

IPE/BC News**Public Education is a Public interest**

Our hearts are with Tumbler Ridge

Like so many others throughout BC and across the country, we are thinking of the children and youth, families, school staff and broader community in Tumbler Ridge. We know that this horrific tragedy will mark their lives for many years to come. We're also thinking of the school-aged children and their parents in every community in BC as they come to grips with the fact that this horrendous shooting took place in a school, a setting where we all expect that students will be safe each and every day. We appreciate that Premier Eby has assured the community that the secondary students in Tumbler Ridge will be provided with a safe place to learn, rather than having to face a traumatic return to the same school site.

Collectively, we must strive to ensure that the safety and well-being of young people is a priority. They are growing up in a world that is experiencing increased uncertainty and facing very difficult challenges; they need our support more than ever.

**A national strategy for children and youth**

Senator Rosemary Moodie has advanced Bill S-212 which addresses the need for a strategy to "create a cohesive national vision to ensure every child's safety, well-being and happiness" as well as to identify existing gaps and take action. The Bill is proceeding through the required steps in the Senate and, should it pass third reading there, it will be sent to the House of Commons for MPs to consider.

Read more about Bill S-212 and its progress [here](#).

BC's provincial budget day



Generally, the Throne Speech, provides the context for the Budget Speech that follows. However, rightfully, the [Throne Speech](#) delivered in the legislature on February 12 focused solely on the tragedy in Tumbler Ridge.

The Provincial Budget is set to be tabled on [Tuesday, February 17](#). We'll be watching carefully, hoping the pressing needs in our public schools are addressed. Unfortunately, for too many years, our public school system has not been given the priority it deserves and the [prevailing narrative has become one of cutbacks and losses](#). It's time for a new chapter. We believe that a quality, well-funded, inclusive public education system is key to a thriving society and healthy democracy. We all benefit when the conditions in our public schools are designed to support the success of every student and the funding is there to help make that happen.

Post-secondary funding

Our K-12 education system is not alone in suffering from inadequate funding. The provincial government initially announced a review of post-secondary funding in 2022 but subsequently put it on hold. Last November, it [restarted the process](#) to review the public post-secondary system, including sustainability and affordability. A report with recommendations will be released on March 16. To learn more, see CUFA BC's [statement on the review](#) and its excellent series, [Funding for Success](#), created when the review was first intended to get underway. See also the BC Federation of Students' campaigns, [Fund it: Fix it](#) and [Cuts Suck, Fix it.](#)

Looking ahead to school board elections



At IPE/BC we believe that democratic local governance is a very important element of our education system. School board elections will take place this coming October and it's not too early to plan ahead. Elected school trustees who are accessible, responsive and determined advocates for the schools in their communities are key to the health and well-being of public education.

Check out our recent blog post on the relevance of school boards, [BC's school boards matter, but only if they act like it.](#)

Watch for details of our upcoming annual forum and AGM

IPE/BC's Board of Directors are busy planning our annual forum and we'll be sharing the details in a special invitation to subscribers very soon. We can assure you that the event will be accessible both online and in person and will be sure to capture your interest.

You can read reports on our past forums and events [here](#).

Issues and advocacy



There's a new resource ready for you on [our website](#), the Issues and Advocacy page, where you'll find reliable information on key topics in education along with handy links to contact Cabinet Ministers, MLAs and School District officials.

The topics we've included so far are:

[Inclusive Education](#)

[Private School Funding](#)

[Privatization](#)

[Teacher Shortage](#)

We'll be adding more and would be pleased to hear your suggestions for priority issues to address.

Hopes and Dreams project update

In our last newsletter we let you know that we're eager to publish the report of one of our projects, [Hopes and Dreams for Public Education in BC](#). We're not quite there yet, but here's the good news:

- we've continued to receive valuable input, including the all-important perspectives of students currently in school,
- we'll send you a special bulletin when we're about to publish the report, and
- we're committed to creating an on-going discussion of the ideals, our hopes and dreams, as a special feature of this project.

Did you know?

✓ IPE/BC was founded in 2017 and has continued to grow and evolve since that day. Check out our [annual reports](#) to see all that we've undertaken since that time.

✓ IPE/BC is privileged to have a cadre of 54 esteemed [Associates](#) who support the institute and contribute to its work.

✓ Our Perspective Blog features posts by [IPE Directors](#), Associates and guest writers. Please [contact us](#) if you have ideas for future posts.

Stay connected



Please don't hesitate to [get in touch](#). We'd love to hear from you.

We hope you'll engage with IPE/BC on social media:

Facebook- [Institute for Public Education BC](#)

X- [@PublicEdBC](#)

Blue Sky- [@publicedbc.bsky.social](#)

Instagram – [ipe_bc](#)

We also invite you to forward this newsletter to your contacts and invite others to [subscribe](#).

