

## **Grassroots Parent Groups Advocate Together for Public Education**

As we near the end of the calendar year and are just over 100 days into the current school year, it is a time of reflection in our province. Many will recognize some positive steps made in public education during the year: the Supreme Court of Canada ruling on class size and composition continues to be implemented and funded; seismic projects are being announced with greater frequency; and there is increasing recognition of the value of public education and the undeniable deficiencies still present in a system which has faced chronic deprioritization for 16 years.

But public education isn't yet the priority it should be, that is, as a societal benefit to all. Parents and families still await long-overdue changes that will make education more accessible and equitable for all learners across the province.

Parent advocacy continues and grassroots parent groups are working together now more than ever. On December 1, 2017, six parent advocacy groups—[BCEdAccess](#), [Nanaimo Parents Supporting Public Education](#), [Parent Advocacy Network](#) (incl [FACE](#)), [Richmond Schools Stand United](#), [Seismic Safety For BC Schools](#), [Surrey Students Now](#)—met with BC Premier John Horgan and Minister of Education Rob Fleming. The representatives of these six groups spoke with Premier Horgan and Minister Fleming about some key issues facing the public education system. Together, the parent representatives [made six recommendations](#) to the government.

We thank Premier Horgan and Minister Fleming for taking the time to listen to the collective parent voice, and we look forward to more such meetings in the future. Our recommendations are only the beginning of many changes that are required to provide a quality, equitable public education to all the children in our province. The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services has also made some strong [recommendations](#) for public education funding in the 2018 Budget. We encourage the government to view our recommendations and the Committee's recommendations as important steps on the road to building the public education system that BC's children deserve.

### **About Our Non-Partisan Organizations**

[BCEdAccess](#) has over 1250 parent members, from all over BC, and we are growing every day. Our mandate as grassroots volunteers is to advocate publicly for equitable access to education for students with special needs, and to provide their parents with support, education and training around that right.

[Nanaimo Parents Supporting Public Education](#) is an organization formed by parents concerned about the chronic underfunding of public education in BC and the effects it has on the quality of our children's education. We work to bring attention and awareness to issues within our public education system both locally and provincially.

The [Parent Advocacy Network](#) is a collective of parents and community members who share a commitment to public education. We work to address the devaluing of public education in Vancouver and across BC by holding government accountable and helping effect policy changes.

[Richmond Schools Stand United](#) is a parent-led group advocating for safe schools and equitable access to public education across our city and the province.

[Seismic Safety For BC Schools](#) is an advocacy group committed to ensuring all schools in BC are earthquake safe.

[Surrey Students Now](#) is a group composed of parents concerned for the education of the community's children.