



Surrey Trustee Charlene Dobie was the only board of education member to vote against a pay increase for trustees June 19.

Surrey trustee miffed as colleagues vote for pay increase

Charlene Dobie says with budget cuts and teacher strike, it's an inappropriate time for raise.

SHEILA REYNOLDS / Jun. 21, 2014 1:00 p.m. / NEWS

After cutting their own pay by \$200 last year, Surrey school trustees have now voted themselves a \$600-per-year raise.



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The seven-member board reviews its pay rates annually, basing them on changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Vancouver. While the rate dropped 0.8 per cent last year, driving the Surrey Board of Education to drop their pay slightly, the rate has increased in the past year.

On Thursday, the majority of the board approved a raise of 1.9 per cent to reflect the rise in the CPI.

The increase will result in a \$50-per-month increase per trustee, bringing the base rate to \$30,800 apiece annually. The chairperson receives an extra \$3,000 per year on top of the base rate, and the vice-chair gets \$1,500.

One trustee, however, voted against the board's pay increase. Trustee Charlene Dobie says the timing – with budget cuts and the ongoing teachers' dispute – is inappropriate.

“This money, no matter how insignificant in the big picture, should be used for education – not to bolster our pay,” Dobie said. “We have so many other costs to take into account while trying to maintain the highest level of education possible for our students.”

She called the raise is “a slap in the face” to teachers currently on strike.

Trustees in Coquitlam, where there are nine board members and half the number of students as Surrey, have the highest pay at \$36,675 per year.

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