



The Parent Advocacy Network for Public Education (PAN) Fall 2018 Newsletter

Hello fellow public education friends, families, and advocates! The Parent Advocacy Network has been busy and we'd like to update you on some of the public education advocacy projects we've been working on:

On March 5, PAN sent the Minister of Education a researched [letter of petition](#) signed by 73 parent and community advocacy groups, university art educators, and art professionals calling attention to the dramatic decline in access to K-12 arts education across BC, and underscoring its vital importance for students in both academic development and social/emotional well-being. We hope that our collective voice will communicate the urgency of this issue and create the will and context for purposeful action.

On September 22, PAN participated in the First Call Education Forum. [Our presentation](#) (The Art of Inclusive Learning: Public Education as Critical Care?) highlighted the need for specialist art education as a critical tool for building empathetic, flexible, creative, and adaptable learners and to deal with inequity and access in our schools. It also deconstructed the label of "special needs" students and made the case that today's classrooms have diverse, complex learning community members who all benefit from the principles of inclusion and universal design for learning.

On October 11, PAN [presented](#) to the legislative committee collecting public input for Budget 2019. To see our eight recommendations, [click here](#). Our full written submission is [here](#).

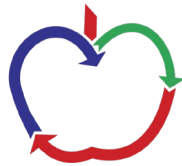
On October 15, PAN sent [this brief](#) to the Minister of Education, calling for an [Area Standards Review](#). Did you know that BC has the lowest school-space allocation per student compared to other provinces? This means replacement schools are approximately 30% smaller than the original school. It also means that spaces for critical curriculum learning in art, music, sensory rooms and more are being erased. If your school will be seismically mitigated you need to know more!

For more news, visit <http://www.panvancouver.ca/news>.

AMPLIFY

As part of PAN's commitment to supporting aligned non-partisan progressive organizations, we are a member of the [BC Poverty Reduction Coalition](#). The Coalition's [ABC Plan](#) calls, for an accountable, bold and comprehensive poverty reduction plan in BC. Click on the link for an easy tool to write to your MLA or engage in simple actions to promote equity and save lives. Poverty reduction is deeply connected to public education, and when we advocate for both, our partnerships make us stronger.

One of the starkest issues in public education advocacy continues to be the inequity and lack of access for complex learners and special needs students. If you haven't already found [BCEDACCESS](#), their site is rich with resources, tools, and advocacy strategies that help parents, guardians, citizens, self advocates, and allies navigate through the complexities of the public education system. In their [Forced Out](#) report, parents surveyed confirmed that families with special needs students are often forced to remove their children from school due to chronic systemic underfunding and understaffing issues that put their children at risk. If you have had or continue to experience exclusion this year, please complete and share this [Tracking Exclusion Tool](#).



KEEP IN TOUCH

As always, PAN welcomes new members. If you would like to hear more about what is happening on your public education landscape, please stay tuned for our next general meeting in Winter/ Spring 2019.

Please also visit our website <http://www.panvancouver.ca> to stay current with our latest efforts, sign up to our newsletter, or let us know what public education issues are keeping you up at night.