



JUN 11 2009

Our Ref: 131183

Ann Whiteaker, Acting President  
BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils  
Suite 350-5172 Kingsway  
Burnaby BC V5H 2E8

Dear Ms. Whiteaker:

Thank you for the letters dated February 24, 2009, and March 25, 2009, from your organization to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education respectively.

Please find enclosed the Ministry of Education's responses to the resolutions outlined in those letters.

We look forward to continuing to work with your organization in a positive and productive way.

Sincerely yours,

James Gorman  
Deputy Minister

Enclosure



**BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC)**  
**Ministry of Education responses to resolutions from the 2008 BCCPAC AGM**

**Resolution 2008.18: Provincial Funding for DPACs**

BCCPAC request that the Ministry of Education provide direct funding for DPAC, on a per-pupil basis.

Response:

Recognizing the importance of education to our continued prosperity, the Province of British Columbia is providing another year of record funding to boards of education, through which we continue to fund DPACs.

In the current climate of economic uncertainty, we encourage all districts and school communities to clearly assess their priorities and work together cooperatively to create the best outcomes for students.

## **Resolution 2008.21: Student Loan Forgiveness for School District Employees**

BCCPAC strongly urge the provincial government, on behalf of rural school districts, to provide and fund incentives, including the implementation of the forgiveness for student loan program, to allow these districts to attract and retain qualified individuals.

Response:

The Ministry of Education recognizes the particular challenges of recruiting and retaining staff in rural areas. We have worked with rural-district partners and teachers across the province to address these issues, as well as other issues facing rural schools and learners. The Ministry will also continue discussions with rural-district partners and teachers on how best to attract and retain qualified individuals in rural areas.

## **Resolution 2008.30: Child Poverty is Also an Education Problem**

BCCPAC petition the provincial government to recognize that children in poverty are one of the greatest challenges to the education of all our children, and that more action is needed to address child poverty in BC.

Response:

Children who live in poverty face unique challenges. We have heard from teachers about the difficulty of engaging students who are hungry, uncomfortable and unable to concentrate. The Ministry believes that every child deserves the opportunity to focus, learn and discover his or her potential.

The Province takes child poverty very seriously. British Columbia offers an array of supports for low-income individuals and their families, designed to assist low-income individuals of all ages and throughout the stages of an individual's life.

Specific supports for low-income families include programs and initiatives in the areas of child care, early learning, education, employment, housing, and health care, including mental health and dental and optical care for children.

To offset the impact of poverty on the educational achievement of children and youth, the Ministry of Education provides resources to boards of education across the province to support vulnerable students.

Also, beginning in 2006, the Ministry of Education introduced StrongStart BC centres in elementary schools across British Columbia. Over 200 StrongStart BC centres will have opened in underutilized school spaces by the end of the 2008/2009 school year. The central focus of StrongStart BC centres is to offer play-based early learning programs to promote language, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development in preschool-aged children. These free, drop-in, early learning centres help remove some of the barriers that families or children in poverty often experience.

**Resolution 2008.31: Cost Neutral Carbon Tax**

BCCPAC strongly and immediately urge the provincial government to exempt school districts from the newly created carbon tax indefinitely.

Response:

Under the Climate Action Revenue Incentive program, announced by Premier Campbell in the Fall of 2008, boards of education were given the opportunity to be reimbursed for the full costs of the carbon tax by signing on to a Climate Action Charter.

As of March 31, 2009, all boards of education had signed on to the charter. This means that every board is being fully reimbursed every year, beginning with the 2008 calendar year, for every dollar they spend on the carbon tax.