



May 24, 2024

Ref: 299292

Tim Dunford, Board Chair
School District No. 63 (Saanich)
Email: tdunford@saanichschools.ca

Dear Tim Dunford:

Thank you for your letter of May 10, 2024, addressed to Honourable Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care and Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Finance regarding the education funding model. I have been asked to reply on her behalf.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care has heard from several school districts, particularly those with low or flat enrolment, that inflationary costs are a concern. I can confirm that the Ministry has been working to gather information on inflationary pressures in the K–12 sector. Discussions are ongoing as to the extent of the impact on operations and possible ways to address the situation.

According to school district financial statements, approximately 90 percent of operating costs are salaries, benefits and wage increases for teachers, support staff and exempt staff that have been funded by government.

Government has recently announced increases of approximately 3.4 percent to the per student rates for the 2024/25 school year, bringing the [operating grants](#) to over \$7.0 billion. School District No. 63 (Saanich) is estimated to receive \$89.6 million in operating grant funding in 2024/25, a \$3.6 million increase compared to the 2023/24 school year.

As you may know, the [K–12 Public Education Funding Review](#) was completed in 2019. In 2020, the Ministry established four working groups who reviewed the recommendations and the potential implementation challenges. The recommendations provide a general road map for the sector to help improve the K–12 public education funding system.

.../2

School districts and boards of education experienced significant challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and government decided it was not an appropriate time to introduce any changes to the way schools are funded. At this point, government has paused the implementation of the remaining recommendations from the Funding Model Review and will revisit the path forward at an appropriate time in the future. I want to reassure you that the Ministry would engage with stakeholders before moving ahead.

I appreciate the efforts boards of education, senior staff and education stakeholders are making to achieve balanced budgets.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C.A. Zacharuk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Christina Zacharuk
Deputy Minister

cc: Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Finance
Adam Olsen, MLA Saanich North and the Islands