

IPE/BC NEWS

PUBLIC EDUCATION IS A PUBLIC INTEREST.



SAVE THE DATE

IPE/BC will be holding its Annual General Meeting via Zoom on March 10th from 7:00-8:00 pm. We look forward to reporting on the work undertaken since the last AGM and hearing your advice for the coming year. Please save the date and watch for further details coming to you in a special bulletin in February. We would certainly value your participation.

THE PANDEMIC, PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 has highlighted the urgency of improving conditions in public schools as parents, students, educators, and support staff deal with another year of pressures and uncertainty. The pandemic has underscored the predictable consequences of years of inadequate funding and planning as school communities now try to grapple with critical and urgent needs such as updated ventilation systems, adequate space for distancing, and sufficient numbers of teachers teaching on call. Additionally, COVID has heightened the importance of support for vulnerable students, access to technology and a stable, coherent school meal program.

IPE/BC's submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services in the fall focused on these four priorities:

- better provisions for health and safety in public schools,
- equity in access to technology,
- more funding for the inclusion of students with special needs, and
- access to adequate, nutritious food.



The 2022 Provincial Budget will be tabled in the BC Legislature on February 23rd. IPE/BC will be very interested in the K-12 funding levels and how these urgent priorities will be addressed. We'll keep you posted.

In the meantime, if you haven't already seen these items, you may be interested in reading:

- the IPE/BC research paper on the pandemic and education funding, [COVID-19 Crisis Impacting Boards of Education Budgets](#).

-the article co-authored by Andrew Longhurst, health policy researcher and IPE/BC Fellow, and Raffi Cavoukian, children's advocate, author and musician, calling for concerted attention to health and safety measures as school opened last September, [Don't Let This Viral Wave Swamp Our Kids.](#)

- recent article in [The Conversation calling for a national school meal program](#) as a key part of Canada's COVID recovery plan, Canada's pandemic recovery urgently needs a national school meal program.

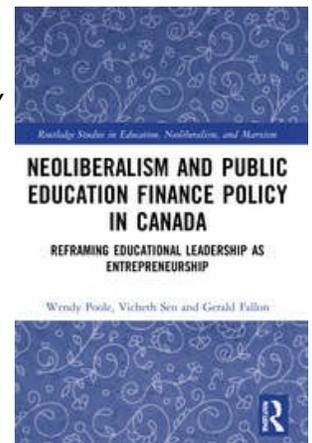
NEWLY PUBLISHED BOOK ON EDUCATION FUNDING, LEADERSHIP AND NEOLIBERALISM

Congratulations to Wendy Poole, Vicheth Sen and Gerald Fallon on the publication of their new book, [Neoliberalism and Public Education Finance in Canada: Reframing Educational Leadership as Entrepreneurship.](#) Dr. Poole has kindly provided the following synopsis to share with IPE/BC Fellows and include in the IPE/BC Commons:

The book reports on research that investigated the worlds of school district administrators (SDAs) in the education policy environment characterized by retrenchment of government expenditure on public education and the imperative for school districts to actively generate supplementary revenue through entrepreneurial and other means. The book reports on the kinds of initiatives that SDAs undertook to protect public funding and to generate new sources of funding through business-like activities, paying attention to the ways in which the SDAs responded to the policy environment differently according to their understandings of local contextual conditions. Themes that permeate various chapters of the book include:

- (1) the impact of entrepreneurial public education finance policy on financial equity between school districts in a spatially diverse province and the implications for equity of student access to quality education; and*
- (2) how SDAs negotiated their subjectivities as educational leaders within a policy rationality that compelled a business-like model of leadership.*

The authors propose a vision of educational leadership that transcends the parochialism and self-interestedness of entrepreneurial leadership at the school district level and that moves toward public education and educational leadership for the common good.



This book will certainly be a welcome resource, providing valuable insights into the impact of neoliberal policies on education leadership and finance.

Dr. Wendy Poole and Dr. Gerald Fallon are [IPE/BC Fellows.](#)

HEADS UP- RESPONSE ARTICLE TO BE PUBLISHED SOON

As reported in the previous newsletter, IPE/BC Board members, Dan Laitsch, Larry Kuehn, and John Malcolmson, submitted a paper to the *Canadian Journal of Education Administration and Policy*, in response to a previous article claiming an "astounding" increase in education spending in BC over the past five decades. We are pleased to let you know that the response paper was accepted for publication by CJEAP. We will inform you as soon as it's available.

QUESTIONING ACCESS AND EQUITY

In the fall, the Tye online newspaper ran a series entitled, "Can we make school more equal?" With this lens, reporter Katie Hyslop examined the Vancouver School Districts' mini-school, French immersion, and gifted student programs in detail. The articles and the comments provide interesting food for thought and lively points of debate. In case you missed them, you can still access the articles [here](#).

8 DAYS OF ACTION

On November 25th, BCEdAccess Society kicked off a very active campaign, 8 Days of Action for Access. The campaign drew attention to the access to rights, assessments, funding, services, supports, sports and play, and equity for children, youth, and adults with disabilities.

[BCEdAccess](#) is a volunteer-run organization whose mission is to "champion and support children and youth who have disabilities and who are complex learners to reach their full potential in BC education, and in all aspects of their lives. This is achieved through supporting families, sharing information, providing education to families, allies, professionals and students, providing community engagement and awareness, and other activities to promote equitable access to education and inclusion for all."

BLOG POST A CALL TO ADDRESS RACISM IN EDUCATION

Our latest [Perspective Blog post](#), written by Noel Herron, speaks to the urgent need to work together to address racism in education. Noel is a retired principal, former school trustee and highly respected education advocate. Check out the post and please get in touch if you'd like to contribute a post or have ideas for topics we should consider.



UPDATES

In the last bulletin, we let you know that we would be updating the Charter for Public Education to remove the quote by Egerton Ryerson. The revised version and an explanation for the change is now [online](#). A click on the Charter image on that page will provide you with a copy that can be printed, posted and forwarded to others.

We continue to examine ways to decolonize the Institute's work and to use the Charter principles to support quality, accessible, inclusive public education. We would appreciate it very much if you shared your thoughts on how the Charter could be used in teaching, assessment, school and district leadership, teacher education and/or parent and community meetings. Please contact us at info@publicedbc.ca.

The work on the Out of Our Own Pockets project is progressing well. This project will demonstrate the many ways in which educators subsidize the school system and provide funding for unmet needs at their own expense. The online tool to record expenses, along with a guide, has been developed and is ready for a formal test stage. Our OOOOP project committee is now at the stage of recruiting volunteers to participate in testing the tool and providing feedback.

MAKING CONNECTIONS; REACHING OUT

IPE/BC has now joined First Call a very effective and long-standing child and youth advocacy coalition made up of over 110 provincial and regional partner organizations. Chairperson Dan Laitsch will be presenting on the Institute's work at the February coalition meeting. First Call undertakes projects, research, and advocacy on matters related children and youth rights and well-being, including the release of an annual child poverty report card.

In December, Dan attended a meeting of the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association to talk about the institute's work. Thank you very much to the BCPVPA for the active interest and warm welcome.

Additionally, Dan and IPE/BC Fundraising and Partnerships Chair, David Chudnovsky, attended a general meeting of the Greater Victoria Teachers' Association to talk about the Out of Our Own Pockets project. Thank you very much to the GVTA for the opportunity to speak with you and your members.

IPE/BC will be participating in the Columbia Institute's annual High Ground Civic Governance Conference again this year. We certainly appreciate the opportunity to present and look forward to engaging with school trustees and local government representatives.

STAYING CONNECTED

Please stay in touch with us through:

Email at info@publicedbc.ca

Facebook and Twitter- @PublicEdBC

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The website - instituteforpubliceducation.org

We'd be pleased to hear your comments and suggestions. We also invite you to share this newsletter with your contacts and encourage them to subscribe [here](#).

