

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 22, 2026 - Burnaby, BC

## **Burnaby schools could face further cuts after the province leaves a \$9.4M bill to the district**

Burnaby parents are warning of immediate and long-term damage to classrooms after the Province failed to commit funding for a \$9.4 million arbitration award owed to teachers, leaving the Burnaby School District to cover the cost through cuts.

The Burnaby District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) is calling on the Province to provide a full \$9.4 million funding solution before the May budget deadline so that the 26,000+ Burnaby students do not bear the cost.

*“This is a provincially created bill being pushed to Burnaby schools to pay,” said Paul Kwon, Chair of Burnaby DPAC. “If the Province doesn’t provide a full solution, Burnaby students will pay through further cuts to classrooms and services”.*

### **A Province-level cost, a local consequence**

The \$9.4 million is salary-arbitration-related costs tied to a misinterpretation of SD41s agreement during the provincial bargaining in 2022, awarded by an independent arbitrator and upheld by the BC Labour Relations Board. The district has publicly stated that this is not simply a normal local budget question layered onto the annual budget cycle. This is a new unfunded pressure of up to \$9.4 million, with no committed provincial funding in place.

Burnaby had been rebuilding its unrestricted reserve after last year’s devastating cuts. Because Boards of Education are legally required to pass a balanced budget, unresolved Province-level costs place direct pressure on local services and school communities, which can mean even more severe cuts to classrooms.

### **Further cuts are not hypothetical**

Burnaby schools already faced significant reductions last year. This is a new unfunded pressure of up to \$9.4 million, with no committed provincial funding in place. It will place serious pressure on student services, staffing, and long-term financial stability.

There is no remaining buffer in the system.

### **The scale of the issue**

The Ministry of Education's annual operating budget exceeds \$6 billion. The \$9.4 million owed to Burnaby represents a fraction of that total, yet its impact at the district level is significant.

### **Without full provincial funding:**

- Burnaby's reserve will fall below recommended levels
- Future budgets will move deeper into deficit
- Cuts will extend beyond a single year and become structural

### **DPAC's position**

Burnaby DPAC is calling on the Province to:

- Provide a full \$9.4 million funding solution before the May budget deadline.
- Address long-standing gaps in the K–12 funding model

### **About Burnaby DPAC**

The Burnaby District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) is the elected voice of parents and guardians of the students enrolled in Burnaby's public schools. DPAC works to support strong, equitable, and well-funded public education in Burnaby School District 41.

### **Media contact**

Paul Kwon (he/him)

Chair, Burnaby DPAC

Email: [dpacchair@burnabyschools.ca](mailto:dpacchair@burnabyschools.ca) [dpacinfo@burnabyschools.ca](mailto:dpacinfo@burnabyschools.ca)

Available for interview: Any day except Wednesday

Burnaby District Parents available upon request.

### **Sources for further readings**

- Burnaby School District, "*Unfunded Ruling Could Devastate District's Budget*" - [burnabyschools.ca](https://burnabyschools.ca)
- Burnaby School District, Preliminary Budget Report FY2026/27 - ([burnabyschools.ca](https://burnabyschools.ca))
- CBC News, "*Burnaby school district faces \$9.4M shortfall after labour arbitration decision*" - [cbc.ca](https://cbc.ca)
- Freshet News, "Burnaby Schools and Province "actively engaged" regarding salary grid arbitration ruling" - [freshetnews.ca](https://freshetnews.ca)
- Ministry of Education and Child Care, official mandate - [gov.bc.ca/ecc](https://gov.bc.ca/ecc)
- *School Act*, Revised Statutes of British Columbia - [bclaws.gov.bc.ca](https://bclaws.gov.bc.ca)
- Budget 2026 - Province of British Columbia