



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

August 7, 2024

Susie Chant

*Parliamentary Secretary
for Accessibility*
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The Honourable

Katrine Conroy
Minister of Finance
PO Box 9048
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The Honourable

Rachna Singh
*Minister of Education
and Child Care*
PO Box 9045
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Dear Parliamentary Secretary Chant, Minister Conroy and Minister Singh,

Subject: Accessibility Funding

At the British Columbia School Trustees Association's 2024 annual general meeting, our members, representing all 60 boards of education in B.C., passed the following resolution:

"That the BCSTA advocate to the Minister of Education and Child Care, the Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility and the Minister of Finance, for new funding to support school districts in addressing non physical and attitudinal barriers identified in their accessibility plans developed under the Accessible British Columbia Act."

As noted in the attached rationale, the *Accessible British Columbia Act* identifies a barrier as "anything that hinders a person's full and equal participation in society with an impairment." These barriers are linked to environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, which makes addressing them a significant challenge. Our member boards of education and the districts they serve are committed to addressing, reducing and eliminating these barriers, but concerns related to the requirement of additional resources to meet the expectations laid out by the act are present.

In recent meetings with Ministry of Education and Child Care staff to examine resolutions passed at our association's AGM, we discussed the phased application approach regarding the act and that, while there is funding for specific projects, overall funding to improve accessibility does not currently exist. We hope these needs will be addressed as work continues. Our conversations also led us to copy the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction on this letter in the hopes that a cross-ministerial approach to a solution may be achieved.



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It is our goal to ensure that the *Accessible British Columbia Act* is fully recognized in every classroom in the province. Districts throughout B.C. are committed to the task, but operating funding alone cannot address the needs and goals outlined in the act. We look forward to hearing from you so that we may forge a path that will enable districts to effectively reduce barriers for all students in B.C. as they proceed on their journey through public education.

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: A202420

Enclosure: Motion rationale

CC: BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors
Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care
The Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction