



Institute for
Public Education / *British Columbia*

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

public education is a public interest

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www.instituteforpubliceducation.org

Our Vision

We believe public education is in the public interest... that **high quality public education** that is **accessible** and **welcoming to all** is essential to a **strong democracy**.

Our Mission

The Institute for Public Education BC, an independent nonprofit organization, provides high quality information and leadership to build a strong public education system for British Columbia's children, families, and communities.

IPE/BC offers analysis of current educational issues, supports public education, and shares current research findings to enrich dialogue on educational issues in British Columbia.

Principles

IPE/BC believes that public education is in the public interest.

The Institute is based on four principles:

- Prioritizing decolonization and reconciliation in policy and practice in public education.
- Commitment to democracy and public education's role in strengthening democratic principles.
- High quality public education for all children.
- Accessible, welcoming and inclusive public schools.

Quality

A decolonizing lens opens the doors to truth and change, and embeds the TRC Calls to Action in schools and professional practice.

A quality Public Education system strives to ensure every child develops their abilities to the fullest. No child is excluded.

A strong Public Education system recognizes that children are at the centre of the enterprise. It is their individual and collective needs that should guide policy and practice.

Public Schools are concerned with a broad-based education that includes aesthetic, cultural, emotional, social, physical and vocational development, as well as intellectual and academic engagement.

The most fundamental and significant relationship in Public Education is between the student and their caregivers, and the teacher. Relationships with peers are also fundamental to their healthy growth and development.

All professional educators—teachers, administrators, and support personnel—should be free to speak out for the best interests of the children with whom they work.

Assessing the progress and value of our Public Schools cannot be reduced to a standardized test. School and system evaluation needs to be carried out with diverse tools and focus on supporting the lives of the children in those schools.

For public education to be optimally effective, schools need to be adequately and equitably funded.

Democracy

Public Schools must strengthen and deepen democracy and encourage active citizenship.

Public Schools are open to all people regardless of special or diverse needs, economic status, background, religion, ethnicity, learning style or location in the province.

The public school is a secular and tolerant place that celebrates the diversity in our communities while underscoring and emphasizing our common humanity. Students in public schools come from families with every kind of religious background – and no religious background.

Public Schools are democratic public institutions governed by publicly elected officials (School Trustees and the Ministers of Education) who are accountable to their communities.

Those closest to the education process—teachers, administrators, school staff, students and their parents and community members—must have a meaningful and respected voice in education policy and practice.

Accessibility

We believe that, as a cornerstone of public education, public schools should be welcoming and inclusive. Students, parents, educators, and community residents should feel that their cultures and contributions are respected and valued, and their presence and participation in the life of the school is welcomed.

Public schools must also be:

- safe and secure places for students and all personnel who work in them.
- community institutions as well as centers of learning. An understanding of the public school as a focus of community life is vital.

While public schools must strive to meet the needs of individual students, they also have an important role to play in creating a community of learners and fostering the social development and civic engagement of the children and youth in their care.

Strategic Priorities

- Grow as a nonpartisan voice on current issues in BC education.
- Conduct and disseminate research that fosters a strong public education system.
- Protect public education from privatization.

Governance

IPE/BC Board of Directors

- Steve Cardwell **
- David Chudnovsky
- Larry Kuehn
- Moira Mackenzie *
- John Malcolmson
- Kevin Millsip *
- Bárbara Silva
- Bryn Williams **

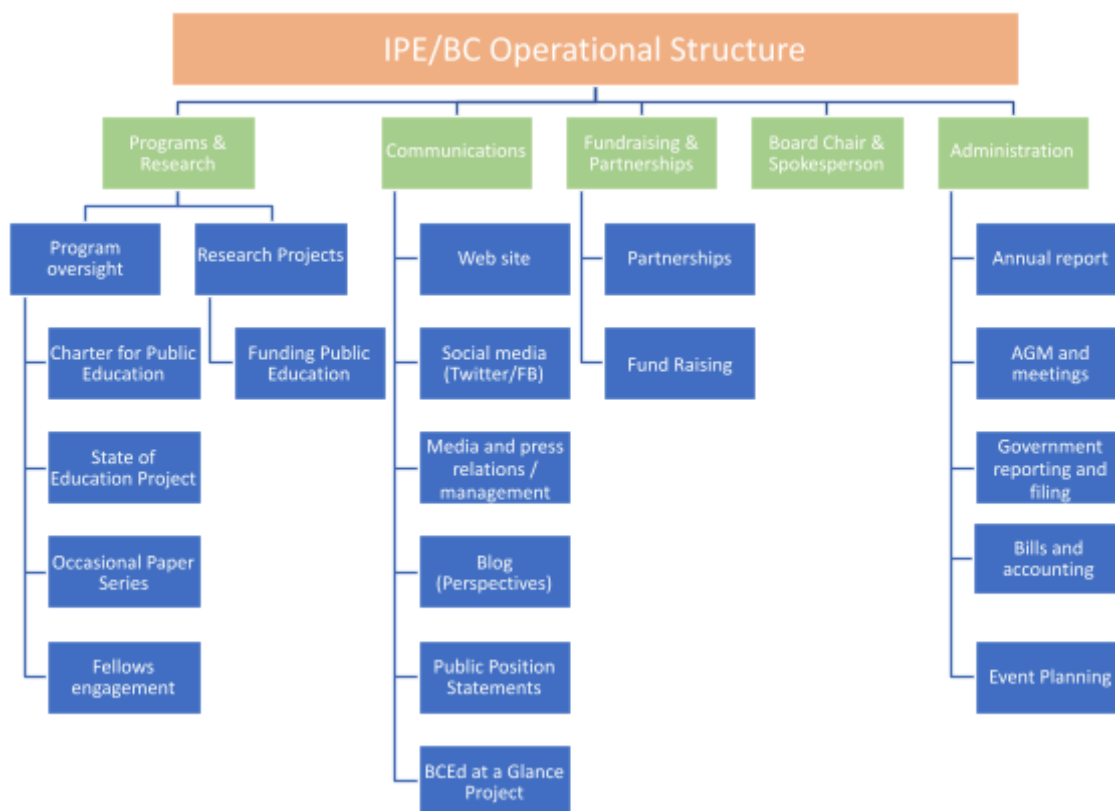
Board members serve for two years, but are eligible for renewal (*term expiring, **new to the Board)

The IPE/BC Board operates through a committee structure intended to empower board member activities. The Committee Structure was meant to clearly define responsibilities of individual Board members and to provide opportunities for others to participate in supporting IPE/BC's work and activities.

The following Board members serve as Committee Chairs:

- Steve Cardwell Board Chairperson
- *vacant* Vice Chairperson/Administration
- Larry Kuehn and John Malcolmson Research & Programs
- Moira Mackenzie Communications
- David Chudnovsky Fundraising and Partnerships

The IPE/BC Committee Structure is illustrated below:



IPE/BC Fellows

We are pleased to have welcomed several new Fellows to IPE BC this year (*). Here is a list of all of the IPE/BC Fellows.

IPE/BC Fellows	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Patti Bacchus● Charley Beresford● Carla Bergman● Liz Blackwood● Jane Bouey● William (Bill) Bruneau *● Steve Cardwell *● David Chudnovsky● Annabree Fairweather *● Gerald Fallon● Lizanne Foster● Andrée Gacoin● Lyndsay Gibson● Budd Hall● Bill Hood● Edward Howe● Iglia Ivanova● Anjum Kahn● Crawford Killian● Larry Kuehn● Dan Laitsch● Shannon Leddy● Andrew Longhurst	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● John Malcolmson● Moira Mackenzie● Sandra Mathison● Kathryn McNaughton● Kevin Millsip● Adrienne Montani● Vis Naidoo● Wendy Poole● Stephen Petrina● Michael Rattray● E.Wayne Ross● Michal Rozworski● Hans Schuetze● Vicheth Sen● Özlem Sensoy● Paul Shaker● Bárbara Silva● Michelle Stack● Paul Tetrault● Fei Wang● Robert Whiteley● Bryn Williams● John Willinsky● Christine Ho Younghusband

Reports

Chairperson

- Steve Cardwell

The Chair of the Board of Directors for IPE is the public face of the organization and responsible for convening the Board of Directors, responding to the organization's incoming e-mail and communicating with Board Committees. At the start of the year, Dr. Dan Laitsch was Chairperson and then Dr. Christine Ho Younghusband led the organization. Both Dan and Christine stepped down from the Board due to pressing work commitments. They are both sorely missed on the Board and welcome to return at any time! The current Chair is Dr. Steve Cardwell who joined the Board in August. He quickly became Vice Chairperson and, in December assumed the role of Chairperson. Steve is also the Chair of the Administration Committee, which is the operational lead for the Board of Directors. The position of Vice Chairperson is currently vacant.

The responsibility for ensuring that the organization's fiduciary requirements are met, as well as fulfilling governmental reporting and accountability requirements lies with the Chair and Vice Chair. This responsibility is currently being handled by the Chair, Steve Cardwell and Treasurer, David Chudnovsky.

Over the course of the past year IPE/BC accomplished the following:

1. Regular Board meetings. Since our last AGM, the Board has met monthly.
2. A planning retreat is being planned for April.
3. Hosting the IPE/BC email address
 - The IPE/BC email domain is [*@publicedbc.ca](mailto:info@publicedbc.ca). We receive email through info@publicedbc.ca. While we have moved our official communications to the info@publicedbc.ca address, we maintain our old publiceducationbc@gmail.com address for legacy messages.
4. Directing requests and information to appropriate Committees
 - Maintained regular communication with the program area committees as part of monitoring emails and chairing regular board meetings.
5. Acting as spokesperson for IPE/BC as needed
 - IPE/BC has worked hard over the past year to build relationships with our partners in the education sector. As a result, the Chair and/or colleagues on the Board has met with the leadership at several external organizations, including the BCPVPA, BCTF, BCSTA, CLC, CUPE BC, BCTF locals in Nanaimo, Surrey, Victoria and Burnaby, CCPA, Columbia Institute, Inclusion BC, and the Retired Teachers' Association. Last year, the Chair represented IPE/BC at the Think Tank on Privatization in Education sponsored by the CCPA and BCTF.
6. Compiled IPE's Annual Report.
7. Scheduled and organized all Board and General meetings.

8. Maintained IPE's *Bylaws* and the *Policies, Guidelines, Rules Manual*. The organization's governing structure was previously updated to focus on programs and services including designating Directors with the following portfolios: Administration, Communication, Fundraising and Partnerships, Programs and Research, and Board Chair role.
9. Worked with the organization's Treasurer, David Chudnovsky to file required government reports, update the list of Board members with the Province, and submit our post AGM report.
10. Supported the organization's Treasurer to ensure continuity in signing authority for IPE/BC accounts.
11. Coordinated IPE public events - IPE was well represented at a variety of public events over the past year.
12. Along with CUFA BC and FPSE, attended a recent meeting with the Shadow Minister for Post secondary education and Future Skills.

Communications

- Moira Mackenzie

Through its communications, IPE/BC continues to promote quality, accessible, inclusive public education and support discussion of matters of importance to BC's public schools.

IPE/BC News is generally published four times a year; it is emailed directly to subscribers and contacts, and is [available on the website as well](#). Through this newsletter we keep IPE/BC Fellows, contacts and the broader community informed about the work of the institute, new publications and resources and emerging issues. If you are not already a subscriber, please sign up [here](#).

Additionally, IPE/BC uses social media to engage with others and share items of interest to public education supporters. In particular, we use Facebook, X/Twitter, and Instagram, but are beginning to test out the advantages of using additional platforms, such as Threads, Mastodon and Tribel. We've increased our overall engagement online and, as a result, have made many new and constructive connections with others.

IPE/s [Perspectives Blog](#), is a space for individuals to write about public education matters that interest them. In 2023 we featured blog posts about the 2023 Forum presentation, Stretched to the Limit, the teacher shortage and the community school model. We welcome new contributors to the blog. Please contact us at info@publicedbc.ca if you'd like to write a post.

The [IPE/BC Commons](#), established in 2021, is a site for sharing links to research, articles, books and other publications related to public education. It maintains an independent voice on public education matters, while also recognizing the work of individuals and other organizations. We added numerous new publications in 2023, many of which were authored by IPE/BC Fellows, and are continuing to expand and promote the Commons. Our aim is for the Commons to be a rich resource for learning about, discussing and researching public education matters. Please get in touch if you have suggestions for additions to the site.

In 2023 IPE/BC's external media engagement included the following:

Katie Hyslop of the Tyee interviewed IPE/BC researcher and Board member, John Malcolmson, on the 2023 provincial budget for the article, "We Still Face an Underfunded System."

Bárbara Silva, IPE/BC Board member, was featured on Radio CFRO, speaking about the IPE/BC Hopes and Dreams project.

The CCPA published The Hopes and Dreams project in the Policy Note publication (January 11, 2024).

IPE/BC has developed a number of factsheets that can be downloaded and shared as handouts at in-person meetings and events, as well as online. They can be found [here](#). We will continue to add to material and would welcome suggestions for new topics.

Our communications in 2023 included a strong focus on the project, Our Hopes and Dreams for Public Education in BC. As well, we have launched the Trustee Project that will be featured in our upcoming communications. We will be actively promoting our projects, creating many opportunities to engage with them, and encouraging participation throughout the province.

We hope to increase our presence in the media and in-house publications of other organizations in 2024.

Research

- John Malcolmson and Larry Kuehn

Out of Our Pockets

The *Out of Our Pockets Project* (OOOP) is an important research endeavor aimed at gathering data from teachers and others on the degree to which they use their own personal money to subsidize our public schools.

In 2024 the Out of Our Pockets (OOOP) project faces both challenges as well as opportunities. OOOP began the year in need of a significant technical overhaul to ensure continued online functionality. Over the prior two years the online platform had been both developed and tested as a way of demonstrating what can be termed “proof of concept.” The platform works but requires further changes to ensure both stability as well as ongoing sustainability. There is a cost attached to proceeding with this overhaul, but IPE has been able to secure dedicated funding to enable further work on the project.

That being said, the original developer team working on the project are no longer associated with it. IPE/BC is therefore looking for a new development group to pick up on the required work and move it forward. One challenge we face is the fact our initial investment in the original software platform leaves us with a restricted pool of developers potentially available to do the kind of work required. So, we are wanting to progress with the original project plan but are constrained by these technical issues. Finding a solution to these challenges will be key to reactivating further work on the project in line with its original research goals.

In terms of the project itself, IPE/BC is planning to explore opportunities for direct partnering with teachers and potentially other groups at the local level interested in supporting OOOP’s research goal to document the reliance of our public school system on the continued influx of money out of the pockets of those working within it. We expect that once we find a path forward through our current challenges we will be progressing forward in earnest with this approach.

Public Support for Private Education

IPE/BC remains committed to doing research on and educating British Columbians about the impacts of privatization on public education and schools.

- *Annual Update of Subsidies to Private Schools* was posted to our website and shared on social media.
- *CCPA/BCTF Think Tank on Privatization in Education*
- *Out of Our Pockets (OOOP)*: designed in part to confront and make transparent the provincial reliance educators subsidizing core services within public education.

IPE/BC has for a number of years now maintained a running examination and critique of BC’s commitment to the enhanced funding of private sector education systems. The 2024 BC Budget released this past February announced a \$72 million increase in this area, representing a 14+% annual hike over 2023’s already substantial commitments. At the current rate, funding to promote and incentivize privatization will close to double every five years. IPE/BC opposes these commitments and advocates that funding be repurposed to support a public system which by definition is available to all children and families.

Education Funding Levels and the BC Budget

IPE/BC continues to offer periodic commentary on issues related to BC's funding support for public schools. The 2024 provincial budget reveals a "stay-the-course" focus when it comes to funding support. As with last year, the budget's primary policy thrust lies with meeting spending commitments that have already been made, along with the steering of new allocations to meet significant growth in student enrolments that is expected to persist over the mid-term.

A major area of spending initiative this year lies with new school construction which sees a 21 per cent jump in spending commitments, geared to addressing continued growth in student numbers anticipated for the period ahead and next year's expected increase will see spending in this area rise more than half compared with 2023 levels. And, as noted, private schools continue to benefit from public largesse while our K-12 system faces unmet needs and uncertain support for inflationary cost pressures facing all areas of public school operation. Child care support within the Ministry of Education's funding envelope also reflects modest levels of increase, especially in light of the ambitious policy goals BC has established for this area.

Submissions to the Provincial and Federal Governments

Priority Funding Initiatives (Provincial Budget brief)

IPE/BC submitted its recommendations for the 2023 provincial budget to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. We focused on the urgent need to place a priority on funding initiatives that support our most vulnerable learners. The full brief can be found on the IPE/BC website here:

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/ipe-bc-submission-to-the-budget-2024-consultation/>.

National universal school foods program (Federal Budget brief)

IPE/BC submitted a brief to the Federal Government about ensuring that students are well-fed through a national universal school foods program. The full brief can be found on the IPE/BC website here:

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/ipe-bc-brief-to-federal-budget-consultations-focused-on-universal-school-food-program/>

Partnerships and Activities

This year saw IPE's continued engagement with other groups and organizations:

- IPE continues to develop and deepen partnerships with a range of organizations and individuals.
- We continued our dialogue with the BC Retired Teachers' Association.
- We appreciate the support we have received for our "Out of Our Pockets" project from Simon Fraser University. We are following up on our previous connections with the Surrey Teachers' Association to implement OOOP.
- An introduction to the Trustee Project was provided to the Table Officers of the BCTF. The BCTF has designated an ongoing liaison to enhance communication between the organizations.
- IPE is working with the BCTF on the "Our Hopes and Dreams for Public Education" project. We will have a presence at both the BCTF AGM and their Public Education Conference seeking participation and submissions to Hopes and Dreams.
- IPE is deepening its relationship with CUPE BC with the addition of a new Board member representing CUPE BC.
- IPE is deepening its relationship with CUFA BC with the addition of a new Board member representing CUFA BC (Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia)
- IPE had a table at the BCTF Representative Assembly (RA).
- IPE met with table officers of the BCSTA to clarify our roles in public education and that of trustees.
- We have recently begun a relationship with the Surrey Teachers' Association and expect to participate in their May Professional Development Conference with special emphasis on Hopes and Dreams, the Trustee Project, and OOOP.
- The IPE Hopes and Dreams project will, in the coming months engage with The Chilliwack Teachers' Association, The Nanaimo Teachers' Association, The Surrey Retired Teachers' Association and other groups. (see below)
- Our annual analysis of the provincial subsidy to Private Schools continued again through a collaboration with the BC Office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
- IPE presented at the Columbia Institute High Ground Conference. This is an important and symbiotic partnership. IPE will again be at the High Ground conference later this month.
- IPE has an ongoing relationship with the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association.
- IPE has an ongoing relationship with First Call.
- IPE will be presenting this May at the Inclusion BC conference with a focus on the Hopes and Dreams project.
- IPE will be in Nanaimo in spring and will present about the Hopes and Dreams and the Trustee Projects – first with the Nanaimo Teachers' Association and then with the larger community.
- IPE has developed a strong relationship with BCEdAccess through interaction with the Executive Director and reciprocal presentations at our respective conferences. We also had an information table at AdvoCon2023 last October.

Projects

Hopes and Dreams for Public Education in BC

- David Chudnovsky

- What are your hopes and dreams for public education in BC?
- What do you think BC public schools need?
- What would an equitable, inclusive, and diverse public education system be like?

The *Hopes and Dreams* (H&D) for Public Education project was inspired by a process that began in 2003 with the *Charter for Public Education*. The Charter was created from passionate discussions about public education with thousands of people from 42 communities around the province and 620 submissions. Twenty years later, much has changed—life is more complex and stressful for many, and public schools are under pressure. IPE is interested in understanding what your “Hopes and Dreams” are for public education in BC.

Additionally, IPE/BC is working to decolonize the Charter through the removal of settler-colonial quotations and finding ways to include Indigenous people both in contributing to and engaging with the project and speaking to the interests and needs of Indigenous students and communities in the Hopes and Dreams report when it is published. In addition, IPE/BC is exploring efforts aimed at enhancing the ability of the Charter to be used in areas like evaluation work or reflection on teacher practice.

In 2023 IPE and our Hopes and Dreams Project made important presentations to First Call and the Vancouver and District Labour Council. We also presented a workshop on Hopes and Dreams at the BCEdAccess conference, AdvoCon2023 last October.

In April 2024, the Hopes and Dreams Project will meet with the Chilliwack Teachers’ Association Early Career Teachers’ group twice to solicit input. In May H&D will meet with the Nanaimo District Teachers’ Association and we are working together with the NDTA to organize a public meeting and engagement on the H&D project. Also in Nanaimo in May IPE will present to the Inclusion BC Conference and solicit input to the H&D project. We expect to meet with the Surrey Retired Teachers’ Association in May as well for a presentation on IPE and an engagement with the H&D Project.

CCPA published a policy note (January 11, 2024) focused on the Hopes and Dreams for BC’s Public Schools: <https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/ccpa-policy-note-focused-on-hopes-and-dreams-for-bcs-public-schools/>

The H&D planning committee includes: David Chudnovsky, Bryn Williams, Bárbara Silva, Steve Cardwell

The Trustee Project

- Kevin Millsip and Steve Cardwell

The *Trustee Project* (TP) is a collaboration between the Institute for Public Education and the Columbia Institute.

The purpose is to develop an ongoing program of support, training, research, and network building that will help progressively minded School Board Trustees in the implementation of progressive agendas in their districts.

The Project will provide education and training that enhances progressive trustees' abilities to govern their boards in a progressive manner and to work with one another across districts to ultimately build a more equitable and just K-12 public education system for all.

We have 3 key goals:

1. To build and support a self-sustaining network of trustees with shared values.
2. To support local advocacy and action in service of public education.
3. To document and create materials and research that supports ongoing learning for progressive trustees.

Actions to date include:

- Two Focus Group sessions were held in the Fall with invited trustees. This was to hear from progressive trustees about their experiences and support needs.
- A webinar was held on Feb. 22 about budget advocacy. This was co-presented by Anna Chudnovsky (BCTF) and Jennifer Ready (VSB trustee).
- A morning dedicated to supporting trustees is being planned for the March 22 High Ground conference with two sessions:
 - State of Education - Clint Johnston (BCTF) and Karen Ranalletta (CUPE BC)
 - Interactive dialogue session for school trustees (IPE BC)
- A workshop is anticipated at the BCTF Public education Conference in May.
- Financial support is coming from BCTF and CLC (IPE) + (CI).
- We are considering hiring a co-op student or part time person to help coordinate activities.
- The TP planning committee includes:
 - Anna Chudnovsky (BCTF), Kari Scott-Whyte (CUPE BC), Kevin Millsip, Steve Cardwell

Finances

- David Chudnovsky

Generous donations were received from BCTF, Surrey Teachers' Association, Burnaby Teachers' Association, Victoria Teachers' Association (these are reflected in the Annual Financial Report), CUPE BC, Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

In-kind support was provided by Simon Fraser University, CCPA, Columbia Institute, and the BCTF.

Annual Financial Report: March 2023 – March 2024

<u>OPENING BALANCE:</u>	
March 2023	<u>\$22,411.29</u>
<u>EXPENDITURES:</u>	
SFU IPE AGM	1085.00
AGM member/guest reimbursements	1267.25
Society Act Charges	40.00
H&D printing etc.	610.40
Columbia Institute Conference	51.00
Cantrust	546.00
BCTF Public Ed Conference	148.14
Airline reimbursement	618.97
BC Ed Access table	250.00
Postal Charges	196.35
Total Expenditures:	<u>\$4813.11</u>
<u>REVENUES:</u>	
Donations *	\$200.00
Total Revenues:	<u>\$200.00</u>
<u>CLOSING BALANCE:</u>	
March 2024	<u>\$17,798.18</u>

* Two significant grants have been approved to IPE - one for \$10,000 from BCTF and one for \$5,000 from the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). We have not yet received those monies so they are not yet reflected in this budget statement. However, assuming receipt of the grants the IPE bank balance will be about \$32,000.



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