



BOARD OF EDUCATION

By email to: localgovelectionreform@gov.bc.ca

January 31, 2014

Local Government Elections Reform
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
PO Box 9847 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9T2

Dear Minister Oakes:

Re: Board of education input on campaign finance reform for local elections

Thank you for the invitation to provide feedback on the *Expense Limits in Local Elections Discussion Paper*. Our Board of Education had the opportunity for a thorough review of the paper and a collective discussion on January 29, 2014.

Our feedback can be summarized in five key areas:

1. We are unanimous in our support of a reasonable cap on campaign spending. Although we acknowledge there may be some difference in rural and urban areas, we feel a cap of \$4000 as per the Manitoba model for councilors in smaller communities is appropriate. This could be a set rate for communities of a particular population or set as a rate per voter.
2. We do not agree with electoral organizations in the elections for trustees as we feel that education in the province should be free from partisan politics.
3. We agree that it is appropriate to hold elections for boards of education at the same time as municipal elections. We recognize that it can be hard to draw profile and public interest to trustee campaigns and feel it increases voter turnout for all when the trustee elections are held at the same time as the other municipal elections. Boards of education should work with local media to help increase public awareness of the election.
4. Absent from the discussion paper was any accountability of where campaign funds are coming from. Our board feels there should be a disclosure of the source of campaign funds.
5. Further to point #4, we feel there should be a limit on third party donations to any campaign.

Thank you for initiating this consultation and for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,



Betty Baxter
Chair, Board of Education
School District No. 46(Sunshine Coast)

BB/er

p.c. Board of Education of School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast)
Patrick Bocking, Superintendent
Nicholas Weswick, Secretary-Treasurer
Nicholas Simons, MLA, Powell River-Sunshine Coast