

From: [Government of British Columbia](#)
To: info@bccpac.bc.ca;
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Ministry of Education

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC SCHOOL YEAR

VICTORIA - The Olympic and Paralympic school year in British Columbia featured investments in early learning, Aboriginal education and green technologies, the start of construction of the first Neighbourhood Learning Centres, school capital and seismic projects, increased funding despite continued enrolment decline, and the start of work on a shared payroll system that will reduce administrative costs and put more dollars into the classroom.

Some highlights from this year in education:

- * B.C.'s Olympic and Paralympic education program enriched the school year by involving students in educational activities related to sport, culture, sustainability, healthy living and global citizenship, including:
 - o Seven student-led Sharing the Dream webcasts for a global audience.
 - o 8,000 student welcome cards submitted from 180 schools and 70,000 student welcome cards created for Olympic and Paralympic Games guests.
 - o 121 schools participated in Adopt a Country.
 - o 150 registered Spirit Schools.
 - o Thousands of students from over 100 schools participated in Torch Relay.
 - o More than 70 Paralympic School Days held in B.C. schools.
 - o 12,000 Student Reporter program online guides downloaded.
- * At the final Sharing the Dream webcast conducted jointly between Vancouver and London, B.C. students passed the torch of global citizenship to their peers in London, England - site of the 2012 Summer Games.

* More than 100 new StrongStart BC programs opened this year, bringing the total to over 310 centres provincewide supporting young learners and their families.

* \$280-million commitment to implement full day kindergarten for all eligible children by September 2011.

* \$144-million investment to provide 665 classrooms to help accommodate full day kindergarten for the approximately 40,000 students expected to attend.

* Province's 50th Aboriginal education enhancement agreement signed to improve success for Aboriginal students.

* English 10 and 11 First Peoples added to the B.C. curriculum.

* The Province and school districts invested more than \$9.6 million for green mechanical upgrades to provide cleaner air and more efficient heating at 11 northern and interior B.C. schools.

* Purchase of 106 new green school buses that reduce particulate by 90 per cent compared to previous standards.

* More than 50 provincial resource programs served more than 9,000 school-aged children and youth in exceptional circumstances by delivering school programs in hospitals, youth

justice centres, residential programs, the BC Provincial School

for the Deaf and on an outreach basis.

* Ground broken on first two Neighbourhood Learning Centres. Fourteen centres have now been announced, bringing educational and community programs together in ten B.C. school districts.

* With an additional \$200 million this year, the Province has invested \$1.7 billion in new and replacement schools, additions

and site acquisitions since 2001.

* Currently, 121 seismic upgrades have been completed, are under construction or are proceeding to construction as part of

the Province's award-winning seismic mitigation program.

* There were 541,917 FTE students in B.C. public schools.

* Though enrolment declined by a further 3,350 students, student-teacher ratios remain low at 16.7 students per teacher.

* \$4.551 billion in operating funding was provided to school districts - the highest ever despite declining enrolment and the current economic challenges.

* Average per-pupil funding increased to \$8,318 - the highest ever.

* Four early leader districts will streamline payroll and business administration systems, providing blueprint for other districts to shift savings to the classroom.

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Media Contact:

Public Affairs Bureau
Ministry of Education
250 356-5963

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