



BC CONFEDERATION OF PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS

Suite 202, 1545 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 1T5
Tel: 604-687-4433 Fax: 604-687-4488 Email: info@bccpac.bc.ca

Member Alert

December 9, 2005

BC Government Allocates \$56 Million to Schools and Districts to Improve Student Learning

Frequently Asked Questions

Where did this money come from?

During the teacher's job action this fall, the government saved \$126 million. The Ministry of Education is using part of these funds to address recommendations of Industrial Inquiry Commissioner Vince Ready, and part to go back into schools.

Who makes the decision at the school to spend the money?

Parents, teachers, and the principal of each school will decide together how best to spend the money allocated to the school. The Ministry says: "Schools must develop a spending plan in consultation with school planning councils, the broader parent community, and school staff." It is a requirement that the school spending plan be approved by a parent representative, the principal, and a staff representative. The plan must then be sent to the school district which must also approve it.

Who makes the decision at the district to spend the money?

Education partners in the district will decide together how best to spend the money allocated to the district. The Ministry says: "Districts must develop a spending plan in partnership with the broader parent community and district staff." It is a requirement that the spending plan for the district be approved by education partners. This means that parents, through their District Parent Advisory Council, as well as other partner representatives, must approve the plan. Districts must submit the plans for their schools and district to the Ministry by January 10, 2006.

Why is there such a short turnaround time to make a decision?

All money accrued as a result of the labour dispute must be spent by March 31, 2006, which is the government's fiscal year end. Money not spent by that date will no longer be available to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry wants to get the money into the schools and districts as soon as possible in order to allow time for it to be spent prior to the deadline. The funds cannot be carried over and used past April 1, 2006. In order to accomplish this, school and district spending plans must be submitted to the Ministry by January 10, 2006. The education partners all recognize that this turnaround is very short.

What can schools spend their money on?

This money must be spent to improve student learning in the classroom and school. The school community is in the best position to decide what is needed to achieve this. Some examples discussed at the Learning Roundtable were:

- classroom, library, or learning assistance resources
- reducing the wait list for student assessments
- initial start up of reading programs such as one-on-one and literacy circles.

The school community may also decide to support professional development for staff in identified areas of need.

What can districts spend this additional money on?

The funds available to school district must be spent to improve student learning in the district. This can best be determined by the school district community. The funds could be used for similar purposes as those listed above at the district level.

The school district community may also decide to support professional development for staff in identified areas of need.

When will schools and districts receive their money?

The government will approve and finalize the plans in January 2006. All money received by schools and districts must be spent by March 31, 2006.

Our parents do not have time to have a meeting before the decision deadline. What can we do?

The education partners recognize that this turnaround is very short. Due to the government's fiscal year end of March 31, 2006, there is a short timeline for using these funds to improve student learning. We recognize that this timeline could be difficult. BCCPAC encourages parents to take advantage of this important opportunity.

What if there is no active PAC in our school?

It is the intention of the Ministry that all parents in the school have the opportunity to participate in this decision. Parents should participate in the discussion and decision-making whether their PAC is active or not.

For more information, click on these links:

[BCCPAC Member Alert](#)

[Ministry of Education's Press Release, December 9, 2005](#)