

From: [REDACTED]
To: john.yap.mla@leg.bc.ca;
cc: info@bccpac.bc.ca; [REDACTED]
Subject: Direct access grants for Parent Advisory Councils
Date: September 8, 2009 7:25:46 PM

Dear Mr. Yap,

I am concerned that the direct access grants for school parent advisory councils may be in peril. I appreciate that these are challenging economic times, but let me assure you that our school community is experiencing those challenges, too. Parents supporting dependent children have to manage many financial constraints.

James Gilmore Elementary school serves 435 students as of Sept 2009. We had been expecting \$8,700 in gaming funds. That is a substantial amount of money. We had intended to spend it on computers, supporting extracurricular activities like track & field membership, games for recess and lunch time, playground equipment like balls and hockey sticks, contributions to our grade 7s' graduation ceremony, scholarships for Gilmore alumni graduating grade 12, and extending our playground with swings. Which of these on-going programs do you recommend we cut?

The Parent Advisory Council already does a substantial amount of fundraising as well. That money goes to many things that one might have hoped would be covered through adequate Ministry funding, like classroom consumables and resources, library books, music program resources, field trip subsidies, and financing other programs within the school like a leadership conference, sexual health educator, and earthquake emergency kits. In the past, the PAC has even bought text books for the school. PAC fundraising profits also support the grade 6 outdoor education program and performances like the Vancouver Opera.

Gilmore's Parent Advisory Council is a dedicated group of parents working with school staff to provide this community of students with a learning environment that encourages them all to develop to their fullest potential. Some of our work involves direct volunteer participation in programs running in the school. Some of our work requires cash. It is extremely discouraging when our government considers our projects sufficiently unimportant that it is considering, or perhaps has already decided to, withhold its financial support. That support represents a substantial proportion of our total funds.

I hope that you will be able to assure me that the direct access grants for school

and district parent advisory councils is going to be provided as promised by the end of this month.

Sincerely,

Louise Coatta
Treasurer
Parent Advisory Council
James Gilmore Elementary School