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To: info@bccpac.bc.ca;
Subject: NEW REPORT SHOWS CLASSES STILL SMALLER
Date: January 13, 2011 1:13:08 PM

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2011EDUC0002-000024

Jan. 13, 2011
Ministry of Education

NEW REPORT SHOWS CLASSES STILL SMALLER

VICTORIA - This year's class size and composition report shows that class sizes continue to be significantly smaller than when class size regulation was brought in five years ago, while the number of classrooms continues to decline.

"Class size and composition will always be important in this province," said Education Minister Margaret MacDiarmid. "But there are numerous pieces of research that say in order to truly have a positive effect on student outcomes, we need to be focusing on teaching, learning and involving parents."

The report shows there are more than 549,000 students in some 64,000 classrooms in B.C. today. There are 2,564 fewer classes than last year.

B.C. does the most comprehensive analysis of class size in Canada. School districts must submit a report by Oct. 30 each year. Other key findings include:

- * More than 94 per cent of classes in B.C. have 30 or fewer students and 98 per cent of classes have 32 or fewer students.
- * The number of classes with 30 or more students has dropped 61 per cent since 2005- 06.
- * Of the six per cent of classes with more than 30 students, many include band, music, choir and physical education.

In all classes with more than 30 students, teachers have given consent (grades 4-7) or have been consulted (grades 8-12), and the principal and superintendent have determined that the learning conditions in the classroom are appropriate.

The 2010-11 class size report is available online:
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/>

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ADDITIONAL FINDINGS FROM CLASS SIZE REPORT

Other findings from the 2010-11 class size report include:

- * There are 549,106 full-time equivalent enrolments in provincial public schools, 1,391 fewer than last year.
- * The number of classes with 30 or more students has dropped by 61 per cent since 2005-06.
- * There are no kindergarten classes with more than 22 students and no classes from grades 1-3 with more than 24 students.
- * The provincial average for kindergarten classes is 18.3 students, grades 1-3 is 20.7 students, grades 4-7 is 25.9 students and grades 8-12 is 25.1 students.
- * There are 16,243 classes with assigned education assistants this year - an increase of 27 per cent since 2005-06.

This year's reporting alerted two school districts to adjust larger-than-average class sizes: Central Coast (SD49) for kindergarten and grades 1-3, and Prince George (SD57) for grades 1-3. Prince George reorganized some classes and Central Coast hired additional teaching staff. Both districts are now in compliance with guidelines.

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