

Presentation to

**The Select Standing Committee  
on Finance and Government Services**

Surrey Hearing, October 6, 2017

Submitted by

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on behalf of

**The Parent Advocacy Network  
for Public Education**

## INTRODUCTION: PUBLIC EDUCATION IN BC

Heather Legal and I (Maggie Milne) are here on behalf of the Parent Advocacy Network for public education – a grassroots collective of parents from diverse schools across Vancouver that seeks to raise awareness, share information, and work with other advocates to protect and defend the value of public education both locally and provincially. We are addressing you today to bring forward pressing concerns with respect to operational funding and growing inequities in K-12 public education within our province.<sup>1</sup>

Public education is the foundation of our future society.<sup>2</sup> What does this mean?

It means that:

The children in our schools today are the decision makers of tomorrow.

*The economic stability of our society, the equitable distribution of wealth, and the degree of freedom and democracy that we uphold, is absolutely dependent on the quality and equity of our public education system.*<sup>3</sup>

This is consistent with the purpose of education as outlined in the BC School Act and the BC Policy on Diversity that:

*All children in British Columbia, (regardless of race, gender, place of birth, ability, or economic situation)<sup>4</sup> have the right to a quality education that allows them to “develop*

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<sup>1</sup> Formed in 2015, PAN Vancouver has advocated under the vision that “All children have a right to high quality public education, accessible in their own neighbourhoods, in educationally appropriate and seismically safe buildings with the resources and staff necessary to meet their learning needs.” <http://www.panvancouver.ca>

<sup>2</sup> Rob Fleming quotes John Horgan in saying “education pays enormous social and economic dividends. It needs to be a key part of sustaining prosperity, and having an innovative, high-functioning economy where we also get other benefits like reducing social inequality, and better outcomes for people’s health and well being.” Katie Hyslop, “New Education Minister vows ‘Fresh attitude towards public education.’”, 25 July, 2017 and

<sup>3</sup> Economists agree that a strong public education system is foundational to economic prosperity. Neil H. Buchanan, “An Educated Population is Essential to a Nation’s Prosperity,” Verdict: Legal Analysis and Commentary from Justia, 29 March 2012 <https://verdict.justia.com/2012/03/29/an-educated-population-is-essential-to-a-nations-prosperity-yet-some-politicians-are-demonizing-our-educational-system-for-political-advantage> See also Doug Saunders, “Finland’s social climbers. How they’re fighting inequality with education, and winning.” Globe and Mail, April 23, 2016. “ <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/education/how-finland-is-fighting-inequality-with-education-andwinning/article29716845/>

<sup>4</sup> The Governments policy on diversity identifies all of these visible and invisible differences and seeks to ensure equitable access to and equitable participation in a quality education for all learners. Diversity in BC Schools: A framework, 2008. [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/teaching-tools/student-safety/diversity\\_framework.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/teaching-tools/student-safety/diversity_framework.pdf). Canada’s declaration by the CMEC at the international UNESCO convention against discrimination in education in 2012 states Canada commitment to providing equal access to a quality education for all children in Canada, [http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/289/2012.11\\_Promoting\\_Equality\\_of\\_Educational\\_Opportunity\\_EN.pdf](http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/289/2012.11_Promoting_Equality_of_Educational_Opportunity_EN.pdf)

*their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, **democratic**, and **pluralistic** society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.”<sup>5</sup>*

As you are aware, British Columbia’s public education system has been severely depleted through the cumulative impact of structural underfunding – to the point that it can no longer provide to all children, without discrimination, **equitable access** to a quality education that meets their learning needs.

Clearly, it is time for an overhaul of the inadequate per pupil funding model.<sup>6</sup> However, the promise to do so should not forestall the urgent need for immediate action to provide additional funding to address the grave inequities within the public education system.

*More than any other place, our public schools must be where true diversity, inclusion, equal opportunity and mutual cooperation are fostered and practiced.*

*It is time to make a real and meaningful financial commitment to this end.*

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<sup>5</sup> BC School Act, preamble, 2015. See Appendix B.

[www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/.../schoollaw/revisedstatutescontents.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/.../schoollaw/revisedstatutescontents.pdf) It should be noted that the words democratic and pluralistic have been removed from the paraphrase of the School Act in both the Liberal and NDP service plans for the Ministry of Education though we applaud the NDP’s reference to the educated citizen.

[http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017\\_Sept\\_Update/sp/pdf/ministry/educ.pdf](http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017_Sept_Update/sp/pdf/ministry/educ.pdf) and <http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017/sp/pdf/ministry/educ.pdf>. See Appendix A.

## IMPLICATIONS OF SUPREME COURT RULING

The NDP government has committed an additional \$521 million over 3 years to cover the full cost of reinstating 3,500 teacher positions to fulfill the Supreme Court ruling (November 2016) that restored contract language around class size and composition. However, this is only the first step.

- BC is still struggling to find sufficient numbers of available qualified teachers. Now into the 5<sup>th</sup> week in school, there are still 1000 to recruit province wide. The government must create additional financial incentives to attract and retain qualified professional teachers from out of province to fill these positions.<sup>7</sup>
- These new positions will also require initial and ongoing mentoring, specialist subject support, access to learning resources, and professional development. This in turn will require funding for the restoration and expansion of district level teacher supports.<sup>8</sup> This is all the more pressing given the implementation of the new BC curriculum and the commitment to the educational calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation commission.<sup>9</sup>
- Whilst lower ratios of specialist teachers and smaller class sizes are significant factors in promoting student learning, the old composition language (outdated by 20 years) needs to be revisited to reflect current thinking around supporting special needs in a way that does not stigmatize children. Funding must be increased to provide the training, staff and resources to support the full range of learning needs and meaningful inclusion

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<sup>7</sup> “Letter to Hon. Rob Fleming, Minister of Education”, September 25, 2017 asking for immediate funds to recruit and retain frontline classroom teachers particularly where geographic factors and cost of living are significant deterrents.

[http://www.panvancouver.ca/uploads/6/7/1/4/67145647/170925\\_pan\\_statement\\_to\\_govt\\_re\\_scc\\_implementation.pdf](http://www.panvancouver.ca/uploads/6/7/1/4/67145647/170925_pan_statement_to_govt_re_scc_implementation.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> In recognizing indigenous rights and the responsibility of all citizens to work towards meaningful reconciliation, it is incumbent upon the government provide sufficient funding for the training and mentoring of teachers in implementing the First Nations history curriculum across K-12 education and providing the necessary supports for indigenous students in accessing cultural and community mentors.

<sup>9</sup> District level administration and management structures have been striped to the bone over the last two decades. In terms of Administrative costs BC school districts spend 30% less than as a percentage and per student than all other provinces. Joan Axford, *Review of the Administrative Costs and Operating Reserves for BC Public Schools*, Dec. 2015 <http://bcasbo.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Report-of-the-Research-Dec-23-2015-final-secure-1.pdf>; The restoration budget of the Vancouver School Board from lists a sample of some of the cuts that have been made in district and school administration. Anecdotally, Vancouver had district principals in each subject areas as well as school and area based subject helping teachers to support teachers.

within any given classroom rather than targeted funding for specific designations. This is particularly true for schools amongst vulnerable or disadvantaged populations.<sup>10</sup>

## FUNDING BASIC EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

Even once the restored contract language has been fulfilled and adjustments made for projected student enrolment growth (\$116 in additional funding over 3 years), funding still falls far short of providing equitably the breadth and quality of education that all children in British Columbia, have a right to receive.<sup>11</sup> Given that the base operational funding amount has not even increased to reflect inflation, school districts with stable or declining enrolment will once again be on track for cutting vital educational services in order to balance their budgets.<sup>12</sup>

This is on top of the cumulative effects of structural underfunding that have stripped educational resources and essential programming from schools creating pressure on parents to compensate for these deficiencies.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Only 2,376 of the 5,199 children with special needs triggered funding support last year, which is insufficient already to meet the needs of children that qualify. The highest level of support (level 1) that requires full time support at \$37,700 is not sufficient to cover the salary and support expenses required. Final Operating Grant Full Year Summary. BC Ministry of Education. <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/resource-management/k12funding/15-16/15-16-sd39.pdf> Behavioral designations do not receive financial support nor are they factored in the restored contract language. In some inner city schools in Vancouver, the loss of needs based LIF funding for support and the composition language around formal designations, has actually worsened classroom learning conditions for students. Research is overwhelmingly consistent in showing that lower class sizes have significant impact on improving student learning for lower income children. "Class Size Reduction: A Proven Reform Strategy", NEA, 2008. [http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB08\\_ClassSize08.pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB08_ClassSize08.pdf) CommunityLINK funding for vulnerable children, provides some schools with hot lunch programs and Community School Teams. However, a recent VSB report affirmed the inadequacy of the funding to meet the extent of need, and the reliance on charities for supplementing funds and services. Val Odegard, Re-visioning Inner City CommunityLINK Resources in Vancouver Schools. VSB, February 2014. [https://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/Final\\_IC\\_Revisioning\\_Report\\_February\\_2014\\_with\\_Appendices.pdf](https://www.vsb.bc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/Final_IC_Revisioning_Report_February_2014_with_Appendices.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> BC Updated Budget, September 2017

[http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017\\_Sept\\_Update/bfp/2017\\_Sept\\_Update\\_Budget\\_and\\_Fiscal\\_Plan.pdf](http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017_Sept_Update/bfp/2017_Sept_Update_Budget_and_Fiscal_Plan.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> After cutting \$21 million from its budget in 2016/17 followed by further cuts of \$2.1 million for the 2017/8 school year, Vancouver is still facing a structural deficit of \$12-14 million. Tracy Sherlock "VSB facing a deficit of at least \$12 million next year," Feb. 23, 2017 <http://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/vsb-facing-shortfall-of-at-least-12-million-for-next-year> and <http://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/vancouver-school-board-budget-deficit-smaller-than-any-in-past-decade-report-shows> In a media release in December 2016, the BCSTA estimated an additional \$96 million would be required, over and above the restored provisions in the Liberal budget, just to maintain educational services at their current levels. In its response to the September update, the BCSTA continues to highlight in addition to the need for more capital spending for seismic mitigation, the need for increases to school district operating budgets to offset local cost pressures and learning resource needs.

[https://dsweb.bcsta.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-82689/2017-09-12-](https://dsweb.bcsta.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-82689/2017-09-12-Media_Release_BCSTA_responds_to_governments_first_budget.pdf)

[Media\\_Release\\_BCSTA\\_responds\\_to\\_governments\\_first\\_budget.pdf](https://dsweb.bcsta.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-82689/2017-09-12-Media_Release_BCSTA_responds_to_governments_first_budget.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Cheryl Rossi, "VSB Schools raise \$3.4 million in one year", Vancouver Courier; BCCPAC "Fundraising efforts produce \$3.4 million for Vancouver Schools, Dec. 2013, Nov 5, 2013; Arik Ligeti, "Fundraising playing key role at some of Vancouver's poorest schools, Globe and Mail, Feb 20, 2015 (21 2015); Carlito Pablo, "Vancouver Parents feeling school fundraising fatigue, Georgia Straight, January 24, 2013; "Fundraising", Huffington Post, September

Parents are fundraising for more than just playgrounds.

A recent PAN survey with responses from 38 schools in Vancouver and 10 schools in other districts identified items that had been fundraised for in the course of the previous year that would previously have been included in a comprehensive public education. The most consistent items across all respondents included basic classroom supplies (books, readers, math materials), technology, resource supplies, art and music materials, gym equipment, playgrounds, and furniture (including curtains, cafeteria tables, desks and chairs).<sup>14</sup> See Appendix B

This reliance on parent subsidies has created unacceptable inequities based on socio/economic difference. This is harmful to neighbourhood schools, who do not have the capacity to fundraise<sup>15</sup> and particularly in urban areas where student mobility to wealthier catchments exacerbates these discrepancies.<sup>16</sup> **It is imperative that school districts are given yearly funding, not a one time hand out to the sum of \$27.4 million, to rectify the unjust and relentless imposition of fundraising on families.**

This is not all. Parents are now fundraising to support core curricular instruction including music, art, PE and sexual education. This highlights the profound depth to which underfunding has eroded the quality and breadth of educational opportunities within our schools.

This is particularly true of the arts. Education in the arts is not only core curricular, it is crucial for building capacity for the kind of creativity and flexible thinking needed for our current

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24, 2014; Katie Hyslop "For Vancouver Parents, School Fundraising 'Has Become Our Lives.", *The Tyee*, 6 March 2015.

<sup>14</sup> PAN Response to Questions on Notice for the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, [http://www.panvancouver.ca/uploads/6/7/1/4/67145647/pan\\_response\\_to\\_questions\\_on\\_notice\\_select\\_standing\\_committee\\_oct\\_2016\[1\].pdf](http://www.panvancouver.ca/uploads/6/7/1/4/67145647/pan_response_to_questions_on_notice_select_standing_committee_oct_2016[1].pdf)

<sup>15</sup> In a 2014 report comparing fundraising abilities between schools, the difference ranged from \$194 per student to \$0. "See the Fundraising Totals at Every Vancouver School over the Past Three Years," *The Globe and Mail*, Feb 20, 2015 (21 2015) <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/how-much-each-vancouver-school-has-fundraised/article23137493/>

<sup>16</sup> In Vancouver, about 41% of elementary students attend public schools outside their local catchment (22.5% of those in specialized District programs and 18.5 cross boundary). Among secondary students, 49% attend cross-boundary, (30% in District programs and 19% cross boundary). Schools in wealthier catchments or with district choice programs have more cross catchment students than schools in poorer catchments with no choice programming. According to First Call, 1 in 5 children still live in poverty in BC. <http://still1in5.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2016-BC-Child-Poverty-Report-Card-Executive-Summary-FirstCall-2017-05.pdf> This is higher in urban centres where 22% of children live in poverty. Iglia Ivanova, *Working Poor in Metro Vancouver*, CCPA, June. Metro Vancouver has the 2nd highest rate of working poor in Canada. 42% of working poor are raising children. Many single parents, new or recent immigrants. [2016.wv.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2016/06/CCPA\\_Working\\_pove\\_rty\\_full.pdf](http://2016.wv.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2016/06/CCPA_Working_pove_rty_full.pdf)

economic reality<sup>17</sup> and fostering the empathy and emotional well-being for a more compassionate and inclusive society.<sup>18</sup>

And yet, specialist teachers and programs in the arts have been drastically reduced in schools across the province.<sup>19</sup> This has been reinforced by the area standards document (2004) that has removed art, music and performance space allocations from new elementary school design. Art rooms have been almost entirely eliminated and a recent survey by PAN on the impact of the SCC ruling on classrooms revealed that of the 37 schools responding, 19 have now lost music rooms.<sup>20</sup> In secondary schools the imposition of class minimums, the outsourcing of equivalency credits and changes to graduation requirements have together resulted in the depletion of core and elective course in the fine and applied arts, limiting student opportunities.<sup>21</sup>

It is the loss of access to educational breadth that most reinforces social and economic inequality. With arts programming evacuated from the public system, arts education is being

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<sup>17</sup> Edgar Cown, "Canada's creative industries can lead the economic charge, The Globe and Mail, July 3, 2015. Cowan notes that Canada has slipped in global competitiveness and in innovation. <http://www.actioncanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/AC-TF3-Creativity-Report-EN-web.pdf> commentary/canadas-creative-industries-can-lead-the-economic-charge/article25236146/; Policy Research Group, The Creative economy: Concepts and Literature Review Highlights, May 2013, identifies Fine Arts graduates as possessing the characteristics necessary for success in the creative economy. [https://cch.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/inline/documents/creative-economy-synthesis\\_201305.pdf](https://cch.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/inline/documents/creative-economy-synthesis_201305.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Glaser, Why the need for empathy has never been greater, The Guardian, February 2017. Neuroscience is showing the link between participating in the arts and cultivating the capacity for empathy in the human brain. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/feb/05/why-the-need-for-empathetic-citizens-has-never-been-greater>

<sup>19</sup> In the 2014/15 satisfaction survey, only 42% of grade 3/4 students and 34% of Grade 7 students responded with strong affirmation to the question "At school are you learning about art?" In the same survey, only 52% of grade 3/4 students and 42% of grade 7 students responded with strong affirmation to the question "At school, are you learning about music?". [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/sat\\_survey/public.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/sat_survey/public.pdf) In Vancouver, the loss of specialized arts education training for elementary teachers in universities, and the loss of specialist positions within elementary schools has decimated the number of arts education teachers with specialization in these areas. Approximately 85% of music specialists and 98% of art specialists in Vancouver have been lost over the last 2 decades. Data analyzed in 2015 for select standing committee using anecdotal evidence, interviews and survey data from schools. According to latest survey, only 30 of the 90 elementary schools in Vancouver have a full-time K-7 music teacher, 27 have part time music teachers and 33 schools have no music teacher. Only 6 elementary schools have a K-7 art teacher for the 2017 school year. See Appendix C

<sup>20</sup> These are the findings to date of our survey initiated mid-September 2017. Research shows that a quality education in the arts requires expertise (specialist teachers) and dedicated space. The government has committed \$50 million to cover the cost of expanding spaces for meeting the restored contract language. Will this money include portables to replace lost music spaces in elementary schools?

<sup>21</sup> Prior to 2004, all students had to take electives in a fine and applied art to grade 10 and then at least one fine and one applied arts elective in the graduating years (11 and 12). Now, students need only take one fine or applied art elective during the graduation years (10-12). This has reduced the number of required electives for the arts by 75%.

largely outsourced through fundraising and private lessons by families who can afford it.<sup>22</sup> Should hundreds of thousands of children living in poverty in BC should be denied the opportunity to develop their artistic capacities? Research shows that a high engagement in the arts is instrumental in mitigating the impact of socio economic disadvantage on life outcomes for at risk youths.<sup>23</sup> Given that aboriginal children and children of immigrant families are disproportionately represented within this group, access to cultural expression and participation is also a matter of social justice.<sup>24</sup>

It is imperative that all children have access to the full quality and breadth of educational opportunity as reflected in the new BC curriculum within our schools. **Additional targeted and protected funding to school districts for arts education is overdue and necessary.**

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<sup>22</sup> The average music lesson is \$30/half hour or \$1,290.00 for 43 weeks (the equivalent of a school year). Arts classes run at \$300 per term, and Choir at around \$350 a school year.

<sup>23</sup> This summary of four longitudinal studies found that children from low socio-economic backgrounds with a high arts exposure came close to and sometimes surpassed inequality gaps with children from more affluent backgrounds in test performances, post-secondary attendance, graduation, volunteer work and civic involvement - including political activity. James S. Catterall, Susan A. Dumais and Gillian Hampden-Thompson, "The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies", National Endowment for the Arts, March 2012. <http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/Arts-At-Risk-Youth.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> UN Declaration of human rights states that everyone has the right to participate in cultural production. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/CrossCuttingThemes.aspx>



## CONCLUSION

We call on government to fulfill its commitment to British Columbians:

1. To affordability – through a fully funded quality public education system that is accessible to all children, not just those whose families can afford to subsidize it.
2. To dependability – so that every child can attend a fully resourced neighbourhood school no matter where they live.
3. To a broad-based economy – by providing a public education that has the breadth and quality needed to support a strong, innovative economy so all children have equal opportunity to reach their individual potential.
4. To funding the human resources necessary to support the delivery and integration of first nations curriculum and culture into schools.<sup>25</sup>

Fulfilling these four tenets is more than just words: it is showing our children today that the betterment of all is more important than the interests of a few. The future health and democracy of our society depends upon it.

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<sup>25</sup> BC Service Plan, Ministry of Education, September 2017. Appendix D  
[http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017\\_Sept\\_Update/sp/pdf/ministry/educ.pdf](http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2017_Sept_Update/sp/pdf/ministry/educ.pdf)

## APPENDIX A:

### **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Article 26**

1. Everyone has the right to an education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

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### **The British Columbia School Act (RSBC 1996) CHAPTER 412**

#### Preamble

WHEREAS it is the goal of a democratic society to ensure that all its members receive an education that enables them to become literate, personally fulfilled and publicly useful, thereby increasing the strength and contributions to the health and stability of that society;

AND WHEREAS the purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to become literate, to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy;

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### **The BC Services Plan**

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable the approximately 553,000 public school students, 81,000 independent school students, and over 2,200 home-schooled children enrolled each school year, to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

## APPENDIX B:

PAN conducted a survey in response to the following question from the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services on September 19, 2016:

*“Could you provide a list of the kinds of things over the last decade that parents have been asked to fundraise for which were previously considered, or which you consider to be, part of the basic education system that should be provided?”*

We received 110 responses, representing the experiences of 33 elementary and 5 high schools in Vancouver, SD 39, as well as responses from school districts across the province; these are SD 68, SD 85, SD 38, SD 61, SD 83, SD 67, SD 23, SD 57, SD43, and SD36. Given the broad spectrum of schools and districts represented, the responses compiled are further compelling evidence for the extent to which parents and PAC's are subsidizing public education.

- items marked with an ~ were high frequency items
- items marked with a \* were consistent across all responses.

### **PAC fundraising has been used to purchase the following resources that should be provided as part of the basic public education system:**

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• technology for classrooms and whole school use * (i.e. ipads, laptops, printers, scanners, computers, charging cart, smart boards, specialized software, audio-visual equipment including projectors, LCD projector, sound system for assemblies, microphones, speakers, headphones, cords)</li><li>• general classrooms supplies *(i.e. paper, markers, crayons, books, notebooks, tissues, agendas, glue, dry erase markers, decorations, charts, craft supplies, organizational supplies such as baskets and containers)</li><li>• supplies needed by Resource staff~</li><li>• cleaning and custodial supplies</li><li>• art materials (i.e. paint, paper, brushes, clay)*</li><li>• library books~</li><li>• French atlases and general atlases~</li><li>• classroom books~ (including novel sets)</li><li>• graded/leveled readers for literacy support~</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• primary home reading books~</li><li>• learning aids</li><li>• texts books in higher grades</li><li>• musical instruments and music stands~</li><li>• science supplies and kits</li><li>• math programs, textbooks and workbooks*</li><li>• math manipulatives</li><li>• robotics kits</li><li>• physical education equipment and supplies* (i.e. mats, sports jerseys/pinneys, balls, hula hoops, volley ball nets, cones etc. for recess and PE)</li><li>• sensory aids and equipment for special education resource including Time Timers, wiggle chairs etc.~</li><li>• technology for special needs support</li><li>• breakfast programs for children who can't afford it</li><li>• school Emergency Kits</li></ul> |
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**PAC fundraising has been used to purchase the following furnishing and infrastructure items that should be provided as part of a basic public school education:**

- curtains~
- carpets
- air conditioner
- student telephone
- library and general furniture~
- music space
- drying rack
- kiln
- chairs for students and teachers~
- bookshelves
- risers for gym~
- gym scoreboard for competitions (highschool)
- cafeteria tables~
- cater fountain station~
- bike racks
- playground structures and equipment, new and replacement\*
- new turf for outdoor track
- outdoor benches~ (some for special needs students for waiting for buses)
- landscaping and gardens/grounds~ (including trees and gardening equipment)
- maintenance costs for playground and landscaping including mulching and resurfacing~
- painting lines on playground for basketball courts and hopscotch
- necessities for portable classrooms (i.e. shoe racks, boot trays, door mats, umbrellas)
- transportation - school buses- rural areas~
- custodial support time for any afterschool activity~

**PAC fundraising has paid for these core (not enriched) educational areas of instruction:**

- Physical education~ (including swimming, gymnastics, ice skating)
- Music Instruction\*
- Choral Instruction
- Art Instruction\*
- Sexual education\*
- Science Instruction
- Drama Instruction
- Dance Instruction
- Safeteen (avoiding violence and bullying) and internet safety courses

**PAC volunteer time is also used to compensate for loss of teachers in the following areas:**

- library staffing
- classroom support workers
- art, music, dance, drama, physical education instruction
- PAC fundraising and parent funding has been used to provide the following enrichments that should be provided within the basic educational system:
- all curricular enhancements\*
- all field trips\*
- school performances\* (music, drama, aboriginal to fulfill cultural curriculum)
- school buses for field trips~ to local galleries, museums etc.
- graduation ceremonies
- Food and Nutrition Program (i.e. Project Chef)
- clubs (chess etc.)~
- sports teams

**Parents are privately outsourcing the following educational services and supports due to the loss of these basic educational programs and supports within the public system:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• tutoring - in basic literacy, reading and math (children who need support but are not of highest need do not qualify for resource time)*</li><li>• tutoring to support high school students taking online courses because of reduced course offerings in school</li><li>• Art classes~</li><li>• individual Music lessons - orchestra/band experiences are only possible within schools*</li><li>• Drama, Dance or Choir lessons~</li><li>• testing for special needs and/or learning disabilities including Psych Ed Assessment, OT</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>assessment, Speech/Language assessment (Average wait time for school based assessment 2-3 years)~</li><li>• Speech Language pathologist support</li><li>• Occupational Therapy</li><li>• Physiotherapy</li><li>• Speech Therapy</li><li>• Counseling support</li><li>• math support i.e. Kumon ~</li><li>• sports lessons/teams</li><li>•</li></ul> |
|--|---|

The ability of parent communities to fundraise for their schools is not evenly distributed. In a 2015 report by the Globe and Mail based on a 2014 VSB report, yearly parent fundraising (and charitable donations) within Vancouver schools ranged from \$501 per student to \$0. (Also see Fundraising Totals at Every Vancouver School, The Globe and Mail). The cumulative effect is an increasing inequity of access to basic educational resources, programs and amenities within schools across the province based on socio-economic status. It should be noted that these numbers are for funds where a receipt was issued by the VSB. Parents don't always demand receipts; the totals of PAC fundraising and parent funding at schools is many times higher across the province.

**Quotes from Parents**

*"Our PAC had to raise \$150,000 last year to replace the playground equipment at our elementary school. It seems to me that a playground is a pretty fundamental part of a schools' infrastructure and isn't really an optional extra or luxury item."*  
Christian Malcolm, Trafalgar Elementary, SD 39

*"This (technology) is not necessarily equipment that would have been covered by the school in the past decade but they are items now deemed necessary by BC through the new curriculum but which are not adequately being funded. This is creating a greater divide between the haves and have-nots, not just within Public/Private education but within the Public system itself where poorer schools simply do not get reading recovery material or access to technology."* Katherine Morrison, Maple Grove Elementary, SD 39

*"I paid for my daughter to have a music education for 3 years. I was angry that it was not a part of the basic education but willing to pay for it in order not to lose that fundamental learning for my child. That paid opportunity was then taken away from*

*us leaving my daughter with an unfinished experience and my son with no music learning whatsoever at the Elementary level. This is shocking to me. Music is an essential part of the human experience and a basic understanding of music as a language has been proven to be an exceptional way of aiding learning in many other subjects including math and language arts. I was angry, now I am furious and frustrated. As a single parent with active kids I am unable to budget for the high cost of individual music lessons. The loss of music programming at the elementary level has hit our family hard." Lord Tennyson, SD 39*

*"I'm gravely concerned at the offering of online courses for secondary students. The absence of the classroom forces parents to fill the teaching/ mentoring gap by paying for tutors to ensure comprehension and success in the online courses."*

## APPENDIX C:

### RESEARCH ON ARTS EDUCATION IN BC

There is growing and compelling evidence pointing to the crucial role the arts play in the social, emotional and intellectual development of children, in the creative thinking skills required for our new economic reality, and creating equalizing opportunities for disadvantaged children.

However, policy and funding decisions in education at government, district and school levels have largely de-prioritized investment in the arts.

#### Data on arts education in BC

In BC, the absence of evidential data about the availability of, or decline in specialists, dedicated spaces and targeted funding, has allowed the erosion of the arts in schools to go largely unacknowledged.

1. The satisfaction survey is the only hard/systematic data available:

[http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/sat\\_survey/public.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/sat_survey/public.pdf)

Most recent survey results are from 2014/15:

- 42% of grade 3/4 students and 34% of grade 7 students responded affirmatively to the question “At school, are you learning about art?” (This is a decline from 45% and 36% five years prior.)
- 52% of grade 3/4s and 42% of grade 7 students responded affirmatively to the question “At school, are you learning about music?” (This represents a slight increase from 51% and 41% five years prior.)
- There was no question about either drama or dance.

This data does not provide any information on the quality of arts instruction children receive, whether or not there are specialist teachers available and/or dedicated spaces.

The questions on the arts for 2016/17 were replaced with “At school are you learning to be creative?” This means there will be NO data for the delivery of arts education in BC going forward.

2. Local and Anecdotal evidence – Vancouver perspective

Interviews with veteran teachers and former district principals give a better indication of the impacts of funding cutbacks and de-prioritization over the last 25 years.

Music specialist teachers (both classroom and k-7 teachers) have been reduced from around 300 to around 50 in music and in art from around 200 to about a 20. The loss of visual and performing arts district principals in 1992 through funding cutbacks and the dismantling of the studio arts education program at UBC through cutbacks to university funding, and the removal of arts specialization as a distinct elementary teacher qualification, has also contributed significantly to this predicament.

## **Space allocation for the Arts in BC schools**

The new area standards blueprint (revised in 2004) **does not** include any provision for art, music or performing space in elementary schools. <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/resource-management/capital-planning/areastandards.pdf>

This is different in other provinces such as Ontario and Alberta. In Ontario, the expert panel recommendations for school design in 2010 include arts spaces - an art room, an unloaded instructional space (music) as well as performance space attached to gym [http://www.hpedsb.on.ca/ec/directorsOffice/arc/documents/ReportofExpertPanel-BuildingOurSchools\\_BuildingOurFuture-ENG.pdf](http://www.hpedsb.on.ca/ec/directorsOffice/arc/documents/ReportofExpertPanel-BuildingOurSchools_BuildingOurFuture-ENG.pdf) and in Alberta, the standard core school design includes allocation for 4 ancillary spaces in addition to classrooms for non-enrolling purposes such as art/music/resource etc. <http://www.infrastructure.alberta.ca/636.htm>

## **Models for developing Provincial Policy on Arts Education - Manitoba**

Manitoba ministry of education commissioned a survey to profile the state of the arts in Manitoba schools. *This survey provides an excellent model for a potential BC survey to assess current delivery of arts education.* Results and analysis found in Provincial Profile of Arts Education in Manitoba Schools, 2006/7 [http://www.mern.ca/monographs/study\\_arts\\_education\\_electronic.pdf](http://www.mern.ca/monographs/study_arts_education_electronic.pdf)

## **National Data and Guidelines on Arts Education in Canada**

The National Symposium on Arts Education convened multiple times from 1998-2004. Participants included Canada Council for the Arts and Ministry representatives from every Province. Policy Guidelines for Arts Education in Canadian Schools, developed by the National Symposium on Arts Education, 2003. [http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/culture/Arts\\_Education/Resource\\_Links/Policy\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Arts\\_Education\\_in\\_Canadian\\_Schools.pdf](http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/culture/Arts_Education/Resource_Links/Policy_Guidelines_for_Arts_Education_in_Canadian_Schools.pdf)

Main policy guidelines:

- equitable access to comprehensive, developmental arts programs delivered by teachers with qualifications specific to the arts
- educationally appropriate opportunities to work with professional and community-based artists and to experience and value all of the arts within the school and community.

*The BC Ministry of Education has fulfilled the curricular goals outlined in the guidelines but not the provision of resources (human, financial or material) required to implement them.*



## **International recognition of the importance of arts education: UNESCO**

There have been two major art education UNESCO conferences in 2006 and 2010. The

Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Art , 2010 was the culminating document with a series of goals and implementation strategies for member countries based on the following premise:

"Arts education has an important role to play in the constructive transformation of educational systems that are struggling to meet the needs of learners in a rapidly changing world characterized by remarkable advances in technology on the one hand and intractable social and cultural injustices on the other."

[http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/multimedia/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul\\_Agenda\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/multimedia/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Seoul_Agenda_EN.pdf)

## **Data and Research on the benefits of arts education**

*The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies, National Endowment for the Arts, 2012*

At risk youths (low SES) with a high arts education closed and sometimes eliminated outcome gaps in graduation rates, academic achievement, post secondary attendance, employment, and civic engagement between themselves and students of high SES. <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Arts-At-Risk-Youth.pdf>

*The Arts in Early Childhood: Social and Emotional Benefits 2000-2015, National Endowment for the Arts, 2015.* This research identified increased levels of academic readiness, prosocial skills, attention and regulation in children who participated in arts activities than children who did not. This research also showed that this clearly benefited children from lower SES and also children with social disabilities like autism.

<https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/arts-in-early-childhood-dec2015-rev.pdf>

*NeuroEducation: Learning Arts and the Brain, John Hopkins University Summit, 2009 sponsored by the Dana Foundation.*

<http://steam-notstem.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Neuroeducation.pdf>

*Ready to Innovate, Conference Board and American Association of School Administrators, 2008*

Survey showed that 97% of Business leaders and employers ranked creativity as most important for today's workplace and 85% had difficulty finding employees that had this characteristic.

[http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/ReadyToInnovate\\_KeyFindings\\_0.pdf](http://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/ReadyToInnovate_KeyFindings_0.pdf)

## APPENDIX D:

### Purpose of the Ministry

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable the approximately 560,000 public and 83,000 independent school students, and over 2,300 home-schooled children, enrolled each year, to achieve their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous, sustainable economy.

To achieve this objective, the ministry places student learning at the centre of its mandate. As specified in the [Statement of Education Policy Order](#), the ministry defines this mandate as developing the Educated Citizen, characterized by the intellectual, human and social, and career development of students.

To this end, the ministry provides leadership and funding to the K-12 education system through governance, legislation, policy and standards. The ministry's role in helping to meet the purpose of the school system involves co-governing, with boards of education, the K-12 education system, working closely with a network of partners. Specific roles and responsibilities are set out under *the School Act, Independent School Act, Teachers Act, Library Act, First Nations Education Act*, and accompanying regulations.

### Ministry Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures

The Ministry of Education's goals are to help government achieve the following three commitments to British Columbians:

- The first commitment is to make life more affordable. British Columbians are counting on government to make their lives easier by containing costs and service fees.
- The second commitment is to deliver the services that people count on. Government services touch the lives of British Columbians every day, and there is so much more that we can – and must – do to provide these services where and when people need them. Additionally, in many cases, critical programs and services are delivered by Crown Corporations, and our Ministry will work with Board Chairs to improve levels of service to citizens.
- The third commitment is to build a strong, sustainable, innovative economy that works for everyone. Our government believes that all ministries and public sector organizations have a role to play in supporting broad-based economic growth, developing poverty reduction strategies, and helping create good-paying jobs in every region of the province.

Integrating with these priorities is government's commitment to true, lasting reconciliation with First Nations in British Columbia, as we move towards fully adopting and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Beyond our work in supporting these commitments, the Minister of Education has been tasked in the [mandate letter](#) to achieve the following specific objectives and performance targets:

- Fast-track enhancement to K-12 education funding.
- Review the funding formula to develop a stable and sustainable model for the K-12 education system.
- Provide additional annual funding to ensure students have the school supplies they need to succeed.
- Create an ongoing capital fund for school playgrounds.
- Make schools safer by accelerating the seismic upgrade program.
- Work in partnership to build and upgrade schools in every region of the province.
- Implement the new First Nations history curriculum, develop full-course offerings in Aboriginal languages and implement the educational Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- Implement BC's new school curriculum and provide new technology, lab equipment, learning material and professional development support for teachers.

Our Ministry will continue to develop specific objectives and performance measures for inclusion in our 2018/19 Service Plan, which will be released with *Budget 2018*.