



## TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION No. 31

AFFILIATED WITH TEAMSTERS CANADA AND THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS  
#1 GROSVENOR SQUARE, DELTA, BC V3M 5S1

August 10, 2020

Honourable Rob Fleming  
Minister of Education  
P.O. Box 9045 Stn. Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

*Delivered via email*

### **RE: School Re-Opening Plan**

I write on behalf of my union membership at Abbotsford, School District No. 34, to address several concerns regarding the re-opening plan for schools in September released by the B.C. Government.

Upon reviewing of the province's plan, it remains unclear which details and direction my union can provide to help the safety and health of our affected 1,200 support staff members, students, and their families.

I wish to resolve the problems in advance of re-opening day, September 2020. Therefore, could we meet to remedy the concerns from which my members have graciously presented to the union?

For your review, I have attached a list of questions stemming from the B.C. Covid-19 Action Plan and our membership experience resulting from the June 2020 re-opening.

Yours truly,

Lance Matricardi  
Business Representative  
Fraser Valley Office

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### Questions

1. How will \$45.6 million be divided up within the province?
2. What is the allotment for the Abbotsford, School District No. 34?
3. What is the Ministry's plan for each school district to hire, train, and pay additional Custodians to maintain the standards introduced in June 2020 with the increase of students and staff inside the buildings?
4. Is there a plan to install **Protective Barriers** for Administrative Staff members working in smaller, older and confined schools that do not afford six (6) feet social distancing?
5. Are there new regulations concerning small rooms with a lack of windows, doors, and conventional air circulations systems?

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### Topic of Concern

1. The Education Assistants group consists of 12,000 plus employees in British Columbia, in which Teamsters represent 600 in Abbotsford. However, there is little attention to this workforce's needs, and here are my reasons why this is concerning:
2. Education Assistants "E.A." and Youth Care Workers "Y.C.W." carry-out their duties assisting teachers with the most vulnerable students within school districts.

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3. An E.A. and or Y.C.W. require the need to have close contact with their student including, changing diapers, assisting students utilizing the bathroom, tube feeding, responding to spitting, kicking, punching and scratching regularly.
4. The government press release did not include a plan to prevent Covid-19 between school district employees and the most vulnerable students.

### Remedy

5. I request to remedy this blind spot by assisting the Ministry of Education in forming a plan to protect Education Assistants, Youth Care Workers and vulnerable students within the workplace.
6. Also, I would like to help improve the guidelines for School Bus Drivers and student transportation safety.
7. In general, the Teamsters Union holds extensive knowledge regarding workplace safety and health. We propose that the province utilize our expertise, and together we build a heightened safety plan that is safer for all employees within the public school system.

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### Summary

In closing, the Teamsters Union and its membership share in the sentiment of B.C. Teachers' Federation President, Teri Mooring saying the provincial re-opening plan needs more work and time to enhance itself to be successful and keep British Columbians safe.

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The Teamsters Union would like to be involved in the process of providing resolutions and solutions to the Ministry of Education on the remaining outstanding problems in the school year 2020 -21.

Moreover, I will continue to do my best to support my union membership; all I ask is for the Ministry of Education to reach-out to receive our assistance.

Sincerely,

Lance Matricardi  
Business Representative  
Fraser Valley Office

Cc: Stan Hennessy, President, Teamsters, Local 31  
Riley Kearns, In-House Legal Counsel, Teamsters, Local 31

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