
From: Katie Sullivan, Trustee

Topic: **Amended Trustee Motion for BCSTA AGM: Strengthening Preservice Teacher Education in Literacy, Numeracy, and Inclusive Instruction in BC**

BACKGROUND

British Columbia's commitment to strong literacy, numeracy, and inclusive learning environments requires that new teachers enter the profession with a solid foundation in evidence-based instructional practices. Yet, teacher education programs across BC vary significantly in the amount, depth, and consistency of coursework in reading pedagogy, numeracy instruction, and inclusive design.

A review of programs at UBC Vancouver, UBC Okanagan, SFU, UVic, UNBC, TRU, UFV, VIU, and TWU shows that:

- Only UNBC clearly requires both literacy and numeracy coursework.
- Most programs offer related content, but it is often embedded within broader courses and not mandatory for completion.
- Requirements for coursework in differentiation or UDL are inconsistent.

These inconsistencies result in uneven teacher readiness, leaving districts responsible for extensive professional learning to ensure early-career teachers develop essential competencies.

RATIONALE

1. Literacy and numeracy are foundational. Research consistently demonstrates that explicit, systematic instruction in reading and mathematics improves outcomes for all students, especially those experiencing barriers to learning.
2. Inclusive instructional design supports diverse learners. Approaches such as UDL and differentiation are embedded in BC's curriculum and inclusive education policy, yet many new teachers report limited preparation in these areas.
3. Inconsistent preservice preparation increases district workload. Where essential competencies are not taught in teacher education, districts must provide significant professional development—diverting time and resources and contributing to uneven instructional quality.
4. Teacher preparation matters. National and international evidence shows that structured preservice preparation directly increases teacher effectiveness and student achievement.
5. Alignment with Ministry priorities. Mandating core coursework in literacy, numeracy, and inclusive instruction aligns post-secondary teacher education with provincial goals for improved student learning and equity.

REFERENCES

- Course calendars and program requirements from BC Faculties of Education (UBC, SFU, UVic, UNBC, TRU, UFV, VIU, TWU).
- National Reading Panel (2000). Teaching Children to Read.

- Ontario Human Rights Commission (2022). Right to Read Inquiry Report.
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Principles to Actions.
- CAST. Universal Design for Learning Guidelines.
- BC Ministry of Education and Child Care. Inclusive Education Policy; Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND REGARDING AMENDMENT

The motion presented in this memo has BCSTA Fraser Valley Branch co-sponsorship and is substantively the same in intent and scope as the version approved by the Board on January 14, 2026. The revised motion includes a minor clarification by explicitly stating that the requirement for mandatory preservice coursework would apply within Faculties of Education’s teacher education programs. This clarification does not change the purpose of the motion but provides greater precision regarding its application.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive, for information, the following motion submitted to the 2026 B.C. School Trustees Association Annual General Meeting, reflecting the amendment to the version approved by the Board on January 14, 2026, as proposed for co-sponsorship by the BCSTA Fraser Valley Branch at its January 19, 2026 AGM:

“BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the BC School Trustees Association advocate to the Ministry of Education and Child Care, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, the British Columbia Teachers Council, and all British Columbia Faculties of Education to require, in their teacher education programs, mandatory preservice coursework to include evidence-based reading instruction; foundational, evidence-based numeracy instruction; and inclusive instructional approaches, including differentiation and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as part of all initial teacher education programs in the province.”