

VOICE NEW WESTMINSTER
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 25, 2007

VOICE CALLS ON EDUCATION MINISTER TO APPOINT “SPECIAL ADVISOR” TO NEW WESTMINSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

New Westminster, B.C. – *Voice New Westminster* is calling upon Education Minister Shirley Bond to appoint a “Special Advisor” to oversee the operations and activities of the New Westminster School Board (SD#40).

The call for a Special Advisor comes in the wake of Consultant Stewart Ladyman’s recent report into the April 26, 2005 asbestos release incident at New Westminster Senior Secondary.

Blair Armitage, President of *Voice New Westminster*, believes that appointing a Special Advisor to the New Westminster School District is in the public’s interest and that it is the only prudent course of action available to the New Westminster community to restore public confidence in the New Westminster School District.

“The New Westminster School District has undergone three Independent Reviews in less than two years now,” said Armitage, “and in each case the Independent Reviewers have found the New Westminster School Board wanting in terms of their ability to competently manage the affairs of the District.”

Voice New Westminster feels that a Special Advisor would have the power to investigate unresolved issues of accountability and responsibility not covered by the Ladyman Inquiry.

“Mr. Ladyman has produced an excellent report—especially given the narrow scope handed to him by the New Westminster Board,” said Armitage. “However, his report also points to the need to go one step further and address the issues of accountability and responsibility.

Stewart Ladyman’s report follows two previous investigations of the New Westminster conducted by Douglas Hibbins—one into the New Westminster School District’s controversial Business Company and one into the stalled High School Capital replacement project.

Voice New Westminster is a recently-formed New Westminster civic electors group comprised of residents from all parts of the city sharing a common vision for a reinvigorated and sustainable New Westminster.

- 30 -

Attachments & Online References

- *Voice New Westminster’s* letter to the New Westminster School Board – January 21, 2007

- Stewart Ladyman's Terms of Reference
- Stewart Ladyman's Asbestos Incident Report
- *Voice New Westminster's* Guide to the Ladyman Report
- www.voicenewwestminster.org

For more information, please contact the *Voice New Westminster* Media Contact at 604-825-3340 or info@voicenewwestminster.org