

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017/18 **SUMMARY REPORT**

BCSTA

British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

Introduction

On May 2017, shortly after their installment at the 113th Annual General Meeting, the 2017/18 BCSTA Board of Directors came together in an intensive two-day meeting to map out the strategic direction of the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) for the year.

Every school year, the Association weathers one new challenge after another and, with that in mind, an extensive list of nearly 150 goals was drafted.

The following is a summary of the goals, strategies and projects accomplished by the BCSTA and the Board of Directors in the year 2017/18.

The Association's Strategic Direction

The 2017/18 BCSTA Strategic Plan was steered by five vision statements:

1

To become the advocate voice and key provincial influencer for public education in the province, inclusive of our co-governance relationship with government.

2

To ensure we provide value to all members through services and support of strong, functional boards of education.

3

To provide the foundational structures, policies and procedures necessary to achieve the Association's strategic plan and meaningfully support our member boards.

4

To emphasize the importance of locally-elected boards of education in maintaining a strong public education system.

5

To establish a strong working relationship with the new provincial government, emphasizing BCSTA's role in both helping to determine and implementing key policy direction and initiatives, including:

- a. Establishing ongoing operational guidelines for work between the Ministry of Education and BCSTA, reflective of the current Memorandum of Understanding.
- b. Ensuring existing communications protocols between the Ministry of Education and BCSTA are followed.
- c. Establishing BCSTA's role in co-determining and designing implementation of key government initiatives related to K-12 public education.
- d. Completing BCSTA consultation and input processes related to key government policy changes, such as the funding formula review and the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) governance.

These five vision statements were in the forefront in the decision-making of, not only the Board of Directors, but standing committees, ad-hoc committees and staff, as well. This unified approach ensured that strategies and tactics that were being implemented were always geared towards achieving the identified vision statements in order to push forward the greater mission of the BCSTA: to create a high-quality public education system, to represent our communities, and to improve student achievement.

Improved Foundational Structures

Focus: 3

The constant fine-tuning and improvement of existing foundational structures and procedures ensures the effectivity and efficiency of BCSTA, its committees, branches and members.

Following an Annual General Meeting resolution, the Board of Directors created the Bylaw Review Committee which was charged with reviewing BCSTA's bylaws and making recommendations to the BCSTA Board of Directors about possible changes, additions and deletions to ensure that they continue to best serve the membership and the current organizational structure. The committee finished its work and submitted a report with recommendations that have been reviewed by the BCSTA Board of Directors. The Board then, based on the committee's recommendations, submitted three extraordinary motions to the 2018 AGM for members to consider.

Public Outreach and Advocacy

Focus: 1 4

BCSTA continued its work in raising the profile of school trustees through media interviews, social media campaigns and publications. We explored and created opportunities for trustees to talk about their work and the impact they have on their communities.

BCSTA had a record number of interviews with the media this year, fostered good relationships with local and provincial journalists and worked to establish ourselves as a reliable source of information on education-related issues.

In non-traditional media, a successful *Public Education is the Key* social media campaign was wrapped-up after the provincial elections and will be picked up again by launching the *#ProudToBeASchoolTrustee* campaign at the April 2018 AGM in preparation for the coming trustee elections in October 2018.

Indigenous Education

Focus: 1 5

In its continuing work to advocate for our Indigenous students, the Aboriginal Education Committee worked to foster aligned goals and stronger relationships with the First Nations Steering Committee (FNESC) by inviting representatives to present at and attend the committee's meetings.

BCSTA also created resources for districts to help them use and interpret data about Indigenous student performance.

BCSTA gave its initial feedback to the Ministry of Education and the provincial government on the creation of a response plan guided by the Office of the Auditor General's 2015 Aboriginal Education Report. The Association is currently awaiting confirmation of the revised direction of the response plan from the government and Ministry.

The Board of Directors, in consultation with the Aboriginal Education Committee, also reviewed recommendations arising from any new tripartite agreement between First Nations, and the federal and provincial governments. We are currently waiting for the federal government to finalize the agreement.

Funding Model Review Process

Focus: 1 5

Work on the Funding Model Review Process began in late-2017 and early-2018 when BCSTA submitted input from members to the Ministry of Education to make sure that they are integrated in the development of the Funding Distribution Formula Guiding Principles.

BCSTA then invited Ministry of Education representatives to present at the February 2018 Provincial Council to give members the opportunity to raise questions and participate in a dialogue with the team that is leading the development of the formula.

The Association is currently working to ensure that trustee representatives from each district will attend and have a voice at the spring regional input meetings being hosted by the independent review panel and the Ministry.

Engaging New Trustees

Focus: 1 2 4

Looking ahead to the October 2018 local elections, BCSTA began its work in 2017-18 to identify new opportunities to support prospective new trustees.

The Board of Directors repurposed last year's Provincial Elections Engagement Committee to become the Local Elections Engagement Committee whose mandate is to help districts attract high-quality individuals to run and to emphasize to the public the importance of voting for school trustees. The Elections Engagement Committee published a guide for prospective school trustee candidates, and will be launching a social media campaign at the April 2018 AGM.

BCSTA also published the new *Trustee Learning Guide* last fall to ensure that it's in place to help the newly-elected trustees when they take office after the October 2018 elections.

Partnerships

Focus: 1 4 5

Education Partners

BCSTA understands the importance of strategic alignment and consistent messaging on common issues between our education partners and it continued to work on these with the BC School Superintendents Association (BCSSA), the BC Association of School Business Officials (BCASBO), the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF), the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association (BCPVPA), the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), the Canadian Union of Public Employees BC (CUPE BC), the BC Confederation Of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEESC).

This year, the Association and our partners tackled bargaining mandates and enhancement agreements. We also aligned professional learning opportunities, coordinated meeting schedules and, with the upcoming election in mind, worked to ensure that transitions will be seamless.

In terms of our national partnerships, BCSTA had the rare chance to host the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) Congress and the National Gathering on Aboriginal Education for the second time in four years. The

successful event took place in Whistler, BC and has been touted as one of the best in recent years. We also continue to increase our profile on the national stage by participating in collaborative advocacy efforts through CSBA.

Government

BCSTA has always viewed the provincial and municipal government as an important partner in achieving its goals and the Association made significant efforts in 2017-18 to advocate for co-governance and meaningful consultation.

Relationship-building with provincial government began in early 2017, before the new leadership was even in place. Ahead of the 2017 provincial elections, BCSTA reached out to all provincial parties with the goal of reintroducing to them the Association's purpose and its goals for the year that were put forward by members boards of education at the 2017 AGM.

Once the new government was sworn in and the cabinet was appointed, BCSTA initiated communication and scheduled meetings with the new Minister of Education. The Board of Directors met with the Deputy Minister of Education to discuss the role of boards, co-governance and to begin work towards updating, signing and operationalizing a new Memorandum of Understanding.

BCSTA did groundwork for the 2019 bargaining by holding quarterly meetings with BCPSEA, the Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC) and the Ministry.

The Association also presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, a submission that was built to align with our partner groups.

BCSTA also pursued opportunities to connect with the municipal government through the UBCM. We presented about the role of boards at the UBCM fall convention and created opportunities for joint meetings with their leadership.

Bargaining 2019

Focus: 1 5

With the upcoming provincial bargaining in March 2019 in mind, BCSTA initiated the development of key provincial bargaining objectives in cooperation with member boards, the Ministry of Education and BCPSEA.

Work has been initiated to ensure the direct participation of BCSTA representatives on the BCPSEA provincial bargaining team. BCSTA has offered

to support BCPSEA in setting consultation and communication timelines in regard to addressing key bargaining issues and recommendations.

BCSTA was also heavily involved in outlining and supporting the need for the return of trustee governance in BCPSEA, and the unanimous voting of BCSPSEA members of 311 to 1 in support of restoring it during their AGM in January was a very positive achievement this year.

New Resources for Member Boards

Focus: 2

BCSTA Website

BCSTA launched a new website that is streamlined as a public-facing resource with unified features and a responsive interface.

BCSTA HUB

BCSTA created a members-only intranet that houses internal BCSTA materials pertinent to members and serves as a space to discuss and collaborate using discussion boards and other integrated tools.

BCSTA Weekly

BCSTA launched a new online publication that compiles important information for members. The *Weekly* includes information about events, advocacy updates, activities, services, important dates and more, and is delivered to members through an email newsletter every Thursday.

Trustee Learning Guide

BCSTA published an online learning resource for boards, individual trustees, senior district staff and partners that covers an extensive list of topics applicable to K-12 education. The *Learning Guide* and its accompanying activities and extended resource materials cover all aspects of the work of both boards and individual trustees. It provides a solid foundation of knowledge and skills on which successful governance, oversight and advocacy can be built.

A Guide to School Legislation

BCSTA started work on an updated edition of *A Guide to School Legislation*. The *Guide*, created in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, will contain an interpretation of the *School Act* and other school legislation that will be useful for trustees and school district staff.

A Guide for School Trustee Candidates

The *Candidates Guide* contains simplified information on the roles of boards of education and other information that will be helpful to anyone interested in running in the October 2018 trustee elections.

Member Support

Focus: 2

Member Communications

BCSTA made changes and improvements to how we communicate with members. We've improved our daily *Headlines: News for School Trustees* to bring member boards a more extensive news coverage that now includes broadcast listening and social media scanning delivered in a new mobile-friendly format. We've also created a new publication - the *BCSTA Weekly* - that compiles important news, events, advocacy updates and other information. We've launched a new website that has an updated look and easier navigation, and we've improved online security by moving certain parts of the old website into a new members-only area, the BCSTA HUB. *The Education Leader* has been moved to a blog format and is now incorporated within the new website.

Professional Learning

To create integrated and continuous learning opportunities for members, BCSTA worked to ensure that professional learning themes were coordinated within BCSTA committees, as well as partner groups.

The Board of Directors established an ad-hoc committee to support the updated curriculum for trustee professional learning - this committee will be in charge of maintaining and updating the new *Trustee Learning Guide*.

With the hiring of a new Director of Education Services came new ideas for professional learning and, with the help of the CEO and seasoned staff, identified new learning facilitations at BCSTA branch meetings.

Legal Services

BCSTA continued to provide guidance in legal, policy and governance matters to BCSTA's member boards of education.

BCSTA provided support to boards in respect of the upcoming 2018 trustee election including preparing legal bulletins, preparing a template election bylaw and presenting about the election at BCASBO and BCSTA events.

BCSTA also prepared resources which were distributed to all boards on topics including: taxation of non-accountable expense allowances for trustees, Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation, consent requirements under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, cannabis legalization and US immigration/travel requirement

Services Review

BCSTA developed a member survey soliciting feedback regarding its services and suggested improvements. The report will be brought forward to the new Board of Directors following AGM 2018 with a recommendation that the feedback be integrated into the 2018/19 Strategic Plan.●

For any comments, questions or suggestions about the **Strategic Plan 2017/18 Summary Report**, please contact **BCSTA CEO Mike Roberts** at mroberts@bcsta.org.

The logo consists of the letters 'BCSTA' in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a solid blue rectangular box.

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