

Dear Funding Model Review Panel,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit feedback on the K-12 Funding Review process. I am writing on behalf of the District Parents' Advisory Council of Prince Rupert. I am the Secretary of this committee. I am also the mother of 5 children at who range from preschool to middle school, my youngest is diagnosed with cerebral palsy. This diagnosis opened my eyes to the shortcomings of our current system. We have done our children an injustice and it needs to be **retroactively corrected**. To continue to educate our children at these current standards is setting many of the public students up for failure. We find that the need for additional tutoring, at the cost of the individual family, is an everyday fact of life. You can only imagine how many are left to fall further behind. Especially in a depressed region. People take for granted that this is the norm. It looks like the answer to this obstacle is to further lower our standards to just move our children on through the system. For the past two years we have been consistently advocating locally and provincially on the following budget items;

- Full funding for all ministry categories of student designation of special needs. Including access to timely assessments through registered educational psychologist, access to appropriate interventions and specialist supports (such as a learning assistance teacher, educational assistant, occupational or speech-language therapy).
- Stable and predictable funding so our district doesn't have to set aside considerable surplus funding into contingency funds.
- Restoration of transportation to our village school (ferry to Metlakatla BC cut) and community buses for the neighbourhoods with closed schools.
- Adequate funding for resources, materials, hands-on learning options, and field trips to support the new curriculum. Including support for ensuring Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives are reflected.
- Funding to address pervasive poverty issues that impact learning, such as quality breakfast and lunch programs.
- Funding to support health and wellness including mental health resources, supervision to allow for full lunch hour, and adequate counselling and community agency supports.
- Recruitment and retention as we are facing a high turnover of specialist teachers, especially in French Immersion. We lack other specialists to ensure special needs supports.
- Funding for seismic upgrades to our H1 school and consideration of aging infrastructure that poses health risks to our children (asbestos, lead, and air quality issues).

Overall, we feel that there simply isn't enough funding to the entire public education system. We've heard there has been a steady decline in the budget for over a decade. We present our budget priorities each year, however there just isn't enough money to provide the services and programs our children deserve. Please consider restoring funding levels to at least the equivalent of the national average. That will address many of our concerns. However, I challenge our new government to change the status quo of the previous government by not ignoring our pleas and give **ALL** BC Families equal opportunities to effective and quality education. Can we not set a good example to the rest of the country instead of being the example of what not to do?

Sincerely,

Dianna Caputo - SD 52 DPAC Secretary 2016-2018 - Mother of 5