



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Via Email: AVED.Minister@gov.bc.ca

May 3, 2016

Hon. Andrew Wilkinson
Minister of Advanced Education
P.O. Box 9055 Stn Prov Government
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Wilkinson:

For several years we in the K- 12 sector of public education have urged the Government of British Columbia to enhance and stabilize the funding for universal public education. We realize that in the post-secondary sector in British Columbia there are also severe funding shortages and students struggle to access further education even if they have successfully completed grade 12. This struggle is compounded for those who are young adults who did not complete and must now pay tuition for adult education even though they are recent graduates and juggle work, family, financial and education needs. This recent reduction of funding for adult basic education has compelled us to change our policies and presents a financial barrier that makes access to post-secondary education even harder.

We have worked hard to improve graduation rates on the Sunshine Coast. It is our hope that these graduates will have full opportunities to continue on to post-secondary study.

Colleagues in the post-secondary sector have launched a campaign to “Open the Doors” to increase funding and awareness of the needs of post-secondary students and their instructors. We fully support this campaign and encourage your ministry to shift direction and enhance opportunities for a full range of post-secondary options for every student. Recent focus to “job-ready” certification has lessened the opportunities for students to individualize their programs and learn a variety of skills to prepare them for an ever changing job market.

The needs of students and the communities that support them is what drives all of us involved public education. We urge you to work with all educational partners to make greater funding and support of access to post-secondary education a priority as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Betty Baxter', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Betty Baxter
Board Chair

BB/er

p.c.: Board of Education of School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast)
Nicholas Weswick, Secretary-Treasurer
Patrick Bocking, Superintendent
Nicholas Simons, MLA, Powell River-Sunshine Coast
George Davison, President, Federation of Post-secondary Educators