



Richmond Teachers' Association

210 - 7360 Westminster Hwy.

Richmond, BC

V6X 1A1

Tel: 604-278-2539

Fax: 604-278-4320

www.richmondteachersassociation.ca

April 22, 2026

Board of Education
School District No. 38 (Richmond)
7811 Granville Avenue
Richmond, BC V6Y 3E3

Dear Ken,

Re: Budget Brief

On behalf of the Richmond Teachers' Association, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit a budget brief for the upcoming 2026-2027 district budget. The RTA is profoundly disappointed that the continued underfunding of Public Education has resulted in a budget shortfall of approximately \$4.2 million dollars leading to a proposed budget that includes staffing cuts. The RTA recognizes the Board is working hard to 'Focus on the Learner' and to keep cuts away from the classroom, but any staffing cut will have a direct or indirect impact on the classroom and the ability to support the needs of a diverse learning population.

Considering these challenges, the RTA presents the following brief in response to the 2026-2027 Budget Update.

1. Provide Additional FTE to Preserve Specialist Teacher Positions

It is important that the Board fully understand that the proposed 2026/2027 budget cuts do not account for the FTE reductions that are directly tied to the anticipated decrease in domestic and international student enrollment. Of particular concern is the projected cuts in ELL, LRT and counselling support that will result from decreased student enrollment. The collective agreement ensures the Board receives Ministry funding for these positions, but each of them is tied to an enrollment driven staffing ratio. The current 1% enrollment reduction will result in less supports being available for the projected 3.2% enrolment increase for funded students, which will require additional support. The RTA encourages the Board to ask questions about these cuts and how FTE reductions will impact access to specialist teacher support. Where possible additional FTE must be added to preserve specialist teacher positions.

2. Reconsider the Proposed Cut to Education Services

Teachers who work as Coordinators, Consultants, School Psychologists, Mental Health Consultants, Hearing Resource Teachers, Indigenous Success teachers and those supporting the Richmond School Program are an integral part of supporting teachers, learners, schools and the Board's Strategic Priorities including *Priority 1 – Success for All Learners* and *Priority 2 – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*.

More specifically, the RTA disagrees with the following cuts:

- 3.0 FTE Teacher Consultants
 - Outreach Behaviour Resource Teacher – Richmond School Program
 - Indigenous Success Teacher – elementary
 - Mental Health Consultant
- 1.0 FTE RVS Coordinator
- 1.0 FTE Hearing Resource Teacher
- 0.2 FTE School Psychologist

Specific information about each of these roles will be sent in a separate document.

3. Provide FTE support for Small Secondary Schools

The current distribution of students at secondary schools is placing significant pressure on low enrolling schools. To address this pressure, the Board must ensure additional FTE is available to add blocks, which will help to maintain neighborhood enrollment. When a school is unable to offer a diversity of courses students will look to transfer to other schools or opt for online learning. In the longer term, the Board of Education must make decisions to address secondary catchments. Providing additional FTE for small secondary schools aligns with the Board's Strategic Priorities including *Priority 1 – Success for All Learners* and *Priority 2 – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*.

4. Provide FTE to support the opening of a new school

The District should ensure additional FTE is available to support Brighthouse, Cook, Talmey and Tomsett with pressures arising from approved transfer requests. The RTA believes additional divisions may need to be maintained at these four schools to ensure compliance with class size and composition language.

5. Provide FTE to maintain Learning Resource and ELL Support at Secondary and ensure In-Service support is provided.

The district plans to introduce a new supplemental support model for learning resource and English language learners. The current change will see less blocks of learning resource and ELL support despite little change in enrolment. We are especially concerned that learning resource

will be cut by 7 FTE at secondary, which is equivalent to 49 blocks across 10 schools or an average of 5 blocks per school.

The new ELL model provides less ELL classes at level 1, 2 and 4. Supplemental support will be added where an ELL teacher will be assigned a caseload of approximately 50 students and will be required to support student's Annual Instruction Plans (AIP) through in-class support, pull out or small group instruction. The RTA has requested the district ensure non-enrolling support for secondary ELL is increased and complies with the collective agreement. To date, there is no Classroom Enhancement Fund FTE assigned for non-enrolling secondary ELL. The RTA will ensure our collective agreement is followed.

The RTA also requests additional funds are made available for enrolling and non-enrolling teacher in-service training. This support is required to ensure secondary schools are prepared to implement the new model for the 2026/2027 school year. If the district cannot provide the resources necessary to ensure successful implementation, they should abandon a model change until they engage in a full review of inclusion as outlined in the Board's Strategic Plan. The RTA is deeply concerned that Richmond's model is being changed without first engaging in a facilitated inclusion review that involves teachers and district employees.

Change without adequate understanding, support and implementation has the potential to directly impact the students who need additional support and resources, as well as the workload of staff involved.

This request aligns with the Board's Strategic Priorities including *Priority 1 – Success for All Learners* and *Priority 2 – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*.

6. Inquiry Grant

As posted by the District on RichNet, "Inquiry is a foundational component of professional learning and is a great way to harness and deepen learning experiences for educators and student learners. Inquiry grants are supported by the Board to support collaboration, pedagogical practice and professional inquiry. Inquiry grants are intended to enhance student learning and the learning culture of our district to create explicit alignment and connections to our schools' learning focus as stated in School Stories, and to the strategic priorities of the Board's Strategic Plan."

This year, the district made the decision to cut inquiry grants. Teachers have expressed significant disappointment in this decision as inquiry grants provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate and explore pedagogy and best practices through district supported inquiry. The Board introduced a new strategic plan in January 2026; the RTA strongly encourages the Board to reintroduce inquiry grants for 2026-2027. This request provides opportunities for teachers to

directly engage with the Board's Strategic Priorities including *Priority 1 – Success for All Learners* and *Priority 2 – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*.

7. Reconsider Cuts to School Based Budgets

The projected 5% cut to elementary school budgets and 15% cut to secondary school budgets will impact the money available for consumable supplies, learning resources and staff development funds including supports for school-based teams. While the RTA appreciates that secondary schools may have access to surplus funds, there is currently no transparency in the amounts available or assurances that school budget committees will be able to access these funds. The RTA has significant concerns that schools will be forced to make cuts that will impact learners. In the past, when the Board imposed cuts to school budgets, teachers experienced reduced access to consumable supplies and learning resources, in particular access to paper for copying and textbooks. Prior to implementing these cuts, the district must ensure school-based budgeting processes are fully transparent and supported.

8. Be Mindful of Staffing Reductions and their Impact on Employee Well-Being

Staffing reductions will impact the ability for the district to implement the Board's Strategic Plan and any new Board recommendations. The Board must keep this in mind when making requests and when providing strategic over-sight of the district's work. Every decision you make must ensure employee well-being remains at the forefront.

As partner groups in education, it is our job to advocate for Public Education and to challenge the government to increase support. The Richmond Teachers' Association remains ready to work with the Board on this advocacy.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our response to the 2026-2027 Annual District budget.

Sincerely,



Liz Baverstock
President, RTA

cc: Chris Usih, Superintendent of Schools
Cindy Wang, Secretary-Treasurer
Steve Wenglowski, 1st Vice President, RTA
Frano Marsic, Vice President, RTA
Sherri Boljuncic, Vice President, RTA