



October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

Honourable Robert Fleming  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

VIA EMAIL: [EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Minister Fleming,

**RE: Request for the Ministry of Education to intervene in the disposal of approximately 5.5 acres of Crown land owned by BC Hydro located in the area 1800 block Kings and Haultain in Saanich on behalf of the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique ("CSF")**

I write on behalf of the CSF in regard to its urgent need to secure a school site for the construction of a French-language elementary school on the BC Hydro site located in the area of the 1800 block of Kings and Haultain in the District of Saanich. The Board of Trustees of the CSF have recently become aware that BC Hydro intends to dispose of this property and has been undertaking consultations with the First Nations and local governments regarding their interest in this site. The CSF requests that the Ministry of Education immediately intercede in this process on behalf of the CSF in order to enable the CSF to acquire this site.

#### **The CSF's requirements in the east side of Greater Victoria**

Over the past year, the CSF has been working with officials from the Capital Division of the Ministry of Education to identify and secure school sites to enable the CSF to fulfill its mandate under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* ("the Charter"), and has had several discussions about the CSF's need for a school site on the east side of Greater Victoria. In fact, the CSF has identified an urgent need for a school located in the east side of Victoria in its annual Capital Plan submissions to the Ministry of Education for many years, since at least the 2009-2010 school year. The BC Hydro site is extremely well situated within the CSF's current catchment area served by école Beausoleil.

École Beausoleil is located in the former Sundance Elementary School owned by the Greater Victoria School District ("SD 61"). The CSF has a short-term lease for this facility with SD 61, however, recently there have been some difficulties with the renewal of this lease, creating significant uncertainty about the CSF's ability to continue to offer French-language education programming at this location. The Sundance School is an old facility that has seismic issues, and

does not meet the CSF's educational programming requirements. At present, operating in this facility is the CSF's only option on the east side of Victoria, as no alternatives have been identified. Capital Division and CSF officials met with SD 61 officials as recently as a month ago in an effort to identify other options for the CSF within SD 61's current facilities, but no tangible options were put forward.

Given the fact that the Ministry of Education officials have been aware of the CSF's urgent requirements for a school site on the east side of Victoria, the CSF is very disappointed that the Ministry of Education has not taken any steps to exercise its right of first refusal with respect to the disposal of the BC Hydro property located in the area of the 1800 block of Kings and Haultain in the District of Saanich.

### **Government of British Columbia Policy on Asset Disposal**

The CSF understands that the Inventory for Real Property for Broader Public Sector Entities applies to BC Hydro.<sup>1</sup> The objective of this policy is for all broader public sector (BPS) entities, including BC Hydro, to promote a portfolio management approach to the management of real property. Section 6.4 of the policy states:

Prior to disposing of surplus real property in the marketplace, BPS entities are expected to investigate opportunities to redeploy such property to meet the needs of other government entities. This includes identifying and listing the surplus property in the inventory for a minimum of three months. Entities with real property needs are expected to regularly review the inventory for any surplus real property and take any necessary actions to confirm whether or not such surplus real property meets those needs.<sup>2</sup>

As you are aware, Minister Fleming, the CSF has urgent needs for school sites throughout the province. These needs are communicated to you annually, through the CSF's Annual Capital Plan submissions. The identification of surplus government and/or BPS property is critical information for the CSF. Therefore, it is the CSF Board of Trustees' expectation that the Capital Division officials regularly review the surplus property inventory list and bring forward to CSF proposed property disposals for the CSF's consideration for any community identified as a high priority community in the CSF's Capital Plan. This activity has occurred in the past, however, there have also been occasions where the CSF becomes aware of government or crown property disposals and brings this to the attention of the Ministry of Education officials. The current proposed

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<sup>1</sup> BC Government. *Inventory Policy for Real Property (Broader Public Sector Entities)*. Inventory Policy V 3.6. December 3, 2105. Page 3.

<sup>2</sup> BC Government. *Inventory Policy for Real Property (Broader Public Sector Entities)*. Inventory Policy V 3.6. December 3, 2105. Page 7.



disposal of the BC Hydro land located in the area of the 1800 block of Kings and Haultain in the District of Saanich appears to be another instance in which the Ministry of Education has failed to bring a property sale forward for the CSF's consideration.

I therefore write on behalf of the CSF's Board of Trustees to request that you ensure that the government of British Columbia takes all necessary action in order exercise the government's and the Ministry of Education's right of first refusal to secure this property for the CSF.

The CSF looks forward to hearing from you as soon as possible. Please communicate with the CSF's Secretary Treasurer, Sylvain Allison, with respect to any aspect of this letter; he can be reached at 778 229 3496 or 604-214-2606, or by email at [sallison@csf.bc.ca](mailto:sallison@csf.bc.ca)

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Lapierre', is written in a cursive style.

Marie-France Lapierre  
President

Cc: Scott McDonald, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education  
Marc-André Ouellette, Southern Vancouver Island Trustee, CSF  
Sylvain Allison, Secretary-Treasurer, CSF