

Responses by Electoral District

Cariboo-Chilcotin

- **Michael Moses, BC New Democratic Party**

Thanks for the questionnaire. As I'm sure you know, we candidates are door-knocking all across the Cariboo Chilcotin for the next three weeks, meeting voters and discussing all sorts of topics, including public education. Our NDP Comms Team has prepared an excellent summary of the items on education in our platform and I'd be pleased to chat with voters on these topics at any time.

Courtenay-Comox

- **Ronna-Rae Leonard, BC New Democratic Party**

What will you do to increase funding to B.C.'s public schools to ensure students receive the opportunities and supports that their counterparts in other provinces are able to access?

The BC NDP is taking action to give our kids the quality education they deserve - building new and expanded schools and investing in our kids. There is more on the way, with a record capital budget over next three years for new and expanded schools.

What will you do to recruit and retain teachers and education support workers?

The BCNDP have hired over 5,700 new teachers and achieved the smallest class sizes in a decade, giving our kids more space and more attention to help them learn.

How will you ensure that B.C.'s students have timely access to safe, neighbourhood schools?

There will be 125 new, expanded and seismically upgraded schools built or underway for more than 70,000 students. There is more on the way, with a record capital budget over next three years for new and expanded schools.

What will you do to ensure Indigenous students receive educational opportunities and supports to enable their success in B.C.'s public schools?

Advance Indigenous education and training opportunities, including the preservation and revitalization of First Nations languages and cultural heritage.

How will you ensure schools are safe, inclusive and welcoming for all students? How will you support and protect programs that educate and support students regarding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and other anti-discriminatory programs and practices?

SOGI is NOT a specific curriculum, sex-ed, or sexually explicit books.

SOGI is not about teaching anyone to be a certain sexual orientation or gender. It's simply about teaching kids to respect people who are different.

Parents always have the right to take their kid out of sex-ed.

The province does not manage the content of libraries across the province - that's up to the school boards. We expect books to be age-appropriate, and anyone with concerns about a specific book should follow up with their school board.

Fraser-Nicola

- **Jonah Timms- BC Green Party**

What will you do to increase funding to B.C.'s public schools to ensure students receive the opportunities and supports that their counterparts in other provinces are able to access?

Education is the foundation of a healthy society, yet it has been consistently deprioritized by consecutive governments in British Columbia. Teacher shortages, reduced funding for special education and rising operating costs are having a heavy impact on students. When schools are inadequately funded and students spend their education years in portables, a clear message is sent to our youth: we are not investing in you. Despite persistent and visible inequities, no BC government has adequately addressed these issues in over two decades.

Every public school should be a place where students, educators and staff feel safe, included, welcome and cared for. When this happens, optimal learning follows. Students cannot succeed in environments marked by scarcity and insecurity—and our schools must be fully equipped to meet their needs and those of the educators who support them. The BC Greens will modernize operational funding and increase grants for school districts to ensure every school has the resources to meet instructional and student support needs.

What will you do to recruit and retain teachers and education support workers?

The BC Greens are committed to strengthening the education workforce by providing financial support, fair compensation, and streamlined processes for educators. We will:

- Provide paid final practicums for teachers and ECEs, offering financial support during their essential training periods.
- Simplify the certification process for teachers from other provinces or countries to attract more qualified educators to BC.
- Develop bursaries for educators who commit to serving in remote districts, and increase funding for rural and remote teacher education programs to address workforce shortages.
- Ensure EAs receive fair compensation and increased hours, ensuring they earn a living wage and have job security.
- Pursue loan forgiveness programs for teachers, ECEs, and EAs as part of broader post-secondary support initiatives.

How will you ensure that B.C.'s students have timely access to safe, neighbourhood schools?

The BC Greens will modernize public school funding and infrastructure to support student success. We will undertake comprehensive reforms in facilities management to ensure all schools meet high standards of safety, functionality, and climate resilience.

And we will collaborate across ministries and the construction industry to create pre-approved universal school building designs, which will be reevaluated every 10 years to ensure they meet climate-resilient standards.

- Universal school building designs can be scaled to the predicted number of students. The current school design process is costly and lengthy. Due to the additional steps – requests for proposals from architects, contractors, and other construction professionals – this can vastly slow down the building process and increase costs. With universal, pre-approved designs, we can ensure schools are built as quickly, efficiently, and safely as

possible.

What will you do to ensure Indigenous students receive educational opportunities and supports to enable their success in B.C.'s public schools?

Indigenous students need what all students need: access to learning and resources that support them to thrive. We are ensuring that all schools in BC are well-resourced – with educators, support staff, mental health professionals, funding, and technology to meet the needs of students. Schools have been underfunded and under-resourced for decades – especially rural and remote jurisdictions, where there are higher numbers of Indigenous students.

We are committed to equipping students with the tools and resources they need to thrive – with a targeted focus on populations who have been marginalized. The school system should be one that creates the conditions for all students to feel included, and succeed – we are committed to making this vision a reality.

How will you ensure schools are safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all students? How will you support and protect programs that educate and support students regarding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and other anti-discriminatory programs and practices?

We will continue supporting and expanding the SOGI 123 initiative to create inclusive school environments that support LGBTQ+ students and address issues of gender identity and sexual orientation.

We will expand awareness and education campaigns for disability and accessibility in elementary, secondary and post-secondary institutions. These campaigns will focus on creating safer and more inclusive learning environments for students with disabilities and raising awareness about ableism and its harmful effects.

Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream

- **Tara Armstrong, Conservative Party of BC**

Thank you very much for reaching out. As the election nears and multiple requests come in for surveys, town halls and other items, we're asking that these requests be sent to our central campaign by filling out the form below. By doing so, we'll be in a better place to understand the priorities of our constituents. [Conservative Party of BC Stakeholder Form \(google.com\)](#)

- **Anna Warwick Sears, BC New Democratic Party**

Thanks for taking the time to email me about my campaign for BC MLA in Kelowna-Lake Country-Coldstream. I, or one of my volunteers, will be in touch as soon as possible. Thanks for your patience!

Kelowna Centre

- **Loyal Woodward, BC New Democratic Party**

Thank you for connecting with me and the BC NDP Kelowna Centre campaign. Our campaign is fuelled by volunteers, we will be in touch with you as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience!

Nanaimo Gabriola Island

- **Dale Parker, Conservative Party of BC**

Hello. The Party Headquarters will help with questionnaires. Please get in touch with them at: [Contact the Conservative Party of BC \(conservativebc.ca\)](http://conservativebc.ca)

Nanaimo-Lantzville

- **Lia Versaevel, BC Green Party**

Funding: There is no question that BC is grossly underfunding public education, and with a population that is growing exponentially, as in Nanaimo and Surrey, this must not continue to be the trajectory that we continue taking. Education needs a larger slice of the BC budget pie. no matter what model we employ. Teachers need to be paid well, as do all support staff within public schools. Students need a robust customized education plan tailored to their learning styles and capabilities. We cannot believe that a one size fits all approach will meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Public education is a relatively recent social phenomenon, but critical to the advancement of democracy and social justice. We must have a well-rounded, curious, and well-informed population, who asks questions and is not content to be brain-washed.

Recruitment: There are many people living in BC, myself included, who tried to become certified as a Teacher in this Province, but were stymied by the red tape and bureaucracy. With a MA and teaching experience in Nevada, and acceptance into a PhD program, with transcripts from 7 BC Universities and Colleges, I could not get through the process, and needed to settle for TA jobs in various schools. A thorough review of the certification process must be undertaken, opening the door to incredible people with a diverse set of talents. There is untapped talent right here and right now in BC. Let's find a way to incorporate it for the benefit of all students.

Facilities: Schools stand empty for nearly half of every year. As single purpose buildings, particularly in urban environments, this is unacceptable. Classes must be offered on early and late schedules, and throughout the year. Our extended summer vacations were designed around agrarian harvests and other antiquated notions. We must offer alternatives that improve the accessibility to school buildings and expand their hours of openness. In some countries there are Saturday and Sunday schools, as well, for specialized learning opportunities. Let's realize that it is 2024, not 1910.

Indigenous Students: The ramifications of Residential School survivors will last well into our collective future. Generational abuse and even genocide is in recent memory and must be the Truth part of the equation leading to Reconciliation. Mentors and language holders, elders and community representatives must be welcomed into the classrooms and schools, for the benefit of all students. Parents and grandparents must be welcomed into classrooms to see and hear that there is a new reality, not the one they suffered through.

Reasons for learning must be promoted and include the ability to tell one's own story, speaking your truth, standing up for the rights of all students, social justice, UNDRIP and the 94 Calls to Action must be taught as essential curriculum.

Safe, welcoming schools: Everyone who is in a school deserves to feel and KNOW that they are in a safe space. This must be a reality that is learned in Pre-K and carried throughout the journey of education, beyond grade 12 and into post-secondary learning. K through 16 is a model that is in use in some jurisdictions (Nevada). Violence in any form must not be tolerated, and this includes emotional and social violence. All staff must exemplify this reality and receive ongoing training, from bus drivers through custodians and administration. Public schools are one of the best places to learn about inclusion and safety.

Richmond Centre

- **Henry Yao, BC New Democratic Party**

Thank you for contacting **Henry Yao**, the BC NDP candidate for Richmond Centre. This automated response is to confirm that your email has been received. For questions about the BC Provincial Election process, you can also contact Elections BC directly at www.elections.bc.ca or 1-800-661-8683. Henry Yao's Campaign Team. We will respond to your email as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience.

Sannich North and the Islands

- **Rob Botterell, BC Green Party**

What will you do to increase funding to B.C.'s public schools to ensure students receive the opportunities and supports that their counterparts in other provinces are able to access?

The education system is the core of everything we do, and we need to start treating it as a top priority. As a parent, I saw my daughter grow up and navigate the school system here, and I want every student in our riding and across the province to have the same opportunities I wanted for her.

I recently attended a debate at Stelly's Secondary School in Saanichton, and I was thoroughly impressed by the students and their insightful questions. Their passion for their education and future serves as a powerful reminder of our responsibility to equip them with the necessary tools to succeed. The issues we discuss during their election will greatly affect their futures—but perhaps none more so than education.

Education is the foundation of a healthy society, yet it has been consistently deprioritized by consecutive governments in British Columbia. When schools are inadequately funded and students spend their education years in portables, a clear message is sent to our youth: we are not investing in you. The impacts of teacher shortages, diminished funding for special education, and escalating operating costs—like the transportation issues happening here at home—are deeply felt by students and families alike, and yet no BC government has taken meaningful action to address these issues.

It's time for us to take a hard look at the budget, sharpen our pencils, and commit to putting education at the very top of our list. I want every student—just like my daughter—to have access to the resources they need to succeed. I'm proud to stand behind the BC Greens' commitment to modernizing operational funding and increasing grants for school districts so that every school has the support necessary to meet instructional and student needs. As your MLA, I look forward to working through these challenges and making education a priority for all.

What will you do to recruit and retain teachers and education support workers?

There is no job more important than educating the next generation—and yet teachers and education workers across the province aren't given the support needed to meet the growing challenges in education, making it more difficult to attract and retain these vital roles. I deeply believe in the vital role educators play, which is why the BC Greens are committed to strengthening the education workforce by providing the necessary financial support, fair compensation, and streamlined processes for our dedicated educators.

We have specific commitments in place to make a real difference. For instance, we want to offer paid final practicums for teachers and early childhood educators (ECEs), giving them essential financial assistance during their training periods. We'll also simplify the certification process for teachers coming from other provinces or countries, making it easier to bring talented professionals to BC. Additionally, we're focused on developing bursaries for educators who are willing to serve in remote districts and increasing funding for rural and remote teacher education programs to help address workforce shortages. I understand the hard work that educational assistants (EAs) do, which is why we're committed to ensuring they receive fair compensation and increased hours so they can earn a living wage and enjoy job security. Plus, we'll pursue loan forgiveness programs for teachers, ECEs, and EAs as part of our broader commitment to support those in post-secondary education.

How will you ensure that B.C.'s students have timely access to safe, neighbourhood schools?

In our riding of Saanich North and the Islands, recent earthquakes highlight the need for safe and resilient infrastructure—particularly our schools. We have a responsibility to ensure our students learn in safe environments that support their success and give their families peace of mind. The BC Greens see the importance of modernizing our public school funding and infrastructure and have a plan to make it happen.

For current infrastructure, we need to assess our existing school buildings to ensure they meet high standards of safety, functionality, and climate resilience. This means implementing comprehensive reforms in facilities management.

Looking ahead, we need to simplify future school development by working across ministries and collaborating with the construction industry to create pre-approved universal building designs. This will help us ensure that new schools can accommodate projected student populations while optimizing construction processes. By reducing the complexities involved in school building—from requests for proposals to approvals—we can ensure schools are constructed quickly, efficiently and safely—with climate resiliency in mind.

What will you do to ensure Indigenous students receive educational opportunities and supports to enable their success in B.C.'s public schools?

Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of working alongside Indigenous communities, which has deepened my understanding of the unique challenges they face—and continue to face—rooted in the historical impacts of colonialism and discrimination, including the legacies of residential schools. Our classrooms need to be welcoming places that ensure Indigenous students receive what all students need to thrive: access to learning and resources that support and empower them to succeed. This means all schools in BC must be well-resourced – with teachers, support staff, mental health professionals, funding and technology to meet the needs of students. Schools have been underfunded and under-resourced for decades—particularly in rural and remote areas, where a higher percentage of Indigenous students are enrolled.

We are committed to equipping all students with the tools and resources they need to succeed, with a particular focus on populations that have been marginalized. Our schooling system should create conditions where all students feel included and empowered to thrive—and I am committed to making this vision a reality alongside the BC Greens and Indigenous communities as your MLA.

How will you ensure schools are safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all students? How will you support and protect programs that educate and support students regarding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and other anti-discriminatory programs and practices?

As I've mentioned, I strongly believe that education needs to be one of our biggest priorities, but it's not just about helping students succeed in their studies—it's about making sure they're in an environment where they feel safe, supported, and respected. Every student should be able to express themselves openly, share their ideas, and feel confident that they're in a space where they are valued. This kind of atmosphere is what allows students to grow into future leaders and changemakers who will make a difference in our communities and our world.

To help achieve this, the BC Greens are taking important steps to make our schools more inclusive and welcoming for all. We're committed to expanding initiatives like SOGI 123, which helps create inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ students by addressing issues of gender identity and sexual orientation. We're also launching disability and accessibility education campaigns in schools because every student deserves a learning space where they feel safe and included. Working with organizations like Disability Action of Canada ensures these efforts have a real, lasting impact.

I'm also passionate about increasing access to high school psychologists and boosting the number of guidance counsellors. By doing this, we can provide students with the mental health support they need and create school environments that are not just nurturing, but truly supportive of every aspect of a student's well-being.

Surrey- Guildford

- **Manjeet Sihota- BC Green Party**

What will you do to increase funding to B.C.'s public schools to ensure students receive the opportunities and supports that their counterparts in other provinces are able to access?

There is a body of evidence that says the better quality of education a student gets and the longer they are in school the less chances of them getting into crime and getting arrested.

The BC Greens have already announced that we want a universal meal program, laptops for the students and counselors being accessible to the students. I believe all of these items will improve the quality of a student's education and make them want to go to post-secondary schools. Once we know the crime rate is going down, we should be able to shift some of the budget from crime to education. It won't happen overnight but we will get there eventually.

In the meantime, we will need to budget more money for education because we need to invest in our children and this investment will bring long term gains.

What will you do to recruit and retain teachers and education support workers?

I think this question can have a lot of answers. Retention can depend on the friendships the teachers make at work, sense of belonging and the organizational social climate.

Where the teacher lives also plays a role. The BC Greens will make their living and commuting comfortable. The BC Greens will build 26,000 affordable rental housing per year. We will make public transit free, frequent and fast so teachers can get to their school quickly and stress free.

Also, the BC Greens will provide laptops to the students and a breakfast program which help the teachers to focus on what they want to do, which is teach.

When the word gets out that BC schools are great to work at other teachers will want to teach in BC also.

How will you ensure that B.C.'s students have timely access to safe, neighbourhood schools?

In regard to damage to schools sustaining damage from earthquakes we need to find out what schools could be dangerous during an earthquake, like schools built out of masonry. These schools then need to be upgraded to make them safe.

We also need to build more schools where they are required. If we are seeing a population growth in a particular city, like Surrey, we need to start to construct schools right away.

What will you do to ensure Indigenous students receive educational opportunities and supports to enable their success in B.C.'s public schools?

We don't need to reinvent the wheel because it is clearly mentioned in the Truth and Reconciliation document. Point 23 of the Truth and Reconciliation document says that we need to provide Indigenous students more scholarships if they are studying in Health Care. If students are having a hard time with their subjects, we need to make sure the support is there, like tutors.

How will you ensure schools are safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all students? How will you support and protect programs that educate and support students regarding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) and other anti-discriminatory programs and practices?

In the education section of our platform, we announce that we will bring drug prevention education. Having students aware of the danger of drugs will keep students safe and keep drug dealers away from schools. We are also going to have psychologists and counselors available for students to talk to if students are feeling down.

SOGI education is a good program that prevents bullying and harassment when there is no misunderstanding about the program. A recent study by UBC Faculty of Education showed that SOGI 123 is effective in reducing bullying and harassment. SOGI helps recognize, understand and build healthy relationships including self-respect, respect for others, commitment and tolerance in an age-appropriate way.

Vancouver-Renfrew

- **Tom Ikonou, Conservative Party of BC**

Thank you for reaching out to me. As I campaign to become your representative in Vancouver-Renfrew, my top priority is to be a voice for our community—a voice that reflects your concerns, ideas, and vision for the future. I believe that the best way to create meaningful change is by working together, and I want to hear from you. Your insights are invaluable as we strive to make Vancouver-Renfrew a better place for everyone. Whether it's ideas for improving funding, staffing, facilities, reconciliation or inclusion and safety, I'm eager to listen and learn. Your feedback will play a crucial role in shaping the policies I champion once elected. Please share your thoughts on these issues or any others that matter most to you and your family. Together, we can build a future that reflects the values and aspirations of everyone in Vancouver-Renfrew. I look forward to hearing from you and working side by side to make our community the best it can be.