



ITEM 12

To: **Board of Education**

From: Trustee
Elaine Yamamoto

Re: **TRUSTEE MOTION: SPECIAL
FUNDING FOR ADULT
GRADUATION PROGRAMS AT
CORRECTIONAL CENTRES**

Date: January 17, 2024
(Public Board Meeting)

Decision

RATIONALE:

The original motion was submitted to the cancelled 2020 BCSTA AGM and subsequently passed by the October 2020 BCSTA Provincial Council. Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General have agreed to the need for the funding; however, progress seems to have stalled. Four years will have passed for the resubmission of this motion to the 2024 BCSTA AGM.

BACKGROUND:

Work toward establishing sustainable and comprehensive funding for the much-needed adult graduation education programs in our correctional facilities began while the system was experiencing and recovering from the COVID pandemic. Then Minister of Education, Jennifer Whiteside, and Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Mike Farnworth, were both in agreement that our most vulnerable and at-risk benefit from participation in education and that experiencing academic success has a significant positive impact on future outcomes. The intrinsic value of supporting adults of all backgrounds in their journey to complete school was recognized.

On March 29, 2022 Minister Farnworth stated that work continued on “the funding model review to examine the funding and resources required to support vulnerable learners with life-altering educational opportunities.”

Securing funding to districts for the 2024/25 school year would provide educators with the necessary resources to design effective, sustainable programs and continue encouraging inmate participation.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board approve the following motion for submission to the 2024 B.C. School Trustees Association Annual General Meeting:

“THAT BCSTA request the Minister of Education and Child Care and the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General to provide an update on the funding model review to examine the funding and resources required to support vulnerable learners in our correctional centres with life-altering educational opportunities.”

Funding for Programs at Provincial Correctional Centres

13.

Category: Educational Programs

Motion #:	13 : A202413	Sponsor:	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows
Meeting:	AGM 2024	Action:	<i>not specified</i>
Category:		Outcome:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 2024: Meeting with Ministry staff re: motion
Disposition:	<i>not specified</i>		

Motion as Adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the BCSTA request the Minister of Education and Child Care and the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General provide an update on the review of the funding and resources, and next steps in supporting learners in our provincial correctional centres.

Motion as Presented:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the BCSTA request the Minister of Education and Child Care and the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General provide an update on the review of the funding and resources, and next steps in supporting learners in our provincial correctional centres.

Rationale:

A similar motion was submitted to the cancelled 2020 BCSTA AGM and subsequently passed by the October 2020 BCSTA Provincial Council. Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General have agreed to the need for the funding; however, progress seems to have stalled.

Work toward establishing sustainable and comprehensive funding for the much-needed adult graduation education programs in our correctional facilities began while the system was experiencing and recovering from the COVID pandemic. Then Minister of Education, Jennifer Whiteside, and Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Mike Farnworth, were both in agreement that our most vulnerable and at-risk benefit from participation in education and that experiencing academic success has a significant positive impact on future outcomes. The intrinsic value of supporting adults of all backgrounds in their journey to complete school was recognized.

On March 29, 2022 Minister Farnworth stated that work continued on “the funding model review to examine the funding and resources required to support vulnerable learners with life-altering educational opportunities.”

Securing funding to districts for the 2024/25 school year would provide educators with the necessary resources to design effective, sustainable programs and continue encouraging inmate participation.



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

August 21, 2024

The Honourable Mike Farnworth

*Minister of Public Safety
and Solicitor General*
PO Box 9010, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria B.C. V8W 9E2
pssg.minister@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Rachna Singh

*Minister of Education
and Child Care*
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2
ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Farnworth and Minister Singh,

Subject: Funding for Programs at Provincial Correctional Centres

At the British Columbia School Trustees Association's 2024 annual general meeting, our members, representing the 60 boards of education in B.C., passed the following resolution:

"That the BCSTA request the Minister of Education and Child Care and the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General provide an update on the review of the funding and resources, and next steps in supporting learners in our provincial correctional centres."

The resolution is similar to a previous resolution passed at BCSTA's October 2020 Provincial Council meeting, and we understand that both the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General continue to appreciate the need to support learners in correctional centres.

Vulnerable and at-risk groups, including individuals in correctional centres, stand to greatly benefit from education. Unfortunately, the current course-registration funding model is inherently unsuited to the realities of correctional centres where the year-round population changes daily and teachers are additionally dealing with barriers. These challenges include mental health issues, addictions, victims of abuse, learning disabilities, impulse and anger control, residential school experiences, intergenerational trauma and a history of failure in school. This results in a challenging system that is chronically under-resourced.

During the debate of this motion, Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Chair Elaine Yamamoto emphasized that "It cannot be expected that funding be taken from operating funds as only nine districts have correctional facilities, but they carry the load for the full province." As part of our recent meetings with the Ministry of Education and Child Care staff to follow up on resolutions stemming from our 2024 AGM, we came to understand that while funding is unfortunately limited, discussions between your ministries have taken place, and strategies are taking shape to address this growing need.



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

While a response at this time is not required, given the update provided during our recent meetings, we will continue to monitor the situation in the future and advocate for this important need when the opportunity arises as we seek to bring hope for a brighter future for these individuals. Should updates become available, we request that you provide us with information to share with our membership as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Broady". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Broady

President

British Columbia School Trustees Association

Motion: A202413

Enclosure: Motion rationale

CC: BCSTA member boards of education
Suzanne Hoffman, CEO, BCSTA
BCSTA Board of Directors
Christina Zacharuk, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

VIA EMAIL

Ref. 669769 (PSSG)
301344 (ECC)

September 16, 2024

Carolyn Broady, President
British Columbia School Trustees Association
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V6J 5K9
Email: myuen@bcsta.org

Dear Carolyn Broady:

Thank you for your email of August 21, 2024, requesting an update on the review of funding and resources to support learners in provincial correctional centres.

The positive impacts of K-12 education programs offered in BC correctional centres continue to be observed. Individuals who have enrolled in these educational programs have shared feelings of accomplishment and appreciation for the support they received from educators and their school districts.

Discussions with our partners related to establishing an appropriate and sustainable funding model, and how to best support this unique program for adults, have continued. We also continue to host meetings with school district administrators from the respective districts to keep relationships strong, address challenges, and share strategies.

The value that the K-12 education program provides to an individual as they prepare to reintegrate to their home communities cannot be underestimated. We appreciate your follow-up, and we look forward to providing future updates as consultation continues to take place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Farnworth".

Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
and Deputy Premier

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachna Singh".

Rachna Singh
Minister of Education and Child Care