

Date: Tue, 6 Oct 2009 12:23:45 -0700
From: "HSD MHSB Correspondence HSD:EX" <MHSDCORR@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: "EDUC Minister EDUC:EX" <Minister.EDUC@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: HSD Response - 155727

Ref: 155727

Mr. Alan St. Pierre, Chairperson
Parent Advisory Council
James Kennedy Elementary School
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. St. Pierre:

Thank you for taking the time to write about community gaming grants. I am pleased to respond.

Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) have a very important role in our education system. However, the global-fiscal realities facing our province mean that difficult decisions must be made to ensure core services and priorities are supported.

As such, the priorities for the 2009/10 community gaming grants are:

- o programs that support low income and disabled British Columbians;
- o programs that provide food, shelter, and support to at risk individuals;
- o programs that support community health services;
- o programs that fund nutritional and similar programs in schools for underprivileged children;
- o public-safety programs;
- o a limited number of arts and culture activities;
- o community education programs, such as daycares and preschools;
- o public community facilities like community halls and recreation facilities;
- o youth and disabled sports;
- o non-sport youth groups, such as scouts and cadets; and
- o written three-year commitments made to community groups.

Community gaming grants to PACs are allocated based on the funding available each fiscal year. This year, they will be \$10 per student. District PACs (DPACs) will be funded at \$1,250 to support parental involvement in schools. This funding is part of the \$56.2 million from community gaming grants being directed to children in schools. It includes \$48.6 million for meal programs, child and youth workers, and other initiatives under the CommunityLINK program, which benefits vulnerable students in the public school system. \$7.6 million will go to nearly 1,700 PACs and DPACs to support extra-curricular activities for students.

I understand these are significant shifts in the gaming grant program and they will impact some PACS this year. The provincial government remains steadfast in our commitment to help build strong communities through the community gaming grant program, while we contend with these challenging economic times.

As your concerns regarding education funding fall under the mandate of the Ministry of Education, I have forwarded your email to the Honourable Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid for her review.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely yours,

Original signed by:

Rich Coleman
Minister of Housing and Social Development

pc: Honourable Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid
Minister of Education