

# E-Alert

Saturday, December 10, 2005

BREAKING EDUCATION NEWS FOR BC SCHOOL TRUSTEES

**Issue****School Boards to approve \$56 million in expenditures by January 10, 2006****Distribute to****Trustees, Superintendents, Secretary Treasurers****BCSTA contact****Jean Ciriani, BCSTA Communications Director****Minister fulfills commitment to return strike savings to school boards**

School Boards need to schedule meetings to accommodate the short timeline for approval of spending plans for \$56 million in one-time funding announced by the Ministry of Education this week.

Education Minister Shirley Bond spoke to recent funding announcements and answered questions from the floor on Friday afternoon at the BCSTA Leadership Academy in Vancouver.

The allocation plan for the \$126 million savings arising from the teachers' job action this fall is explained in a news release and in letters to school superintendents and school board chairs.

The breakdown in brief:

- \$56 million in one-time funding to public schools and school districts, with plans to be set through local consultation and school board approval.
- \$2 million to the 34 school districts submitted proposals requesting funding to offer additional instruction time when school would not normally be in session.
- \$20 million to school districts to reduce class sizes, as recommended by industrial inquiry commissioner Vince Ready.
- \$40 million in one-time funding for the B.C. Teachers' Federation Long Term Disability Trust.
- \$8 million for provincial education initiatives, including a rural schools strategy and healthy schools program.

Allocation of the \$56 million is split equally between the district and school level. Schools and School Districts are to develop a spending plan in consultation with parents and staff. School boards are required to approve and submit local plans to the Ministry of Education by **January 10, 2006** and guarantee that the funding will be spent by March 31, 2006. Funds not spent by the deadline will revert to the Ministry of Education.

The \$20 million to reduce class sizes is ongoing funding. School Districts are required to submit a plan to the Ministry for the use of these funds, also by **January 10, 2006**.