

**From:** Linda Kerr [<mailto:linda.kerr@sd78.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 11, 2018 11:25 AM  
**To:** K-12 Funding Review EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** Written submission by SD 78

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Board of Education for Fraser-Cascade (District #78), I want to thank you for the way in which you received our first submission — and the way you listened carefully to what was said by all of us at the Regional Meeting on Thursday, April 5.

As a way of emphasizing our concerns before you make your report to the Minister of Education, here is a précis:

- Changes to the fiscal framework have implications for all of us in the education sector. The model we currently use has evolved over many years, and we have adapted along with it.
- Education funding needs to be dependable. This is crucial for long-term planning.
- Long-term planning has caused some districts to have managed to create a funding reserve. Those districts should not be faulted or punished for creating such a reserve. In our district, for example, that reserve allowed us to build classrooms onto a school whose population was growing, and achieving that addition without requesting further funding from the Ministry of Education. In an earlier case, a school had to be closed because it was not safe, had there been a seismic event. With the financial help of the Ministry, we built more classrooms onto another school and transferred the students into that addition. Financing for the washrooms in the addition was completely supported by our reserve fund. We also purchased a bus for disabled students totally out of the reserve fund.
- The Annual Facilities Grant also needs to be factored into the plan in order to make it dependable; keeping our current facilities viable is more efficient than having to build new ones, and work can be done at a time of year that disrupts students and staff the least.
- The Ministry of Education undertook a wide survey of districts during the past two years in order to allow rural students more access to the opportunities readily available in urban areas. Recruitment and retention of teachers and other staff was also the focus of this look into rural education; the Supreme Court ruling exacerbated the problems uncovered in that study.
- Our District is a kind of hybrid : we are geographically large, yet have a student population under 2000. We have access to larger centers, yet struggle with providing students with opportunities for diverse courses, especially in our northernmost school Boston Bar Elementary-Secondary, with under 70 students. We have a large Indigenous population, a large vulnerability index, and a large proportion of unfunded Special needs students within that small

number. And, as was echoed by most districts at the Regional meeting, regardless of population, each school requires a basic number of administrators, teaching and support staff.

- In the same way as the Ministry is rightly understanding that each student is different — and personalized learning to respond to these individuals means finding just the right fit for each one— each school within each district is also a separate entity, and the one-size-fits-all approach does not work. Personalized funding might be what we call the current model.
- Provincial teachers' — and support staff—contracts, with a nod to rural and remote districts, would go a long way to making recruitment and retention workable. Even within our district are contractual anomalies that date back to amalgamation in the 90s. We recognize that this would be difficult to achieve. But not impossible.
- We also support mandated periodic Professional Development for all teachers in areas of their current assignment, in order to strengthen their positive influence on student success.

Any alterations to the current funding model should be phased in over a long period of time.

Thank you again.

Yours truly,

Linda Kerr  
Board Chair  
School District #78 (Fraser-Cascade)