

# SUMMARY OF BCSTA'S SERVICES

- In addition to its vital advocacy role BCSTA also provides a suite of support services to members including communications, legal services and professional development.
- BCSTA keeps trustees informed of important and breaking educational matters. This often includes insights not found in standard media releases.
- BCSTA's board chair discussion area on the HUB provides a mechanism for boards to exchange ideas and information on emergent issues.
- Involvement in BCSTA's regional branch associations provides opportunities to share resources, learn from other boards and influence regional issues.
- BCSTA's Legal Services provides a first point of contact for boards seeking guidance in legal, policy and governance matters.
- Participation in the joint BCSTA/ BCTF Group Life Insurance Plan, which results in significant financial savings for districts, is available only to BCSTA member boards.
- BCSTA regularly distributes legal and policy-related publications to member boards, including updates on legislation, bargaining bulletins, election advice and support, templates for board policies and bylaws, FOIPPA and property disposition.
- Our professional development services help to prepare boards to carry out their governance and accountability responsibilities. Educational governance is a complex blend of legal, financial and political skills.

# BCSTA OVERVIEW

- Through a wide variety of communication tools, BCSTA does considerable work to ensure member boards are kept up-to-date on current issues of interest to boards of education as well as raising the profile of both public education and our advocacy efforts through the media and public.
- In addition to the general benefits of being part of a provincial association that advocates on behalf of its members, support and assistance is provided to all member boards on a wide range of issues as well as to individual member trustees requesting support or assistance specific to their needs.
- BCSTA events are frequently attended by the Minister of Education, Deputy Minister of Education and other government representatives. Government often presents to members about current issues in the education sector. Non-members may not have access to these opportunities.

**BCSTA**

British Columbia  
School Trustees  
Association

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# OUR MISSION

- The mission of BCSTA is to provide support to, and advocate on behalf of, BC's member boards of education.
- BCSTA is recognized by government, education partners and media as the provincial voice of locally-elected boards of education.
- BCSTA plays a substantive role in helping to shape and respond to matters that impact all boards of education. It is through this collective voice that we are able to influence educational governance and policy.

# EXAMPLES OF BCSTA'S ADVOCACY EFFORTS

- BCSTA advocates strongly at the provincial and national levels, including the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA), on many areas of concern. Recent examples include improvements to the delivery and funding of Indigenous education, poverty reduction, meaningful consultation with boards of education, school planning councils, international students, teacher training, settlement workers, BC Hydro rates and BC Ferry scheduling to name a few.
- BCSTA continuing to be a strident voice for improved education funding. Through submissions to government standing committees, government and opposition caucuses, ministry meetings, media interviews and close collaboration with education partners, BCSTA continuously advocates to protect and increase public education funding. Full government funding of recent union

contract settlements is an example of our success.

- In response to government plans to change the structure of the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA), BCSTA conducted a province-wide consultation process with trustees and struck a Bargaining Structure Task Force to ensure that the voice of boards of education remained part of the bargaining process. The BCPSEA Board has since been reinstated.
- A vigorous response to the recent changes to how the government funds capital and seismic projects. Meetings are regularly scheduled with the Minister of Education and Finance Department staff to rectify issues such as their misunderstanding of district surpluses and to preserve local decision-making on budget allocations. This advocacy will include coordinating local board responses and a provincial media campaign.
- Our Stability for Students Action Plan was developed in response to the recent BC Supreme Court ruling on class size and composition. The action plan advocates for stability for students, resolution of class size and composition matters through bargaining and full funding for any related implementation costs.
- BCSTA's Core Review submission and resources were developed in response to the government's ongoing examination of services including the governance of school districts. BCSTA mounted an extensive campaign that provided resources to boards and all MLAs on the importance of local governance, the co-governance relationship between boards and the Ministry of Education and the economic fallacy of amalgamating

boards of education. In response to our submission and direct advocacy efforts, the Minister of Education stated publicly at our February 2014 Provincial Council meeting that there would be no amalgamation of boards of education.

- BCSTA participation in a variety of government and partner group committees and initiatives, where trustee input has significantly shaped the final outcome. The Ministry of Education, as well as government as a whole, most often seek the input of boards through the voice of BCSTA. On numerous occasions, BCSTA is asked to provide either representatives and/or input to processes established to gather information, develop procedures or refine policy regarding issues affecting K-12 education. These opportunities have most recently included input on Indigenous education, ELL programs, capital construction, school district accountability, the funding distribution formula and shared services implementation. Boards who are not members of BCSTA will, on most occasions, not be considered for participation in these processes and will lose the opportunity to provide input.

