



# CAMPBELL RIVER

## School District 72

September 15, 2021

Honorable Jennifer Whiteside  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Re. Rural subsidy request for Cortes Island students

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Dear Minister Whiteside:

Campbell River School District 72 reflects the diversity of our province. It includes schools in the city of Campbell River, the remote village of Sayward 75 km to the north, and three rural schools on nearby islands, including Cortes Island.

Cortes Island School has been the hub of community and learning on the island for many years. Children attend kindergarten through grade 9 on the island. At this time, students and their parents must decide whether the next three years of secondary education will be home schooling, distance learning, or attending secondary school in Campbell River. Most students beginning secondary school decide to leave Cortes Island for greater opportunities in their education.

Cortes Island is two ferry rides away from Campbell River. An attempt to commute would mean a minimum of four hours travel daily, but the ferry schedule does not permit students to arrive in time for school.

Recognizing the extra considerations and challenges faced by rural and remote schools, the Ministry of Education provides a rural subsidy grant for Cortes Island students. This grant is applicable when the students are in school on Cortes, but not when they need to leave school to further their education in a bricks and mortar school in Campbell River.

For at least 20 years, the Campbell River School Board has provided a subsidy to Cortes families who have a child attending secondary school in the city. This subsidy, for the 20 years, has remained at \$350 per month per student. Now, at a time when there are more costs incurred for accommodation, there is less money available. The students board individually with a local family, or several students live together in a city home with one or more Cortes parents.

In our role as advocates for students, the Campbell River Board of Education appeals to the Ministry of Education to consider providing adequate funding to subsidize the extra costs faced by students when they leave their island home to attend high school in Campbell River. Any financial consideration would be most helpful, and certainly most appreciated. If further information would be helpful, please contact our Superintendent Jeremy Morrow, Secretary Treasurer Kevin Patrick, or Board Chair John Kerr.

Sincerely,



John Kerr

Chair

SD72 Board of Education

cc: Honourable John Horgan, Premier  
Honourable Michele Babchuk, MLA, North Island  
Ms. Stephanie Higginson, President, BCSTA  
Ms. Candace Spilsbury, President, VISTA  
Ms. Debra Coombes, President, CRDTA  
Mr. Laird Ruehlen, President, CRPVPA  
Ms. Andrea Craddock, President CUPE 723  
BCSTA members

