



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

June 13, 2023

Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

c/o Parliamentary Committees Office
Room 224, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
FinanceCommittee@leg.bc.ca

Dear committee members,

Subject: BCSTA Presentation Questions

Thank you for considering the concerns and needs of British Columbia's boards of education regarding the formulation of Budget 2024.

Our presentation, given by BC School Trustees Association Vice-President Tracy Loffler, covered three topics:

- Funding support for inclusive education.
- Funding to offset inflationary cost increases.
- Need for increased capital funding.

At the conclusion of BCSTA's presentation, three questions were asked that required follow-up. It is my pleasure to provide you with the following context and details, which were gathered with the assistance of the Ministry of Education and Child Care:

1) How much was spent on portables last year?

- It is important to note that school districts submit annual reports to the ministry detailing the total number of portables they have.
- It should also be noted that the ministry does not track the number of portables that are purchased by school districts.
- The committee should also be made aware that the decision to purchase and install portables rests with the district.
- The average current cost to procure, install and service a portable is between \$350,000 - \$450,000.
- Between September 2021 and 2022, the number of portables reported by districts rose from 2,212 to 2,287 (an increase of 75 portables).
 - 11 were for classroom purposes. 64 were for other programming.
 - Of those intended for classroom use, districts spent between \$3.85 and \$4.95 million from September 2021 to 2022, which does not include costs associated with existing portables, including replacement or moves, as these figures are not included in the ministry's portable inventory.



2) What is the anticipated amount of unfunded inflationary cost pressures for the 2023/2024 budget cycle?

- 89 per cent of school district operating costs are compensation-based, and wage increases are currently fully funded.
- The ministry is unable to estimate the impact of inflation on the wide range of services and supplies that form the remainder of district budgets due to the diverse nature of the spending both within, and between, districts.

3) How much should the per pupil funding be?

- As mentioned at the meeting, this number is difficult to determine and would be a complex undertaking
- The Basic Allocation (per student full-time equivalent funding) is only one part of operating grants:
 - Additional funding is provided on a per-student basis for students with disabilities and diverse abilities, English/French language students and Indigenous students.
 - Extra funding is also provided based on the unique district characteristics.
 - The Equity of Opportunity Supplement is provided based on figures for children and youth in care, students receiving non-clinical mental health support and income.
 - There are also estimated special grants totalling \$957 million for the 2023/24 school year.

B.C.'s boards of education appreciate the committee's interest in exploring the needs of school districts and welcome further requests for information should the committee require additional information.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Broady

President

British Columbia School Trustees Association

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