



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

May 18, 2022

The Honourable Jennifer Whiteside

Minister of Education and Child Care

PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

educ.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Whiteside,

Subject: Funding for Outdoor Learning Spaces

At the British Columbia School Trustees Association's most recent annual general meeting, our membership, representing all 60 boards of education in B.C., passed the following resolution:

"That BCSTA request that the Ministry of Education and Child Care:

- *To complete the review of its Area Standards for new schools and expansion of existing schools and include guidelines within for covered outdoor learning spaces.*
- *To provide additional funding in the Annual Facilities Grant so districts can create covered outdoor learning spaces on school sites where they currently do not exist."*

Outdoor play is an integral part of every student's day, and they are regularly prompted to learn and play outdoors regardless of climate and weather. Even in northern communities, students are often dressed and equipped to take full advantage of time outdoors as part of their regular school day.

The development and use of covered spaces at schools can further bolster these initiatives, as they provide some basic protection from more severe weather. B.C.'s boards of education would like to see that such spaces are included in the development of all new schools and that funds be provided for existing schools to be retrofitted appropriately.

These asks are further motivated by what we have learned about COVID-19 and the vital role that open spaces have in reducing the spread of a disease that will remain in our communities for the foreseeable future. These investments can leave long-lasting positive impacts on B.C.'s school-aged children.



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Thank you for taking the time to consider this request on behalf of our association's members and the communities they serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Broady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Broady
President
British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: A202212

Enclosure: Original motion rationale

CC: Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
Chris Brown, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors