



December 7, 2022

Honourable Rachna Singh  
Minister of Education and Child Care  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Singh:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as Minister of Education and Child Care. I trust in your leadership at this critical time to deliver results for the people of British Columbia.

British Columbians continue to recover from and respond to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate related natural disasters, while global inflation is driving up costs for more households and the world's economic outlook is concerning. Now more than ever, we need to focus on building a secure, low emission, sustainable economy, and a province where everyone can find a good home – whether you live in a rural area, in a city, or in an Indigenous community. We will continue working toward true and meaningful reconciliation by supporting opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be full partners in the inclusive and sustainable province we are building together.

Our government is committed to delivering on the mandate British Columbians gave us in 2020. Together we can make life better for people in B.C., improve the services we all rely on, and ensure a sustainable province for future generations.

As we renew our work, my priority as Premier is to deliver results that people can see and feel in four key areas:

- **Attainable and affordable housing:** In the wake of soaring prices and record migration to B.C., we will take on the important work of building new homes that are actually attainable for the middle class, while continuing our work to address the housing crisis for those in distress on our streets.

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- **Safer communities:** To address concerns about public safety, both for the people struggling with mental health and addiction on our streets, as well as the feeling that downtown centres are not as safe as they were before the pandemic, we will work with our partners at all levels of government, the justice and health care systems, the non-profit sector, and community leaders to find solutions for this complex challenge facing our province, and work overtime to seize the assets of high-level criminals.
- **Improved health care:** Amid unprecedented pressures we will continue to work to strengthen our public health care system, from family doctors to new hospitals, so care is there for each of us when we need it.
- **A sustainable, clean, secure, and fair economy:** We will continue our work investing in British Columbians, fighting racism and promoting equity, and building a clean economy that addresses our obligations to combat climate change by driving down emissions, while creating good, family supporting jobs.

Because of our government's success in building an economy that works for everyone, 100,000 people moved to B.C. last year seeking new opportunities, the fastest growth in 50 years. This year's numbers are expected to be similar. Many of B.C.'s fastest growing communities are seeing more families moving in, including school-age children, exerting pressure on school capacity in several parts of the province.

Sustaining our economic success means responding to the needs of fast-growing communities, and this will be a significant challenge and opportunity for us given the unprecedented rate of growth we are seeing. As Minister, working with teachers, staff, elected school boards, local governments, Indigenous Peoples, and colleagues, you will work to ensure the learning outcomes of over 665,000 students are achieved as an essential part of our whole-of-government response to this growth.

In addition, as Minister you will continue the good work of rolling out the first major new social program in a generation in our province – universal child care. Affordable, accessible, and inclusive child care helped B.C. to be the province with the fastest post-pandemic recovery of women returning to the workforce. The initial successes have raised public expectations and hopes for expanded child care services, including before and after school spaces. Supporting childcare workers and those who would like to become childcare workers will be key to meeting the needs of urban and rural communities as our government, in partnership with the federal government, commits to expand these vital services as quickly as possible to support families and reduce their costs.

Our education system is not immune to global trends of rising racism – making sure that schools, school boards, teachers, and staff have the tools they need to respond and fight racism in our education system so that all students feel they're in a safe place to learn is a priority.

Since 2020, our government has made considerable progress on important initiatives including:

- Increasing funding to deliver the safe new and expanded schools families need, and building new, accessible playgrounds for thousands of kids across the province.
- With teachers and required stakeholders, identify opportunities to expand services and interventions for kids with dyslexia and related learning differences.
- Taking steps to ensure that reconciliation and education go hand-in-hand, including co-creation of culturally relevant resources that are now available to all educators across the K-12 education system, and starting in the 2023-24 school year, requiring all secondary students to complete Indigenous-focused coursework before they graduate.
- Ensuring quality public education continues to be safely delivered throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, which included fast-tracking improvements to online and remote learning and increasing supports for teachers, support staff and students.

As you continue to make progress on items in the previous mandate letter, over the remaining period of this mandate I expect you to prioritize making progress on the following:

- Continue to work with Boards of Education to ensure all students have the supports they need to be successful.
- To help make sure students are properly fed for learning, expedite work with school districts to create more local school meal programs based on district data and priorities, and work with the Minister of Agriculture and Food to integrate Feed BC into this plan so that districts can include locally grown food.
- Deliver targeted investments to help make sure students have the classroom supplies they need to succeed, so parents and teachers don't have to pay the full cost out-of-pocket.
- With support from the Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility, continue providing supports to children and youth with disabilities and special learning needs.
- Continue to invest in new and modernized schools, including focusing on meeting seismic requirements, increasing child care spaces, and achieving climate change and energy efficiency standards as set out in our CleanBC plan.

- Work with staff, Boards of Education, teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders to identify and address issues of racism in our education sector.
- Support the Minister of State for Child Care by working toward universal access to before and after school care, continuing to build spaces on school grounds, and finalizing development of a capital plan for child care.
- Work with the Minister of Children and Family Development and support the work of the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to continue our government's commitment to addressing mental health problems early by expanding Integrated Child and Youth Teams to 20 school districts.

Our work together must continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people in this province. Issues not contemplated by this letter will come forward for government action and I ask you to bring such matters forward for consideration by the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet, with the expectation that any proposed initiatives will be subject to the usual Cabinet and Treasury Board oversight and include measurable outcomes for British Columbians. Your ministry's priorities must reflect our government's overall strategic plan as determined by Cabinet.

British Columbians expect their elected representatives to work together to advance the public good. That means seeking out, fostering, and championing good ideas regardless of their origin. I expect you to reach out to elected members from all parties as you deliver on your mandate. Further, you will build thoughtful and sustained relationships both with title holders and through public and stakeholder engagement plans that incorporate diverse perspectives early in the policy development process. Federal partnerships and resources will be particularly important and, on behalf of our government, you will engage with the federal government on advancing priorities to improve the lives of British Columbians.

As a Cabinet, we will uphold the highest standards of ethics, collaboration, and good conduct in service of the public, and as a Minister of the Crown, you are expected to review, understand, and act according to the *Members' Conflict of Interest Act*. You will establish a collaborative working relationship with your Deputy Minister, and the public servants under their direction, who provide the professional, non-partisan advice that is fundamental to delivering on our government's priorities. Your Minister's Office must meet the highest standards for integrity and provide a respectful, rewarding environment for all staff.

The rural and urban challenges that we face are urgent and complex. In response, we must be forward-thinking, strategic, and ready to work across disciplines and old divisions in new ways. Labour shortages are a major issue globally, and British Columbia is no

exception, including in the public service. Maintaining the BC Public Service as an employer of excellence will be key to retaining and recruiting the diverse professionals we rely on to deliver essential services, advice, and analysis.

At the core of this work is listening and responding to the priorities of people in B.C. Together, we can deliver results in very real ways – ways that people can see, feel, and touch, and that change their lives for the better. Thank you for doing this important work with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Eby", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Eby, KC  
Premier