

In open letter to the Premier, APPLE BC says education promises totally unrealistic ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Dear Premier Campbell:

Before you depart as Premier of British Columbia we, the members of APPLE BC, a newly-formed alliance of parents and partners, would like to send an open letter to you stating our position on the ongoing underfunding of K-12 public education in this province.

This letter is also directed at your successor, so that the issues raised are appropriately dealt with.

We view with the strongest reservations the commitment you made during a province-wide television address, on Wednesday October 27, 2010, to parents that all Grade 4 students in British Columbia would be reading and writing at a Grade 4 level within the next 5 years.

Given the fact your government has been in power for the past decade and that our public schools have been underfunded over that time, and given the fact that you did not provide any information about funding levels for your ambitious goal for our students, we would like to itemize for you, and your successor, the full implications of the solemn commitment you made, as well as our detailed reservations on your promise.

It should be noted that in a poll commissioned by the BC Society for Public Education and conducted by Angus Reid that almost 80% of members of the general public wanted more money for public schools.

We have selected one board - namely, the Vancouver Board of Education, for a review and a call for reinstatement of the programs and services needed in our city schools, at both the district and board level, in order to fully implement your goal. You noted that this would be an "expensive" undertaking but provided no outline of costs involved or of the financial commitment your government was prepared to make to achieve this goal.

We have undertaken in this open letter to outline the scope of the task that lies ahead for your successor. In the 16 itemized points that follow, we show the implications for our urban school district and the obstacles that have to be overcome to even begin to achieve this end.

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-reprinted from the Vancouver Observer

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