



Mayor and Council
Box 219, 4936 Barriere Town Road

Barriere, B.C. V0E 1E0

Via Email: inquiry@barriere.ca

Dear Mayor and Council,

The [School Act](#) recognizes the District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) as the legislated parent voice at the school district level, elected to represent the collective views of Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) within the school district.

DPACs advise the Board of Education on matters relating to education in their school district. DPACs advocate for parental involvement in the education system and give input into the development of education policy.

The SD73 DPAC Executive has been an active partner in the process of developing educational priorities within SD73. We have provided input that is relevant and individual to the needs of our communities. Representing the families of over 16,000 children in twelve communities, the SD73 DPAC is the largest stakeholder group and educational planning partner in our District.

Last month, the SD73 Board of Education adopted a budget for the 2025/26 fiscal year. This budget reflected considerable fiduciary pressures, many of which are externally fixed and not under control of local Trustees. Cost pressures, which included ballooning relief costs, inflationary pricing, declining interest rates, the cost of maintaining aging infrastructure, and operational challenges related to facilities that should have been replaced decades ago have, unfortunately, become the focus of the fiscal plan for 2025/2026.

While the district is focused on the staff/program/maintenance cuts required to balance the budget, families are focused on an educational experience that is *student-centered*, *accessible*, and *meaningful* for each child in our community.

Skeletal Supports lead to Student Inequities

Parents are witnessing ongoing cuts to vital school resources and programs. Inadequate provincial funding has left school districts struggling, placing immense pressure on school boards, classrooms, families, and—most importantly—students.

Our Board is aware of the success gaps we are already seeing in our student population. Indigenous students, students with disabilities, and children in care are not keeping up



with their peers in literacy or numeracy proficiency in our district. Our most vulnerable students are experiencing more segregation and exclusion. This will worsen.

Families have been asked to cover the costs of basic school supplies, tech replacements, classroom supplies, and the increased transportation fees implemented by the Board last year. Some school communities are able to support their school this way; others do not have the resources. This widens the gaps in our already two-tiered public education system between schools in higher socio-economic areas and those who serve families facing systemic barriers.

BCEdAccess, a provincial organization that tracks school exclusions in BC, reports that the highest incidence of school exclusions now occurs in kindergarten and grade one. This matches what we're being told by our parents. DPAC is being asked to provide advocacy and support for both PACs and individual parents at a never-before-seen rate.

The Superintendent of SD73 summed it up best during her budget presentation in April: our situation is "impossible". The financial position we've been put in by the Province makes it impossible to meet the needs of our students. It simply can't be done.

In 2018, the Province commissioned a report to evaluate how the Ministry of Education delivers funding to Districts. The Commission presented 22 recommendations to the government. Seven years later, those recommendations remain largely ignored, despite repeated efforts by many stakeholders for more stable, needs-based funding for School Boards to implement programs and support students in their district.

Counselling, CEA's and IEW are crucial to student wellbeing and success. The people in our schools that connect to our children and provide low-demand interactions, places to relax and reset, celebrate their interests and achievements, and spend time with them are what make our school communities what they are. Our educators and school support workers, our bus drivers and custodians, are all part of the intricate web that is holding families up in uncertain times. To balance the budget, these positions are being cut.

We need better Provincial funding for Schools and School Communities.

We Need Your Help

Districts around the province are currently facing the same questions and having the same conversations as we are.

The commitments made by the Provincial Government to address gaps in school programming and student needs are not being met.



Now is the time to pressure the Province to act.

Now is the time for change.

We are asking you to help us support parents and children in our communities.

What You Can Do

Councils from around BC can advocate for provincial funding through various means. We are asking you to leverage the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) as a collective voice. We are asking you to prioritize students when you participate in the annual UBCM convention, and lobby for their needs. We are asking you to meet directly with provincial ministers. And, we are asking you to write to the Province immediately and tell them of your intent to advocate for our students. You can advocate alongside us for a better future for children in BC.

Will you join us by:

- **Collective Advocacy:**

***Coming to our Rally for Public Education outside of the Kamloops Library on May 10th from 11-12pm.**

*Submitting a Resolution to UBCM to advocate for educational funding and policy changes at the provincial level.

*Writing a letter to the Province to tell them that Public Education is important to our city.

- **Direct Engagement:**

*Requesting a direct meeting with the provincial minister to discuss funding needs and priorities.

- **Discussing Public Education Funding at the Annual UBCM Convention:**

*The UBCM's annual convention provides a platform for city councils to meet with provincial officials, lobby for funding, and discuss issues of mutual concern.

- **Local Government Initiatives:**

*Support DPAC in advocating for funding through local initiatives and projects that demonstrate the need for provincial support.



Now is the time to stand together. We're calling on you to join parents and families of SD73 in urging the Province to prioritize public education—because it matters, every child matters, and united, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Bonnie

Bonnie McBride

SD73 DPAC Chairwoman

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