

## King, Jessica MTIC:EX

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon LASS:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2016 10:29 AM  
**To:** Denniston, Tristan M MEM:EX  
**Subject:** FW: I want my tax dollars to adequately fund education.

Hi Tristen,  
Please respond on behalf of the Minister and Simon Gibson, Thanks,

Jean Hooge  
Constituency Assistant to Simon Gibson  
33058 First Ave.,  
Mission BC V2V 1G3  
Ph. 604.820.6203  
[Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca)

-----Original Message-----

From: S.22  
Sent: March 2, 2016 10:50 PM  
To: Bernier.MLA, Mike <[Mike.Bernier.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Mike.Bernier.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
Cc: [facebc.vancouver@gmail.com](mailto:facebc.vancouver@gmail.com); Gibson.MLA, Simon <[Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
Subject: I want my tax dollars to adequately fund education.

Dear Mr. Bernier,

I care about public education in BC, and I don't appreciate my concerns being dismissed as "noise." Public education funding is currently not adequate to meet operational needs, and cuts are being made that affect children and their access to a quality education.

I want my government to stop the cuts and follow the advice of its own MLAs on the Select Standing Committee on Finance, which advised the government to "Provide stable, sustainable and adequate funding to enable school districts to fulfill responsibilities to continue to provide access to quality public education, with recognition of the increased costs school districts have incurred." A first step would be to remove the \$25 million in administrative cuts included in Budget 2016.

s.22 the lack of adequate funding for her students, particularly those with special needs. Shame on all of you who were elected to represent your constituents but who are really in politics to collect big salaries and fully funded pensions. If you have any conscience, stand up for our children by demanding your cohorts Clark, Bernier and deJong do the honourable thing and properly fund our public schools.

Sincerely

s.22

Sent from my iPad

## King, Jessica MTIC:EX

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon LASS:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 11:51 AM  
**To:** Denniston, Tristan M MEM:EX  
**Subject:** FW: PALS Gala 2016 Invitation

Hi Tristan,

As you can tell from the body of the letter Andrea requests that I make sure that Minister Bernier knows about this event. Please pass this on to him. Unfortunately I sent regrets from Simon as he has already committed to attending an event honoring the veterans at a legion event in Abbotsford that night.

All the best,

*Jean Hooge*

Constituency Assistant to Simon Gibson  
33058 First Ave.,  
Mission BC V2V 1G3  
Ph. 604.820.6203  
[Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca)

---

**From:** Andrea Kasunic [<mailto:andrea@palsautismschool.ca>]  
**Sent:** February 15, 2016 5:36 PM  
**To:** Gibson.MLA, Simon  
**Subject:** FW: PALS Gala 2016 Invitation

Good afternoon Simon,

It was nice seeing you again at the FISA dinner earlier this month. As you are aware, PALS must do a fair bit of fundraising to offer the program to families and our biggest event, the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Imagine Gala, is coming up on April 9<sup>th</sup>. An invitation to you has gone out in the mail already, but I just wanted to personally extend the invite. You can see from the details below it's a very fun night of raising not only much needed funds, but also autism awareness. We'd love for you to be able to participate should your work and family commitments allow. Your invitation will indicate you are receiving 2 complimentary seats, so all we really need from you is an RSVP and then a meal selection if you can make it.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

I am also extending the invitation to the Honorable Mike Bernier. While I have not met him personally yet, we feel it is important for him to know about the school. At our 2014 gala, the Honorable Peter Fassbender attended and gave a short address which was very well received. I would be very appreciative if there is any way you can assist me with ensuring Mr. Bernier knows of the event and the invitation, in the event my email does not reach him personally.

Best wishes,  
Andrea

---

**Andrea Kasunic, M.Ed., BCBA**  
Head of School | PALS Autism School

---

**From:** PALS Autism Society [<mailto:admin=palsautismschool.ca@mail54.atl111.rsgsv.net>] **On Behalf Of** PALS Autism Society  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:29 PM  
**To:** Andrea <[andrea@palsautismschool.ca](mailto:andrea@palsautismschool.ca)>  
**Subject:** PALS Gala 2016 Invitation

Copyright

Page 05

Withheld pursuant to/removal as

Copyright

**King, Jessica MTIC:EX**

---

**From:** Denniston, Tristan M MEM:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, February 19, 2016 1:46 PM  
**To:** Simran Sahota  
**Cc:** Holme, Matt EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** Monday's Event

Good Afternoon Sim,

We are still firming up details, I am hoping to have MC notes to PS Gibson this afternoon for Monday.

As discussed, PS Gibson will need leave from 11:00 - 1:30 as the event may be at Mayfair Mall.

I will continue to update as details become available.

Regards,  
Tristan

Sent from my iPhone

## **King, Jessica MTIC:EX**

---

**From:** Denniston, Tristan M MEM:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 4:39 PM  
**To:** Keenan, Jason GCPE:EX; Holme, Matt EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: BCTESG Documents

Approved,

Simon Gibson would love to be MC as well

---

**From:** Keenan, Jason GCPE:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 1:26 PM  
**To:** Holme, Matt EDUC:EX; Denniston, Tristan M EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** FOR APPROVAL: BCTESG Documents

Here are materials for Monday BCTESG event

We will have MC speaking notes. Can we ask PS Gibson to take that role?

Note that materials and possibly itinerary will be updated as we get names from Island Savings.

Jason

## King, Jessica MTIC:EX

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon LASS:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2016 2:13 PM  
**To:** Denniston, Tristan M MEM:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

Thanks, I'll schedule him in for the Friday. Is the Minister attending as well or would Simon be bringing greetings etc.  
Regards,

*Jean Hooge*

Constituency Assistant to Simon Gibson  
33058 First Ave.,  
Mission BC V2V 1G3  
Ph. 604.820.6203  
[Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca)

---

**From:** Denniston, Tristan M EDUC:EX [<mailto:Tristan.Denniston@gov.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** February 23, 2016 12:11 PM  
**To:** Gibson.MLA, Simon  
**Subject:** RE: Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

Good Afternoon Jean,

The Minister would be delighted if Simon would attend.

Regards,  
Tristan

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon [<mailto:Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2016 11:37 AM  
**To:** Denniston, Tristan M EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon  
**Sent:** February 18, 2016 11:34 AM  
**To:** 'Denniston, Tristan M JTST:EX' <[Tristan.Denniston@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tristan.Denniston@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Gibson, Simon <[S.Gibson@leg.bc.ca](mailto:S.Gibson@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** FW: Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

Hi Tristan,  
Simon Gibson is requesting input from the Minister in regards to this request. He is available to attend on either the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> if the Minister deems it appropriate.

Please advise, thank you,



*Jean Hooge*

Constituency Assistant to Simon Gibson  
33058 First Ave.,  
Mission BC V2V 1G3  
Ph. 604.820.6203  
[Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca)

---

**From:** Zorica Jovic [<mailto:ZJovic@BCSTA.ORG>]  
**Sent:** February 15, 2016 4:18 PM  
**To:** Gibson.MLA, Simon <[Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

February 15, 2016

Simon Gibson, MLA  
Abbotsford-Mission  
BC Liberal Party

Dear MLA Gibson,

On behalf of the BC School Trustees Association, I would like to invite you to attend our 112th Annual General Meeting as our guest. This year's AGM will take place April 14-16, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver.

Titled Making the Connections for Student Success: Aligning Vision, Governance, and Finance, this year's AGM promises to be an exciting educational event as well as a constructive business session for our members. In addition to attending the professional development portion of the program, you are also welcome to observe the business session that will take place on April 16, 2016.

Please RSVP by April 1, 2016 to Zorica Jovic by emailing [zjovic@bcsta.org](mailto:zjovic@bcsta.org) or calling 604-235-2297.

We very much hope to see you at BCSTA's 112<sup>th</sup> AGM.

Sincerely,



**Teresa Rezansoff**  
*President*  
BC School Trustees Association

## King, Jessica MTIC:EX

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon LASS:EX  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2016 9:25 AM  
**To:** Denniston, Tristan M MEM:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Simon and Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

Thank you, Tristen,, much appreciated.  
Jean

---

**From:** Denniston, Tristan M EDUC:EX [<mailto:Tristan.Denniston@gov.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** March 3, 2016 9:12 AM  
**To:** Gibson.MLA, Simon  
**Subject:** RE: Simon and Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

MMB will be in attendance April 15<sup>th</sup> from 11 – 11:30AM. Simon is more than welcome to attend the AGM as he pleases.

Regards,  
Tristan

---

**From:** Gibson.MLA, Simon [<mailto:Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 2, 2016 4:29 PM  
**To:** Denniston, Tristan M EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** Simon and Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

Hi Tristen,  
You were going to get back to me on a recommendation as to what time on Friday Simon Gibson should attend the AGM.  
Thanks for checking with the Minister.

*Jean Hooge*

Constituency Assistant to Simon Gibson  
33058 First Ave.,  
Mission BC V2V 1G3  
Ph. 604.820.6203  
[Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jean.hooge@leg.bc.ca)

---

**From:** Zorica Jovic [<mailto:ZJovic@BCSTA.ORG>]  
**Sent:** February 15, 2016 4:18 PM  
**To:** Gibson.MLA, Simon <[Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Simon.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Invitation to BCSTA AGM 2016

February 15, 2016

Simon Gibson, MLA  
Abbotsford-Mission  
BC Liberal Party

Dear MLA Gibson,

On behalf of the BC School Trustees Association, I would like to invite you to attend our 112th Annual General Meeting as our guest. This year's AGM will take place April 14-16, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver.

Titled Making the Connections for Student Success: Aligning Vision, Governance, and Finance, this year's AGM promises to be an exciting educational event as well as a constructive business session for our members. In addition to attending the professional development portion of the program, you are also welcome to observe the business session that will take place on April 16, 2016.

Please RSVP by April 1, 2016 to Zorica Jovic by emailing [zjovic@bcsta.org](mailto:zjovic@bcsta.org) or calling 604-235-2297.

We very much hope to see you at BCSTA's 112<sup>th</sup> AGM.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Teresa Rezansoff', written in a cursive style.

**Teresa Rezansoff**  
*President*  
BC School Trustees Association

Gibson, Simon

---

From: Gibson, Simon  
Sent: 31 Mar 2016 21:31:34 +0000  
To: Holme, Matt EDUC:EX  
Subject: WHAT ABOUT THIS?  
Attachments: SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS.docx  
Matt, I think this is what you are looking for.  
Thanks.  
Simon

---

**From:** Gibson, Simon  
**Sent:** February 3, 2016 7:38 AM  
**To:** Jonker, Brian EDUC:EX  
**Cc:** Hill, Joyce  
**Subject:** GOOD MORNING FROM SIMON

Good morning, Brian:

I admittedly have been having difficulty finding time to prepare an intro.

The report looks good. Thanks for your efforts.

I am attaching my capsule summary, which I just completed here in my hotel in Vancouver, prior to going to Public Accounts for the rest of the day.

See what you think. Feel free to edit as you see fit. You won't offend me if you make changes.

Maybe we can talk later, or you could text me at s.17

Thanks, Brian. Have a great day!  
Simon

**Simon Gibson**  
MLA for Abbotsford-Mission  
Parliamentary Secretary – Independent Schools  
Government Caucus of British Columbia  
Constituency (604) 820 6203  
Toll Free: 1 866 370 6203  
Victoria: (250) 953 0974  
[www.simongibsonmla.ca](http://www.simongibsonmla.ca)

It has been a privilege for me to serve as Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools since early 2015 and I have come to appreciate, in a very practical way, the contribution that independent schools make to the educational culture of our province. At the outset, I want to acknowledge the help and counsel I have received from Brian Jonker and Theo Vandeweg. To date, I have visited 35 independent schools which represents about 10 per cent of the total number of schools province-wide.

The attached report focuses on a unique “brand” of independent schools, those with a particular mandate: the education of so-called “special needs” (SES) which, admittedly, is a wide nomenclature. As the report notes, I have been given the opportunity to tour practically all such schools and my sense of their purpose, their vision, has been informed by my relatively open-ended discussions with principals, board members, teachers, and, in many cases, students.

In virtually every instance, I was impressed by the passion of those involved. For many administrators and teachers, they see their roles as a “calling.” Their affection for their students often goes far beyond a job, even a career, it epitomizes the term “avocation” (I believe teachers of typical children, in general – both in public and independent schools – would have a similar though perhaps less intense empathy for their students.)

This report provides a compendium of the various SES schools and their particular educational emphases. It would be accurate to observe that each school is quite unique. In fact, their disparate approach to educational objectives can make it somewhat challenging to develop a cohesive approach to a collective consideration of the schools. Nonetheless, it is apparent that students are generally well served at both designated and self-designated schools.

s.13

The report demonstrates that educational outcomes are largely being met and that vulnerable students – with social and mental challenges - are being served well. In many cases, there are no other options for these students. Should they not be enrolled in these schools, they could very well be clients of the government social services system or, worse, on the street.

s.13

---

Sent: 4 Mar 2016 20:38:40 +0000

To: Sahota, Simran LASS:EX

Subject: RE: Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hi Simran,

I just heard back from Jennifer Ives and she said if he would like to say a few words that is fine. Its just a photo-op meet and greet mostly. If I receive a briefing note from EDUC on the McCleary Opinion I will share it with you.

---

**From:** Sahota, Simran [mailto:Simran.Sahota@leg.bc.ca]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2016 4:52 PM

**To:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX

**Subject:** RE: Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hi Lara,

PS Gibson will definitely be attending this event on Monday. Will he be having a speaking role?

Thanks,

Sim

---

**From:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX [mailto:Lara.OConnorDixon@gov.bc.ca]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:13 PM

**To:** Sahota, Simran <Simran.Sahota@leg.bc.ca>

**Subject:** FW: Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hi Simran,

Minister Bernier would like to have PS Simon Gibson join him to meet with this group on Monday from 11:00-11:30am down in the Press Gallery.

Please let me know if Simon is interested and available to attend.

Kindly,

**Lara O'Connor-Dixon**

Office of the Honourable Mike Bernier  
Minister of Education

250.387.1977

[Lara.oconnordixon@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Lara.oconnordixon@gov.bc.ca)

---

**From:** Ives, Jennifer [mailto:Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2016 11:00 AM

**To:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX

**Subject:** RE: Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hello Lara,

That is great news – thank you.

We will look forward to meeting with the Minister from around 11:00 am – 11:25 am. As mentioned, we will be using the basement Press Theatre beneath the West Annex.

Myself and Karen Aitken, the Director of the Parliamentary Education Office, are coordinating this annual visit. However, the Washington Interns will be accompanied by their program coordinators: Paula Rehwaldt and Emily McCartan.

The interns are arriving on Sunday evening for a brief tour of Victoria and dinner with our interns. Monday's agenda has been crafted to support various interest areas they identified to us, such as: health policy, treaty negotiations, business-government relations, and education. They will also be meeting with Madame Speaker and watching QP.

I will certainly send you a copy of the final agenda once complete.

Best regards,  
Jen

*Jennifer Ives*

Parliamentary Education Officer  
Legislative Assembly of B.C.  
P: 250-356-1285 C: 250-812-9829  
F: 250-356-8521  
[Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca)

---

**From:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX [<mailto:Lara.OConnorDixon@gov.bc.ca>]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 03, 2016 8:56 AM

**To:** Ives, Jennifer <[Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca)>

**Subject:** FW: Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hello Jen,

Minister would be available to meet with the interns at 11:00am on Monday. He has a Committee meeting prior so fingers crossed it ends on time and then he will have to leave by 11:25am. Do you have any further information or a name of the person leading the group?

Kindly,

**Lara O'Connor-Dixon**

Office of the Honourable Mike Bernier



Minister of Education

250.387.1977

[Lara.oconnordixon@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Lara.oconnordixon@gov.bc.ca)

---

**From:** Holme, Matt EDUC:EX  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 1, 2016 11:13 AM  
**To:** Ives, Jennifer LASS:EX  
**Cc:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** RE: Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hi Jennifer,  
Good to hear from you. Yes, I moved over to the Ministry of Education at the beginning of February. It is has been great so far. 😊  
We will check to see if Minister Bernier is available to do this and let you know as soon as possible.  
Thanks,  
Matt

---

**From:** Ives, Jennifer [<mailto:Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 1, 2016 10:44 AM  
**To:** Holme, Matt EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** Visit from Washington State Legislative Interns - Monday, March 7

Hi Matt,

I notice that you've taken on a different position with the executive council – congrats!

The 2016 Legislative Interns will be hosting their counterparts from Washington State at the Parliament Buildings next Monday, March 7. The Washington Interns and their program directors will be meeting with Madame Speaker, opposition MLAs, staff from several Ministries and will be attending QP.

One area of particular interest the Washington Interns identified was BC's K-12 education system. As you will know, the [McCleary Opinion](#) in Washington is having broad-ranging implications for the state budget and the future funding of Washington's education system.

We are wondering if Minister Bernier might be willing to meet briefly with the Interns to share his expertise and insights on BC's system. If so, I would propose either 9:15 – 9:45 am or 11:00 – 11:30 am on Monday. All meeting are being held in the basement Press Theatre beneath the West Annex.

Thank you for considering our invitation.

Best,  
Jen

*Jennifer Ives*

Parliamentary Education Officer

Legislative Assembly of B.C.

P: 250-356-1285 C: 250-812-9829

F: 250-356-8521

[Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Ives@leg.bc.ca)

---

Sent: 1 Mar 2016 20:10:57 +0000  
To: Sahota, Simran LASS:EX  
Subject: RE: British Columbia Youth Parliament Gala - Obesequium  
Okay, Thanks for looking into this for me.  
Lara

---

**From:** Sahota, Simran [mailto:Simran.Sahota@leg.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 1, 2016 12:10 PM  
**To:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** FW: British Columbia Youth Parliament Gala - Obesequium

Hi Lara,

Unfortunately, MLA Gibson will not be able to attend this event due to a prior commitment.

Thank you for the invite!

**Simran Sahota**

Legislative Assistant, BC Government Caucus  
East Annex, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC  
P: 250 387-8153 F: 250 387-9100

---

**From:** Sahota, Simran  
**Sent:** Monday, February 29, 2016 4:19 PM  
**To:** 'O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX' <Lara.OConnorDixon@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: British Columbia Youth Parliament Gala - Obesequium

Hi Lara,

I'm sure he would be delighted to attend on behalf of MMB. I will confirm with you once he is out of the House.

Thanks,  
Sim

---

**From:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX [mailto:Lara.OConnorDixon@gov.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 29, 2016 4:15 PM  
**To:** Sahota, Simran <Simran.Sahota@leg.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: British Columbia Youth Parliament Gala - Obesequium

Hello Simran,  
Minister Bernier is unable to meet with the below group and is wondering if MLA Gibson may like to. Please let me know if this is a consideration. The gala is on April 8<sup>th</sup>.  
Lara

---

**From:** Bernier.MLA, Mike [<mailto:Mike.Bernier.MLA@leg.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2016 8:12 AM  
**To:** O'Connor-Dixon, Lara EDUC:EX  
**Subject:** FW: British Columbia Youth Parliament Gala - Obesequium

**From:** [nathan.how@bcyp.org](mailto:nathan.how@bcyp.org) [<mailto:nathan.how@bcyp.org>] **On Behalf Of** Nathan How  
**Sent:** February 9, 2016 7:02 AM  
**To:** Bernier.MLA, Mike <[Mike.Bernier.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Mike.Bernier.MLA@leg.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** British Columbia Youth Parliament Gala - Obesequium

Dear Honourable Mike Bernier,

I'm writing to you on behalf of the British Columbia Youth Parliament to cordially invite you to Obsequium, a gala to promote and recognize service. You will find a formal invitation attached to this email.

The British Columbia Youth Parliament (BCYP) is a non-profit, non-partisan and non-denominational organization comprised of youth between the ages of 16 to 21. Every year, 95 dedicated individuals are elected to our parliament and congregate for a week-long session in the Legislative Buildings in Victoria BC, where we amend and deliberate legislation which later becomes the layout of projects run throughout the year. What sets us apart from others is that we are not a mock parliament. Rather, we build the organization upon the legislation we propose and after session, we work tirelessly to implement our obligation of service, while fulfilling our motto of "Youth Serving Youth". In order to continue giving back to the community, we are organizing this evening gala to raise funds for our year long projects; and our largest service activity, Camp Phoenix.

Camp Phoenix is a project that will provide an opportunity for youth across British Columbia to attend a summer camp. The vision for Camp is to offer 35 underprivileged and Indigenous youth the opportunity to attend a weekend sleep-away camp. Camp is targeting high risk youth that for any reason have been unable to attend summer camps in the past. We want to change that. We feel that camp is a wonderful way to further the growth and development of these children. Camp gives a child from a precarious situation the ability to let loose and be a kid for the weekend and provides a support base upon which a child can grow and succeed.

As a Member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, we ask that you consider attending our gala and lending a helping hand to a worthy cause. It is now our turn to give back and provide this camp opportunity to others, and we hope you feel the same way. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Tickets can be reserved online at <https://bcyp.yapsody.com/>  
More information about BCYP can be found at <http://bcyp.org/>

Thanks for your time and consideration,  
Nathan How

Premier  
87th British Columbia Youth Parliament

 OBSEQUIUM Gala Invitation.pdf



# OBSEQUIUM

*a gala to promote service*

**7:00**

Hosted at the Abdul Ladha Hall Science Student Centre at UBC on April 8th, 2016, we cordially invite you to join us and support the work that the British Columbia Youth Parliament does for the community.

Ticket sales, beverage sales, and a silent auction will benefit the reinstatement of Camp Phoenix, a subsidized sleep-away camp for underprivileged, First Nations, disabled, and at-risk youth aged 8-12.

*British Columbia Youth Parliament*  
40\$ UNTIL MARCH 4TH  
BCYP.YAPSODY.COM

Gibson.MLA, Simon

---

From: Gibson.MLA, Simon  
Sent: 1 Jun 2015 19:09:03 +0000  
To: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX  
Cc: Jonker, Brian EDUC:EX  
Subject: 182190 Gibson  
Attachments: PSSG report to Minister on skills and trades v5 (3).pdf

To: Peter Fassbender  
From: Simon Gibson

Minister:

Please find attached a summary report on the Skills and Trades survey which was developed and analyzed prior to my appointment as Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools.

The report details some interesting observations and recommendations but some limits need to be acknowledged. Data was gleaned electronically which may account for a relatively poor response. As noted, only 41 schools completed the survey instrument which represents 28 per cent. Some effort was made to elicit a greater response, with nominal success.

It is apparent that there are identifiable barriers to growing the trades component in independent schools. These are noted in the report, and it would seem more efficient to concentrate on those schools that would be motivated to either expand or initiate trades as a part of their curriculum.

I believe there are opportunities to encourage independent schools to consider trades-oriented programs, such as mechanics and woodwork/metalwork, but it will require a strategic and targeted effort to achieve success.

I look forward to meeting with you and discussing the report in the coming weeks.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Gibson', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Simon Gibson



## Executive Summary

The report was prepared with the help of a survey conducted electronically by Ministry of Education staff. The purpose of the survey was to identify opportunities and challenges to independent school student access to Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE-IT), Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA), Skills Exploration (STX) and Work Experience (WEX) in support of the Ministry of Education's work aligned with the BC Jobs Plan and BC Skills Blueprint.

| SURVEY RESPONDENTS |         |          |
|--------------------|---------|----------|
| Distributed to     | Started | Finished |
| 146                | 60      | 41       |
| 100                | 41%     | 28%      |

See **Appendix 1** for a listing of participating schools.

The skills training survey was sent out to all independent schools offering grades 10 – 12 which included 146 Independent schools across the province. The survey was open for response from February 5<sup>th</sup> until March 6<sup>th</sup> (30 Days). Of the 146 schools who received the survey; 60 participants started it (41%), and 41 finished it (28%).

It should be noted that the survey was conducted electronically and the results may not be representative given the low response rate. However, information from those who did respond provides a starting point for identifying barriers and considering opportunities moving forward.

Electronic survey raw data was analyzed by the Data and Reporting Unit within the Knowledge Management Division from both a qualitative and quantitative approach and using both human and machine analytics. The common themes emerging from the analysis in the form of barriers are included in the table below with associated suggestions for opportunities and response strategies.

| Barrier   | Opportunities/Possible Response Strategy   |
|---|--|
| <b>Partnerships/Engagement</b><br>– Schools identified that their ability to establish and benefit from partnerships with trades organizations was a significant barrier to successful implementation of these programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry to provide more information and positive examples of successful partnerships and opportunities (online, print and face to face).</li> <li>Share enabling ideas and highlight success stories of independent schools that are making these programs work.</li> <li>Look at options to support independent schools establishing partnership development with community organizations, school districts, and post-secondary institutions.</li> <li>Specifically target partnerships and sponsorships between independent schools and the private sector.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Partnerships/Engagement</b><br>– Schools identified that their ability to establish and benefit from partnerships with trades organizations was a significant barrier to successful implementation of these programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry to ensure independent schools are informed of skills and trades related initiatives in the province.</li> <li>Ministry to engage with more independent schools regarding skills and trades to develop a more representative picture of barriers and opportunities.</li> <li>Direct involvement by the Office of the Inspector and the Superintendent of Careers and Transitions</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Internal Capacity</b><br>– lack of trained staff, inadequate facilities and equipment constrain offering programs  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry to provide more information and exemplars (online, print and face to face).</li> <li>Ministry to ensure independent schools are informed of and eligible for skills and trades related initiatives in the Province.</li> <li>Look at options to support partnership development with community organizations, school districts, private sector businesses and post-secondary institutions.</li> </ul>  |

## Introduction

This government is committed to making sure that residents of British Columbia are at the front of the line for the one million job openings forecast for the B.C. economy in the coming years. The ability of British Columbians to fully take advantage of our growing economy is determined in part by ensuring that the right opportunities are made available to students in different areas of the province. To help ensure this happens, the Minister of Education was directed to focus the Ministry of Education on priorities outlined in the **Minister of Education's Mandate Letter**: a balanced budget; labour stability; successful implementation of B.C. Jobs Plan and B.C.'s Skills for Jobs Blueprint: Re-engineering Education and Training priorities; and continuation of the educational reforms outlined in the B.C. Education Plan.

Government is also committed to providing parents choice in the education received by their children as represented by a variety of options such as public schools, independent schools, and distributed learning. As part of the Minister's commitment to BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint, Marc Dalton, the outgoing parliamentary secretary for independent schools was tasked to conduct a survey and prepare a report on independent school access to skills and trades programming. In February 2015, Simon Gibson was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools and has been tasked with completing this task and this report is the result.

The information and report provided will assist the Minister of Education in meeting the objectives referenced in his mandate letter, specifically mandate items 4 and 5:

4. Continue to work with the Ministries of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Advanced Education to successfully implement BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint that will provide BC students better prospects for long term job security in our growing economy.
5. Review the effectiveness of ACE-IT and apprenticeship training opportunities for high school students across British Columbia.

## Strategic Context

B.C. has a strong education system, with motivated and talented students, outstanding teachers, committed parents, skilled administrators, and dedicated education partners. B.C. students perform among the best in the world by many measures. A characteristic of a strong education system is that it strives to continuously improve for the benefit of students; accordingly, we must continue to work with our education partners to improve outcomes for all students, and address differences amongst particular groups of students, most notably Aboriginal students.

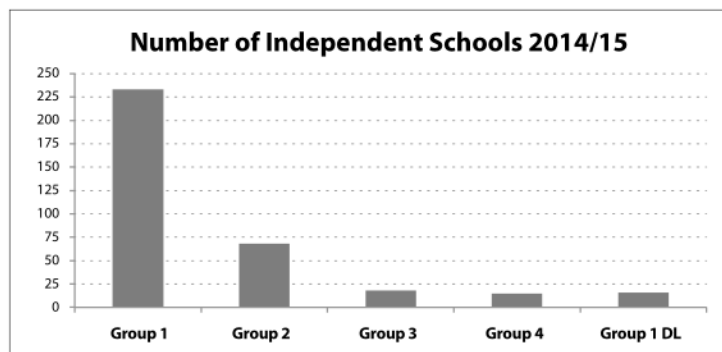
In B.C. we have an incredible opportunity on the horizon: 1 million jobs. About 530,000 young people will enter the job market over the next 10 years. B.C.'s Education Plan provides the vision for how the Ministry and its partners are transforming the education system and supports the Ministry's aim to consistently prepare capable young people ready to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

This Government has and continues to be supportive of the Independent school sector in the Province of BC. Independent schools play a key role in providing the citizens of BC flexibility and choice with regard to the K-12 educational program that best fits their needs and values. This commitment is reflected in the Ministry of Education Service Plan under Goal 1 and related objectives which include:

- A personalized learning system that takes into account the learning motivations, needs and styles of individual students.
- A flexible education system that provides families, students and teachers options in how, when and where education is delivered.
- An education system focused on student success.

As of October 2014, there were 350 independent schools in the Province representing 13% (80,783) of the total Provincial K – 12 enrolments. Job action during the 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 school years resulted in independent school enrolment for 2014/2015 increasing by an unprecedented 6.75% when compared with 2013/2014.

There are four groups of independent schools. Groups 1 and 2 schools must employ British Columbia certified teachers and follow the British Columbia curriculum, and are funded. Group 4 schools must meet the same requirements as Groups 1 and 2, with the addition of a bonding requirement; however, these schools are not funded since the majority of the students are international. Group 3 schools only meet basic regulatory requirements and are not funded.



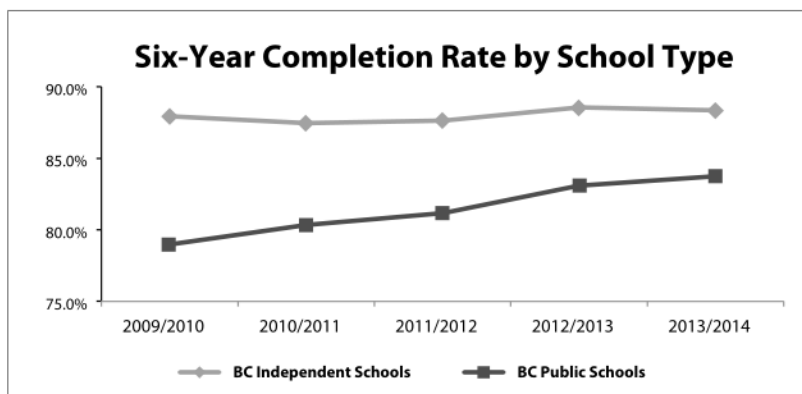
The Federation of Independent Schools Association in BC (FISABC) has been the voice for independent schools in the Province for nearly 50 years. Their mandate is to ensure that policy changes in the education sector are equitable to independent schools, funding remains stable at 50 percent and 35 percent for groups 1 & 2 respectively, and to lobby government for changes which will further support improvement in the independent school system. FISABC represents 292 schools in the Province, translating into over 93 percent of all independent school enrolment.

FISABC consists of 5 member associations:

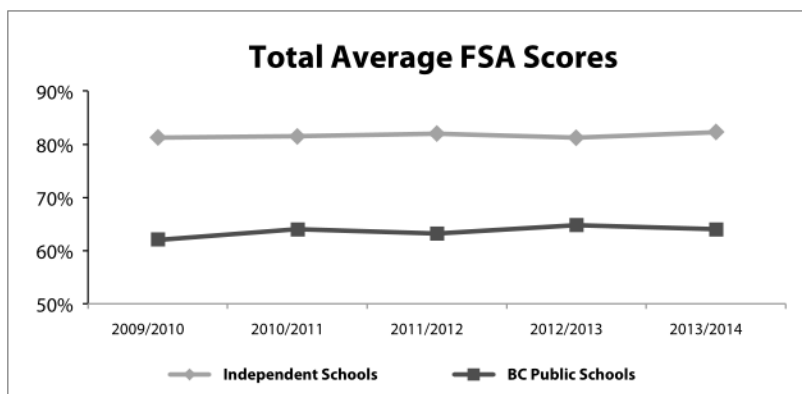
- 1) The Association of Christian Schools International in British Columbia (ACSIBC) represents 25 schools.
- 2) The Associate Member Group (AMG) encompasses over 100 individual schools such as Montessori, Waldorf, specials needs, and religious schools.
- 3) The Catholic Independent Schools in British Columbia (CISBC) represents 77 schools and is organized into the Archdiocese of Vancouver and Dioceses of Kamloops, Nelson, Prince George, and Victoria.
- 4) The Independent Schools Association in British Columbia (ISABC), which is also a member of the Canadian Association of Independent Schools, represents 22 schools.
- 5) The Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia (SCSBC), which is also a member of Christian Schools International, encompasses 40 schools.

Students enrolled in BC Independent schools have a history of strong academic performance. Student success in independent schools is demonstrated through the same metrics used for the public school system. Evidence of successful outcomes is shown through both the 6 year Completion Rate and Foundation Skills Assessment results.

The 6 year completion rate shows the proportion of students who graduate high school, within six years of the first time they enrol in Grade 8.



FSA data also shows that independent school students currently outperform public school students in each of the components; reading, writing and numeracy.



Information is limited on regarding BC students, including independent school students, participation in the job market post-graduation. This is an area in which the Ministry is working to improve its data in order to be more fully able to evaluate student success.

## Purpose of the Report

As part of the Minister of Education's commitment to BC's Skills for Jobs Blueprint, Marc Dalton, the outgoing parliamentary secretary for independent schools was tasked to prepare a report on independent school access to skills and trades programming. In February 2015, Simon Gibson was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools and has been tasked with completing this task and this report is the result.

## Survey Scope and Design

The report was prepared with the help of a survey conducted electronically by Ministry of Education staff. The purpose of the survey was to identify opportunities and challenges to independent school student access to Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE-IT), Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA), Skills Exploration (STX) and Work Experience (WEX) in support of the Ministry of Education's work aligned with the BC Jobs Plan and BC Skills Blueprint.

The purpose of the survey was to gain insight into skills and trades programs that independent schools in BC currently offer as part of the schools educational program in order to inform the Parliamentary Secretary's report to the Minister of Education outlining opportunities and challenges independent schools encounter in the delivery of these programs.

The scope of the survey was limited to establishing a baseline of information regarding how Independent Schools are offering Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE-IT), Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA), Skills Exploration (STX) and Work Experience (WEX). These programs are described below;

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>ACE-IT</b> | <p>The Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE IT) program is the in-class component of a high school apprenticeship. ACE IT students are Youth Apprentices registered with the Industry Training Authority (ITA).</p> <p>ACE IT programs are usually offered as partnerships between school districts and post-secondary institutions with onsite training at either location. Students who successfully complete the ACE IT program earn credit towards both high school graduation and a post-secondary credential.</p>                        |
| <b>SSA</b>    | <p>Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA) is an educational program jointly supported by the Ministry of Education and the Industry Training Authority (ITA).</p> <p>SSA is the apprenticeship component of a program and usually a companion to ACE-IT.</p> <p>Individuals complete an industry training program and become a certified tradesperson by combining both work-based training and technical training in an apprenticeship program.</p>  |
| <b>STX</b>    | <p>Skills Exploration (STX) is a Ministry Authorized course intended to allow students to explore trades or technology careers and subsequently enrol in Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE IT) and/or Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA).</p> <p>STX is not a prerequisite for ACE IT or SSA. STX involves learning that explores skills and knowledge in a number of trades or technology areas. STX is intended to assist students in making smooth transitions to either the workplace, or an appropriate post-secondary program.</p> |
| <b>WEX</b>    | <p>Work Experience (WEX) primary goal is to help students prepare for the transition from secondary school to the world of work. Through work experience, students have the opportunity to observe and practice generic employability skills required in the workplace, as well as technical and applied skills relating to specific occupations or industries.</p>  |

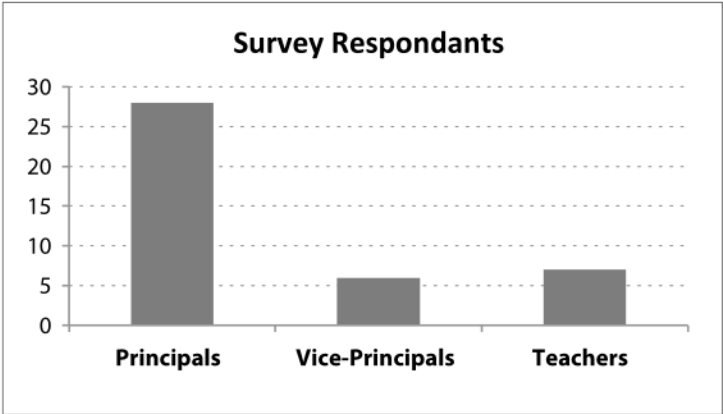
The survey was designed using a collaborative approach which included:

- Ministry staff representation;
- Independent school staff from Timothy Christian School who have a significant amount of experience with students participating in skills and trades programs;
- Parliamentary Secretary Marc Dalton.

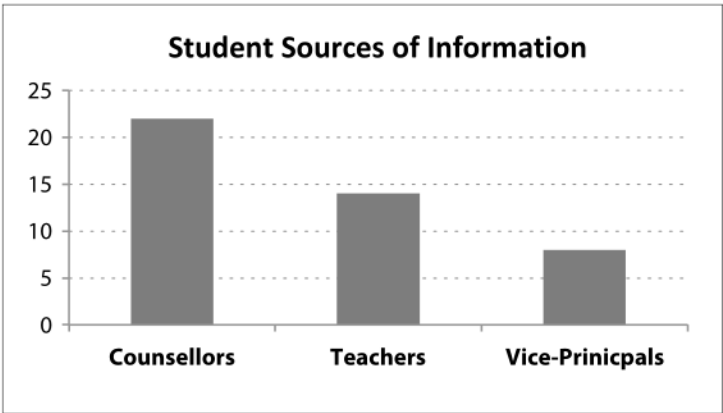
The survey design framework intended to take a holistic approach to identify the relevant influences an independent school student may have on his/her journey in an independent school. Therefore, the survey design accounted for factors such as parental support, school philosophy and other factors which may influence a student’s exposure to skills and trades. An infographic of the survey design is available in **Appendix 2**.

Survey Analysis

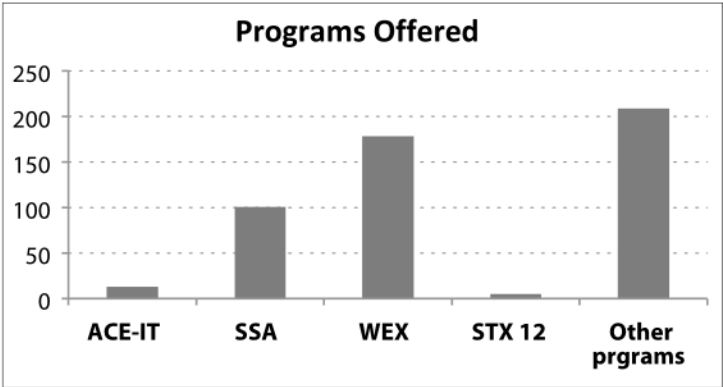
**Respondents:** This graph indicates who at each of the responding schools answered the survey questions. Of those schools which finished the survey, respondents were primarily senior administrators; mainly Principals, then Vice-Principals and Teachers.



**Student Information Sources:** This graph indicates who at each of the responding schools provides information on ACE-IT, SSA, WEX, and STX to students. Responses suggest that Counsellors are the main source of information for students, followed by Teachers and Vice-Principals.



**Programs Offered:** This graph shows the number of student enrolments in skills and trades programs in those schools which finished the survey. Of the Ministry Authorized programs, the most commonly reported program was WEX followed by SSA and then ACE-IT. Interestingly, the “other programs” category has the most enrolment; further investigation would be required in order to validate what schools classified as “other programs”.



## Barriers

Schools were asked to identify barriers to offering each of WEX, SSA and ACE-IT. The survey responses indicate that the barriers are similar across programs but that each program lists barriers in a different order. The table below includes the top 4 barriers for each program based on survey responses.

| Rating | ACE-IT                  | SSA                     | WEX                     | STX                |
|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1      | Internal Capacity       | Time Tabling            | Time Tabling            | Awareness          |
| 2      | Partnerships/Engagement | Partnerships/Engagement | Partnerships/Engagement | School Philosophy  |
| 3      | School Philosophy       | Awareness               | Awareness               | Internal Capacity  |
| 4      | Material Resources      | Material Resources      | Internal Capacity       | Material Resources |

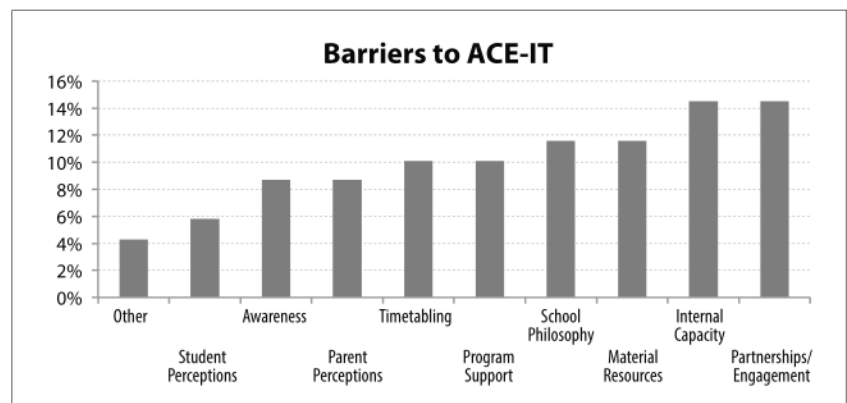
Although survey responses identified barriers in a different order, when looking at the top 4 barriers for each program there are commonalities across each program offering. Common items across programs are colour coded in the table above for ease of identification. Graphic representation for comparison purposes is included below for information. This analysis is supported by comments respondents provided within the open-ended sections of the survey.

### ACE-IT

A foundation element of the current ACE-IT program is built on the ability to partner with a school district and/or post-secondary institution. As a result, the top three barriers identified for ACE-IT are partnerships/engagement, internal capacity, and school philosophy as displayed in the chart below.

“Our school focus is on academic post-secondary work. Skills-related work would be more of engineering, medicine, legal, accounting, etc.”

“Access is critical for students. Resources, guidance or assistance to get programs set up in new schools would be helpful.”

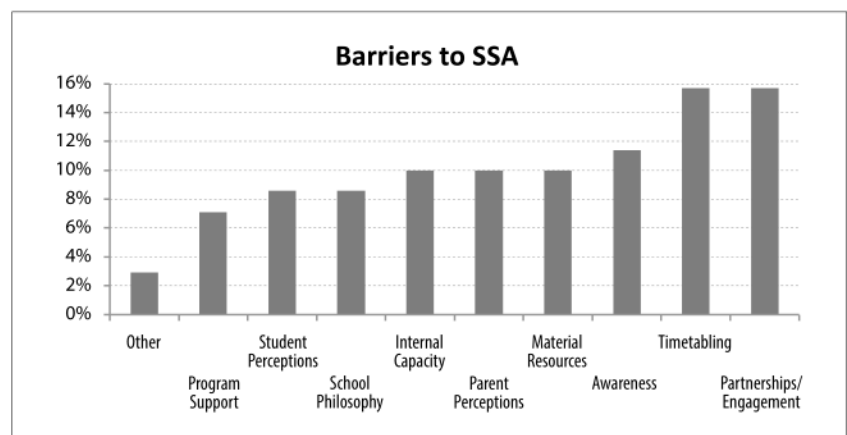


### SSA

The program is built on the ability of school to partner with local businesses and community willing to take on young apprentices. As a result, the top three barriers identified for SSA are partnerships/engagement, time-tabling and awareness displayed in the chart below.

“We have a significant number of First Nations students (30% of our student body)... these students would love to have opportunities to learn a trade or skill, but without enough tradespeople willing to take on student apprentices, it's difficult to find meaningful placements for students...”

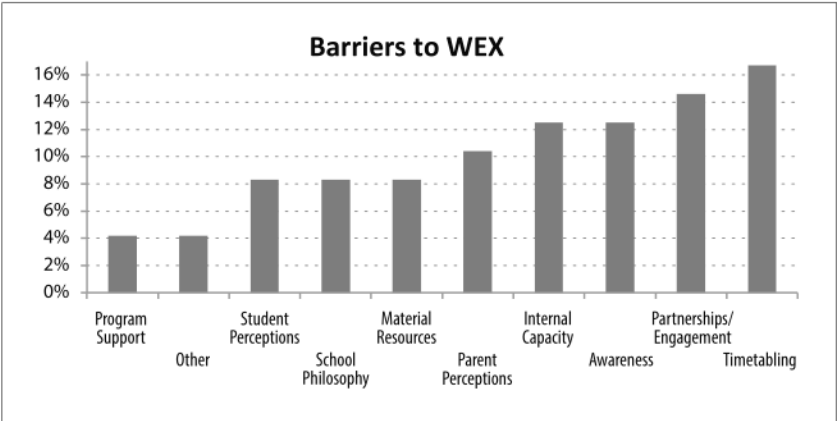
“In order for SSA to gain a firmer foothold... we need more trade-based business willing to take on apprentices... students inquire about the program... get very discouraged with the program because they  
1) Cannot get placement; and/or,  
2) They cannot get enough hours.”



WEX

The WEX program supports students obtaining generic skills to aid in employability or transition to post-secondary programs. As a result, the top three barriers identified for WEX are time-tabling, partnerships/engagement and awareness as displayed in the chart below.

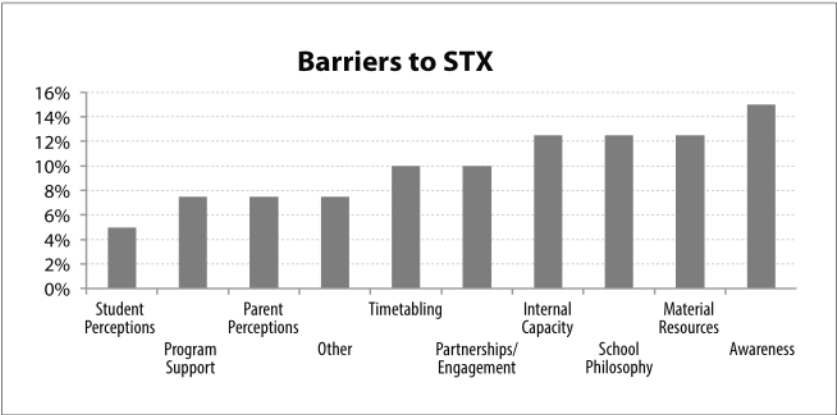
- “ More concrete, simplified information on how to get involved. Exploration opportunities for young people, with understanding from community employers that youngsters are often searching, undecided and maybe reluctant to make a commitment at the time of exploration. ”
- “ We are very interested in making as many opportunities available to our students as possible. The significant resource industry related opportunities for our students in our community make this a high priority. ”



STX

The STX program supports student exposure to a number of hands on learning opportunities for employability or transition to post-secondary programs. As a result, the top three barriers identified for STX are awareness, internal capacity and school philosophy as displayed in the chart below.

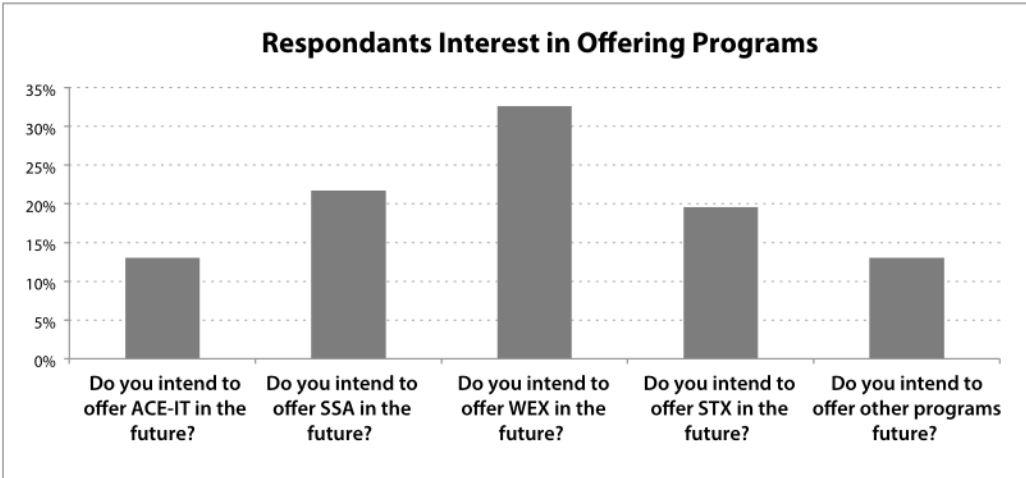
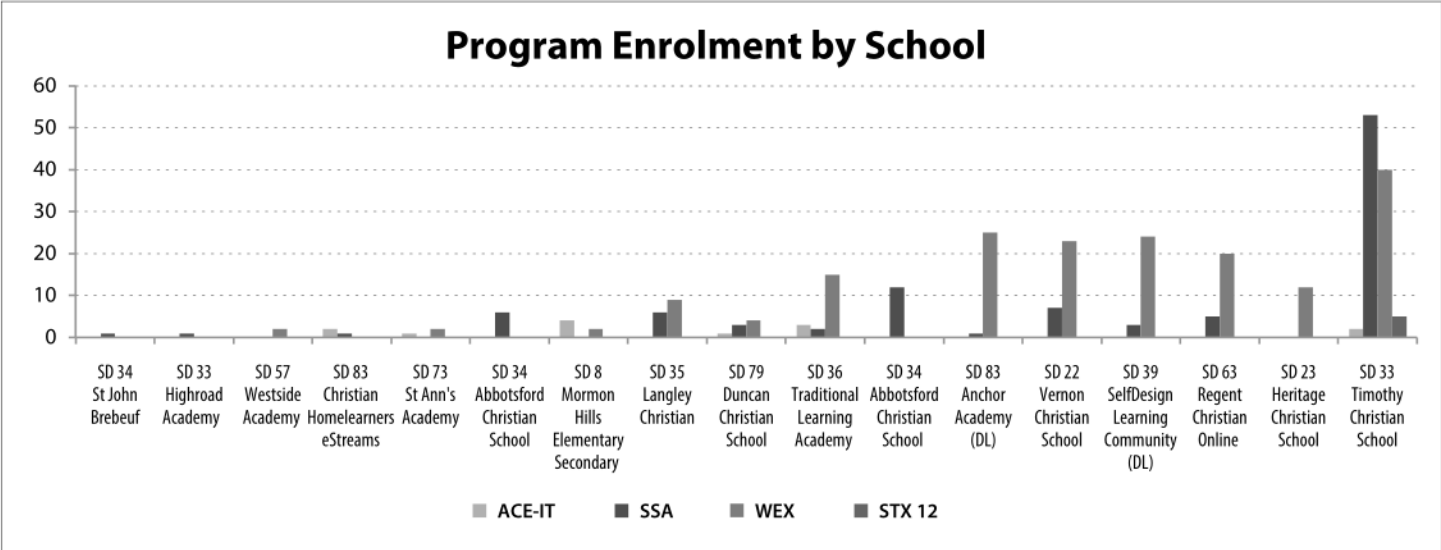
- “ ...there is within our school a tremendous focus on academics, university education and fine arts. As a result many students who have an interest in getting started in the trades, are dissuaded by their parents who place an over emphasis on the academic achievement. ”
- “ Will look into STX 12. We are very interested in making as many opportunities available to our students as possible. The significant resource industry related opportunities for our students in our community make this a high priority. ”





**Current Program Enrolment:** Reported independent school enrolment in ACE-IT, SSA, WEX, and STX results in a conclusion that the majority of enrolments in these programs are being provided by a handful of independent schools. Given that there are schools who have clearer figured out how to offer programs within the current program and policy frameworks there is an opportunity to tap into their knowledge and expertise to assist other independent schools in navigating through offering these programs.

**Future Program Offerings:** Of those who completed the survey, WEX, SSA and STX were the top rated programs schools are interested in offering in the future. This data points to an increasing interest in skills and trades within the sector and an opportunity to support the sector by way of information and resource access.



### Open-Ended Survey Responses

Several schools provided text responses to expand on their individual schools perspective on barriers within the independent school sector. The analysis of these responses has been used to inform the identified barriers and possible opportunities and response strategy.

## Conclusion:

The analysis in this paper shows that while some independent schools have developed innovative ways to partner with the local public school district to support access to skills and trades related programs. These success stories should be documented and promoted in order to inform other independent schools on possibilities with a framework for replication.

The analysis also shows that the mandate and educational focus of some independent school programs do not align with the skills and trades initiatives but even these may have a few students who would be interested in skills and trades programs.

The common themes in the form of barriers are included in the table below with associated suggestions for opportunities and response strategies.

| Barrier   | Opportunities/Possible Response Strategy  |
|---|---|
| <b>Partnerships/Engagement</b><br>– Schools identified that their ability to establish and benefit from partnerships with trades organizations was a significant barrier to successful implementation of these programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry to provide more information and positive examples of successful partnerships and opportunities (online, print and face to face).</li><li>• Share enabling ideas and highlight success stories of independent schools that are making these programs work.</li><li>• Look at options to support independent schools establishing partnership development with community organizations, school districts, and post-secondary institutions.</li><li>• Specifically target partnerships and sponsorships between independent schools and the private sector.</li></ul> |
| <b>Partnerships/Engagement</b><br>– Schools identified that their ability to establish and benefit from partnerships with trades organizations was a significant barrier to successful implementation of these programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry to ensure independent schools are informed of skills and trades related initiatives in the province.</li><li>• Ministry to engage with more independent schools regarding skills and trades to develop a more representative picture of barriers and opportunities.</li><li>• Direct involvement by the Office of the Inspector and the Superintendent of Careers and Transitions</li></ul>  |
| <b>Internal Capacity</b><br>– lack of trained staff, inadequate facilities and equipment constrain offering programs  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry to provide more information and exemplars (online, print and face to face).</li><li>• Ministry to ensure independent schools are informed of and eligible for skills and trades related initiatives in the Province.</li><li>• Look at options to support partnership development with community organizations, school districts, private sector businesses and post-secondary institutions.</li></ul>   |

## Appendix 1 – List of Schools Participating in the Survey

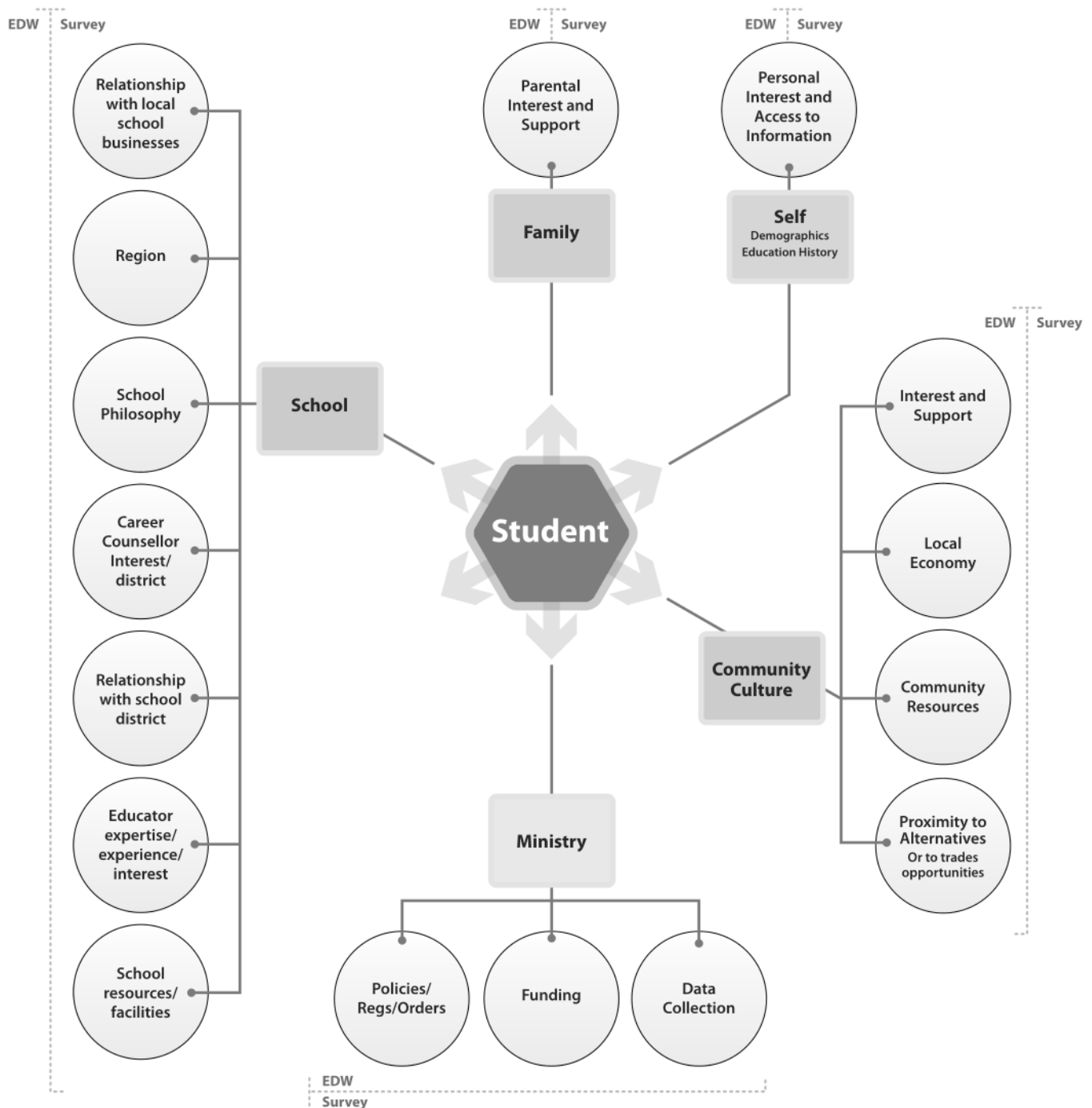
Aatse Davie School (08797074)  
Abbotsford Christian School (03496069)  
Acwalshta Band School (04997170)  
Alexander Academy (03996870)  
Anchor Academy (DL) (08396713)  
Archbishop Carney Regional Secondary (04396629)  
ASCEND Online Distributed Learning Prg. (07396838)  
Aspengrove School (06896730)  
Avenir School (03996844)  
Campbell River Christian School (07296335)  
Christian Homelearners eStreams (08396714)  
Coquitlam College (04396349)  
Dasmesh Punjabi School (03496425)  
Dogwood School (03496607)  
Duncan Christian School (07996086)  
Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School (05496064)  
Fountainview Academy (07496333)  
Fraser Academy (03996332)  
Heritage Christian School (02396479)  
Highroad Academy (03396251)  
Holy Cross Regional High School (03696166)  
Khalsa School (Surrey) (03696585)  
Langley Christian (03596311)  
Meadowridge School (04296400)  
Mormon Hills Elementary Secondary (00896726)  
Nanaimo Christian School (06896256)  
North Cariboo Christian School (02896621)  
Peace Christian School (05996188)  
Regent Christian Online Academy (06396767)  
SelfDesign Learning Community (DL) (03996721)  
Seminary of Christ the King (07596034)  
St Ann's Academy (07396194)  
St John Brebeuf (03496595)  
St John's International (03996527)  
St Margaret's (06196010)  
Stratford Hall (03996692)  
Surrey Christian (03696266)  
Timothy Christian School (03396209)

## Appendix 2 – Survey Design Info Graphic

### Independent School Students: Access to Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA), ACE-IT (CTC) and other Dual Credit opportunities.

Survey objectives are to determine:

- How many schools are offering students secondary school apprenticeship, ACE-IT or other dual credit opportunities.
- Barriers independent schools face in offering these programs to independent school students
- Opportunities to improve independent school student access to these programs



## **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BRIEFING NOTE**

**DATE:** April 23, 2015  
**CLIFF:** 181467

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Peter Fassbender, Minister of Education, and Simon Gibson, Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools, for **Information** at the request of the Deputy Minister's Office for May 5, 2015 meeting with Doug Lauson, President, and Peter Froese, Executive Director of Federation of Independent School Associations British Columbia

**SUBJECT:** Independent School Skills and Trades Survey Update

### **BACKGROUND:**

- Outgoing parliamentary secretary Marc Dalton initiated a skills and trades survey as part of his project work under the terms of reference approved by Minister Fassbender.
- The survey was co-constructed with Ministry staff, independent school staff and Parliamentary Secretary Marc Dalton.
- The purpose of the survey was to gain a better understanding of what skills and trades-related programs independent schools are currently offering.
- The survey results will be used by the Parliamentary Secretary to develop a report for the Minister outlining opportunities and barriers independent schools are facing in delivery of skills and trades programs.
- The survey was distributed to all independent schools offering grades 10 to 12, or 146 independent schools across the Province.
- The survey was open for response from February 5, 2015 to March 6, 2015 (30 Days).
- The survey provider followed-up with selected participants on two separate occasions to ensure the best response rate.
- Of those 146 schools who received the survey; 60 participants started it (41 percent), and 41 finished it (28 percent).
- Survey result must be used with caution as survey participation rates do not provide a representative sample.
- Survey data analysis is ongoing and will be used to inform the Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools report to the Minister of Education in the coming weeks.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The programs Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE-IT) and Secondary School Apprenticeship (SSA) are designed to give students a mix of classroom and practical work experience in a skills based career of their choice. The programs are usually taken during student's senior high schools years; students earn dual credit in these programs, credit towards post-secondary credential and dogwood diploma credits. Analysis of survey responses has produced the following high-level themes.

## **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BRIEFING NOTE**

### **Barriers**

1. School philosophy
  - Many schools indicate that their school philosophy does not align with the skills and trades agenda and, as such, they do not offer these options as part of the regular program offering.
2. Timetabling
  - Given the small size of many independent schools, offering a skills program within the core educational program is not viable given the constraints of timetabling.
3. Lack of Resources
  - Schools that responded cited lack of trained staff, inadequate facilities and equipment, and/or lack of funding as significant issues constraining skills and trades program offerings.

### **Opportunities**

1. Provide more information and exemplars (online, print and face-to-face)
  - Share enabling ideas and highlight success stories.
  - Promote engagement in how some independent schools are offering programs.
  - More direct involvement by the Superintendent of Careers and Transitions in the independent school sector.
2. Inclusion
  - Ensure independent schools are informed of, and eligible for, skills and trades-related initiatives in the Province.
3. Engagement and information gathering
  - Engage with more independent schools regarding skills and trades to develop a more representative picture of barriers and opportunities.
  - This work would dovetail nicely with the Parliamentary Secretary's engagement plan project.

### **CONCLUSION:**

- Some independent schools have developed innovative ways to partner with the local public school district to support access to skills and trades related programs. These success stories should be documented and promoted in order to inform other independent schools on possibilities with a framework for replication.
- Some independent schools underlying philosophy will never align with the skills and trades initiatives and as such we should focus efforts on those schools interested in these programs.

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BRIEFING NOTE

### OTHER POTENTIAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

FISABC has four current priorities for member independent schools.

#### 1. Property tax exemption

- The Ministry of Finance is the lead Ministry on amendment to the Community Charter and Taxation (Rural) Area Act in support of this request.
- The amendments will not be tabled but presented as an Exposure Bill to allow for required consultations with UBCM and First Nations.
- The Ministry of Education has been involved in consultation and drafting.
- The Request for Legislation to support expanded property tax exemptions was scheduled for presentation at P&P on April 23, 2015, and was passed.
- The Exposure Bill is expected to be presented towards the end of the current session.

#### 2. Independent school authority access to unused school property.

- FISA submitted a brief to the Minister on May 23, 2012, with resolution options for consideration regarding independent school access to unused property.

s.13

- The Minister is unable to intervene or direct a board to dispose of a property.
- FISA may be interested in Bill 11 and if it provides the Minister greater power to direct a board to dispose of a piece of property.
  - In recent media coverage, it has been claimed that the proposed amendment in section 12 of Bill 11 would give the Minister the power to force school closures and the sale of board property.
  - This is not the case. The amendment is intended to ensure that the Minister has the authority to require boards to manage schools and property in accordance with any orders related to shared services. It does not, on its own, create a new Ministerial power.

#### 3. Implications of amendments to the *Societies Act* for Independent Schools.

- Amendments to the *Societies Act* were tabled for third reading on April 22, 2015.

s.13


- The Ministry of Education is scheduled to meet with Ministry of Finance staff on April 30, 2015 to review details.
- FISABC responded to the *Societies Act* white paper on October 15, 2014.

# **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BRIEFING NOTE**

## **4. Access to low interest loans for independent school authorities.**

FISABC, on behalf of Independent Schools, has requested access to low interest loans for Independent Schools in order to upgrade facilities to support skills and trades training.

- At the November 2013 FISA board meeting, then Deputy Minister Rob Wood informed FISABC that given the fiscal climate and clear objectives regarding balancing the provincial budget, Government would not entertain this request at this point in time.

|  |             |   |   |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| <b>Contact Information</b><br><br>Brian Jonker<br>250 217-3991 |             | Approved  | Approved                                |
|  | IR          |  |   |
|  | ADM initial | Dave Byng<br>Deputy Minister  | Honourable Peter Fassbender<br>Minister |
|  |             | Date signed: May 4/15   | Date signed:                            |