

IPE/BC NEWS

Public Education is a Public Interest.



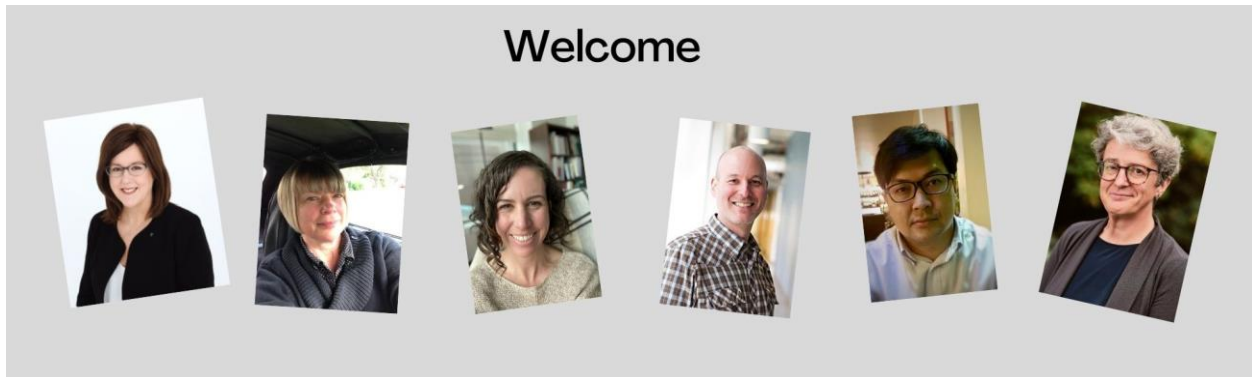
New IPE/BC research paper

IPE/BC has recently published a new research paper, *Inflation, bargaining and the impact of restrictive mandates*, in our Occasional Paper series. Board member and researcher, John Malcolmson has thoroughly examined the impact of years of restrictive bargaining mandates for teachers and support staff in BC public schools along with the current rising inflation rate. Additionally, John tallies the dollars that have been lost to the system due to the steady drop in education spending as a percentage of BC's GDP. In contrast with the oft-repeated "highest funding ever" mantra, this research reveals that were BC to be spending at a rate commensurate with the percentage level found a decade ago, there would be \$2.0 billion more in board budgets annually; if spending were at the rate found in 2001, this figure rises to an astounding \$4.3 billion in additional funds.

Annual Report available

Our Annual Report for 2021 was presented to the AGM in March and is now [available on the website](#). We will be holding a planning session in June to guide the institute's work in the year ahead and will be inviting Fellows to join us. Please watch for a separate bulletin about this opportunity.

Six new Fellows joining IPE/BC



IPE/BC Board is very pleased to welcome the following Fellows to our network of academics, community activists and leaders in public education:

- **Patti Bacchus**, public education advocate and commentator, former school trustee and member of the board of the Broadbent Institute.
- **Charley Beresford**, leader in public interest governance and policy solutions, former school trustee and executive director of the Columbia Institute.
- **Andre Gacoïn**, experienced researcher and Director of the Information, Research and International Solidarity Division of the BCTF.
- **Kevin Millsip**, strategic advisor with the Columbia Institute, former school trustee, BC Libraries Cooperative board member and cofounder of Next UP and Check Your Head. Kevin was also elected to a two year term on the IPE/BC Board of Directors.
- **Vicheth Sen**, experienced educator and researcher, sessional lecturer in the Department of Educational Studies at UBC and senior fellow at the Center for Khmer Studies, Cambodia.
- **Michelle Stack**, associate professor in the Department of Educational Studies, UBC, experienced instructor, researcher, author, and editor.

More information on our cadre of dedicated [IPE/BC Fellows](#) is available on the website.

Perspectives Blog

We have some very interesting blog posts lined up for the coming months, including commentary on the AERA session, *Who Profits from Public Education*, a report on the BCTF seminar, *Renaming Your School as an Act of Reconciliation*, the importance of teaching for citizen education and civic engagement, and addressing climate change through school district operations. Thanks very much to the upcoming writers.

We promote the blog posts on social media as well as in bulletins. Please consider following @PublicEdBC on Facebook and Twitter if you haven't yet done so.

If you would like to write a blog post or have a suggestion for a topic to include, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@publicedbc.ca. We would certainly welcome your participation.

IPE/BC indebted to Sandra Mathison



Sandra Mathison, founding member and driving force for IPE/BC, served on the Board of Directors for seven years, six of those as chair and spokesperson. She opted not to put her name forward for the Board at this AGM but will be carrying on as a Fellow. Sandra's leadership and guidance has been invaluable as has her commitment to building a strong, independent organization in which we can all take pride.

Thank you very much, Sandra, for the very important role you played in building and sustaining IPE/BC and your on-going contributions as a Fellow.

Our hopes and dreams for public education

Thanks very much to the Columbia Institute for including IPE/BC in the High Ground conference for school trustees, councillors, mayors, and regional directors again this year. IPE/BC Board Members, Dan Laitsch, Christine Ho Youngusband, David Chudnovsky and Moira Mackenzie facilitated the workshop, *Our Hopes and Dreams for Public Education*. It was a pleasure to engage with the participants and learn from the perspectives they shared. This experience will inform IPE/BC's work on the Charter for Public Education project and help to create a more current framework and process for acting on our common hopes and dreams for public education.

IPE/BC Board members, Dan Laitsch, John Malcolmson and Larry Kuehn are also working with the Columbia Institute to present a stand-alone session, *Five Myths About Education Funding in BC*. Watch for more information coming soon.

Reaching out, making connections



While our connections with others and our Board meetings have been online this year, we have been busy reaching out and building alliances. We do, however, certainly looking forward to a time when we can meet in person once again.

IPE/BC Chairperson, Dan Laitsch, and Partnerships and Fundraising Chair, David Chudnovsky, have been busy meeting with organizations and individuals with a shared interest in a quality, accessible, inclusive public education system. Recently, they presented the Out of Our Pockets project to the [Provincial Specialist Association](#) Council of the BCTF and have continued discussions with the [BC Principals and Vice-Principals' Association](#) on this project and other opportunities for professional development engagement.

Several Board members attended the [First Call Child and Youth Coalition's Virtual Fundraising Gala on April 29th](#). As reported previously, IPE/BC has become a member organization in First Call. This event featured award winning author and speaker, [Monique Gray Smith](#), who stressed the importance of love and hope. She reminded us that the students in school in Canada today are the first generation learning the true story of Indigenous people's history, culture, and ways of knowing. Monique called on everyone to help children and youth engage in social and emotional learning and to instill the belief that the future will be better than the present. Monique read from her new children's book, [I Hope](#), coming out in the fall and spoke about her [adaptation of Robin Wall Kimmerer's book, Braiding Sweetgrass](#), for young people, also being published in the fall. Congratulations to First Call for this inspiring event.

Countering commercialization and privatization

Like IPE/BC, Education International firmly believes that public education is a public good. EI, representing educators on a global level, is very concerned about the increasing commercialization of public education and the resulting undue influence on education policies and curriculum. Further EI believes that "the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this trend which risks transforming education into a commodity, favouring profit over quality education."

EI has been conducting a multi-year campaign, Global Response to Commercialization and Privatization of Education, and features a wealth of valuable information on the organization's work in this area online [here](#).

Growing the Commons



We're steadily building the [IPE/Commons site](#) as a resource on current issues in education and would be pleased to receive your suggestions for papers, articles, books and interviews to add. The most recent additions include:

[Pause PISA international standardized student testing — it's been two years of pandemic schooling stress](#)

By J-C Couture, *adjunct colleague and instructor at the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.*

[Ten Schools the VSB Should Aim to Rename](#)

By Dr. Lindsay Gibson, *IPE/BC Fellow and Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia.*

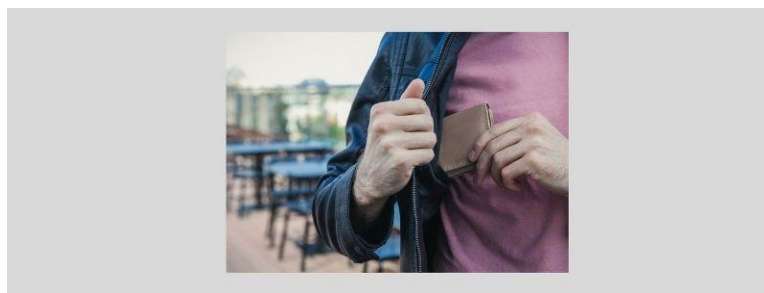
[Inclusion interrupted? The impact of COVID restrictions on inclusion and belonging in classroom communities](#)

By Dr. Gemma Porter is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education, Acadia University.

[Self-checkout education](#)

By Dr. Shannon DM Moore, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba.

Out of Our Pockets Project Update



The purpose of the project

We know that educators spend hundreds, and in some cases, thousands of dollars of their own money ensuring their students have access to adequate food, clothing, hygiene products, as well as curricular and extra-curricular resources. During the pandemic, educators have spent their own money on PPE and cleaning products to ensure safer learning environments for their students. All this money covers core services that should be provided by the provincial government. We hope that with this tracking we can better understand spending needs and patterns and advocate for changes in policy and funding to ensure that the basic health and learning needs of all public school students are met.

To try and better understand just how much money comes into the system from educators, the Institute for Public Education BC is now launching "Out of Our Pockets" -to track teacher spending of their own money on their students, classrooms, colleagues, and schools.

How it works

Our web site (www.ooop.ca) is currently being pilot tested as we move to scaling up the project for full implementation this summer. We invite you to check out the web site and join us in our effort to track teacher out-of-pocket spending. At ooop.ca, educators can easily enter and track their spending across five categories: COVID-related, teaching materials, student learning materials, extra-curricular materials, and financial support for students. Designed to be compatible with smart phones, individuals can easily enter their data, even while they're standing in line at a store. Further, the system allows educators to monitor their own spending to gain a better understanding of their school's resource needs as well as to look back on what they've spent over the year, which can be helpful at tax time. All information entered on the web site is held in confidence and as a user driven system, participation is entirely voluntary—users can add, delete, and revise any of the data entered, and close their account at any time.

Building participation

We hope to generate wide engagement in the project and will continue to update you in future newsletters. Please feel free to share this information with any educators and teacher candidates that you are in contact with.

How is England's standardized testing regime affecting students and their education?



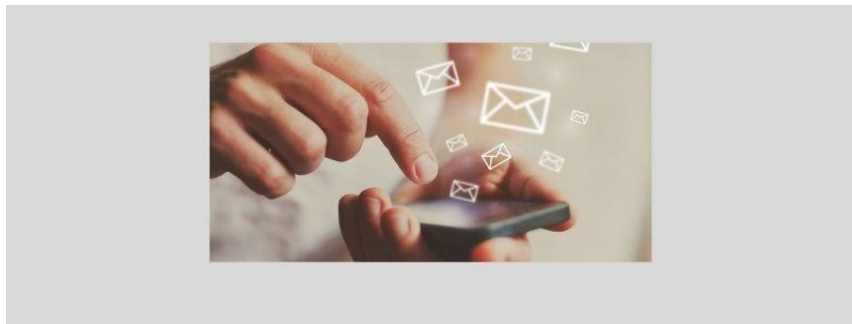
In a recent article in The Guardian, "[England's punitive exam system is only good at one thing: preserving privilege](#)", George Monbiot speaks to the damage being caused by the country's intense standardized testing regime and asks the question, "Why are we doing this to our children?"

Drawing on data from the NHS, the OECD, the Children's Commissioner for England and the National Education Union, Monbiot concludes that the tests "inflict pain and distress on our children, narrow their minds and force them to conform. They turn education, which should be rich with the joy of discovery, into an instrumental misery. They exacerbate injustice, exclusion, and inequality."

Looking ahead

BC's general local government elections will be held on October 15th, including the election of school trustees. Traditionally the turnout for these elections has been low, yet the impact of elected trustees on public education values, conditions and priorities is significant. IPE/BC believes in the importance of public education as a democratic institute governed by elected officials who are accountable to their communities as well as the value of respecting the voice of those closest to the education process- parents, students, administrators, teachers, and support staff. As these elections only take place every four years, it's even more important for those who value a quality, accessible and inclusive public education system to become engaged in the process.

Sharing the news



Please feel free to send this newsletter to others in your networks and encourage them to [subscribe](#). You can find a [one-page handout on IPE/BC](#) to share as well as back issues of [IPE/BC news on the website](#).