



February 28, 2018

Reg Bawa
Assistant Deputy Minister
Resource Management & Executive Financial Office
PO Box 9151
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC
V8W 9H1

via email

Dear Mr. Bawa,

Re: K-12 Funding Model Review

The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) appreciates the correspondence we received regarding the K-12 Funding Model Review and the opportunity to provide input on behalf of parents. For many years parents from across the province have raised a number of issues with the current per-pupil funding model and echo the recommendations of [the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services](#) have called for predictable, stable and adequate funding for K-12 public education.

Once again, on behalf of parents, DPACs and PACs, we request formal stakeholder representation during the funding model review process. BCCPAC has a number of resolutions that have been passed by parent members advocating for changes for a needs-based funding model that address these local and provincial concerns. Changes to the funding formula need to reflect the actual costs of operating schools, to provide the supports and resources needed to meet the diversity of educational needs and offer a comprehensive, quality education that includes the arts.

We also have a number of recommendations to put forward to the Funding Model Review:

1. Development of a Protected Funding Envelope to address Students Learning Needs

As stated in our submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, the change from targeted funding to block funding has had significant impact on the level of services and supports to students with learning differences. Many parents are told that districts are allocating much more funding to special education than they receive. Unless the amount of high incidence targeted funding that was rolled into the per-pupil allocation in 2002 is taken into account, this is a flawed comparison. The original per-pupil funding was intended to cover all needs of high incidence special needs and gifted students such as early intervention, assessment, service and support for a range of students with varying diagnoses such as dyslexia, ADHD and students requiring behaviour support. The supplemental Funding for Special Needs was intended to cover the unique requirements of low incidence special needs students.

BCCPAC recommends that new funding model ensure that student services and classroom supports are protected. By creating a protected funding envelope, districts will have flexibility to address local needs, supports and interventions.



2. Increase to Supplemental Special Needs Funding

Parents have strongly reiterated the need to increase provincial funding to cover the true cost of meeting the requirements of designated and non-designated students with special needs in accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines for special education and inclusion.

An immediate significant increase is needed to bring supplemental special needs funding in-line with the actual costs of services and supports that our special needs students require. All students deserve access to a full day of school. The lack of educational assistant coverage when a regularly assigned educational assistant is absent, is of grave concern to BCCPAC and to parents of special needs students.

3. Address the unintended consequences of the Classroom Enhancement Fund

There have been a number of challenges with the restoration of language as directed by the Supreme Court ruling. Although the restoration of language has been a fair process, it has not resulted in equitable distribution of funds to districts. In 15 years, many districts have made cuts in other areas to try and retain smaller classes and specialist teacher ratios. These are the unintended consequences with the restoration of language and the allocation of the Classroom Enhancement fund. District parent representatives from across the province reported to us that their districts need additional flexible funding to fulfill these local needs such as more Educational Assistants, custodial services and occupational and physio therapists.

4. Addition of New Supplemental Funding—Classroom Resource Fund

Often, the dynamics of a classroom (i.e. the particular combination of students and staff) create some unique needs that require extra supports and resources that would not fall within one of the current funding categories. As such, BCCPAC recommends an additional supplementary funding envelope to specifically address classroom resources and needs. Classroom needs are unique to the grouping of students and staff within that classroom. There are factors besides numbers that influence the dynamics and level of support and intervention required by classroom students: environment, demographics, social, emotional and communication skills, English language proficiency and age are only some of the factors that influence the dynamics of a cohort. This is especially true in Metro Vancouver areas where some districts have over 25% English Language Learner (ELL) students. Classroom needs include learning needs in addition to classroom management needs and are unique to the grouping of children in the class.

With the recent Supreme Court ruling, parents and the public are more aware of the variable factors that affect the learning conditions of our classrooms and the need for more appropriate resource and support levels in many of our classrooms.



5. Increase to Supplemental funding for Unique Geographic Factors

At the 2017 BCCPAC AGM, parent representatives from rural and remote districts voiced dire need for the funding and implementation of a recruitment and retention strategy. With some districts losing 50% of new teachers after one year, this situation has become untenable in some district as contract language is restored to fulfill the requirements of the Supreme Court ruling.

Another area of concern for parents in rural and remote areas is a need for transportation funding that reflects the true costs of providing transportation to ensure that children have equitable access to education. Parents have been clear that the solution to a shortfall in transportation funding is not user fees, and that transportation funding needs to be allocated in ways that fairly reflect differences in circumstances between school districts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the K-12 Funding Model Review process. We look forward to hearing how BCCPAC can continue to contribute as a public education partner during this process.

Sincerely,

Jen Mezei, President

On behalf of BCCPAC Board