

## BCSTA PLEASED BC BUDGET SPEAKS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION. NOW LOOKING TO PROVINCE TO COMPLETE COMMITMENTS ON BARGAINING AND STUDENT ENROLMENT.

Issue 13 News & Events

February 23, 2017



The announcement on Tuesday, February 21 of \$740 million additional dollars for K-12 education over the next three years is a significant step toward meeting the overall needs of B.C.'s students and schools. BCSTA was pleased to hear from Minister of Finance Mike de Jong that education is "the single most important service government operates or funds," and will look for government to translate his statement into stable, sustainable and predictable funding for B.C. school districts.

BCSTA president Teresa Rezansoff responded by saying, "I am pleased to see that government has recognized the need for significant further investments in public education. A robust and effective K-12 education system is critical to the health and prosperity of the province. The funds needed to deliver quality programs and services to students must be provided each and every year."

An area of the budget not directly addressed today will be the full cost implications of the current bargaining between government and the teachers' union. Beyond funding additional teachers, school trustees will be looking for government to meet their commitment to funding such key needs as additional classrooms, corresponding support staff increases and school district operational budgets. The increased overall funding announced today is a significant step in the right direction, but school districts will be expecting substantially more money to address the full costs of the Supreme Court of Canada decision.

"We will be looking to government to fulfill their commitment to ensure ALL of the costs of the Supreme Court of Canada decision are met by the province," confirmed President Rezansoff. "While we realize it would be inappropriate for government to predetermine the outcome of bargaining, it is our expectation that the conclusion of the process will include funding of all the resulting costs."

The commitment of \$228 million to fund anticipated enrollment growth in B.C. schools will assist Boards of Education toward balancing their 2017/2018 budgets. Other government budget announcements, such as the reduction and eventual elimination of PST on electricity and the reduction of MSP costs will also help school districts by reducing costs.

BCSTA will be monitoring both the growth in student numbers during the coming school year and government's commitment to corresponding further funding for K-12 education over the coming months. While today's provincial budget provides a base on which school districts can plan for next year, additional funds to meet growing student numbers may still be required. This will be particularly important knowing this is an interim budget that must be reintroduced within 90 days following the May provincial election.

President Rezanoff concluded by saying, "We understand that government is not in a position to address the final costs of bargaining and anticipated student population growth at this time, but it is critical to our students and schools that their commitment to fully fund public education is fulfilled."

BCSTA will be providing further analysis of Budget 2017 and the implications for public education in the coming days. Translating today's government fiscal year budget into local school district budget numbers for the coming school year will be our initial focus.

## EDUCATION WEEK AT RICHMOND SCHOOL DISTRICT

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The Richmond School District Education Week will be taking place from Sunday, February 26, 2017 to Sunday, March 5, 2017. Education Week is an annual celebration hosted by the Richmond School District. It is a time to celebrate teaching excellence and student achievement while highlighting individual, classroom, school and district accomplishments. Education Week also provides an important opportunity for the Richmond community to experience and appreciate the public education system.

The Education Week 2017 website is now live with a full list of this years events and activities.

This years events include:

- Meet the Board
- Jr. Board Meeting
- Science Jam
- Ready, Set, Learn
- Skills Canada BC Competition
- Reading Buddies
- Fine Arts Fair
- Notorious
- Check Please: A Cambie Theatre Production
- Ash Girl: A Richmond Secondary Theatre Production
- Popsicle Stick Bridge Contest
- Rolling Art Boards
- Aboriginal Art Displays

## LESS THAN 80 DAYS UNTIL THE BC GENERAL ELECTION: KEY ACTIONS TO HELP US MAKE AN IMPACT

Issue 13 Public Education is the Key

February 23, 2017



**PUBLIC EDUCATION IS THE KEY**

# 10 KEY ACTIONS 100 DAYS 'TIL ELECTIONS



Public education leaders understand the social, economic and cultural empowerment that comes with making public education our number one priority, and with the provincial election just a little less than 80 days away, the urgency to ensure that our candidates understand the issues that are important to us continues to grow.

Public education is the key to a strong economy, a skilled work force, world class health care, environmental stewardship, restorative justice, truth and reconciliation, peace, understanding and a civil society, and voters must make it our priority issue this election. BCSTA is inviting everyone to participate in 10 Key Actions to help put public education front and centre in the lead-up to Election Day.

We have rolled out the first three Key Actions, now, it's up to you to engage your candidates, district staff, sector leaders and community members.

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### KEY ACTION 1

Tell us: Why is public education the key?

You may answer this question as a board of education, or you may cite personal examples, effects you've seen in your district, your workplace, your community, your family, and yourself. Post your answers on your Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with the hashtag #bcedkey, or email them to [gollero@bcsta.org](mailto:gollero@bcsta.org).

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## KEY ACTION 2

This week, in preparation for our Sector Leader's Speaker Series event at Provincial Council, we'd like to ask you to engage sector leaders in your community and ask them about how PUBLIC EDUCATION has made an impact in their sector and what our elected officials can do to improve our public education system to better cater to them and the workforce.

Post your messages/conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag #bcedkey, or email them to [gollero@bcsta.org](mailto:gollero@bcsta.org).

[View image on Twitter](#)

"As the former police chief in our community, I can say that a well-educated and informed citizenry is necessary for forming a solid foundation for a healthy and strong community. The importance of our school system and public education cannot be overstated. Our police officers recognize the important role that public education plays in our community and they work very hard and are proud of the relationships they developed with our students, teachers and administrators. I strongly believe that it is incumbent on our political leaders to make public education a top priority and to ensure they provide the best support to all of the components of our public education system."



**Jim Cessford**  
Former Police Chief, Municipality of Delta

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## KEY ACTION 3

If people are new Canadians, new residents to BC, moved to a new riding or are now of voting age we want to make sure they are registered to vote and so does Elections BC.

For Key Action 3, we ask you to make sure your district staff, family and community members are registered to vote.

Elections BC will actively look to register voters throughout the province. Registration drives will be held in each electoral district, in shopping malls, community centres, and door-to-door in some areas. If you're not on the list, i.e. did not receive a voter card, register online at [elections.bc.ca/ovr](http://elections.bc.ca/ovr), or by phone 1-800-661-8683. Registration is open until midnight on April 11th. Election day is May 9th.

Take photos of your friends registering to vote. Post your photos/messages/conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag #bcedkey, or email them to [gollero@bcsta.org](mailto:gollero@bcsta.org).

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Stay engaged and watch out for the next Key Actions in the coming week. Don't forget to spread the word and share this information with your board and district.

## **SECTOR LEADERS PUT A SPOTLIGHT ON PUBLIC EDUCATION**

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### **PUBLIC EDUCATION IS THE KEY**

## **SECTOR LEADERS SPEAKER SERIES**



Armed with 20 slides and a 6 minute and 40 second window to present them, presenters at BCSTA's Sector Leaders Speaker Series did not mince words while making their high-impact presentations to trustees to kick off the first Provincial Council Meeting of 2017.

Assembling under the banner, "How does a strong public education system make a difference to your sector?" BCSTA's Elections Engagement Committee, with the aim of reaching out to community members outside of the education sector, invited the following distinguished guests to the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver to speak on the importance of public education:

Dr. Patricia Daly, Vice-President, Public Health and Chief Medical Health Officer, Vancouver Coastal Health

James Hursthouse, Acting DigiBC Executive Director, DigiBC

Bernard Richard, Representative for Children and Youth

Isobel Mackenzie, The Senior's Advocate

James Rout, Associate Vice-President, Education Support and Innovation, BCIT

Kishoore Ramanathan and Amy Zeng, Representatives, Student Voice, Richmond School District

The committee, led by BCSTA Board Members Donna Sargent and Gordon Swan, sought to bring leaders from different areas of business and education together in order to spark conversation leading into the upcoming election.

Reviews from the session were glowing, the message clearly having a vivid influence on those in attendance.

“The energy brought forth by today’s presenters perfectly captures the passion we have as publicly-elected representatives for education,” said BCSTA Vice President and committee Co-Chair Gordon Swan. “We hope that we can turn that passion into action between now and May 9th”

High-school students Kishoore Ramanathan and Amy Zeng inspired the attendees with their outlook on public education, with Kishoore highlighting that “my teachers have helped form my core values, and helped me figure out what I want to do in life.”

The viewpoint meshed with DigiBC’s James Hursthouse presentation, where he stated that “it is not just what the kids know, but how they learn it.”

The message is that we need to invest in educators and students continued to be echoed throughout the evening.

In response to the formulation of an integrated curriculum, Dr. Patricia Daly of Vancouver Coastal Health emphasized that we need to “plan for the future, not just in 4-year cycles.” The discussion underlined the importance of long-term planning for education, and continued support for initiatives that will have a long-lasting impact on future generations.

The evening was rounded out by an engaging question and answer period, during which BCIT’s James Rout reminded attendees that we need to work together, and break tasks down into manageable steps. His statement that “we change the world a little bit at a time,” was well received by those on hand.

The message from the Sector Leaders Speaker Series is intended to move forward and spark conversation as we move toward the provincial election. “We hope trustees can engage with members of their communities just like we did here,” said Sargent in closing the event.

BCSTA hopes that districts across the province can take ideas from the event and engage sector leaders in their own community.

Videos from the Sector Leaders Speaker Series can be view below. Please share the videos with your district board, staff and community members.