85 classes that exceeded the class size limits of 30 students and 140 classes with 4 or more IEP students. Examples include English 12 classes with 32 students, Math 8 and Science 8 classes with 33 students and a Social Studies 11 class with 34 students. Almost ONE in THREE classes in the district did not comply with provincial limits. Does this affect student achievement? Of course! More than 22% of Mission's public school students fail to graduate within 6 years (that's worse than the provincial average). The failure rates for males (27%), Aboriginal students (46%) and students with learning disabilities (50%) are even more alarming.

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From: Randy.Hawes.MLA@leg.bc.ca
To: megan-faulkner@hotmail.com
Date: Mon, 22 Feb 2010 10:07:14 -0800
Subject: RE: BC education cuts

We will just have to agree to disagree. The BCTF looks after the interest of teachers not students. I have talked to many teachers who privately tell me that it is the union that is the problem not the school board or the government.

I don't know where you get your numbers but they are not the numbers the government has and as the funders of the system, I suspect that the Ministry numbers are the accurate ones.

Randy

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From: megan-faulkner@hotmail.com
To: randy.hawes.mla@leg.bc.ca
Subject: RE: BC education cuts
Date: Mon, 22 Feb 2010 13:32:30 -0700

I got my stats from: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/student_stats/075.pdf and <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/dynamic/PopulationStatistics/index.asp>.

This has nothing to do with coming to an understanding together, neither one of us matter in this equation. You are my voice when it comes to speaking to the government, you have been elected to serve me and my fellow mission residents. All I want is some sort of assurance that you know what is happening in Mission, as well as the rest of the province and that you are doing your personal best to make sure things are taken care of the best they can be.

These emails will be forwarded to the BCTF as well as members of the opposition and also will be posted on a web site so that other residents can see where you stand on the topic. Thank you very much for your time.