



*Institute for*  
**Public Education / *British Columbia***

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2025-2026**

***public education is a public interest***

learn more <http://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 insure 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 they work with.

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

- Andrew Schofield \*\*
- Anna Chudnovsky
- Annabree Fairweather \*
- Bárbara Silva
- David Chudnovsky
- Janice St. Helene \*\*\*
- John Malcolmson
- Kevin Millsip \*
- Kirsten Daub \*
- Larry Kuehn
- Moira Mackenzie \*
- Patti Bacchus \*
- Rory Brown \*
- Shannon Leddy
- Steve Cardwell

\* Board members serve for two years but are eligible for re-election (Board members with \*term expiring). \*\* Andrew Schofield will be officially appointed at the AGM. \*\*\* We say goodbye for now to Janice St. Helene who has decided to step back from the IPE Board. We wish Janice all the best and thank her for her service.

Find out more about our hard-working volunteer board here:

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/about/board-of-directors/>

The IPE/BC Board operates through a committee structure intended to build capacity and empower board member activities. The Committee Structure is 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
- David Chudnovsky Vice Chairperson/Administration
- Larry Kuehn and John Malcolmson Research & Programs
- Moira Mackenzie Communications
- David Chudnovsky Fundraising and Partnerships

The following Board members chair our project committees:

- David Chudnovsky Hopes and Dreams
- John Malcolmson Out of Our Pockets (OOPs)
- Anna Chudnovsky Trustee Project
- Steve Cardwell Private School Funding Project

## IPE/BC ~ Associates

Our advisory group was renamed to be *Associates*. Here is a list of all of the IPE/BC Associates.

IPE/BC Associates are a province-wide network of academics, community activists and independent thinkers with expertise in a wide range of educational issues who are committed to education in the public interest. They have experience speaking with members of the media, policy makers, and community members about their work.

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

Find out more about our excellent volunteer IPE/BC ~ Associates:

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/about/ipebc-fellows/>

## Report from the 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. The Chair is Dr. Steve Cardwell who joined the Board in August 2023. He quickly became Vice Chairperson and, in December 2023 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 David Chudnovsky.

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 Vice Chair/Treasurer, David Chudnovsky.

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

- Regular Board meetings. Since our last AGM, the Board has met monthly.
- A planning retreat was held in November. Another will take place next Fall.
- Hosting the IPE/BC email address  
The IPE/BC email domain is [\\*@publicedbc.ca](mailto:info@publicedbc.ca). We receive e-mail through [info@publicedbc.ca](mailto:info@publicedbc.ca). While we have moved our official communications to the [info@publicedbc.ca](mailto:info@publicedbc.ca) address, we maintain our old [publiceducationbc@gmail.com](mailto:publiceducationbc@gmail.com) address for legacy messages.
- Directing requests and information to appropriate Committees  
Maintained regular communication with the program area committees as part of monitoring e-mails and chairing regular board meetings.
- 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 have met with or plan to meet with the leadership at several external organizations, including the BCTF, BCSTA, CLC, CUPE BC, BCTF locals in Nanaimo, Campbell River, Langley, Maple Ridge, Surrey; Victoria and Burnaby, the CCPA; the Columbia Institute; Inclusion BC; and the BC Retired Teachers' Association.
- Wrote letters to Ministers re several issues – congratulatory messages, requests for meetings, firing of Victoria School Board.
- Wrote and submitted a brief to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (SSCFGS). IPE BC was referenced in the Final Report several times.  
[https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/18986/Report\\_Consultation\\_Budget-2026%20-%20Desktopped%20-%20FINAL%20VERSION.pdf](https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/18986/Report_Consultation_Budget-2026%20-%20Desktopped%20-%20FINAL%20VERSION.pdf)

- Scheduled, organized and chaired all Board and General meetings. Compiled IPE’s Annual Report.
- The Chair works closely with table officers: Moira Mackenzie (Communications) and David Chudnovsky (Vice Chair) to conduct the day-to-day work of IPE/BC. Last year, we contracted Isabelle Norris, a qualified primary teacher who is assisting IPE in conducting our business. Isabelle’s primary functions include co-planning meetings, searching out and applying for grants, developing the podcast series and assisting other functions of the organization. We also had the assistance of Krista Sigurdson for a short time before she took on a role as a Ministerial Assistant. We do not have paid assistance at the time of writing this report.
- We are all thankful that Moira has been working on updates to the website and writing newsletters on a regular basis.
- The organization’s Treasurer, David Chudnovsky files government reports, updates the list of Board members with the province, and submits our post AGM report. He also manages our books which miraculously has remained in the black this year!
- The Treasurer also ensures continuity in signing authority for IPE/BC accounts. We have two required signatories.
- Coordinated IPE public events - IPE was well represented at a variety of public events over the past year.

The Institute for Public Education BC was delighted to be recognized by the *Canadian Teachers’ Federation* in 2024. The IPE/BC Board continues to be humbled by this prestigious honor and very grateful for this wonderful recognition of the work we volunteer to do on behalf of BC’s public schools: <https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/ipe-bc-receives-public-education-advocacy-award/>

## Communications

### Moira Mackenzie

Throughout 2025, IPE/BC continued to use a range of communication tools to connect with others and continue to build support for quality, accessible, inclusive and well-supported public education. Some of the highlights of the 2025 communications are included below.

Additionally, IPE/BC used social media to encourage British Columbians to consider the needs of public schools.

Through the [Perspectives Blog](#), IPE/BC Directors and Associates, and Guest writers share their views on current issues in public education. This past year, the institute published a number of blog posts, listed below, and is very grateful to the authors.

In addition to using Instagram, Facebook and X to build community around the importance of quality public education, IPE/BC joined BlueSky in the fall of 2024. We will continue to evaluate the ability of each platform to provide a venue for productive and respectful dialogue on education issues.

IPE can be found at:

- Facebook and still on X - [@PublicEdBC](#)
- Instagram: [ipe\\_\\_BC](#) (note: 2 underscore symbols)
- Blue Sky: [@publicedbc.bsky.social](#)

We were very pleased to report that the [IPE/BC News](#) readership increased significantly this year. We now send the electronic newsletter directly to over 350 contacts and subscribers, in addition to posting it to the website. Thanks very much to everyone who signed up in person at workshops, conferences and events. We transitioned to using MailChimp this year.

In 2025, IPE/BC updated the website and hopes to do more in 2026.

## Public Education Exchange (PEX)

Board Director, Patti Bacchus submitted an article on how public funding for private schools contributes to societal divisions (and should be stopped) to the Public Education Exchange (PEX). The article was published in Our Schools Our Selves — Winter/Spring 2025 issue and was widely shared across the country. It can be read here:

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/increased-public-funding-for-private-schools-is-dividing-us-and-needs-to-stop/>

## Advocacy

- Wrote and submitted a brief to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (SSCFGS). IPE BC was referenced in the Final Report several times.  
[https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/18986/Report\\_Consultation\\_Budget-2026%20-%20Desktopped%20-%20FINAL%20VERSION.pdf](https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/18986/Report_Consultation_Budget-2026%20-%20Desktopped%20-%20FINAL%20VERSION.pdf)
- Issued a Statement on the firing of the democratically elected Greater Victoria School Board:  
<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/ipe-bc-statement-on-the-firing-of-the-democratically-elected-greater-victoria-school-board/>
- Sent letter to the Minister of Education and Childcare asking for a pause on the school police liaison program:  
<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Minister-Beare-Re-SPLO-Programs-05012025.pdf>
- Sent letters to the Ministers of Education and Childcare, Infrastructure and Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills congratulating their appointments and requesting meetings.
- 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* posted to our website and shared on social media.

## Partnerships and Activities

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

- IPE/BC 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 Greater Victoria Teachers' Association to implement OOPs.
- The BCTF has designated an ongoing liaison to enhance communication between the organizations. We are fortunate to have Anna Chudnovsky as co-chair of the Trustee project. We recently said goodbye to Kari Scott-Whyte (CUPE BC) as co-chair and welcomed Tuesday Andrich.
- Through the tremendous efforts of David Chudnovsky, IPE is working to finalize the "Our Hopes and Dreams for Public Education" project. We also contracted Shannon Daub to write the final report.
- We had a presence and exhibit table at the BCTF AGM.
- IPE is deepening its relationship with CUPE BC through Board member, Kirsten Daub, representing CUPE BC.
- IPE is deepening its relationship with CUFA BC through Board member, Annabree Fairweather representing CUFA BC (Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia)
- Our annual analysis of the provincial subsidy to Private Schools continues again through a collaboration with the BC Office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
- IPE is joining a session at the Columbia Institute High Ground Conference. This is an important and symbiotic partnership.
- IPE has an ongoing relationship with First Call through board member Moira Mackenzie.
- IPE was in Campbell River this year and presented the Hopes and Dreams Project.
- IPE presented once again at the Inclusion BC conference with a focus on the Hopes and Dreams project.
- IPE will have a table at the BCCPAC conference on April 24.

## Projects

### Hopes and Dreams for Public Education in BC

#### Sub-Committee Chair - David Chudnovsky

We don't often have the time or opportunity to discuss, debate, or engage with each other about the future of public education. We're usually caught up with immediate issues — whether the excitement and fulfillment of a project, assignment or learning process, or a critical analysis, protest or condemnation of an ongoing weakness or problem. But shouldn't we be talking about these issues, imagining and planning for a future that meets the educational needs of every child — articulating and sharing our hopes and dreams?

Our Hopes and Dreams for Public Education is a project of the Institute for Public Education BC (IPE/BC). Over the past two years, IPE/BC facilitated a community-based discussion and collection of data from British Columbians that we collated, analyzed, and now share in this report. Our aim is to

inform public policy and decision-making — and to make clear to the broader community what our schools could and should be like.

We have also met with and heard from public school students. And the draft report was reviewed through an Indigenous lens - advice was provided and included in the report writing.

The final draft of the Hopes and Dreams Project report is now complete. This is a significant moment but certainly not the end of the process. We are now working on the publication and dissemination of the report which will include both hard-copy and on-line versions and will include opportunities for public response and input.

We thank the more than 1,000 people who participated in this project by sharing ideas and vision for public education in BC.

We thank the members of the IPE/BC Hopes and Dreams Committee: Barbara Silva, Patti Bacchus, Moira Mackenzie, Rory Brown, Kirsten Daub, Anna Chudnovsky, Steve Cardwell, Janice St. Helene, David Chudnovsky. These members of the IPE/BC Board of Directors volunteered their time to promote the project, develop and conduct workshops, and collate the findings.

Special thanks to Shannon Daub for her tremendous work in transforming reams of consultation materials into a coherent, organized and beautifully presented vision.

The Hopes and Dreams Project can be found on the IPE website:

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/hopes-and-dreams/>

## **The Trustee Project**

### **Sub-Committee Chairs - Anna Chudnovsky and Kari Scott-Whyte/Tuesday Andrich**

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 BC school districts.

The Project will provide education and training that enhances trustees' abilities to govern school 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.

The Trustee Project has 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:

- Several meetings have been held through the year, including meetings to plan a website presence along with the creation of promotional materials.
- A recent Focus Group session was held with invited trustees. This was to hear from progressive trustees about their experiences and support needs.
- Two opportunities for current and prospective trustees - skills-building workshops to help prepare elected officials and progressive candidates for the 2026 municipal elections are being planned for June in conjunction with CCG.
- Two workshops will be offered by CCG in November re legal matters and what trustees can and cannot do, plus two more early in the new year on budgeting and SOGI
- The Trustee Project can be found on the IPE website:  
<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/the-school-trustee-project/>

The TP planning committee includes Anna Chudnovsky (BCTF), Kari Scott-Whyte (CUPE BC), Tuesday Andrich (CUPE BC), Patti Bacchus, Kevin Millsip, and Steve Cardwell.

## **Out of Our Pockets (OOOPs)**

### **Sub-Committee Chair - John Malcolmson**

Out of Our Pockets (OOOPs) is a research initiative aimed at gathering data on the degree to which teachers and other school staff use their own personal money to subsidize public schools. This is an area that has received little research attention, both here in BC and Canada as well as internationally.

Over the past few years, our online platform had been developed and tested as a way of confirming its viability for data gathering. Now that this phase has been completed, IPE/BC is exploring opportunities for direct partnering with local teacher associations and teachers in local schools interested in supporting OOOP's research goals.

It is our hope that the project will identify a specific participant base and then be able to implement data gathering. Once data gathering is complete, the project expects to move onto data analysis and reporting.

We have explored the possibility of partnering with the locals of two large school districts. Our request has been that the partnering organization take steps to identify cohorts of teachers wanting to participate in the OOOP research project. Unfortunately, we have not yet been successful in meeting this necessary condition with either local association. We are now considering next steps.

## Private School Funding Project

### Sub-Committee Chair – Steve Cardwell

In British Columbia, over 13 percent of students are now enrolled in private or independent schools, and public funding for those schools has steadily expanded over decades. Families are increasingly driven toward private options as public schools face systemic underfunding.

Our recent work in the Hopes and Dreams project shows strong community appetite for reinvestment in public schools. The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services has already recognized IPE's policy priorities in its final report.

This initiative will build the evidence base and public mandate for a phased elimination of Group 2 public funding for independent schools in British Columbia, with resources reinvested into public education.

Project Components will include:

- (i) a province wide independent public opinion poll. The poll will measure public views on reducing or eliminating Group 2 funding, confidence in public schools, and expectations for reinvestment.
- (ii) Research review and synthesis report will compile current Canadian and international publications documenting privatization drivers, inequity impacts, and policy reforms. BC-specific data will include trends in independent school growth and boutique public programs that stratify access.
- (iii) An independent financial analysis will assess the current funding formula, including per-student grants to public vs. Group 1 and Group 2 independent schools, and model phased reinvestment scenarios tied to staffing, inclusive education supports, and capital planning needs.
- (iv) A policy pathway for a phased implementation outlining a politically and operationally viable schedule for incremental Group 2 reductions that protects students while strengthening the public system.
- (v) A social and system impact assessment analysis will document equity improvements, enrollment stability, and progress toward universal access as funding shifts into public schools. Planning support will be included to assist families transitioning from subsidized private programs.
- (vi) A professional communications strategy will translate research into public will. Components to include media relations, stakeholder alignment (advocacy networks), outreach materials, regional public events, social content, and a strong narrative emphasizing public education as a public good.
- (vii) A major public event or forum will be organized to coincide with either the budget subsidy announcement and/or the release of the polling results, designed to elevate public awareness, generate media coverage, and build momentum for policy change.

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/new-report-on-public-tax-dollars-going-to-private-schools-in-bc/>

<https://instituteforpubliceducation.org/private-school-funding/>

## Finances

Treasurer - David Chudnovsky

### IPE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT MARCH 2025 - April 2026

<b>OPENING BALANCE March 2025</b>	<b>\$ 28,954.28</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Inclusion BC expenses	250.24
Affinity Bridge	2,625.00
BCTLA	150.00
Cantrust	504.00
BCCPAC	150.00
Mail Chimp	34.70
Zoom	422.87
Postal Box	196.35
AI Charges	16.99
Board retreat	418.55
Book Prizes	55.36
Contracted Executive Director support	3,162.73
H&D writing costs	5,000.00
H&D travel	2,093.68
H&D Surrey DPAC	107.00
H&D Admin	40.00
Contracted Admin Assistance support	3,341.88
Printing	259.83
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$18,829.18</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>	
Columbia Institute (Trustee Project)	1,176.69
Inclusion BC (reimburse)	300.00
Funds transfer	300.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUES *</b>	<b>\$17,76.69</b>
<b>CLOSING BALANCE April 2026 *</b>	<b>\$11,901.79</b>

\* Two grants/donations have been received for a total of \$11,500. They have been deposited into our account but have not yet been reflected in our hard copy monthly statement from Vancity. Therefore, they are not included in this Financial Report. However, our true bank balance is approximately \$23,400 at today's date.

# Public education is a public interest



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