

The BC Greens believe that education is the cornerstone of a healthy society.

From early childhood education to post-secondary, all students in the province should have the opportunities they need to succeed. If you walk into any public school in BC, you should feel safe, included, welcome, and cared for. When the needs of students, educators, and staff are met, the best learning outcomes occur. Students cannot learn to their full potential in an environment of scarcity and insecurity. Yet, BC now ranks second to last in Canadian provinces in per-pupil funding¹, and funding has dropped dramatically as a percentage of government spending over the past five years - a drop that is projected to continue².

Diversity, equity and inclusion are baseline requirements for everyone to thrive in the education system. This is especially true for students with disabilities who require additional support – such as education assistants and specialist teachers. All students, regardless of their ability or background, should feel like they belong in schools and education spaces. By ensuring our education system has enough staff and adequate resources, we can create an educational environment that is safe, healthy, and conducive to learning and development.

Research by the British Columbia Teachers Federation found that provincial supplemental inclusive education funding covered only 75.8 percent of what BC school districts actually spent. Districts received about \$994.8 million but still had to make up a shortfall of \$316.8 million from other operating funds. This funding gap has persisted for at least 18 years. The BC Greens will close this gap. We will fix the broken operating model that has allowed this gap to persist, and ensure that school districts can rely on having the resources that they need to educate children. Not from fundraising, not from one-off grants, but from a funding model that supports our children and our educators.

The Government is responsible for ensuring that the experience for children in the education system, no matter where they are in the province, is an equitable one. Instead, under the Eby government, resources are being diverted from the public education system to support private schools, whose funding is now growing faster than any the public system³. The Eby Government currently contributes \$590 million per year⁴ to subsidise private schools - schools that are now enrolling the highest numbers of any province in Canada⁵. This two-tiered education system undermines social cohesion and reduces funding available to the public system.

¹ <https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/projects/funding-public-education-project/>

² https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2026/pdf/2026_Budget_and_Fiscal_Plan.pdf

³ <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/public-funding-for-b-c-s-private-schools-is-indefensible/>

⁴ <https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2026/sp/pdf/ministry/educ.pdf>

⁵ <https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/more-bc-parents-opting-independent-schools-report>

This disparity comes at a time when families across the province are feeling strained. It is increasingly difficult for many families to pay for basic expenses like school supplies, lunches, and child care. Operating costs for schools and school districts continue to rise, placing more pressure on tight budgets. B.C.'s K-12 and child care sectors face challenges attracting and retaining qualified employees, especially in rural and remote areas. Chronic underinvestment in the education system has made it difficult for teachers to do their jobs, and for students to receive the education they deserve.

We are entering uncharted territory as we move through the 2020s. Rapid changes in the economy mean that many of the jobs our children will have don't even exist today, and they will be using technology that has not yet been invented to solve the incredible challenges facing us. The role of AI in the classroom is one example of regulation not keeping pace with technological change. We need to redesign our education system to prepare our children for this future and instill in them a commitment to lifelong learning. For our children to be able to prosper in the world that is taking shape before them, adaptability, perseverance, problem solving and creativity are some of the most important skills they will learn.

The BC Greens will:

- Eliminate the inclusive education funding gap. We will review the per-pupil funding formula to develop a new needs-based, stable and sustainable model to fund actual costs, resource needs, and professional development requirements of each school district.
- Reallocate private school funding to the public school system, in a phased approach to support students currently enrolled.
- Develop a detailed capital improvements plan, to ensure school facilities meet high standards of safety, functionality and climate resilience.
- Establish a sustainable funding model for organisations addressing diverse and under-resourced student needs, such as the Take a Hike Foundation, to ensure long-term support.
- Increase the counsellor-to-student ratio in school districts, to ensure there is at least one for every 250 children.
- Continue supporting and expanding the SOGI 123 initiative to create inclusive school environments that support 2SLGBTQIA+ students and address the topics of gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Enact a moratorium on the use of AI in classrooms from K-12 in order to develop a comprehensive response to AI in the classroom, and direction on safe, ethical use of AI with students. This includes protecting privacy, enforceable safeguards, digital literacy support for all educators, and working with the federal government to hold tech companies accountable for ensuring that systems are safe before they reach the classroom.

- Create a universal school food program that provides opportunities for schools, community organisations and farmers to promote sustainable practices and educate children on healthy eating habits.
- Create a school supplies program, that ensures students have access to the stationery and supplies that they need to learn to their full potential and parents and teachers don't have to pay out of pocket.
- Ensure educators have the resources to equip students with critical thinking skills and knowledge about: our electoral systems and the responsibilities of citizenship, colonial history and contemporary realities (in Canada and around the world), human rights, and major historical events.
- Increase provincial funding support for community schools, to help create space for community connection and make use of public buildings that would otherwise be empty outside of school hours.
- Ensure every school district has the resources to develop credible and robust language learning options, particularly for Indigenous and French languages, and American Sign Language.