



Federation of
Independent School
Associations in British
Columbia

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Public Interest in Faith-Based Education

The following article was written by Jim Beeke, former Inspector of Independent Schools. In light of recent recommendations by the City of West Vancouver for independent schools located in its municipality to provide evidence of serving the public good (in order to receive permissive property tax exemption), the article is published in abridged form for FISA-BC member schools' information.

Having been at the business of education for several decades on both sides of the Pacific, I expect I've heard all the complaints: independent faith-based education is divisive. It produces radicals. It blurs church and state. It promotes a two-tier education. It's not in the public interest.

Anecdotally, this has not been my experience. And now, objectively speaking, there are data quite to the contrary. I read the *Cardus Education Survey* (<http://www.carduseducationsurvey.com/>) (CES, 2012) results with great interest, particularly in the meaningful insights they can yield for those working with educational legislation.

In a nutshell, the survey revealed that independent faith-based schools produce graduates with higher propensities toward:

- ◆ generosity
- ◆ volunteering to help the poor and needy
- ◆ commitment to family and community
- ◆ respect for authority
- ◆ favourable relationships with teachers

Graduates from independent faith-based schools outscored their public school counterparts in every measured trait that we would desire in a stable contributing citizen in our society, even when controlled for socio-

-economic variables. These graduates also scored lower in all undesirable measures such as divorce rates and feelings of helplessness in dealing with life's problems. CES results indicate that society would be strengthened by increasing the numbers of the type of citizens that faith-based independent schools are graduating.

BC commenced inspection and certification of independent schools in 1977 and granted up to 30% funding for qualifying schools. This was raised to a maximum of 50% after the *Royal Commission on Education* in 1988, which noted that a framework of partial funding complies with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *First Protocol* to the *European Convention on Human Rights*, both co-signed by Canada.

Today, BC's position on school choice continues to hold. The province's Ministry of Education website notes that "Partial funding of independent schools recognizes the contributions these schools have made to the education of children in our province. It also impacts tuition fees set by authorities, thereby increasing options for more parents to select schools of their choice."

Some will object to any levels of tax-based funding, because this would promote a two-tier system of education. But because independent schools' parents pay taxes toward education, the truth is actually the opposite: we *already have* a two-tier funding system. By increasing the level of tax-based funding to independent schools, lawmakers can *reduce* the current inequalities that impact which families can choose or not choose independent school options.

- cont. on p. 6

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TRB Statistics and FISA BC Recommendations



...independent school authorities should ensure that appropriate teacher evaluation and support strategies are regularly being practiced so that most issues of conduct and competence are addressed at the school level...



Independent School Certificates (as of January 1, 2014)

Total TRB Authorized individuals:	69,369
Types of Certificates:	
- Letter of Permission (LOP)	74
- Certification of Qualification (COQ)	67,241
- Independent School Certificate (ISC)	1,677
- COQ and ISC	197

The TRB currently receives between 200-300 ISC applications per year.

In 2013, the TRB issued 3,083 certificates:

- 1,940 for teachers educated/trained in BC
- 775 for teachers educated/trained in Canada
- 368 for teachers educated/trained internationally

Complaints from School Boards (Independent school teachers comprise 13%, public 87%)

Reports to the Commissioner received from school boards

Reports on Public School Teachers

2011	93
2012	113
2013	141

Reports on Independent School Teachers

2011	8
2012	9
2013	14

A "report" is a written statement to the Commissioner from a Board of Education, Independent School Authority, or certified teacher regarding a teacher who has been suspended, dismissed or disciplined for misconduct that involves physical harm to a student, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a student, or significant harm to a student; or is believed to have breached the Standards.

Complaints from Individual Members of the Public

Complaints written to the Commissioner from a member of the public regarding the conduct or competence of a teacher who is believed to have breached the Standards:

Complaints Against Public School Teachers

2011	34
2012	32
2013	55

Complaints Against Independent School Teachers

2011	8
2012	11
2013	28 (includes offshore and band schools which are not FISA BC member schools)

Note from FISA BC: As more parents become aware that complaints can be directed to the Commissioner of the TRB, independent school authorities should ensure that appropriate teacher evaluation and support strategies are regularly being practiced so that most issues of conduct and competence are addressed at the school level, thus reducing the number of complaints parents may direct to the Commissioner. Complaints will likely never be eliminated, but with appropriate due diligence in hiring practices, monitoring classroom performance, evaluating instruction, and using professional growth plans for teachers, they can be reduced.

*Data provided by the TRB and the 2013/14 Annual Report by the Commissioner

ERASE Bullying Update

The Ministry of Education is continuing to offer ERASE Bullying training to public, independent and First Nations schools. The current schedule identifies public school training but these sessions are open to FISA and FNESC teachers as well. FISA will be working with the Ministry to schedule a stand-alone session in the New Year.

Level 3 training is currently being offered to teachers and administrators who have completed Level 1 and 2 training. Level 3 training covers VTRA protocols, Critical Incident Response Plans, Child and Youth Mental Health, Inventory or Services and Specific Case Studies.

The attached schedule identifies training sessions throughout the province. Independent school staff may register in any of these locations by contacting the contact person in each training location.

Upcoming ERASE Training as of December 16, 2014

Date	Level	Training Location	Contact	Email
Jan 19	1	Kelowna or Oliver	Terry Collis	tcollis@sd53.bc.ca
Jan 20 & 21	2	Kelowna or Oliver	Terry Collis	tcollis@sd53.bc.ca
Jan 20 & 21	3	Nelson	Heather Dennill	Heather.dennill@sd10.bc.ca
Jan 26 & 27	3	Richmond	Wendy Lim	wlim@sd38.bc.ca
Feb 3 & 4	2	Maple Ridge	Sherri Skerratt	Sherri_skerratt@sd42.ca
Feb 10 & 11	2	Delta	Diane Turner	dturner@deltasd.bc.ca
Feb 12	1	Delta	Diane Turner	dturner@deltasd.bc.ca
Feb 12 & 13	3	Langley	Renge Baillie	rbaillie@sd35.bc.ca
Feb 17 & 18	3	Campbell River	Tracy Kennedy	Tracy.kennedy@sd72.bc.ca
Feb 18 & 19	3	Burnaby	Deanna Azzara	Deanna.azzara@sd41.bc.ca
Mar 2	1	Coquitlam	Julie Pearce	jpearce@sd43.bc.ca
Mar 3 & 4	3	Coquitlam	Julie Pearce	jpearce@sd43.bc.ca
Mar 2	1	Surrey	Colleen Brian	Brian_c@surreyschools.ca
Mar 3 & 4	2	Surrey	Colleen Brian	Brian_c@surreyschools.ca
Mar 2 & 3	3	Nanaimo	Debbie Sywak	dsywak@sd68.bc.ca
Mar 6	1	Vancouver	Lisa Pedrini	lpedrini@vsb.bc.ca
Mar 9 & 10	3	Dawson Creek	Keith Maurer	Keith_maurer@sd59.bc.ca
Mar 23	1	Saanich	Monica Braniff	mbraniff@sd63.bc.ca
Mar 26 & 27	2	Saanich	Monica Braniff	mbraniff@sd63.bc.ca
Mar 24 & 25	3	Prince George	Susan Johnston	Sjohnston@sd57.bc.ca
Mar 26 & 27	2	Vancouver	Lisa Pedrini	lpedrini@vsb.bc.ca
Apr 15 & 16	2	Victoria	Deb Whitten	dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca
May 19 & 20	3	Terrace	Karen Scales	Kscales@cmsd.bc.ca

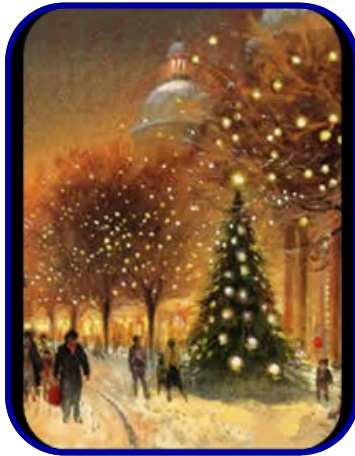


**Level 3 training is
currently being offered**

**At Christmas
play and
make good
cheer, for
Christmas
comes but
once a year.**

- Thomas Tusser





Five Facts at a Glance

- ◆ In 2013, the property value for 313 independent schools in BC was \$1.7 billion, for which the school authorities received no provincial funding.
- ◆ Independent schools have been property tax exempt since 1957; the Municipality of Lantzville has removed the permissive tax exemption and the City of Victoria has partially removed the permissive tax exemption for 2015.
- ◆ The 2014-2015 enrolment in independent schools increased by 5.76%.
- ◆ Since 2009-2010 (5 years ago), the FTE enrolment in independent schools has increased by over 11,000 students or 15.3%.
- ◆ There are 8,000 teachers in the Independent School system in BC.

FISA BC Elects Executive Officers for 2015

Doug Lauson (CIS) continues as the President of FISA BC for his 13th year. Dr. Elizabeth Moore (ISABC) is elected as Vice President, Ed Noot (SCSBC) is the Treasurer, Harry Moes (AMG) is the Secretary and David Neufeld (ACSI BC) is the member at large.

Ray Sutton (ACSI BC), member of the board for the past 22 years and Treasurer for the past 16 years, has retired from the FISA BC Board of Directors. He has been the longest serving board member and we thank him

for his dedication and support of independent schools.

As well, we thank Joe Colistro (CIS) and Dave Shinness (ACSI BC) for their many years of service as directors of FISA BC. Replacing them on the board are Bev Pulyk (CIS), Superintendent of the Catholic Independent Schools, Victoria Diocese, and Phil Hills (ACSI BC), executive director of ACSI Western Canada.

BC certified teachers who hold a valid teaching certificate and are currently teaching are eligible to be nominated [to the BCTC] by 10 certificate holders whose principal residence is in the same zone.

Call for Nominations for the 2015 BC Teachers' Council (BCTC) Elections

BC certified teachers who reside in a Council electoral zone, hold a valid BC teaching certificate, and are currently teaching, are eligible to be nominated by 10 certificate holders each having his or her principal residence in the zone.

Any teacher whose principal residence is in one of the five zones is eligible to vote for a candidate from that zone. The five electoral zones are Interior, Fraser, Northern, Vancouver Island, and Vancouver Coastal. More information about the BC Teachers' Council and the elections can be found on the Teacher Regulation website at <https://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/AboutUs/Council.aspx> or by calling 604-660-6060 or 1-800-555-3684.

Nominations must be received by January 9, 2015. Ballot packages will be mailed to teachers' homes in February 2015.

We encourage independent school authorities in the Vancouver Coastal Zone to make teachers aware that Mr. John O'Flynn, independent school teacher, is running for election to the BCTC. He can be reached at 604 929 0345. FISA BC encourages all independent school teachers in all five zones to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming election.

FISA BC encourages independent school associations to nominate candidates in the other zones as well.



Healthy Schools BC School District Readiness Grants

Applications for the new Healthy Schools BC School District Readiness Grants are now available to support school districts and independent school authorities to identify and address priorities for healthy schools through shaping partnerships with health sector and community partners. These grants are designed to support independent school authorities and health professionals to build relationships, create a plan for addressing shared healthy schools priorities informed by community and school district data sources, and take collaborative actions that address identified healthy school priorities. Approximately 10 grants of up to \$7500 are available (provided in two phases). For more information and grant application forms, go to http://www.healthyschoolsbc.camedia/22089hsbc_school_district_readiness_grant_2014-5.pdf.

The application deadline is Jan. 31, 2015.

BC Student Healthy Living Network

Applications are now live for students to join the BC Student Healthy Living Network. The Network is made up of youth (12-19) across the province who are looking to make their schools healthier places to learn and play. As part of the Network, students can: obtain grants to support healthy school projects that have a lasting impact on themselves, their peers, and their schools; connect with other youth from all over BC; access available resources and tools; and receive supportive adult mentorship.

The deadline to apply is February 6, 2015.

To learn more about the Network and information on how to apply, go to <http://healthyschoolsbc.ca/healthy-schools-bc-resources/healthy-schools-network.aspx>. If you have further questions, please contact DASH BC at hlyc@dashbc.ca.



Grants for healthy school projects are now available



The two most joyous times of the year are Christmas morning and the end of school.
- Alice Cooper



Sanofi BioGENEius Challenge Canada

LifeSciences BC organizes an annual science competition for students in Grades 10-12. The winner travels to Ottawa for the national competition in April. The Ottawa winner travels to the U.S. for the international competition. Last year's provincial and national winner was Nicole Ticea from York House. For more information, go to <http://sanofibioingeniouschallenge.ca/>.

Call for BCCIE Summer Seminar Proposals

The next Summer Seminar conference of the BC Council for International Education will take place at Whistler in June 2015. You are invited to submit session proposals for this conference before **February 2, 2015**.

More details are available at http://www.bccie.bc.ca/educators/summer-seminar/2015/call_for_proposals

Canada Day Challenge

Canadian youth ages 8-18 are invited to submit a poster, digital photos, or creative writing to the Canada Day Challenge.

Nine national finalists will win an all-expenses paid trip for two to Ottawa.

More details are available at www.challenge.pch.gc.ca.

UBC Offering Free MOOC on Indigenous Education

UBC Faculty of Education is delivering a free six-week Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) called "Reconciliation through Indigenous Education" beginning on January 27, 2015.

Register at ets.educ.ubc.ca/IndEdu200x.

Public Interest in Faith-Based Education - (continued from page 1)

Some, particularly in the United States, will object that tax-based funding for independent schools contravenes the concept of “separation of church and state” upon which the country was founded. This would reflect a serious misunderstanding. The founding fathers meant by “separation of church and state” that the state would not be permitted to declare a particular church denomination to be the church of the land, so that those belonging to that denomination would receive privileges and those who did not would have privileges removed or be persecuted, as they had experienced in their European backgrounds. This did not mean that anything religious was to be kept out of the public sphere or not supported by the state. Yet it remains a pervasive notion that religion is bad for society, and that faith-based school graduates by extension do not fit in well or do not contribute positively to society.

An interesting illustration of this type of false thinking occurred when the BC College of Teachers (BCCT) refused to accredit Trinity Western University (TWU)’s teacher education program. As the BCCT did not produce evidence that TWU students were taught to engage in discriminating behaviours against same sex couples or that TWU graduates employed as teachers actually discriminated against students, the Supreme Court of Canada

found that the BCCT had acted beyond its mandate. The majority ruling stated, “Absent concrete evidence that training teachers at TWU fosters discrimination in the public schools of BC, the freedom of individuals to adhere to certain religious beliefs at TWU should be respected. The proper place to draw the line is generally between beliefs and conduct. The freedom to hold beliefs is broader than the freedom to act on them.”

During this court case TWU submitted an interesting example from a survey in the USA. When HIV was first detected and uncontrolled, a number of health care providers refused to work with HIV+ patients. A survey to identify distinctive traits in nurses who were willing to work with these patients revealed that the stronger the religious commitment of the nurse, the more willing the nurse was to work with HIV+ patients. This indicator was the very opposite of the presupposed argument raised by the BCCT. The CES (2012) results also appear to indicate that the more committed the graduate is to his/her faith, the more service-oriented the person tends to be.

A concern commonly expressed by independent school supporters is that government funding will cause a faith-based school to lose its autonomy or spiritual vitality if it receives partial funding. Harro

van Brummelen interviewed principals of BC Christian schools approximately 15 years after provincial government inspection, certification, and partial funding was implemented. He discovered that a number of principals stated that both the Christian perspective and ethos in their schools had *increased*. Prior to government funding, budgets were so tight that principals had to spend almost all of their time teaching classes themselves, working on fund-raising activities, and caring for immediate/urgent administrative issues; and had little or no time to mentor teachers or work with their boards in developing appropriate goals for their schools.

Governments should be in the business of promoting in their citizenry generosity, commitment to families and communities, compassion for the poor and needy, and respectful involvement in civil institutions. In that light, serious thought should be given to expanding tax-based funding to independent schools. This would expand the number of parents who could afford the choice of independent schooling for their children and at the same time reduce the per student operational and capital expenditure pressures on the tax-based dollars available.

-Entire article “Public Interest in Religious Education” by Jim Beeke available at <http://www.cardus.ca/comment/article/3195/public-interest-in-religious-education/>

Christmas Greetings!

The Board of Directors and staff of FISA BC extend our warmest wishes to all our associations and their schools for a happy holiday season. Thank-you for your continued efforts in giving each student a rich and rewarding education in the independent school of their choosing. May you find rest, happiness and peace as you enjoy the Christmas season with family and friends, as well as continued success and fulfillment in the New Year.



President's Annual Report for 2013-2014



November 26, 2014

*"Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision" – Henry Kissinger***STATISTICS:**

The FISA BC member schools have shown increased enrolment over the past year:

Association	# Schools	Enrolment	% of Total
ACSI BC	27	11,262	15.5
AMG	121	18,028	24.8
CIS	79	21,099	29.0
ISABC	26	12,442	17.1
SCSBC	39	9,923	13.6
Total	289	72,754	100.0

Alexander Academy was accepted into FISA BC as a member of AMG.

Total number of independent schools in BC	348
Total number of FISA BC member schools	289
Total membership enrolment	72,754
Increase in FISA BC member enrollment	3,506
Percentage increase	5.1%
Total public school enrolment (HC)	558,985
Total independent school enrolment	(adjusted) 76,072
Total number of students taking at least one course at an independent school last year	78,084
Percentage of independent school students	12.3%
Growth over last year	2.3%
Total independent DL students	9,747
Total FTE in public schools	540,005.0
Total FTE in independent schools	74,333.5
Total FTE	614,338.5
Grants for Group 1 & 2 independent schools	\$257,385,520
Special Needs Grant	\$42,908,929
Total funding for independent schools	\$300,294,449

The government has maintained the funding for BC Education at \$5.35 billion, under which independent schools are allocated 5.3% of the overall budget to educate 12.3% of the overall enrolment. These general figures include funding that independent schools do not have access to such as the increase of the Learning Improvement Fund from \$60 million to \$75 Million annually.

FISA BC MANDATE:

In September 2013, the FISA BC Board of Directors adopted a new mandate that set three priorities for the Federation in the next few years. This mandate directed the Federation to seek (a) improved access to unused public property, (b) access to low interest loans from government for capital projects to improve student safety and develop trades skills/training programs for high school students, (c) secure legislation to exempt independent school properties wholly used for education from local municipal permissive property taxes. The board has been diligently working with appropriate government ministries and agencies to pursue these goals.

50th ANNIVERSARY OF FISA BC:

FISA BC will be celebrating its golden anniversary in 2016 (February 4th and 5th) with a provincial convention to be held at Canada Place Convention Centre West, the largest convention facility in Western Canada. With the high profile book-end speakers Daniel Pink and Chris Hadfield, it is anticipated that the convention will attract over 6,000 attendees from all over the province. Early registration indicates that over 5,000 educators have already registered for this celebratory event that focuses on the theme *Learning Together: Leading Forward*. The theme of the convention is *Celebrating 50 years of Choice in Education*. A Gala dinner will be held on Thursday evening, February 4, 2016 at the Convention Centre. My thanks to the Convention Planning Committee, under the leadership of Elizabeth Moore, for the good work it is doing to ensure the success of this milestone event in BC history.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION:

FISA BC welcomed the new appointments to the Ministry of Education who have direct responsibilities with independent schools: Dave Byng, Deputy Minister; Ian Rongve, Assistant Deputy Minister; Brian Jonkers, Executive Director. FISA BC looks forward to continue working collaboratively with the Ministry towards strengthening education in BC. My thanks to Hon. Peter Fassbender for the leadership he shows in his portfolio as Minister of Education, a job that requires skill and talent combined with strength of character. Also, to Theo VandeWeg, Inspector of Independent Schools, and his staff for the collaboration and cooperation they have shown in the past year.

PERMISSIVE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS:

Three municipalities have already begun to remove the

permissive property tax exemption from independent schools located within their jurisdictions. These include the District of Lantzville (north of Nanaimo) that chose to fully tax an independent school's property; the City of Victoria, which is reducing the exemption by 5% per year until it reaches 50%; the City of Nelson, which removed the exemption completely for one year, but then chose in the following year to follow its previous practice of not taxing independent school properties.

This tax exemption issue is of grave concern to independent schools as it has never been an issue for any independent school in the last 55 years, but it surfaced in 2012 in West Vancouver when the municipality attempted to tax the properties of three independent schools and only by parents crowding the council chambers in protest, did the council decide to delay such a taxation for further study. Currently, the West Vancouver council does not tax these schools, but they are required to provide evidence that they contribute to society!

The FISA BC board is pursuing this issue with government and seeks to obtain statutory exemption from property taxes for the independent school building footprint and a reasonable area around the school building, similar to a public school, that is wholly used for the education of children. Other properties of investment that an independent school holds may be subject to taxation at the discretion of the individual municipality. Taxing independent school properties could be considered a third tax on parents who choose to send their children to an independent school; the first being property public school taxes on homeowners and the second being the payment of tuition. The financial burden to independent schools, if all their properties were taxed under the current legislation, would be an estimated additional \$5-7 million - something that the families of independent school students cannot afford.

FISA BC ACTIVITIES:

The FISA BC board continues to work at matters concerning effective and efficient operation of the Federation, including the:

- ◆ development and adoption of Board Succession Guidelines to ensure the smooth transition for retiring directors and executive officers on FISA BC.
- ◆ development and adoption of the Strategic Plan for 2013 – 2018 which includes six SMART goals (separate publication is available upon request).
- ◆ development and administration of a survey instru-



ment to determine Post-School Trajectories and Social Contributions of BC Independent School Graduates.

- ◆ establishment of a Distributed Learning (DL) committee to develop best practices guidelines for independent DL schools to support appropriate administrative and educational practices that result in a quality education for children enrolled in DL programs. FISA BC is appreciative to government for the increase (1%) to DL funding that recognizes this educational choice for parents of children who choose to home school (DL independent schools receive 63% of the funding provided to a public DL school).
- ◆ opportunity for all independent schools across the Province, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, to participate in a one day professional development opportunity in the area of special education best practices. This was achieved by FISA BC hosting a seminar in Vancouver featuring two special education specialists and having the seminar broadcast live online throughout the Province so that independent schools in remote areas were able to receive assistance in adapting to the new Ministry of Education protocols and descriptive audits regarding special education funding changes. In response to a FISA BC request, the government advanced a portion of the 2014-15 special education funding to enable schools to prepare and purchase resources over the summer to enable support to students with special needs from the day school started.

CONGRATULATIONS:

My congratulations go to Peter Van Huizen (SCSBC) on his appointment by Minister Fassbender to serve on the BC Teacher’s Council. Also, to Lloyd Robinson (AMG)

who was reappointed to the ISTCSC for a two year term.

THANKS:

This past year, we saw the departure of three board members, two of whom have been long-standing members of the board and executive. Their servant leadership will be missed. I recognize Ray Sutton (ACSIBC), Joe Colistro (CIS) and Dave Shinness (ACSIBC) for their terms of office as directors and Ray for serving as treasurer on the executive from 1998 to 2014. Henry Contant will remain on the board until June 2015 and I want to thank him for his leadership on the executive.

My thanks once again must be expressed to Peter Froese, Executive Director; Magda Hogewoning, Executive Assistant and Ruth Froese, part-time Administrative Assistant for their tireless work in supporting the Federation in its mission. Without their excellent teamwork, the administration of the Federation would not be as efficient and effective as it is. Thank you.

Lastly, to the members of the board, I express my gratitude and thanks for all the volunteer time that they provide to the Federation, but especially my thanks for the expertise they bring to the leadership of the Federation as it continues to grow to serve the students and families of all independent schools in the Province of British Columbia.

Respectfully submitted
Doug Lauson
President



Board of Directors

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Mr. Doug Lauson (CIS)

Vice-President

Dr. Elizabeth Moore (ISABC)

Secretary

Harry Moes (AMG)

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