

From: Richmond Stands United <richmondstandsunited@gmail.com>

Subject: Rally Notice Home!

Hello Richmond PACs!

I hope this email finds you well, and your school is having an enthusiastic return to classes! The Richmond Rally for Education is coming up fast and we are hoping we can see you and parents from your community there to support changes to public education. We are pushing hard for improvements to the required utilization rate, so that our schools have the room necessary to deploy the curriculum as mandated, and have the flexibility to meet the changing needs of its student population.

During this process we are also very vocal about the need for seismic remediation of our schools. In a major earthquake, 24 schools in Richmond (25 with Ecole des Navigateurs), will collapse to some degree in an earthquake, jeopardizing the lives of over 7,000 of our children. My heart stutters when I think of what could happen, and I will be holding my kids extra close when I tuck them in tonight.

School closures and lack of earthquake-safety repairs are just symptoms. The underlying illness of the public education system is deliberate and calculated defunding. School districts are trying to 'make do' with less and less each year, while the real costs of delivering education are going up. We have the lowest administrative costs in the country, the second lowest funding per pupil (\$1000 below national average), and we are short 6,600 teachers to bring us to the average student-teacher ratio for Canada. Thousands and thousands of children are learning in portables, from Richmond to Surrey to Chilliwack. PACs are raising record dollars to pay for the basics of education. Children with special learning needs take longer to be assessed and receive less support. Our children need us to speak up and be their champion. They depend on us to make change so that they have the bright future they deserve and tomorrow's British Columbia can be prosperous.

This is our last chance to make an indelible impression on MLAs, Trustees, the Minister of Education, and even the Premier, through a show of strength in numbers that will be covered by radio, print, and television media. Once the recommended closure list is given from the Superintendent to the Trustees on September 19th, it will be much harder to change their course. We need you, and your families, community members, supporters, even grandparents, to come out and make some noise! Nothing will impress more than hundreds of parents gathered to demand better for their children!

I've attached a flyer that can be printed to go home with students. It is meant to be printed double sided (English/Chinese) and then cut to make two copies per page. Every school in Richmond will be affected by the upcoming closures. I will have a per school outcome available by midday tomorrow at www.RichmondSchoolsUnited.ca, and it can be downloaded or shared. If you need any additional materials (one page flyers, etc), please let me know and I would be happy to provide them.

As always, I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. We are all in this together, no matter what the schools closed may be. We have all felt the uncertainty and worry, and can stand together to advocate and support each other. We are all neighbours.

Warm regards,

Kelly Greene

Richmond Schools Stand United

www.RichmondSchoolsUnited.ca

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