



July 19, 2021

Ref: 247470

Charlene McKay, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 68 (Nanaimo Ladysmith)
Email: Charlene.McKay@sd68.bc.ca

Dear Ms. McKay:

Thank you for your letter of May 18, 2021, regarding COVID-19 school district funding. I would like to thank you, the Board and all the staff in the School District for the incredible work over the past year to ensure students have had access to education in a safe and supportive environment. With case numbers in decline and more and more British Columbians receiving their second vaccine dose every day, I hope that this fall will be much closer to normal than this past year.

As you referenced, the Ministry of Education has made available almost \$288 million to the K-12 sector through the Provincial Safe Return to School Grant and the federal government's Safe Return to Class Fund to ensure the safe delivery of education since the pandemic began.

The Ministry recently announced the [2021/22 Estimated Operating Grants](#), which includes an approximate 4.3 percent increase to most funding rates. In addition, the Ministry also released the update to the current school year operating grants, which has provided an additional \$20.6 million to school districts due to updated funding claims as well as \$5.9 million to address learning impacts due to the pandemic.

Last month, I was also happy to announce that the Ministry will be providing an additional \$25.6 million in new one-time, pandemic-specific funding to support necessary cleaning and disinfecting, hand hygiene for students and staff, improve ventilation and restock supplies of personal protection equipment (PPE).

The Ministry will continue to monitor the pandemic and the positive impact the British Columbia vaccine rollout will have on returning to normal operations. The Ministry is also assessing the pandemic situation as we prepare for the start of the next school year and plan to provide more information in the coming weeks.

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Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jennifer Whiteside".

Jennifer Whiteside
Minister