

# CSBA REPORT

## Situation Overview

BCSTA's membership elected Stephanie Higginson as president during the April Annual General Meeting, the 115th in the Association's history. President Higginson previously served as vice-president of the Association for two terms.

BCSTA's co-governance agreement with the provincial government regarding public education has continued to aid in the Association's success. The signing of the Co-Governance Relationship Memorandum of Understanding with the BC Ministry of Education occurred on December 5, 2014. The MOU was subsequently updated and signed on November 30, 2018 at the trustee academy, with the period lasting five years. The document serves to define the working relationship between the Ministry of Education and the BCSTA as the representative voice of its member Boards of Education.

Exiting the AGM, members have put forward a number of motions upon which BCSTA will act on throughout the months ahead. Government continues to emphasize the value of board of education in BC, which sets a positive example.

## Learning and Curriculum Transformation

The BC curriculum has been undergoing a transformation for the past five years. September 2019 will see all students in K-12 learning from our new curriculum.

The modernized curriculum is forward thinking and focused on preparing students for a rapidly changing world. We can all agree that the world of today's students will graduate into is different from the one that existed when past groups graduated.

This new graduation program will ensure that students graduate from public school in British Columbia with the knowledge, competencies and skills they will need to transition successfully on their post-secondary journey.

The new curriculum is competency focused and grounded in a strong foundation of numeracy, literacy and robust assessment.

## Funding Model Review

The Ministry of Education has extended consultation for the funding model review in British Columbia for another year. Through this process, the ministry is looking to update and modernize the funding model for the province.

The BCSTA co-created the guiding principles for the new funding model with the Ministry of Education to ensure local board needs were addressed in the new funding model. The Ministry of Education's working groups on the complex and complicated parts of the funding model have met throughout the spring and will continue through to early summer.

BCSTA's Board of Directors have representation on each working group. Past member motions indicate that updating and modernizing the funding model to ensure equity for students across the province is a priority for trustees throughout BC.

As quoted in an upcoming article written by the BC Principals and Vice Principals Association, a valued partner organization of BCSTA, President Higginson stated regarding the funding model, "It's hard to find anybody in the sector who doesn't agree that the model needs to change, but it is about finding a way forward where everybody feels included and is happy with where we go."

Achieving this level of balance will continue to be a focus for BCSTA's advocacy on this issue.

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## BC Tripartite Education Agreement

The BC Tripartite Education Agreement was signed by Tyrone McNeil, President of the First Nations Education Steering Committee, Rob Fleming, BC's Minister of Education, Seamus O'Regan, the federal Minister of Indigenous Services as well as Carolyn Bennett, Minister for Crown Indigenous Relations.

As stated in a news release provided by Indigenous Services Canada, this five-year deal includes "a more sufficient and sustained funding model for BC First Nations education; a new \$20 million investment in funding for First Nations schools, including increased resources for First Nations language and culture and technology to enhance learning opportunities for students; new policies to promote beneficial First Nations education agreements between First Nations and School Boards, including improved transportation services; commitments to support the creation of a First Nations language policy leading to full-course offerings of First Nations languages in public schools; joint efforts to monitor student achievement data in order to inform policy and practice, and; professional development and information sharing opportunities to expand and deepen understanding of issues related to First Nations education."

BCSTA is pleased to have this agreement signed and guiding the work we do with our Indigenous rights holders within the local jurisdictions of school boards.

## Bargaining

Bargaining between the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) continues in our province.

BCPSEA exists to bargain on behalf of the provincial government and boards of education. This is a generational round of bargaining for all involved as a result of the 2016 Supreme Court decision, in which BC's teachers won back the right to bargain on class size and composition.

This victory saw language from 2003 returned to the collective agreement. As a result, all parties are looking to find agreement on how best to modernize this language to reflect the diversity of today's classrooms. BCPSEA has indicated that they are focused on a new approach aimed at protecting teacher workload while providing students with the customized services they need and school boards with the ability to make nuanced staffing decisions that meet the needs of the students and communities they serve.

All parties involved have indicated that there is little desire for disruption of services relating to students. The period for bargaining extends through to June 30 with possible continued negotiations into the summer. ■