



November 4, 2022

Ref: 281578

Tracy Loffler, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 75 (Mission)
Email: tracy.loffler@mpsd.ca

Dear Tracy Loffler:

Thank you for your letter of June 1, 2022, regarding how the Ministry of Education and Child Care allocates capital funding for new schools and additions, and your letter of October 3, 2022, regarding the request for a replacement of École Mission Secondary (Mission Secondary). I appreciate the insights you provided on the timelines and complexities associated with the process, and related implications for School District No. 75 (Mission).

Each year, the Ministry reviews 5-year Capital Plan Submissions from all 60 school districts to determine priority investments to accommodate within available capital budgets. Once a project is supported to proceed to business case development, there are a series of evaluation factors and extensive review processes used to determine whether a project will be approved for funding. In most cases, the 10-year enrolment projections are in fact more relevant than current enrolment numbers to inform a decision around justification of an expansion project, as projections for sustained enrolment growth illustrate more of a need for expansion than sporadic bumps in enrolment over a 10-year horizon.

Current process dictates that prior to a project receiving funding approval, school districts are responsible for utilizing local funds to cover the initial costs for business case development, preliminary cost estimates, and any associated consultant reports/fees. Following funding approval, school districts are able to recover the costs for these works through approved project funding envelopes.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care is currently undertaking a review of the annual Capital Plan submissions put forward by all 60 school districts earlier in the year. This includes consideration of the submission, and the replacement request for Mission Secondary, put forward by the School District. This review is in alignment with the broader provincial process that is currently underway in preparation for Budget 2023. All priorities which will be supported to proceed to business case as part of this budget cycle will be announced following Budget 2023 early in the new year.

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The Ministry is currently facing increasing enrolment pressures in many communities, life safety concerns at existing facilities (including but not limited to seismic risk), and deferred maintenance costs, all of which are placing pressure on Ministry capital allocations. We will look to balance all needs as we proceed with Budget 2023. Our government remains committed to investing in Mission Secondary School to ensure students can learn in a seismically safe school for generations to come.

I would like to thank you for bringing these concerns to the Ministry's attention and we look forward to continuing to work closely with the School District to serve the students and families of Mission.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Chris Brown, Assistant Deputy Minister, Resource Management Division by email at Chris.Brown@gov.bc.ca.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Whiteside". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Whiteside
Minister

pc: Chris Brown, Assistant Deputy Minister, Resource Management Division
Francois Bertrand, Executive Director, Capital Management Branch
Capital Management Branch