



# Report on Education

from the Deputy Minister of Education

February 17, 2006

**Information on every class, school and district is now online...**

...on our web page at [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/enrol/class-size.php](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/enrol/class-size.php)

On the right-hand side of the web page, click on the link for the province-wide summary report, or use the drop-down boxes to the left to access the report for your district, or even your school.

## Throne Speech

The second session of the 38th parliament was launched with a speech from the throne that calls for major initiatives to transform health, education and other services so they are sustainable and available for future generations. Visit [www.legis.gov.bc.ca/38th2nd/4-8-38-2.htm](http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/38th2nd/4-8-38-2.htm) to learn more

**“How might we modernize our curriculum to ensure it offers instruction for a modern world?”**

**“How can we foster a culture of excellence in teaching and learning...?”**

What innovative practices might we consider to promote excellence? Can we promote excellence by re-thinking our policies and finding better ways of sharing best practices?

All of these questions are important. Educators, whether working out of district offices or in schools, seek answers.

The speech from the throne introduces the notion of “transformative change” that sets the stage for proactive change in BC. The speech includes the announcement of a virtual school broadening accessibility and choice to online learning opportunities including online tutorials widely accessible to secondary students. →

Other directions contained in the speech from the throne include

- ▶ Increased opportunities for parents to participate meaningfully and significantly in decisions affecting their district, school and children. This is an opportunity to continue the dialogue with parents to determine decision-making processes.
- ▶ A move to implement an employment/discipline registry for teachers disciplined for misconduct.
- ▶ Continued information made available with respect to class size and class composition data to inform our discussion of optimal learning conditions.
- ▶ Annual reports for public schools that present parents and the public with comprehensive information.

There are two other directions in which I see great potential:

- ▶ The launch of a new Parent’s Education Network; and,
- ▶ The opening of early learning centers in underutilized school space.

You can see that the impact of this agenda outlined in the speech from the throne will be felt in every school and school district. It is clear from government that the education agenda is high profile and will continue to be a focus of government. The Ministry, school district and schools will need to work together to achieve the directions and initiatives laid out in the speech from the throne.

## Notes from the Deputy

### Last Week

Last week we talked about the class size and composition data that was collected around the province. I was asked about the calculation of the Educator Student Ratio Data (ESR) – what is it and how is it calculated? The ESR currently stands at 15.9 – one educator for every 15.9 students. The number of educators includes teachers, principals and vice principals, district staff with certificates and other professionals with certificates. The number of students includes the headcount enrolled on September 30th not including status Indians, non-resident students and students in distributed learning programs. This is consistent with Statistics Canada’s method of calculating ESR.

### Next week

Funding – Have you heard talk about funding cuts? Guess what? There have not been any! Next week I will provide the picture of funding of education in the province over the past 5 years. Do we always want more funding to do our important work? You bet! There is never enough because we always want to do the best for every child. But what is the real story of our funding levels?

### BCTF response to my communication to you

Not surprisingly, the BCTF has responded to my communication to you last week. The BCTF calls it government spin and labels *the facts* provided as “Deputy spin”. The facts are the facts and speak for themselves.