



December 7, 2022

Ref: 281848

Amanda Krebs, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 83 (North Okanagan)
Email: board@sd83.bc.ca

Dear Amanda Krebs:

Thank you for your letter of June 14, 2022, regarding inflation's effect on school operations. I recognize the value of all the work that boards of education do to consult with rightsholders and partners during the budget process to aid accountability and transparency and appreciate your advocacy on behalf of students in the communities you serve.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care has recently heard from several school districts that inflation is a concern for them with the current rate of inflation having not been experienced for decades. The Ministry is working with the BC Association of School Business Officials to gather information on inflationary pressures in the K-12 sector, and discussions are ongoing as to the extent of the impact on operations.

Nonetheless, we have introduced the Student and Family Affordability Fund (SFAF) which is designed to assist families who have been impacted by the effects of global inflation and the associated cost increases of daily life, including school related purchases for their children. The one-time funding provided directly to school districts is designed to help them deliver on existing initiatives like school meals programs, paying particular attention to the needs of vulnerable students.

According to financial reports, approximately 90 percent of operating costs are salaries and benefits. When labour settlements are finalized the cost of negotiated settlements will be added to operating funding.

We appreciate the efforts that boards of education and senior staff are making to achieve balanced budgets. Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Whiteside
Minister