

September 16, 2009

To: The Honourable Rich Coleman  
Minister of Housing and Social Development

The Parent Advisory Committee at Woodland's Secondary School in Nanaimo is extremely concerned and disappointed with the Provincial government's recent decision to cut gaming grants to our school PACs. The money we receive from these grants is well spent and directly supports students in their extracurricular activities at school. In our school most of these funds support students in athletics, band, and in our library. They are also used for student scholarships, student council, and to enhance student access to computers. Our PAC and school community engages in fundraising in addition to receiving gaming funding and many parents, community members and teachers volunteer countless hours to help students.

As a school community we have embraced the governments' mandates to encourage equity and excellence in education. How will schools achieve any sort of equity across this province when you cut this funding? This only serves to deepen the divide between "have" and "have not" schools. Athletics and Band help to engage our students and our Library supports and enhances literacy, the very essence of education and any hope of excellence.

You are making these cuts while asking us to also absorb the cuts to B.C. School Sports and in the wake of loss of funds from school vending machines. We implore you to reinstate the funding from gaming grants to their previous levels and by doing so stating that education is of high priority in this province.

Sincerely, Jane Coupland (Treasurer)  
Woodlands Secondary School P.A.C.  
Nanaimo, B.C.