



BCSTA POLICIES

Updated October 2008

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POLICY BOOK

UPDATED OCTOBER 2008

BCSTA POLICIES

The following policy resolutions have been passed at the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) annual general meetings.

Policy statements define objectives BCSTA membership wishes to attain or retain, and/or beliefs expressed by BCSTA membership on relevant matters.

The policy statements contained in this manual are categorized under 11 major headings. It is intended that they will serve as a framework of continuous action on the part of elected officials of the Association, its staff, and trustees in every part of British Columbia; also, that the policies will be added to and amended as directed by the membership.

1. STUDENTS

1.1. Statement of Principle

BCSTA believes that, recognizing individual differences, all children should be challenged and encouraged to attain their maximum possible development.

2/77

1.2. Addressing Student Differences

BCSTA adopts as policy the following principle:

BCSTA supports the use of a variety of instructional strategies for addressing student differences, including the adaptation of learning resources, timelines, assessment and evaluation strategies and pedagogical techniques, in supporting goals of integration and mainstreaming and the principles of learning; and

BCSTA asks the Ministry of Education for funding to support:

1. site projects to research, pilot and assess a variety of approaches to addressing student differences, including the use of adaptation strategies; and
2. teachers in their work to accommodate student differences including diagnostic testing, addressing primary-level entry differences and intervention programs.

1/97

1.3. Principles of Fair Student Assessment and Evaluation

BCSTA adopts as policy the following statement of principles with respect to fair student assessment and evaluation:

Assessment: The systematic gathering of evidence about what a student knows and is able to do.

Evaluation: The making of judgments about the quality of a student's performance (e.g., the quality of a demonstration, the appropriateness of an attitude or behavior, or the correctness, completeness or depth of an answer).

1. Assessment methods and tools should:

- a. Be grounded in solid knowledge of how students learn;
- b. Be connected to clear statements of what is important for students to learn, and be based on clear and realistic expectations related to the aims of the curriculum;
- c. Be used in ways that are consistent with the purposes and limitations of the methods and tools used;
- d. Be flexible enough to meet the needs of a diverse student body (i.e., suitable for the range of students who are being assessed, as fair as possible for students who have different backgrounds or special needs, and enable students to demonstrate in a variety of ways what they have learned);
- e. Provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning actively (i.e., alone, or in combination, provide students with a sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviours being assessed);
- f. Reflect the tasks students will encounter in the world outside schools, not just those they encounter in schools;
- g. Reveal how students solve a problem, not just the solutions they reach;
- h. Encourage students to explore possible solutions to problems; and

- i. Be designed to determine whether or not standards of performance are achieved, rather than rank-order students.
2. Assessments and evaluations should not be used in ways that harm students' self esteem.
3. Students and parents should be informed about:
 - a. Why assessment information is being collected;
 - b. The expectations associated with the assessment, including content, standards and marking methods; and
 - c. How this information will be used.
4. The number and nature of assessments should ensure a rich, accurate and ongoing flow of information about student progress and achievement, without placing undue pressure on instructional time or financial resources, or undue stress on students.
5. Assessment should be administered, scored and/or interpreted only by individuals who have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform these tasks.

1/01

1.4. Safety and Protection

BCSTA adopts the following statement as policy on child abuse:

Child abuse is linked to problems beyond the control of boards of education, including social and economic deprivation, societal violence and alienation, and complex social norms related to the role of the family and human sexuality. With respect to students and the school environment, boards of education play an important role in supporting the prevention, detection and treatment of child abuse.

BCSTA believes that full involvement of the community and parents is essential in the development and implementation of child abuse programs at the local and provincial levels.

BCSTA supports the involvement of boards of education and school authorities in the following ways:

- Providing training for students and employees in the avoidance, detection and reporting of child abuse;
- Ensuring that suspected cases of child abuse are reported to the appropriate authorities in keeping with agreed protocols;
- Assisting health and social service professionals in the treatment of students who are victims of child abuse by providing appropriate support to those children in the school environment;
- Coordinating with other public and private agencies the delivery of child abuse prevention programs, reporting and investigation procedures, and professional development activities.

Reaffirmed EM2/04

1.5. Substance Abuse/Misuse Prevention

BCSTA endorses:

- a. Curriculum that informs students about substance abuse/misuse, encouraging attitudes and behaviours that reduce or eliminate the non-therapeutic use of chemicals;
- b. Provision of sufficient legal and regulatory powers to school authorities in order to protect the learning environment from disruption arising from substance abuse/misuse.
- c. Treatment of victims of substance abuse by health and social agencies to whom schools can refer;

- d. Demonstrable commitment by adults in schools, board employees and others, to substance abuse prevention so that their examples serve to reinforce and not undermine program objectives.

Reaffirmed EM3/04

1.6. Student Poverty and Learning

That BCSTA adopt the following as policy:

BCSTA embraces a quality education system that promotes the development of human potential and improves the well being of each individual person in British Columbia. Given that socioeconomic status has a strong correlation with student achievement, personal well-being, and access to education services, BCSTA supports the elimination of child poverty in Canada. In support of this goal, BCSTA advocates raising the welfare rate to at least the poverty line.

9(a)/91; revised AGM 2005

1.7. Integration of Services

That BCSTA adopt as policy a commitment to the following principles:

- a. coordinated and comprehensive approach to the integration of services to students;
- b. the provision of these services by individuals or agencies with the appropriate expertise; and
- c. the costs of providing social, health and other support services for students which are outside the mandate of the Ministry of Education to be the responsibility of the appropriate agencies.

EM1/96

1.8. Health Promoting Schools

That BCSTA adopt as policy:

- a. BCSTA supports the “Draft Framework for Health Promoting Schools” produced jointly by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health Services, and
- b. Urge the Ministers of Education and Health Services to commit to, develop and sustain the Health Promoting Schools Framework Model, which states that:

“All children in British Columbia belong to school communities that are committed to promoting student achievement and health” and further states its mission “to create and maintain the capacities of school communities to promote health” by way of addressing: teaching and learning; school environment, culture and organization; partnerships, supports and services.

AGM 2005

2. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

2.1. Purpose and Core Values for Public Education

The BC School Trustees Association adopts as policy the following:

BCSTA supports, as the prime purpose of the BC public education system, the following statement:

The purpose of the British Columbia public school system is to enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes which will allow them to make a positive contribution to developing and sustaining a healthy, democratic, pluralistic and ever-changing society.

BCSTA believes:

- in the dignity and worth of each individual student, and in fostering the individual

- potentials of each student;
- that the goal of public schools, supported by the family and community, is to foster intellectual development – the ability of students to analyze critically, reason, think and learn independently, communicate effectively, and appreciate and employ different forms of inquiry, thought, expression and understanding;
- that intellectual development is integrally linked to the development of the whole child – not just intellectually but aesthetically, emotionally, physically, socially, spiritually and vocationally – and that fostering the development of the whole child is a responsibility that is shared by the school system, family and community; and
- that the province’s core curriculum should address the development of communication and critical thinking skills as well as aesthetic, cultural, numerical, scientific and technological literacies.

4/96

Reaffirmed 4/00

2.2. Special Education

BCSTA supports recognition of the full costs associated with the integration of students with special needs and conditions.

3/95

2.3. Curriculum

2.3. 1. First Nations

BCSTA recognizes the particular educational needs of First Nations peoples, especially in relation to their heritage, histories, and cultures. Further, BCSTA recognizes the validity of inclusion of First Nations perspectives within the broader curriculum. Therefore BCSTA supports and encourages active participation

of First Nations peoples in all aspects of the public education system of British Columbia.

1/94

Reaffirmed 4/00

BCSTA supports initiatives and programs which will ensure the survival and revitalization of First Nations languages in British Columbia.

2/94

Reaffirmed 4/00

2.3. 2. Multiculturalism

BCSTA encourages school districts to develop policy statements on multicultural education and race relations.

7/87

Reaffirmed 4/00

BCSTA adopts as policy and supports the following goals and objectives with regard to the promotion of multiculturalism by public schools:

1. That there should be recognition of the multicultural reality of Canada and British Columbia in all facets of public school education.
2. That all Canadian citizens and landed immigrants should learn to appreciate and value the historical, current and future contributions of the diverse cultural, linguistic and ethnic communities to the social and economic well being of Canada.
3. In supporting these goals, it is recognized that objectives and programs should be developed and implemented in the following areas:

- a. the development of a personal sense of identity among students by becoming acquainted with their cultural heritage;
- b. the provision of assistance to students in learning to understand and appreciate the perspectives of different ethnic and cultural groups;
- c. the integration of culturally sensitive programs and practices within the curriculum and learning environment of the school. It is recognized that strategies to achieve these goals and objectives include the development of school district policies that describe beliefs, goals and objectives, implementation strategies and evaluation methods in relation to the promotion of multiculturalism.

L-11/88

Reaffirmed 4/00

2.3. 3. Health Education and Supporting Student Health

A. Health Education

1. BCSTA supports the provision of an integrated health education curriculum with broad lifestyle objectives that include the development of positive attitudes and decision-making skills which support the making of healthful choices.
 2. This curriculum be required of all students but be adaptable to local conditions and values.
 3. The curriculum be related to the particular health problems of BC as identified by studies in BC.
 4. The implementation of the curriculum be supported by effective teacher preparation and ongoing teacher in-service, and by an adjustment to the funding formula consistent with this additional mandate.
5. The curriculum be accompanied by evaluation processes which ensure effectiveness, relevance and currency.
 6. BCSTA pursue and support, cooperative initiatives with other agencies to promote and achieve the objectives of this policy.
 7. BCSTA recognize that the successful implementation of the health education curriculum can only be achieved if it is supported by appropriate facilitative policy at the district level.

B. Supporting Student Health

1. The health (and social) systems be charged with providing services to screen, identify and treat students where learning is being affected by health (and social) problems, and the development and delivery of these services be approached in a coordinated and integrated way by all involved in the provision of services to these students.
2. The services referred to in 1. be provided for the broad range of students and preschoolers who need them and not simply for the most extreme cases.
3. In maintaining good health BCSTA recognizes the importance of preventative health care and educational programs and supports the cooperation of the Ministries of Health, Social Services and Education in establishing, funding and reviewing programs designed to maintain wellness, and prevent injury and other debilitating conditions.

4. BCSTA pursue and support, cooperative initiatives with other agencies to promote and achieve the objectives of this policy.

3/89; amended 5/95

2.3. 4. Development Funding and Implementation

BCSTA believes that the introduction of new curricula should be based on a sound rationale and requires corresponding financial resources for schools for initial and continuing in service opportunities so that teachers can implement the programs effectively.

To accompany the introduction of new curricula, therefore, the minister of education should ensure that adequate provincial funds are available to school districts for instructional resources and that opportunities exist for teachers to prepare to teach the new programs.

3/88

2.4. Reporting and Promotion

BCSTA adopts as policy the following statement on provincial examinations:

The public school system of British Columbia, in all of its activities, should be assessed and evaluated continually for the purpose of improving the quality of education. One element of that assessment and evaluation system should be a provincial examination component.

The provincial examination component should be designed on the following principles:

1. The provincial examination system, since it evaluates student performance on an equalized standard, must be accompanied by a system of resource provision that equalizes the education services provided to students.
2. It should be consistent with the principles of BCSTA's policy on evaluation and assessment.

3. The examination should be designed to determine whether or not a standard of performance is achieved; not to rank order students.

19/86; amended AGM 2004

2.5. Program Evaluation

Policy on Assessment and Evaluation

Definition of Assessment: A statistical measure

Definition of Evaluation: A judgment of quality

The public school system of British Columbia, in all of its activities, should be assessed continually for the purpose of improving the quality of education.

The BC School Trustees Association asserts that this assessment should be based on the following principles:

1. Assessment instruments must be appropriate to the purposes of the assessment and used in ways consistent with the limitations of the instruments.
2. The number and nature of assessments should not place undue pressure on instructional time or financial resources, nor should it place excessive stress on students.
3. It is the responsibility of the locally elected board of education to evaluate the effectiveness of schools, programs and locally developed curriculum.
4. It is the responsibility of the minister of education to evaluate provincial achievement levels and provincially developed curriculum.
5. Assessment of student achievement, whether measured by provincial examinations or standardized tests, or other means, is not, by itself, a sufficient assessment of people,

schools or curriculum. Student achievement is influenced by many variables of which staff performance and curriculum are only two. It is, however, a most important element of any assessment.

6. Evaluations of staff performance and curriculum must not be based on student achievement alone. Such evaluations must be based on all appropriate criteria.

L-7/83; amended 4/95; revised AGM 2005

The health education policy should be accompanied by good evaluation processes to ensure effectiveness, relevancy and currency.

3/89

3. BOARDS OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

3.1. Accountability of Boards of Education

BCSTA adopt as policy a commitment to the following principles:

1. responsibility, authority and accountability should reside in the same place;
2. boards should be held accountable for discharge of the following responsibilities:
 - to the provincial government for the Ministry of Education's funding of public schools, and to local
 - communities for the effective and efficient use of public money; and
 - to the provincial government for implementing provincial programs and achieving provincial standards, and to local communities for doing so in ways which reflect local priorities and values;

3. boards should be responsible and held accountable for:
 - representing, reflecting and being responsive to community values and priorities;
 - developing and articulating vision, mission, goals, priorities and the local policies which provide the framework with which to realize them;
 - evaluating workplace performance relative to the school district's vision, mission, goals, and;
 - providing stewardship of public money and allocating resources in keeping with local priorities;
 - advocating for public education, for their communities, for all students within their care, and for sensible improvement;
 - establishing, maintaining and nurturing community partnerships and connections to better serve the needs of students;
 - establishing an appeals process and serving as an appeals board;
 - hiring, evaluating and, if necessary, terminating staff;
 - implementing legislation and provincial policies in locally responsive ways;
 - approving local curriculum, textbooks and materials;
 - ensuring adequate quality education for the students under their care;
 - keeping the needs of students and their education uppermost in decision making;
4. that the Board of Directors work with the Minister of Education to:
 - clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the co-governors of the K-12 public education system;
 - define key program and service objectives and standards for K-12 in the province; and
 - identify key performance criteria for K-12 education programs and services.

3.2. Regionalization of Educational Services

There have recently been references in the Legislature and in other forums to the possible forced regionalization of educational services by government.

While many school districts may choose to share services cooperatively among themselves, boards of education should not be forced to relinquish direct control over any education or support services. Locally elected boards of education should continue to have the ability to determine the educational and support services models appropriate for their districts, based on local needs and decisions.

BCSTA strongly opposes any initiative by the provincial government to force the regionalization of any K-12 educational, instructional or support services.

3. The physical and geographical peculiarities of the area under consideration should receive due weight.
4. The preservation of local autonomy and initiative should be carefully observed in each case, with a view to maintaining a high capacity for local initiative.
5. The proposal should allow for elected lay representation on an equitable basis for all regions within a proposed new school district.
6. No proposal should be implemented without prior consultation with and among all districts involved.

3/68

19/04

3.3. District Boundaries, Amalgamations, County System

BCSTA supports the amalgamation or consolidation of existing school districts, or the creation of new school districts after the dissolution of existing school districts only when it can be shown that such amalgamation, consolidation, or dissolution of present school districts will cause benefits to accrue to the total educational and economic advantage of the districts concerned, and to the province as a whole. The following criteria should apply:

1. The proposal should effect an improvement in the educational environment of the pupils and communities involved, which improvement is not possible at similar cost under current school district boundaries.
2. The proposal should effect a clearly demonstrable economic advantage without detriment to the educational environment of pupils in any of the parts of a new school district.

4. SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

4.1. Gender Equity

BC School Trustees Association encourages member boards to develop policies which will promote gender equity as it relates to both students and staff.

61/91

5. PERSONNEL AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

5.1. Collective Bargaining

5.1.1. Primary Priority

The objective of collective bargaining is to achieve collective agreements that promote and foster harmonious employer employee relations to enable the provision of quality educational services to pupils. While the parties should strive to achieve such agreements without disputes, all collective bargaining disputes must be resolved with the agreement of the people who are accountable through the electoral process for the governance of public schools.

7/89

BCSTA supports some form of bargaining of collective agreements with teachers on a province wide basis.

17/92

BCSTA adopts the principle that any teacher bargaining system in BC should include a process that allows for meaningful input from every board.

22/91

BCSTA, while recognizing the interests of individual boards, acknowledges the mutual advantages for all boards of a teacher bargaining system which maintains the integrity of boards as employers with important shared goals and objectives.

23/91

5.1. 2. Role of Locally Elected Boards of Education in Bargaining

As duly elected governors of local systems of public education, BCSTA believes that boards of education should have sole responsibility for bargaining with their employees. Any provincial bargaining with employee groups should be done under the collective direction of the boards of education. Any local bargaining should be done under the direction of the district's locally elected board of education.

EM4/97

6. TEACHERS

6.1. Teacher Education

BCSTA believes that the professional education of teachers is not completed with the attainment of a university degree and that school districts have a responsibility to support the training of teachers, and to provide a working environment that promotes ongoing professional development.

With regard to teacher education, BCSTA encourages school districts to:

1. Provide practicum opportunities to student teachers in collaboration with teacher education programs.
2. Support exemplary teachers to serve as sponsor teachers and mentors.
3. Promote professional development opportunities for teachers serving as mentors and/or sponsor teachers.
4. Develop and maintain liaison with institutes providing teacher education.
5. Develop and maintain liaison with the BC College of Teachers.

With regard to teacher education, BCSTA encourages faculties of education to:

1. Remove from teacher training as early as possible, those students who, through evaluation, are deemed unlikely to be successful.
2. Facilitate the continued professional growth of teachers by expanding their credit and non-credit course offerings in areas removed from their campuses.

With regard to teacher professional development, BCSTA believes that:

1. It is the professional responsibility of teachers to participate regularly in in-service programs to remain current with the most recent teaching methods, materials, and programs.
2. The ultimate purpose of teacher in-service programs is the improvement of student achievement.

- 3. All teacher in-service programs should have clearly defined purposes and be evaluated appropriately.

7/76; 1/77; amended 6/95; revised AGM 2005

The implementation of the (health education) curriculum (should) be preceded by effective teacher preparation and provision be made for ongoing teacher preparation.

3/89

6.2. College of Teachers

A person who has been convicted of any sexual offence under the Criminal Code of Canada is not “a person of good moral character and otherwise a fit and proper person” to be granted membership in the College of Teachers under Section 25 of the *Teaching Profession Act*.

24/90

7. EDUCATION FINANCE

7.1. Expenditures

BCSTA supports the principle that all expenditures for construction and operation of public schools are in the public interest, and should accordingly be exempted from all federal and provincial sales taxes.

5/69

BCSTA believes that public funds used for education in schools in the province should only be expended in schools under the direction of a board of education constituted under the provisions of the *School Act*.

L 1/77

7.2. Funding

Over the province as a whole, a foundation of approximately 90 percent of the total current school operating costs should be financed by provincial grants out of consolidated revenue and a provincially imposed uniform levy on real property, in order to equalize the cost of financing education. (Such uniform levy must be low enough to ensure any school district sufficient fiscal discretion to satisfy local education needs.)

2/66, 4/69

BCSTA believes that the Ministry of Education should provide grants to cover actual costs over and above the basic education program when severely handicapped students are mainstreamed into the public school system.

5/78

8. SCHOOL PREMISES, FACILITIES, SERVICES

8.1. New Construction

The Association supports cooperation between adjacent school districts in the establishment and financing of consolidated senior secondary schools and dormitories on a permission basis.

29/65

8.2. Earthquake Protection

BCSTA strongly endorses the general principle that structural and non-structural seismic upgrading of schools and emergency preparedness is a high priority for school districts.

49/99

9. PUBLIC EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

9.1. Definition

BCSTA adopt as policy the following:

- a. "Governance is the mechanism which translates the *will of the people*, through the efforts of *elected* representatives, into statutes, policies and regulations designed to guide, direct, and support teaching and learning." (1988 Sullivan, Report on the Royal Commission on Education, "A Legacy for Learners," p. 186)
- b. It is appropriate to have both a provincial and local level of governance with responsibilities for education. A provincial level of governance in education ensures that education is placed appropriately alongside other social priorities, and that the interests of all British Columbians are represented in the broad policy framework for education in the province. A local level of governance ensures that education receives the kind of focused attention it deserves; that the interests of all community members are represented in setting educational priorities; and that all students in a district receive equitable access to educational opportunities.
- c. Governance in a democracy is about being entrusted with the authority to decide. In public education, that authority should be conferred, in trust, by election of the legislative assembly provincially, and by election of boards of school trustees locally.
- d. Public education, as the foundation stone of a free and democratic society, is most secure when responsibility for it is local, direct, clear, and focused.

Locally elected boards of public school trustees are the appropriate vehicle for assuming responsibility for the stewardship of education locally because:

 - i. they are made up of members of the community in which they serve and, as such, understand their communities;
 - ii. they are visible, fulfilling the duties of their office, discussing the issues they are wrestling with, and making their decisions in the public eye. In their deliberations and their decisions, boards of education are not removed from local opinion or insulated from local reaction;
 - iii. by virtue of being elected, the right to decide has been conferred on board members, in trust, by their communities. They are, therefore, held directly accountable through the election process to that electorate for the decisions they make;
 - iv. they are living, accessible models of democracy in action.
- e. Since the right to choose amongst alternative courses of action to express the will of the electorate is conferred by election in trust, that right must be exercised in the context of the responsibility to understand and respect the often competing values, needs, and aspirations of those who have conferred that trust.
- f. As governors in public education, the province and local boards of education are responsible for exercising their governance rights in ways which ensure that the rights and responsibilities of the constituents in public education are understood and respected.
- g. Only after appropriate and timely consultation should governance responsibilities be carried out.
- h. Governance in education should be carried out in the context of what is in the best interests of students and their learning.

9.2. Principles

1. Authority, responsibility and accountability must reside in the same place.
 2. The division of responsibilities reflects the necessity to balance the needs, values, and interests of individuals, interest groups, and the larger society.
 3. Education is about teaching and learning – it is a student centred enterprise. In this, **boards of school trustees, the Minister of Education, Skills and Training, and the BC Legislature** are responsible for “mediat[ing] among the competing interests and values manifested by various public constituencies [to] translate public priorities into strategies to achieve such objectives” (Sullivan, p.186), and otherwise acting in the best interests of the students in their district (boards), or of the province (provincial government).
 4. In governing education, the broader interests of society and students are captured within policy frameworks. These frameworks must be respected, but examined regularly, and if found wanting, they should be challenged and changed.
 5. Policy frameworks developed by the province, school districts, and schools should balance the need for clear direction with the need to provide each level of the system with the maximum flexibility in carrying out its responsibilities and responding to the needs of students and communities.
1. the provincial government is responsible for creating, reviewing, and refining a legislative policy framework which:
 - a. “mediates among the competing interests and values manifested by various public constituencies and translates public priorities into strategies to achieve such objectives” (Sullivan, p. 186);
 - b. enshrines the rights and responsibilities of the participants in public education, and provides them with the authority to fulfil their responsibilities;
 - c. mandates core learning outcomes and standards for core programs and services;
 - d. provides funding which allows students across the province to have equitable access to an appropriate standard of programs and services in keeping with the mandate articulated in the legislative framework;
 - e. ensures that boards of locally elected school trustees are held accountable for the delivery of core programs and services, and that boards have the flexibility necessary to deliver a range of programs and services that respond to local situations and priorities; and
 - f. ensures that the provincial government is accountable to the provincial electorate for the framework it sets and the standard of program and service delivery achieved in the province as a whole.

EM2/97

9.3. Roles & Responsibilities

BCSTA believes that the roles of the provincial and local governors of the public education system can be broadly defined as follows:

2. Boards of education are responsible for creating, reviewing, and refining a district policy framework which:
 - a. implements the mandated *provincial* policy framework in locally responsive ways;

- b. mediates among the competing interests and values within a community, and translates community priorities into locally responsive programs and services;
 - c. ensures that provincially prescribed and locally developed learning outcomes and standards for educational programs and services are achieved;
 - d. makes effective use of funding to provide district students with equitable access to these programs and services;
 - e. ensures that district schools are accountable for the programs and services they deliver, and that educators have the flexibility necessary to deliver the services in responsive ways; and
 - f. ensures that the board is accountable to the local electorate for the framework it sets and for the standard of program and service delivery achieved in the district's schools.
- 2. Media Relations – expectations on how requests for information and interviews will be handled by trustees and by staff at both the district and school levels.
 - 3. The role of the spokesperson – expectations on who will speak for the board of education/district/school. This may include a process or protocol for assigning spokesperson duties.
 - 4. Internal Communications – expectations on how information will be delivered to school district employees in routine and crisis situations.
 - 5. Student/Parent Communications – expectations on how information will be delivered to students/parents in routine and crisis situations.
 - 6. External Communications – expectations on how information will be delivered to the general public in routine and crisis situations.
 - 7. Public Participation – identification of criteria to determine the circumstances under which a board of education will consider seeking formal public input.

EM3/97

10. COMMUNICATIONS

10.1. Board of Education Communications

BCSTA encourages each board of school trustees to develop appropriate policy to guide communications practices used by the board of education and by school district staff.

EM5/04

Items boards of education may wish to address in such a policy include:

1. A commitment to preparing a district-level annual communication plan to ensure ongoing, planned communications and to focus communications activities on board of education goals.

8. Communication by schools/school district departments – a statement empowering principals, school staff and other school district employees to communicate effectively and openly on subjects that are within their responsibilities and areas of expertise.

10.2. BCSTA Communications

BCSTA is committed to communicating on matters of concern to BC boards of education with both internal and external audiences.

BCSTA's internal audience includes member boards of education and their senior staff. External audiences

include the education partners, non-member boards of education and their staff, other levels of government, special interest groups, media and the general public.

EM5/04

11. BCSTA

11.1. Mission

The mission of the BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) is to support and advocate for effective public boards of education in British Columbia.

The mission of BCSTA is driven by the following beliefs:

1. We believe that a high-quality public education system is the foundation of a democratic society.
2. We believe that improving student achievement is the key work of locally elected boards of education.
3. We believe that the interests of BC students are best met through local decision-making with an engaged community.
4. We believe that an important role of BCSTA is to provide a strong, representative voice for boards of education throughout the province.
5. We believe that an important role of BCSTA is to help build effective boards of education by providing development, communications, and support services.

11.2. Values

As the provincial organization for school trustees in British Columbia, the BC School Trustees Association believes:

1. that school trustees and boards are our valued clients;

2. that serving the needs of school districts is our prime focus;
3. that value for investment by members is our commitment;
4. that positive communication among all the educational partners, including government, is necessary;
5. that collaboration and cooperation are essential common goals;
6. that the Association must act with integrity, endorse an open style, and respect the diversity of regions and communities.

AGM '92

43/87, AGM '92; amended AGM 2006

11.3. Representation Mandate

1. To preserve and promote fundamental principles affecting the governance of public education, including lay control, appropriate local autonomy in decision making and practice, and public influence and involvement in the establishment of education policy by:
 - a. providing boards of education with information which will ensure that boards of education can promote the acceptance of these fundamental principles in their respective communities;
 - b. promoting these principles at the provincial level in a highly visible manner.
2. To influence government by representing the membership on matters affecting the course of public education, the process of provincial decision making, existing and proposed legislation and provincial government policies and practices by:

- a. speaking clearly and definitively to government on important issues;
- b. speaking publicly on important issues, representing BCSTA policy and interests of boards of education;
- c. using the following means to influence government opinion:
 - a strong program of media releases
 - having BCSTA elected representatives meet formally with elected officials to present briefs and information
 - providing member boards with information for use in local campaigns
 - assisting member boards to prepare for meetings with local MLAs, the minister, and Ministry of Education officials
 - developing contacts with influential individuals and groups from government, business, labour, the community and media personnel
 - attending informal, off the record meetings with influential individuals, provided that these discussions are within BCSTA policy.

45/87

11.4. Review of BCSTA Standing Policies

The President will establish an ad hoc BCSTA policy review committee as needed to recommend that the Board of Directors:

- a. Revise and update certain BCSTA policies for consideration by the membership at an annual general meeting;
- b. Request the Education, Aboriginal Education and Finance Committees to revise and update certain policies for consideration of the membership at an annual general meeting; and
- c. Move certain policies from the record of current **BCSTA Standing Policies** to the **Historic Record**

of BCSTA Policies, on the understanding that the assignment may be reconsidered on advice from members.

EM1/04

11.5. Membership Services

The Association may provide or arrange for legal service and advice, at BCSTA expense, to a member board when the legal matter involved is of province wide interest or importance.

17/63; amended AGM 2004

11.6. Support for Outside Organizations

The Board of Directors decided as a matter of policy that individuals, groups or organizations outside our principal education partners requesting BCSTA support for introduction of projects into BC schools shall be encouraged to approach directly individual boards of school trustees; that BCSTA may, at its discretion, facilitate such direct contact (for example, by provision of mailing addresses, etc.); and, further, that this policy is not intended to discourage any board of school trustees or BCSTA Director from bringing to the attention of the BCSTA Board a request for support of projects which they deem to be an exceptional educational opportunity for students.

BoD09/99

11.7. Investment Policy

That the Provincial Council revise BCSTA's current investment policy as follows to include bonds issued and guaranteed by other Canadian provinces in addition to British Columbia:

- Bonds issued and guaranteed by the Government of Canada which guarantee principal and interest;
- Bonds issued and guaranteed by a

Provincial Government of Canada which guarantee principal and interest;

- Treasury Bills of the Government of Canada;
- Bankers' acceptance of a major Canadian chartered bank.

PC46/98

11.8. Mileage Rate

That BCSTA use the federal government's maximum allowable mileage rate, as defined under Regulation 7306 of the *Income Tax Act*, as the benchmark for setting its mileage rate.

AGM34/06

2. That the mandate of all sponsors, vendors, and groups wanting to participate in BCSTA events be consistent with the mandate of BCSTA, and that they be advised in advance that their involvement must be professional in nature.
3. That all materials to be distributed at BCSTA events be approved by the Executive Director.
4. That requests to copy advocacy related letters to other boards of education must come from a member board and be approved by the Executive Director or President.

BoD68/08

11.9. BCSTA Sponsorship Requests

That when an organization asks BCSTA to financially support an event, and where BCSTA is not directly involved in the planning or delivery of that event, the organization be referred to the Ministry of Education for possible sponsorship.

BoD30/08

11.10. Post-election AGM Location

That the AGM location schedule be adjusted so that starting in 2012, AGMs will be held in Vancouver following trustee elections.

BoD56/08

11.11. External Advocacy

The Board approved the following policies regarding external advocacy:

1. That requests for meeting space at BCSTA events outside of that which is normally provided to all delegates or branches, or which has not been approved by the Board of Directors or Education Committee not be accommodated.

