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Date: September 9, 2022 at 10:19:10 AM PDT

To: Timothy Dunford <tdunford@saanichschools.ca>

Subject: Please support before and after school childcare

Dear School Trustees,

The B.C. government is working to implement a universal \$10 per day childcare system. While a new system like this takes time to scale up to meet the nearly overwhelming demand across the province, progress is being made. As you know, the government and school districts are currently piloting more than 20 “Seamless Day” programs around the province for Kindergarten-aged kids, and the federal government has recently announced significant financial resources to support childcare for kids aged 0-5.

What’s missing is affordable universal, quality childcare for all school-aged children (ages 5 to 12). The solution to this need is right in front of us – our existing public school system.

I support public childcare integrated into the public education system from the early years on. But before and after school care is the obvious and necessary next step.

Before and after school childcare in schools just makes sense on so many levels:

- Low—or no—capital investments or construction required—public schools are already here;
- No recruitment/retention problems with staffing—qualified Education Assistants are already in place, and most of them don’t receive full-time hours of work;
- Public delivery by school boards ensures high-quality care and oversight within an existing governance structure;
- Improved accessibility and fewer transitions for kids;
- Cost-effective delivery of high-quality childcare spaces; and,
- One-stop for parents—just drop your kids at school in the morning and pick them up at the end of the day—no more running to multiple locations or juggling competing schedules.

Recent decisions by the B.C. government have given school districts the means and mandate to implement before- and after-school programs.

Given the benefits to families, kids and our schools, I am asking you to call on the Provincial Government to fully implement the \$10aDay childcare plan, and give School Districts the funding needed to deliver affordable childcare, including before and after school care.

I also ask that you take the much needed first step of implementing before- and after-school care directly operated by our local school district. Families in our community desperately need high quality before and after school care located at the school their children attend. The school district is ideally situated to open these spaces quickly and efficiently using existing school infrastructure and staff.

Sincerely,

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