



British Columbia  
School Trustees  
Association

June 25, 2018

**The Honourable Katrine Conroy**  
*Minister of Children and Family Development*  
PO Box 9057, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

**SUBJECT:** Creation of childcare spaces within BC schools

Dear Minister Conroy,

At the most recent Annual General Meeting of the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA), our membership passed the following resolution regarding increasing opportunities for teacher training at the local community level across BC:

*That BCSTA urge the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development to work with school districts by expediting access to capital dollars for childcare spaces in school districts and by amending the Ministry of Education's Area Standards to recognize that including space for child care is an important consideration when building or upgrading schools.*

BCSTA member boards of education are excited about the possibility of a provincewide childcare and early learning programs being included in public schools. The introduction of such universal programs opens up a number of beneficial options for parents, communities and school districts. A significant concern, however, is how to appropriately house these potentially large programs within public school buildings that are, in many cases, already full to capacity.

Our request to you is to work with boards of education, as well as the Ministry of Education, to find proactive answers to the question of facilities in all of our 60 school districts. We already know that there will not be a 'one size fits all' answer to that question, but there will have to be a solution found in hundreds of local schools if the stated goal is to be met. Collaborating with BCSTA and local boards of education to co-create proactive answers will serve us all well.

BCSTA would like to see resourcing and planning commitments made now, so as to allow the creation of additional space in a timely manner. If we want schools ready to accept childcare and early learning programs in the reasonably near future, we need to begin building those spaces into new and existing facilities now. We also want to ensure the addition of new childcare and early learning spaces does not come at the expense of existing K-12 educational facilities or space allocations.

The Ministry of Education has been very receptive to discussing this issue with BCSTA and Boards while recognizing final solutions will need to include a number of government and community partners. We hope you are willing to join this dialogue and support the need for early planning and resourcing.

We believe the best path forward on this exciting initiative is one of collaboration and co-creation, and look forward to any opportunity to work with you and the Ministry of Education.

Thank you for considering our request and we look forward to any future dialogue on this important issue that you might consider.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G B Swan', written in a cursive style.

**Gordon Swan**

*President*

British Columbia School Trustees Association

Cc: Hon. Rob Fleming, *Minister of Education*



#### **41. Childcare and Capital Projects**

**Submitted by:** *SD39 (Vancouver) and SD 61 (Greater Victoria)*

##### **BE IT RESOLVED:**

That BCSTA urge the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development to work with school districts by expediting access to capital dollars for childcare spaces in school districts and by amending the Ministry of Education's Area Standards to recognize that including space for child care is an important consideration when building or upgrading schools.

##### **Rationale:**

Pressures for space to accommodate adjusted class sizes and increasing enrolment have meant displacing community partners, such as childcares or other community partners that serve children in our buildings at a time when more families are trying to find childcare to meet their needs. Recent funding announcements to create 22,000 childcare spaces, which include capital funding available to school districts to build on district lands, are welcome and greatly appreciated. Access to priority funding will allow for more efficient expenditure of capital dollars as well as benefitting community members and partners by opening additional spaces faster. The current Ministry Area Standards do not allocate space specifically for 0-4 childcare therefore, new, seismic replacement schools have significantly smaller footprints than the original schools. These smaller builds reduce options for multi-purpose and community use, including preschool and before/after-school childcare.

##### **References:**

- Ministry of Education, Area Standards (05/2012)
- Government of BC, New Child Care Improvements in BC

**This is an action motion and does not change or contradict any existing Foundational or Policy Statement.**