



March 5, 2025

The Honourable Marc Miller  
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)  
Email: marc.miller@parl.gc.ca

Re: Funding for Settlement Workers in Schools Program and Five-Year Contribution Agreement

Dear Honourable Marc Miller,

The Langley Board of Education writes to you regarding a motion that was carried unanimously at the Board's Regular Meeting on February 25, 2025:

"That the Langley Board of Education write a letter to the federal government, specifically to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), advocating for the restoration of full funding for the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program and the reinstatement of a five-year Contribution Agreement to ensure stability in planning, staffing, and service provision for immigrant and refugee students and their families."

The Langley Board of Education prioritizes meeting the educational needs and health, safety, and well-being needs of our students. The Settlement Workers in Schools Program (SWIS) has been a vital part of the Langley School District since 2008, providing essential settlement support to immigrant and refugee students and their families. The recent changes by the IRCC, including the reduction in funding and the shift from a five-year to a three-year Contribution Agreement, will significantly impact the ability of SWIS workers to provide necessary support services to families and students, many of whom are among the most vulnerable in our District.

SWIS workers play a crucial role in conducting Needs and Asset Assessments, identifying barriers to family and students' needs including education and inclusion, and offering wrap-around supports that are critical for newcomer students' academic success and well-being. The funding cuts will reduce the capacity to provide whole family services that include support with housing, food, employment applications, medical system navigation, and other settlement needs that directly affect students' ability to thrive in school.

These reductions directly contradict the District's commitment to foster an inclusive and nurturing culture and ensure equitable access to education for all students.

The Langley Board of Education requests the following:

1. Reinstatement of the five-year Contribution Agreement for SWIS programs to provide long-term stability for planning and staffing.
2. Restore the previous level of funding to prevent a reduction in services and maintain adequate support for immigrant and refugee students and families.

3. Recognize the critical role of SWIS workers in supporting students and families beyond just permanent residents, including those on work permits, refugee claimants, and naturalized citizens, ensuring funding allocations reflect the true scope of community needs.

As a Board governing a fast-growing and diverse school district, we strongly urge for your support to help us continue to serve the students and families in need. Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response and will carry on with our advocacy for the sake of our community.

Sincerely,



Candy Ashdown  
Chairperson of the Board of Education