



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

December 8, 2009

Honourable Colin Hansen
Minister of Finance
PO Box 9048, Stn. Prov. Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Hansen,

I write on behalf of BC's 60 publicly elected boards of education to express our concerns regarding the negative impact the implementation of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) will have on board of education budgets.

Through data collected by the BC Association of School Business Officials (BCASBO), we estimate that for the 2010/11 budget year BC's public schools will collectively face cost increases of approximately \$32,000,000 due to the HST if no rebate or other compensating mechanism is established.

As you are aware, despite increases to the overall education budget the K-12 public education sector continues to face very significant funding pressures due to a number of factors including: additional non-funded costs of implementing Full Day Kindergarten; increased salary and pension costs; the cost of carbon offsets; MSP premium increases; and energy cost increases, to name a few. These and other funding pressures such as this year's loss of the Annual Facility Grant have resulted in staff lay-offs and program cancellations in many school districts.

The additional impact of the HST will require even greater cuts to education services unless some form of rebate or compensating mechanism is included in the next provincial budget. BCSTA endorses the position of BCASBO in its November 2 letter to you. We respectfully request that the next provincial budget include an HST rebate of no less than 68% to ensure cost neutrality for BC's 60 public school districts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Connie Denesiuk".

Connie Denesiuk
President

cc: Margaret MacDiarmid, Minister of Education
David Green, President of BC Association of School Business Officials
BC Boards of Education