

December 11, 2024

Hon. Randene Neill, M.L.A
Powell River-Sunshine Coast

Delivered via email to: Randene.Neill.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Dear Hon. Randene Neill,

Subject: Request for Exemption for qSD Schools from ICI Packaging and Paper Product (PPP) Restrictions

As trustees of qathet School District, we are committed to advancing environmental stewardship and sustainability education, as reflected in our 2023–2028 Strategic Plan Framework. One of our key priorities is fostering environmental responsibility through learning and action, ensuring our students are equipped to meet the challenges of a changing world. Recycling programs are essential to these efforts.

Addressing Challenges in Zero Waste

Implementing zero-waste principles in schools is a noble goal but comes with challenges. School environments generate diverse waste streams, from packaging to instructional materials, making it essential to maintain recycling systems. Unfortunately, recycling opportunities in our schools have been significantly impacted by Recycle BC’s decision to discontinue a special license to collect Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) recycling in our rural community. While we strive to reduce waste overall, the absence of accessible recycling options now creates a critical barrier to achieving a zero-waste model.

Sustaining Educational Impact

Recycling programs are not merely operational tools but also educational platforms. By engaging students in clean recycling practices, we teach the importance of reducing contamination and maximizing resource recovery. These lessons contribute to broader awareness of the pollution prevention hierarchy and the circular economy, values embedded in both provincial goals and our district’s strategic framework.

The curriculum resources provided by Recycle BC emphasize critical environmental education, including waste reduction, recycling processes, and fostering a circular economy. These materials

support schools in teaching students the importance of sustainability through practical applications such as classroom waste audits and recycling tracking ([Learning_with_RecycleBC](#)). However, without access to recycling programs, it is impossible for our schools to model these best practices effectively.

Call for Support

We commend the qathet Regional District and the City of Powell River for their efforts to address recycling system challenges. To support the sustainability of these initiatives and align with our educational goals, we urge the provincial government to grant an exemption for schools from current Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) Packaging and Paper Product (PPP) restrictions.

As highlighted in discussions around recycling solutions for rural and remote areas, collaborative models and localized infrastructure are critical to effective recycling systems. Schools, as hubs of community education and action, can play a significant role in piloting and implementing these solutions if granted an exemption.

Through continued collaboration, we can reinforce the vital connection between education and environmental stewardship, creating lasting impacts for our students and communities. We welcome the opportunity to work alongside provincial and local partners to build a future where sustainability is not just a lesson but a way of life.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours truly,



Jaclyn Miller
Chairperson
Board of Education
qathet School District

cc: Vianne Kintzinger, Superintendent of Schools
Patrick Devereaux, Manager of Operational Services, qathet Regional District