

James Janzen, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 40 (New Westminister)
1001 Columbia St
New Westminister BC V3M 1C4

Dear James Janzen:

Re: New Westminister Schools Project

As you are aware, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation have completed an investigation into the burial site of Tsilhqot'in Chief Ahan. The investigation has concluded that it is very likely that Chief Ahan's remains were buried within the grounds of the former New Westminister Gaol, located near the old New Westminister Courthouse on Carnarvon Street.

Current research to confirm the exact location of the Gaol grounds is continuing, under the leadership of the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

I appreciate that the Board recognized the importance of the Province undertaking this investigation. I also appreciate that the Board is committed to dealing with the situation related to Chief Ahan in a way which brings honour to the Tsilhqot'in Chief and to the Tsilhqot'in First Nation.

As a result of the investigation into the burial site of Chief Ahan, additional information regarding the former New Westminister Public Cemetery was found. I am advised that the Public Cemetery may have been larger in size than previously assumed, and that the provisions of the *Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act (CIFSA)*, in addition to the provisions of the *Heritage Conservation Act*, may apply to any works on the NWSS site.

Given these new circumstances, I am requesting the Board of Education review its overall plan for replacing New Westminister Secondary School and constructing the west side middle school. We need to work together to review options which would allow the New Westminister Schools Project to move forward as quickly as possible.

Options should be prepared which take into consideration the requirements of dealing with the former New Westminister Public Cemetery and the likelihood of finding human remains on the NWSS site; the concerns of the Tsilhqot'in First Nation; the future elementary, middle and secondary school capacity requirements on the west side; and the availability of alternate sites for either or both of the New Westminister Secondary School and the proposed west side middle school.

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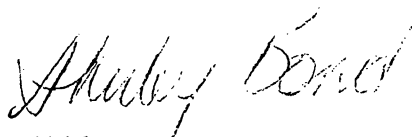
The educational merits and the capital and operating costs are to be assessed for each option. I expect that the Board of Education will work collaboratively with the City of New Westminster in the development of these options.

The options are to be submitted to the Ministry of Education as soon as possible. My Deputy Minister will review the options, following which it is our intent to convene a meeting with yourself as Board Chair, and possibly with the Mayor, so that your plan to implement the New Westminster Schools Project can be finalized.

I encourage you to liaise regularly with the Ministry of Education as you review your plan. The Ministry of Education Representative remains available to provide guidance to the Board in the preparation of the options.

I look forward to these schools proceeding with full cooperation of the City and School District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Bond".

Shirley Bond
Minister
Deputy Premier