



**Federation of
Independent School
Associations in British
Columbia**

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New Minister of Education Appointed



The Hon. Mike Bernier was sworn in as BC's new Minister of Education on July 30, 2015. He replaces Peter Fassbender who is now Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and Minister Responsible for Translink.

Since December, he has been the Parliamentary Secretary for Energy Literacy and the Environment for the Minister of Environment. FISA BC looks forward to working with Minister Bernier in supporting teaching and learning in both the public and independent school sectors.

Minister Bernier has a good understanding and appreciation of independent school education. He graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas School in North Vancouver when Doug Lauson, FISA BC President, was principal of the school.

Minister Bernier was elected as Peace River South MLA in May 2013, where he was a former city councillor and mayor of Dawson Creek. He has lived in the community for the past 20 years.

Ministry of Education Launches 3-Year Plan for K-12 Curriculum Revision

Over the past three years, the Ministry of Education has worked with more than 100 public and independent school teachers on developing new curriculum for students in K-12. Starting this fall, students in K-9 may be transitioning to the new curriculum, which will be fully implemented in September 2016.

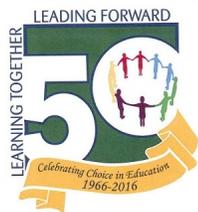
Deputy Minister Byng is asking educators in independent schools to provide feedback on the new curriculum. Input received during the current transition year will assist the Ministry in making refinements to the K-9 curriculum.

Curriculum drafts for Grades 10-12 are now available for review and will be ready for use in September 2016, with full implementation in September 2017.

Student competencies have been developed for K-12 and are posted on the curriculum website for review and use. The new competencies will be required for K-9 in September 2016 and for Grades 10-12 in September 2017. The three competencies are available on the MoE website at: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies>.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS USING THE NEW CURRICULUM

Please check out the e-board on the Independent Schools website regarding the June 18th posting to authorities that are adopting the new curriculum for all or part of the academic program in K-9 during the 2015-16 school year. There are clear guidelines on authorities meeting course compliance guidelines under the Educational Standards Order, Section 4 and 5. Information can be found on the Independent Schools e-board, which can be accessed at: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools/>.



**Buy tickets
before
October 16 for
preferred rate!**

- ◆ Ticket sales for pre-registered schools began on September 1. Deadline to purchase tickets at the preferred member rate of \$100.00 is October 16, after which the reduced member rate will increase to the general admission rate of \$250.00.
- ◆ Please remember to book hotel rooms if required. The partnering hotels offering a reduced rate are posted on the website at www.fisabc-convention2016.com. Each hotel has a limited number of rooms set aside at the convention rate, so you are encouraged to book early.
- ◆ Exhibitor opportunities for Thursday, Feb. 4 are now available. An application form is located on the convention website.
- ◆ Speakers have all been finalized and include Col. Chris Hadfield, Daniel Pink, Alan November, Yong Zhao, Kimberly Mitchell, Charles Fadel, Christopher Gaze, and Amy Burvall.
- ◆ The convention schedule is available on the website and updated regularly. Follow our Twitter page @FISA2016 for exciting limited opportunities to meet our phenomenal speakers. Email Bonnie Chant at convention@fisabc.ca for more information.

Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts, and Authorities

**Schools are
encouraged to
peruse the
provincial
emergency
preparedness
guide online**

This guide has been produced in cooperation with representatives of all the provincial education partners, several school districts and government personnel. The guide deals with emergencies, disasters and critical incidents that can occur in a school setting. Many of the references are commonly used in the public system but the guide is also intended for independent and First Nations schools.

The Guide is not intended to provide a detailed description of each and every scenario that might occur in an emergency. Instead, it gives a framework for building school and district plans that are compatible with provincial standards. The Guide and supporting templates are available at: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-and-orderly-schools/emergency-management-planning-guide>.

FISA BC will be providing a supplementary document that will offer additional information designed especially for independent schools. In the meantime, please make staff aware of the provincial guide to ensure that our schools are safe places for staff, parents and children.

**Revised
provincial
scholarship
program
gives more
generous
awards**

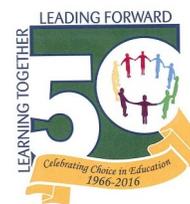
New Provincial Scholarship Program Designations

The purpose of the provincial scholarship program is to recognize student achievement and encourage students to pursue post-secondary education. Achievement will be recognized using broader criteria beyond exam scores, and scholarship amounts have been increased. The scholarships will be provided in the form of vouchers to be used upon registration in postsecondary institutions.

There are four types of scholarships available to students, including the BC Achievement Scholarship for \$1,250; the BC Excellence Scholarship for \$5,000; the District/Authority Scholarship for \$1,250; and Pathways to Teacher Education Scholarship for \$5000. Specific information regarding criteria for each award is available at: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/provincial-scholarships>.

Greetings from the Board of Directors

The FISA BC Board of Directors wishes all independent schools a very successful year in 2015-2016. We welcome new teachers, administrators and board members, and wish them success and fulfillment as they work together in creating the best learning environment in which students can acquire the skills and concepts needed to succeed in life. It is a privilege to support the diversity of schools that operate in British Columbia where parents can choose the education that they feel meets the needs of their children. Best wishes for a very successful year!



Managing Stress While Under Stress

Schools are very busy and potentially stressful workplaces. As the year begins, it's important to remember that while it is unlikely you will be able to avoid stress over the next ten months, you can take significant steps to manage and minimize your response to the stressors you encounter. Healthy daily habits are the best defense against feeling overwhelmed, and though they require discipline to enact they pay enormous dividends as the pace of life increases. The five helpful tips below have been compiled and adapted from four websites: www.Advice-for-teachers.com, www.psychcentral.com, www.apa.org, and www.heart.org.

1. Eat, Drink, and be Merry

Breakfast is important, and protein should be a part of it. If eggs, cheese, or peanut butter are a component of your morning routine you are more likely to make it through to lunch without a serious dip in mid-morning energy.

Staying hydrated cannot be overemphasized as a hedge against fatigue. It may be necessary to jumpstart your day with a cup of coffee, but after the requisite shot of java switch to herbal tea or unflavoured water for the rest of the day. Your brain will function more efficiently, and you will sleep better, resulting in less fatigue the following day.

Junk food is readily available from vending machines in many schools and provides temporary emotional relief from stress or exhaustion, but the long term effects of a bag of chips or candy is more stress and exhaustion, to say nothing of weight gain and nutritional deprivation. Foods high in protein and fibre will help to control mood swings and hunger pangs much more effectively, and can be just as gratifying to munch. Frequent snacks of dried fruits, nuts, veggies, yogurt, fresh fruits or cheese throughout the day will help to avoid cravings for pastries, chips, or sweets in mid-afternoon.

2. Get Enough Sleep

Marc Weissbluth's book *Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child* is a gold mine of information about the positive effects of sufficient sleep on the entire family, and how to achieve it.

Just as cranky babies are usually sleep-deprived babies, so cranky, stressed-out adults are usually sleep-deprived adults. Sleep researchers have observed that someone who has slept only six hours per night for a week is as cognitively impaired as someone who has not slept at all for 36 hours. Avoiding naps, going to bed at the same time every night including weekends, and engaging in pre-sleep calming rituals are all effective techniques for ensuring a good night's sleep.

3. Enjoy Yourself, Exercise, and Relax

Not everyone can train for triathlons while teaching full time. But even a mild routine of stretching, deep breathing, recreational walking, and weight training will increase your endurance, improve your energy levels, and enhance your enjoyment of life.

Relaxation, contrary to popular opinion, is not achieved by watching the news or sports or the latest crime thriller on TV. These activities can actually increase stress levels. Stretches, yoga or tai chi style movements, meditation, or deep breathing exercises can cause your muscles to let go of the tension they have acquired throughout the day. It takes only a few minutes and quiets your brain and body.

It is also important to have something to look forward to when your work day ends. Teachers can easily spend all their evenings and weekends doing prep and marking, but that doesn't necessarily make them better teachers. If you regularly take a break to do something you truly enjoy, your soul will be fed, your spirits will rise, and you will have something to bring into the classroom beyond your grasp of curriculum.

Seek Out Social Support

Sharing concerns and negative feelings can reduce their power and relieve stress. However, spending much mutual time griping about working conditions or perceived employer insensitivity can add stress to an already heavy workload. As much as possible, spend time with people who not only empathize, but also encourage you to rise above your circumstances. Positive self-talk and social talk will make you feel better, and will make others happier to spend time in your

- cont. on page 5

Protein and high fibre
foods help control
mood swings and
hunger pangs

Having a hobby you
really enjoy makes
you a better teacher



Letter from the Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools

Students are back for another year of school, settling in to new classes, meeting their teachers, and catching up with their peers.

This fall a three-year transition to new curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9 begins. The curriculum allows teachers greater flexibility to respond to the demands of the learning environment that will allow students to thrive when they reach college, university, and the work force. The world is changing and we need to make sure today's kids get the right skills to succeed in tomorrow's world.

I encourage families to take advantage of the B.C. Training and Education Savings Grant, which provides a one-time \$1,200 grant to kick-start their children's savings for post-secondary education. Children born in 2007 or later are eligible, and families have three years, or until the day before the child's ninth birthday, to submit an application. All that is required is opening a Registered Education Savings Plan at a participating institution and applying for the \$1,200.00. Participating financial institutions are listed at www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/bc-training-and-education-savings-grant.

As Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools I look forward to engaging with you during the course of the school year through school visits, participation in events, and dialogue with FISA BC.

In closing, I want to wish all schools, teachers, and students a successful school year.

Simon Gibson,
Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools, MLA for Abbotsford-Mission

B.C. Training and Education Savings Grant provides a one-time \$1,200 kick-start to your children's savings for post secondary education.

Regional Tour for administrators and board members to take place in October and November

Did You Know...?

- ◆ Since 2000-01, the number of public school students (head count) has decreased by 12.6% or approximately 79,500 students.
- ◆ Since 2000-01, the number of independent school students (HC) has increased by 26% or approximately 20,800 students.
- ◆ During the 2014-15 school year there were approximately 633,500 students in K-12 in British Columbia, 552,700 in public schools and 80,800 in independent schools (HC).
- ◆ In 2014-15, the Ministry of Education paid \$341.5 million to support independent school education, of which \$64 million was designated for funded students with special needs.
- ◆ Independent schools are educating 14% of the K-12 enrolment (HC) on approximately 6.3% of the overall annual MoE budget of \$5.4 billion.

Regional Tour 2015

The Fall 2015 independent schools regional tour will include updates by Larry Espe, Superintendent of Skills & Careers; Theo VandeWeg, Inspector of Independent Schools and Brian Jonker, Executive Director of Independent Schools; and Peter Froese, Executive Director of FISA BC. The table below shows the dates for meetings in various locations around the province. All meetings are scheduled for 7:00-9:00 pm. Please check the MoE eBoard regularly for possible date changes in your area.

Date	City	School
Oct. 6	Ft. St. John	Christian Life School
Oct. 8	Prince George	Cedars Christian School
Oct. 15	Victoria	St. Joseph's Catholic School
Oct. 22	Nanaimo	Nanaimo Christian School
Oct. 27	Terrace	Centennial Christian School
Oct. 29	Abbotsford	St. John Brebeuf School
Nov. 12	Vancouver	King David High School
Nov. 17	Cranbrook	Kootenay Christian Academy
Nov. 18	Kelowna	St. Joseph Elementary School

FISA BC strongly encourages authority administrators and board members to attend as important information will be shared.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy Review

MyEducationBC

Paige’s Story, involving a First Nations teenager who slipped through the cracks and lost her life while in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development, has been in the news over the summer. MCFD is asking caregivers to review the protocols on child protection to ensure that no further tragedies occur. Please remind teachers and administrators to review the *BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect for Service Providers* found at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/handbook_action_child_abuse.pdf and the FISA BC template on *Child Abuse and Neglect* available on the FISA BC website at: <http://fisabc.ca/services/schools/policy-aids> so that all school personnel understand their obligations for child safety under the law.

Conversions to MyEducationBC are continuing and all BCeSIS schools that plan to switch to MyEducationBC should do so by the end of December 2015.

Access to BCeSIS will be terminated on January 1, 2016 and BCeSIS services will be terminated on March 1, 2016.

...review protocols on child protection to ensure no further tragedies...

International Education Update

In 2014-15, there were nearly 17,000 international students in BC’s K-12 system, more than 13,000 in 50 school districts and more than 3,800 in 101 independent schools. International education contributes approximately \$400 million annually to the provincial economy.

responsibilities for homestay organizers and international student programs.

A new set of Provincial K-12 International Education Homestay Guidelines has been developed by the Ministry of Education, with the assistance of many educators in the public and independent school sectors. The new guidelines will benefit public and independent schools in clearly outlining

Many independent schools have developed their own guidelines for homestay programs but this will ensure that all schools provide international students with a consistently safe and culturally enriching experience living with British Columbia families while studying in BC. The guidelines are available here:

http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/internationaleducation/home_stay_guidelines.pdf

New International Education Homestay Guidelines clearly outline responsibilities.

Managing Stress While Under Stress - cont. from page 3

presence. Set realistic goals and celebrate accomplishing them. Say, “I can handle one step at a time,” rather than, “There’s absolutely no light at the end of this tunnel.”

Preserve Personal and Professional Boundaries

You probably entered the field of education because you liked to help people. But you can’t do everything for everyone, and you will eventually implode—or explode—if you try. Some important factors to consider are:

- ◆ Communicate optimism and enthusiasm as much as possible.
- ◆ Determine what is in your control and what is not. Do not waste energy over what you cannot control.

◆ When you have done your best within reasonable time limits, stop. Let it go. “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink.”

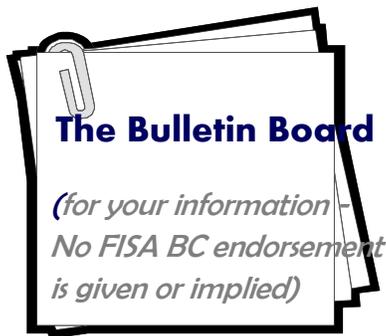
◆ Don’t accept more responsibilities than you can manage. Leave some unscheduled margin time.

◆ Laugh frequently and uninhibitedly. It’s good for the abs and increases lung capacity. And it’s fun.

If your conscience won’t let you let down, just remember the old adage, adapted from the home to the classroom:

“When Teacher is happy, everyone is happy. When Teacher is miserable, no one is likely to have fun.”

Set realistic goals and celebrate accomplishing them.



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Educational and Contest Opportunities for Students

- ◆ The 2015-2016 Sanofi Biogenius Canada BC Regional Competition is open to students in grades 9-12. Proposal submission deadline is November 8, 2015. Those selected for the SBC competition are matched with local mentors. Participants present their findings at regional competitions. Cash prizes are awarded (first place is \$1,875 for the student and \$625 for the school), and regional winners advance to the National stage and the opportunity to compete in the International Biogenius Challenge. Full details available at www.lifesciencesbc.ca/calendar-events-programs-SanofiBiogeniusCanada/2015/.
- ◆ Sea to Sky Gondola offers educational packages for all grade levels on topics in structural physics, energy, subalpine environment, and Squamish Nation Culture. Information and bookings available at www.seatoskygondola.com/groups/school-programs.
- ◆ CBC Canada Writes is sponsoring the Shakespeare Selfie Challenge for grades 7-9 and 10-12. Contest deadline in April, prizes, judge, and other details TBA. The challenge: Write a modern-day soliloquy or monologue by a Shakespearean character, based on a prominent news, pop culture, or current affairs event from the past year. Go to <http://www.cbc.ca/> to read last year's winning entries and to check for more information as it comes available.
- ◆ World Wildlife Fund Canada provides free lesson plans for elementary school teachers on their "Schools for a Living Planet" page. Go to www.schools.wwf.ca for a variety of topics.

Professional Development Opportunities for Teachers

- ◆ myPITA Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers' Association annual Fall conference on October 23-24 will feature Jeffrey Whilhem on reading and comprehension, and Diana Chrchley on writing and journaling. Forty additional speakers presenting more than 70 workshops on French, Visual and Performing Arts, Math, Literacy, and Technology will be featured. Register early, as last year was sold out! [Register](http://www.mypita.ca) at www.mypita.ca.

