

# Vancouver Inner City Parents Group

Formed in 1997 out of the recognition that there are many problems and concerns unique to inner city schools in Vancouver. We meet monthly to share information, discuss problems affecting children and parents in schools and to plan and implement action to help resolve these problems.

Hon. Shirley Bond,  
Minister of Education and Deputy Premier,  
Room 248, Parliament Buildings,  
Victoria, BC, V8V 1X4

April 10, 2006

Dear Minister Bond,

## **2006/2007 Funding Increase**

We are writing to support the letter written by Mr. Ken Denike, Chairperson of the Vancouver School Board of Trustees dated April 3, 2006 and the concerns he raised about the 2006/2007 educational funding increase.

The Vancouver Inner City Parents Group grew out of the recognition that there are many problems and concerns unique to inner city schools in Vancouver. We were formed in 1997 and meet monthly to share information, discuss problems affecting children and parents in the schools and to plan and implement action to help resolve these problems. In our inner city schools, students face obstacles to success at school because of economic, social and other reasons. Extra support can significantly help to improve the school environment, academic performance, attendance, attitudes and behaviours. We enclose herewith a copy of our latest budget brief to the Vancouver School Board for your reference.

As mentioned in Mr. Denike's letter, we are extremely concerned that the Vancouver School Board only received an increase in basic student allocation of \$1.33 million instead of the \$1.99 million as expected for the 2006/2007 school year. This \$1.33 million increase is required to help offset inflation on goods and services and normal employee salary increments. It cannot be used to continue the improvements made this year in class size and composition. In March, 2006, your ministry did provide a one-time funding of \$20 million to address the situations in classrooms which, in our opinions as parents, must be continued. Therefore, we are very disappointed to learn that this funding is not provided for the 2006/2007 school year, or for the years after.

In our inner city schools, we see many "grey area" students parallel to the Ministry and School Board definition of "vulnerable students" struggling in overcrowded classrooms both at elementary and secondary levels. It is also particularly important for these vulnerable inner city children to have more contact with teaching staff in smaller classes that have adequate support for special needs, ESL and aboriginal students. We would request you to give serious consideration in providing continuous and additional funding similar to the one-time grant in March 2006 so that the progress made this year in our Vancouver classrooms can be continued.

For our most vulnerable children as well as all students in the school district of Vancouver, we urge you to take appropriate actions immediately as our Minister of Education.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Wong  
For Vancouver Inner City Parents Group  
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cc: Ken Denike, Chairperson, VSB Board of School Trustees  
Vancouver DPAC and Inner City School PACs  
All Vancouver MLAs  
BCCPAC