



MEDIA RELEASE:

BCSTA responds to B.C. government's Speech from the Throne

[Vancouver B.C. – February 14, 2019] Affirmation of the current positive direction for K-12 education in B.C. is the theme of this week's provincial speech from the throne, in the opinion of BCSTA President Gordon Swan. As stated by Premier John Horgan in a subsequent press release, "People deserve the opportunity to build a good life in the communities they call home, with housing and child care they can afford, quality public services, like health care and education, good jobs and a better future."

BCSTA shares the view that public education must remain at the forefront of government's list of priorities leading into 2019. The throne speech reiterated several key initiatives and goals that B.C.'s government has outlined in past statements regarding K-12 education, reaffirming their commitment to the province's K-12 students as well as their communities.

"Government's commitment to continued funding improvements and investment in capital infrastructure sets a positive tone as we head towards Budget 2019," said BCSTA President Gordon Swan. "We look forward to the release of the next provincial budget so that we can see exactly how and where these promised investments in our schools and students will be made."

Specific mentions of improvements directly affecting B.C.'s schools, such as seismic upgrade projects, smaller class sizes, the hiring of new teachers, including special education teachers, teacher psychologists and counsellors, illustrate a shared commitment to high-quality public education. While not directly tied to K-12 education, other initiatives, such as the government's commitment to affordable child care and housing, are also appreciated by the Association. The speech also served to draw attention to government's continued support of inclusivity in the classroom, with specific acknowledgements of ongoing support for Indigenous learners, expanded anti-bullying programs, improvements to mental health services and additional sexual orientation and gender identity resources. These priorities echo the priorities put forward by many local boards of education and are reflected in school district initiatives over the last several years.

"BCSTA and its members remain supportive of the government's vision for modern, caring schools where students can reach their full potential" added Swan. "It is clear that government views K-12 education as an important component of their plan to best serve the people of B.C. We look forward to working with them to put in place the necessary policies, funding and governance structures to bring this vision to reality."

- 30 -

For additional information and to arrange an interview with BCSTA President Gordon Swan, please contact:

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