

Lisa Beare - NDP - Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

Public education is the foundation of a strong community and strong economy. I believe in public education. The need to protect and improve our system was the impetus for me to run for trustee in the last election. The BC NDP believe that it's critical that every child have the opportunity to gain the skills they need and the resources they require to be successful. I have witnessed first hand how the public education system can bring the community together, build understanding between people, and help our children prepare for the future. A strong public education system is about removing barriers so that all children have the best opportunities in life.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

Locally elected school boards are an integral part of our democracy and help keep our education system accountable to families and communities.

Every school district has very unique needs and visions and democratically elected local trustees are in the best position to make budgetary decisions. They can see and understand first hand how those choices will affect local families. Listening to the community and education partners while being a trustee has impacted how I make decisions when we pass the budget each year and reinforces the need for local representation.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

I am proud that John Horgan and the BC NDP will approach school board governance being founded on goodwill, collaboration and the desire to offer our children the very best public education. As a trustee I have been frustrated with the lack relationship building with the current BC Liberal government.

The fact that they signed the co-governance agreement and then tabled Bill 11 soon after without any consultation with local boards or our advocacy group, BCSTA, shows their lack of respect for the memorandum.

This needs to change. We will work with school districts, parents and the general public before making any changes to school board governance.

Education funding has been the subject of considerable debate over several years. How would your party engage in meaningful consultation with local boards of education on an ongoing basis to ensure sufficient resources are available for the public education system to attain the level of excellence we all hope to achieve?

As a current school trustee I fully understand the importance of all levels of government working together to ensure our students have the best education system and are ready for the future. The relationship between the Provincial government and local school boards needs to be a collaborative relationship and the BC NDP will engage school districts as partners in the budgeting process. We are committed to examining the current funding formula with an eye to fairness, and we will be directly engaging with school boards to learn more about the unique geographical, population and other challenges facing individual districts.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

In addition to the above answer, not only will the BC NDP examine the funding formula, they will work to ensure no district is unfairly penalized by our funding formula because of demographics, geography or other factors outside of board control.

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

The BC Liberal approach of starving school districts while loading them down with unfunded costs is unacceptable and will not be continued by a BC NDP government. We have consistently held Christy Clark and the BC Liberals to account for raising costs like hydro bills and then downloading those costs onto districts.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

John Horgan and the BC NDP understands that there is only one taxpayer. It is the responsibility of the provincial government to ensure that our children get the public education they deserve. This approach would both create regional inequalities and deflect responsibility from funding shortfalls from the province to local school districts.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

At this time we do not have a position on the Foundational Skills Assessment but are committed to working with all education partners to find the best assessment tool that will help school districts with their instruction and strategic planning. We don't believe that it's useful to rank schools based on a single test, devoid of context.

Doug Bing - Liberal - Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

Education enables students to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy. Ensuring the world's best education outcomes for our students is the best way they can benefit from one of North America's strongest economies. British Columbia has a K-12 education system that is one of the best in the world. Our Grade 10 students were recently ranked first in the world for reading, second in science, and sixth in math by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). We are also ranked first in the English-speaking world on student outcomes in reading, science and mathematics, giving BC a competitive advantage.

Our graduation rates have also improved:

- 83% of high school students are graduating now – 8% more than in 2001-02.
- 66% of students with special needs are graduating now – 103% more than in 2001-02.
- 65% of Aboriginal students are completing high school now – 51.5% more than in 2001-02.
- 87% of English language learners are completing high school now – up 10% since 2001-02.

We know the world doesn't stand still, and we have to keep working to stay on top. Today's BC Liberals believe that by working together with teachers, parents and students, we can continue to build on this momentum and make our public education system the best in the world.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

As local bodies, Boards of Education are well positioned to understand the needs of their respective communities. They provide important operational services like program delivery, human resources and school facility maintenance. BC is a geographically large and diverse province and local requirements are reflected by Boards of Education.

As a result, the BC Liberal government has strengthened the autonomy and accountability of Boards of Education. We introduced three year budgets and gave Boards more flexibility and autonomy in allocating funding. Accountability measures were strengthened through achievement contracts and district literacy plans.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

Today's BC Liberal government was pleased to sign the co-governance Memorandum of Understanding with the BC School Trustees Association. Going forward, we would make changes only after consulting with the Association.

Education funding has been the subject of considerable debate over several years. How would your party engage in meaningful consultation with local boards of education on an ongoing basis to ensure sufficient resources are available for the public education system to attain the level of excellence we all hope to achieve?

Our government engages in regular and ongoing conversations with Boards of Education on matters related to their funding. We believe that a collaborative approach produces the best results for both the education system and for students, and we will continue meaningful consultations with Boards of Education.

Going forward, Today's BC Liberals will undertake a full educational funding review to ensure our rural and fast-growing school districts have the resources they need to educate their students. We anticipate that Boards of Education will have a role in that review, articulating SD 42's needs.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

Today's BC Liberals are committed to reviewing the funding formula. We will ensure our rural and fast-growing schools have the resources they need, and we will continue the record level of investments we are making in our schools today.

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

We believe that it's critical to build and maintain a collaborative relationship with local Boards of Education. That has been our approach as MLAs and it will continue to be an important focus for us.

BC's total education budget for public and independent schools is \$5.9 billion this year – a record \$314 million (5.6%) increase over last year. Annual education funding is up 44% since 2000/01, or more than \$1.8 billion, at a time when there are fewer students in the school system.

In SD 42, per pupil funding has increased from \$5,737 in 2000-01 to \$8,541 in 2016-17 and we've seen \$57.74 million in capital investments since 2001. This historic funding has contributed to BC students consistently achieving high scores in international studies.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to deliver a well-funded education system while we strive to make our education system the best in the world.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

Each year, the province sets the residential school tax rate for school districts, based equally on the total number of residences in the district the total residential assessed value in the district.

Generally, these rates increase each year based on the previous year's provincial inflation rate.

In addition, every year the Province sets the school tax rate for each non-residential property class. These rates increase each year based on the inflation rate plus new construction.

Today's BC Liberals are committing to review the funding formula for how we fund education in BC. To comment on the outcome of that review would be premature. If re-elected, we will ensure SD 42's interests are represented.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

The Foundational Skills Assessment is a valuable indicator of where individual students might have challenges in reading, writing and numeracy and can be used to help plan their education. It also provides a snapshot of how our education system is meeting the needs of students in reading, writing and numeracy. School rankings based on FSA results do not accurately reflect student performance.

Our students are making significant progress:

- We are ranked first in the English-speaking world on student outcomes in reading, science and mathematics, giving BC a competitive advantage.
- 83% of high school students are graduating now – 8% more than in 2001-02.
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- 65% of Aboriginal students are completing high school now – 51.5% more than in 2001-02.
- 87% of English language learners are completing high school now – up 10% since 2001-02.

And we are continuing to find new ways to make it easier for parents to learn about student outcomes. In early April, the BC Liberal government announced a new smartphone and tablet-friendly website that will provide interactive information about student outcomes to make it easier for parents and students, as well as school districts, to understand and use information that will enhance education for students. This Fall, information about individual schools will be available to give parents a better understanding about how their child's school is doing across the district.

Marc Dalton - Liberal - Maple Ridge-Mission

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

Education enables students to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Ensuring the world's best education outcomes for our students is the best way they can benefit from one of North America's strongest economies. British Columbia has a K-12 education system that is one of the best in the world. Our Grade 10 students were recently ranked first in the world for reading, second in science, and sixth in math by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). We are also ranked first in the English-speaking world on student outcomes in reading, science and mathematics, giving BC a competitive advantage.

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We know the world doesn't stand still, and we have to keep working to stay on top. Today's BC Liberals believe that by working together with teachers, parents and students, we can continue to build on this momentum and make our public education system the best in the world.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

As local bodies, Boards of Education are well positioned to understand the needs of their respective communities. They provide important operational services like program delivery, human resources and school facility maintenance. BC is a geographically large and diverse province and local requirements are reflected by Boards of Education.

As a result, the BC Liberal government has strengthened the autonomy and accountability of Boards of Education. We introduced three year budgets and gave Boards more flexibility and autonomy in allocating funding. Accountability measures were strengthened through achievement contracts and district literacy plans.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

Today's BC Liberal government was pleased to sign the co-governance Memorandum of Understanding with the BC School Trustees Association. Going forward, we would make changes only after consulting with the Association.

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Our government engages in regular and ongoing conversations with Boards of Education on matters related to their funding. We believe that a collaborative approach produces the best results for both the

education system and for students, and we will continue meaningful consultations with Boards of Education.

Going forward, Today's BC Liberals will undertake a full educational funding review to ensure our rural and fast-growing school districts have the resources they need to educate their students. We anticipate that Boards of Education will have a role in that review, articulating SD 42's needs.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

Today's BC Liberals are committed to reviewing the funding formula. We will ensure our rural and fast-growing schools have the resources they need, and we will continue the record level of investments we are making in our schools today.

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

We believe that it's critical to build and maintain a collaborative relationship with local Boards of Education. That has been our approach as MLAs and it will continue to be an important focus for us.

BC's total education budget for public and independent schools is \$5.9 billion this year –a record \$314 million (5.6%) increase over last year. Annual education funding is up 44% since 2000/01, or more than \$1.8 billion, at a time when there are fewer students in the school system.

In SD 42, per pupil funding has increased from \$5,737 in 2000-01 to \$8,541 in 2016-17 and we've seen \$57.74 million in capital investments since 2001. This historic funding has contributed to BC students consistently achieving high scores in international studies.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to deliver a well-funded education system while we strive to make our education system the best in the world.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

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Today's BC Liberals are committing to review the funding formula for how we fund education in BC. To comment on the outcome of that review would be premature. If re-elected, we will ensure SD 42's interests are represented.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

The Foundational Skills Assessment is a valuable indicator of where individual students might have challenges in reading, writing and numeracy and can be used to help plan their education. It also provides

a snapshot of how our education system is meeting the needs of students in reading, writing and numeracy. School rankings based on FSA results do not accurately reflect student performance. Our students are making significant progress:

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And we are continuing to find new ways to make it easier for parents to learn about student outcomes. In early April, the BC Liberal government announced a new smartphone and tablet-friendly website that will provide interactive information about student outcomes to make it easier for parents and students, as well as school districts, to understand and use information that will enhance education for students. This Fall, information about individual schools will be available to give parents a better understanding about how their child's school is doing across the district.

Bob D'Eith - NDP - Maple Ridge-Mission

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

Public education is the foundation of strong communities and a strong economy. John Horgan and BC New Democrats believe that it's critical for every child to have the opportunity to gain the skills they need to succeed, right from the start. A strong public education system strengthens community bonds, builds understanding between people of different backgrounds and helps prepare our children for the future.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

Locally elected school boards are an integral part of our democracy and help keep our education system accountable to families and communities.

Local elected school boards help keep our education system accountable to families and communities.

When locally elected school boards make budgetary decisions they can see and understand first hand how those choices will affect local families. That's important.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

Unlike Christy Clark and the BC Liberals, who have waged a war against public education for the last decade and a half, the BC NDP approach to school board governance will be founded on goodwill, collaboration and the desire to offer our children the very best public education. A BC NDP government would work with school districts, parents and the general public before making any changes to school board governance.

Education funding has been the subject of considerable debate over several years. How would your party engage in meaningful consultation with local boards of education on an ongoing basis to ensure sufficient resources are available for the public education system to attain the level of

excellence we all hope to achieve?

Attitude is everything. A BC NDP government would engage school districts as partners in the budgeting process. We've committed to examining the current funding formula with an eye to fairness, and we will be directly engaging with school boards to learn more about the unique geographical, population and other challenges facing individual districts.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

We understand that school districts can face unique challenges that are not reflected in our current school funding formula. However, we want to hear from parents, school boards and communities before making final decisions about changes to the funding formula. We will be engaging with stakeholders about the ways that the funding formula does or doesn't work for districts currently before making changes. We will work to ensure no district is unfairly penalized by our funding formula because of demographics, geography or other factors outside of board control.

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

The BC Liberal approach of starving school districts while loading them down with unfunded costs is unacceptable and will not be continued by a BC NDP government. Over the last 16 years we have consistently held Christy Clark and the BC Liberals to account for raising costs like hydro bills and then downloading those costs onto districts.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

John Horgan and the BC NDP understands that there is only one taxpayer. It is the responsibility of the provincial government to ensure that our children get the public education they deserve. This approach would both create regional inequalities and deflect responsibility from funding shortfalls from the province to local school districts.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

At this time we do not have a position on the Foundational Skills Assessment but are committed to working with all education partners to find the best assessment tool that will help school districts with their instruction and strategic planning.

We don't believe that it's useful to rank schools based on a single test, devoid of context.

Alex Pope - Green - Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

The investments we make today in education will result in a stronger workforce and more resilient economy in the future. Education is the best long term investment society can make.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

Our education system needs to be shaped to meet the requirements of our local community. The provincial ministry of education is too far removed from the local community to be able to make the best decisions for each school district. The school board is best equipped to implement local programs that are adapted to our community to best achieve our education objectives.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

There is no official party policy on that directly comments on these documents, however, I have concerns that there has been a shift of some of the decision making to the provincial level, while the accountability for those decisions has remained with the school board. I dislike the threat of firing the school board and appointing a trustee in situations where the provincial government is unhappy with the budget decisions being made, especially in an environment where the school board funding is being so tightly restricted.

Education funding has been the subject of considerable debate over several years. How would your party engage in meaningful consultation with local boards of education on an ongoing basis to ensure sufficient resources are available for the public education system to attain the level of excellence we all hope to achieve?

The BC Green Party has identified education as being our top priority and are committing significant investments in our education system as part of our Strategy for Lifelong Learning. An ambitious plan like this will be most successful by being implemented in consultation with all participants in our public school system, including school boards, teachers, parents and students. We need to establish processes where decisions around our students' education are made with an improved consultative process and then keep that process in place going forward.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

The per student funding model does not take into account other costs, for example administration and maintenance, that do not vary based on the number of students in the school district. Some of these costs will vary based on the number of schools, and some school districts may have higher or lower costs for maintenance activities based on population density and the distances between schools. In addition, the need for capital expenditures for new schools cannot always be determined by district-wide school utilization due to uneven changes in student populations across the district, as we have seen in Albion and Silver Valley. Renegotiating distribution of funding, taking into account these other factors, makes a lot of sense.

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

Yes. The BC Green Party recognizes that our school system is currently underfunded and have committed to increase funding for schools, beginning in 2017/18 at \$220 million and rising to \$1.46 billion in 2020/21, to allow schools and school districts to invest in every child and prepare students for the 21st century economy, and to invest in innovation and technology. This is in addition to the \$330 million committed by the BC Liberals to address the recent court ruling on class size.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

Included in the BC Green Party Strategy for Affordable Homes are proposals to make property taxes and the home owner grants more progressive. Given that school taxes are collected on the same annual bill, these should be part of the conversation. I would prefer that our funding models be adjusted province wide in such a way to appropriately fund year over year costs without requiring cuts. Having said that, I think it is worthwhile discussing the pros and cons of any ideas brought forward to see if they can be effective in improving our education system.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

I dislike the FSA testing and reporting in its current form as it appears to be used as more of a political tool than something that will provide real benefit to students. Standardized testing has some value to track students' progress and areas for improvement. This could also be useful in aggregate form to help prioritize areas where we can make improvements in our education system, but attempting to make this what amounts to a competition between schools doesn't benefit our students.

Steve Ranta - Independent - Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

Under our current economic, social, and political system, a well funded, enlightened public education system is the best way to ensure basic equality between citizens. A public education system which aims to meet the needs of all students, encourages the development of individual skills and interests, and instills critical thinking ability, leads to a prosperous and inclusive society.

A confident, well-educated population has the potential to defend the public good against selfish special interests. The respect a government gives to its public education system, students, teachers, and support staff, is a barometer of that government's commitment to democracy and generalized prosperity. A government which seeks to degrade the public education system signals that it is willing to sell out the many for the benefit of the few.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

Locally elected boards can represent their communities by approving locally-developed courses and programs, supervising personnel and facilities, overseeing disciplining and counselling of students, planning ways to meet local educational needs, and consulting and jointly developing educational improvements with the provincial government and local teachers union. In addition, locally elected boards can serve as a counterbalance to centralized power, and represent their communities in public dialogue

regarding the role and needs of the public education system, including dialogue with the provincial government.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

An education minister's belief should not be sufficient to cause imposition of an Administrative Directive which reduces the powers of an elected board, as this belief may have origins in ideology or personal political advantage rather than pedagogy. see 168.03, 168.04

The Lieutenant Governor's power to replace an elected board with an official trustee should be carefully circumscribed to apply only in unexpected emergencies, and certainly not to punish elected board officials who are working to adequately fund and deliver educational programs to students in their community. In no case should the official trustee be able to freely violate the Education Act. see 172,173

Boards should be able to borrow money, including interest-free loans from the Bank of Canada, to cover capital expenditures such as new schools if the need emerges before provincial funding is provided. see 144

Boards should be able to run deficits to ensure there are adequate facilities, materials, and staffing to provide appropriate learning for students. see 156 (12)

Superintendents and principals should not have the power to decide if a class size over 30 is appropriate for learning or not, as they usually lack the expertise and time to devote to the question, and may feel pressured to approve a class of over 30 for institutional and financial reasons, rather than pedagogical reasons. Class size limits should be freely bargaining by local school districts and local teacher unions. see 76.1 (2.1)

Collective bargaining between boards and local unions should include qualifications for specialist positions, and districts should not have the power to assign principals teaching duties for which they are not qualified. see 27.3

Boards should not be in the business of setting up corporations. see 95

The Memorandum of Understanding promises co-operation between the provincial government and school boards. Unfortunately, for a memorandum of understanding, it is unusual in defining itself as an 'aspirational document'. By using this definition, it clearly contemplates not living up to the understanding. It should become more than an 'aspirational document' by making the province's 'aspirations' into commitments enforceable by law.

Education funding has been the subject of considerable debate over several years. How would your party engage in meaningful consultation with local boards of education on an ongoing basis to ensure sufficient resources are available for the public education system to attain the level of excellence we all hope to achieve?

Increased funding has to come first. Too much time is wasted when boards struggle to secure and allocate insufficient funds between competing claims.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

B.C. has steadily dropped in per pupil funding compared to the rest of Canada, and public schools aren't being built in time to meet anticipated enrolment.

B.C. should return to its former place at the top of per pupil funding, and more public schools should be built. Funding for private schools should be eliminated, and strict regulations should be in place to prevent the use of private schools for tax avoidance.

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

First, funding has to be restored to reasonable levels. Then once the system is adequate, regular increases must be given to maintain the system. Money should also be dedicated to helping the generation of students with learning disabilities, speech and language disorders, autism spectrum disorders, emotional and mental health challenges, and other special needs who suffered during the fifteen years of illegal cuts in teacher services by the Liberal government. Many of them are facing a lifetime of skills or social deficits which could have been alleviated had the support system for special needs negotiated by teachers not been removed.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

Public education should give equal opportunities to all citizens. Basing education funding on the local tax base will lead to inequities between districts and student's education. In addition, property taxes are currently regressive, and relying on them instead of income and corporate tax would further advantage the already wealthy.

That said, I am strongly in favour of a steeply progressive property tax.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

The FSA scores are totally unreliable because of manipulation of the difficulty of the questions from year to year for political reasons, the inclusion of questions which disadvantage students from various ethnic, cultural, or class backgrounds, various types of cheating at the school level, and negligence in enforcing consistent marking standards and practices. The FSA tests need to be scrapped.

Peter Tam - Green - Maple Ridge-Mission

Why do you believe a strong public education system is important?

The next generation's ability in creating and sustaining health and wellbeing depends on education now. Education is the fundamental factor in determining a the type of future we in for.

Why do you believe locally elected Boards of Education are important?

A local board works directly on the front line, having and much better grasp on local economic and challenges. Decision made by people with these knowledge ensure the best way to effectively deliver programs and budgets.

The relationship between local Boards of Education and the Provincial Government is currently described in both the School Act and a co-governance memorandum of understanding between the

Ministry of Education and the BC School Trustees Association. Does your party agree with everything in these documents? What changes would your party propose to either of these if your party forms the next government and why?

The boards seems to have all the responsibility but without authority. We need to review the School Act to allow boards and trustees to manage a flexible portion of revenue and expenses.

Education funding has been the subject of considerable debate over several years. How would your party engage in meaningful consultation with local boards of education on an ongoing basis to ensure sufficient resources are available for the public education system to attain the level of excellence we all hope to achieve?

Review the funding model for the K-12 education system with a view to ensuring equitable access for students. This will address targeting funding to schools with the greatest need and increasing local autonomy regarding funding priorities and distribution.

Do you and your party have any thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the current funding formula used to determine the level of funding provided by government to local Boards of Education? If you feel changes are required what changes would you propose?

I believe the best way is to allow boards to have control over the school tax within the 10% range

Does your party agree that the funding provided by the Provincial Government to local Boards of Education should increase sufficiently each year to cover all clearly identifiable and required additional costs being experienced by School Districts year over year?

Increase funding for schools, beginning in 2017/18 at \$220 million and rising to \$1.46 billion in 2020/21, to allow schools and school districts to invest in every child and prepare students for the 21st century economy, and to invest in innovation and technology. This is in addition to the \$330 million committed by the BC Liberals to address the recent court ruling on class size.

Provide \$10 million per year to restore funding for adult secondary education upgrading and language training.

What thoughts do you or your party have on the notion of local Boards of Education having the ability to set local school property tax rates to cover a portion of their increased year over year costs to avoid having to cut programs or student support services, just as city governments have the authority to set municipal property tax rates?

That is what was suggested.

What position have you and your party taken on the reporting of Foundational Skills Assessment results?

Traditional measures of educational achievement may not be as relevant as we move forward into the 21st century. New methods of assessment are required, pertinent to the needs of the time. This test may no longer be relevant as we are seeing the different types and levels of abilities within each individual.