

BCTI Spring Gazette

A Parliamentary Education Newsletter for BC Teachers

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Read Time: 8 minutes

Membership on the Education Steering Committee: A Reflection

It has been a pleasure to serve on the Parliamentary Education Office's [Education Steering Committee](#) since 2018. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with like-minded colleagues from around the province through Zoom and attending in-person meetings in the Legislature at our annual August retreat. Helping create and shape educational resources that aim to raise awareness of how our parliamentary system works has been very rewarding professionally. As educators, we play a foundational and crucial role in shaping future citizens. I am convinced that this important work is more relevant than ever as we witness increasing political polarization and a breakdown in constructive public discourse. Creating educational resources and learning opportunities like the [Democracy & Me](#) contest, the annual [B.C. Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy](#), and the [Speaker-in-the-Schools](#) program helps to ensure that educators can effectively guide students in becoming well-informed, responsible, and actively engaged members of democratic society, contributing to the overall health and sustainability of the democratic process. I would encourage any educator who is passionate about helping others to better understand our parliamentary system to consider applying for this important committee.

By: Jonathan Boone, Independent School (Vernon), Education Steering Committee Member

CALLING ALL EDUCATORS!



EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE

WE ARE SEEKING APPLICANTS!

The Parliamentary Education Office is looking for **two (2) new members** for our [Education Steering Committee \(ESC\)](#) to support and enhance the learning objectives of our office. The members provide ongoing input and recommendations for programming, practical advice about the teaching profession in BC and assist with communications. We encourage all BCTI Alumni to apply! We are especially keen to have teachers with experience in [secondary](#), [rural](#) and/or [Indigenous educational settings](#).

The term begins [August 12, 2024](#), with an in-person meeting in Victoria. Check out the [Terms of Reference](#) and [apply online!](#)

SCAN HERE FOR THE APPLICATION!



DEADLINE TO APPLY

May 31, 2024



APPLY ONLINE:

<https://www.leg.bc.ca/learn-about-us/educational-programs-workshops/bcti>

B.C.'s Next Provincial Election: Get Involved!

Youth at the Booth

B.C.'s next provincial general election is scheduled for [Saturday, October 19, 2024](#). Elections B.C. is hiring secondary school students for the election through the [Youth at The Booth](#) program. Students will:

- Work on [October 19](#) as an election official in their community
- Earn at least \$390 for attending training and working a full day
- Gain experience for graduation, their resume and post-secondary applications
- Learn about elections and voting



If you want to promote [Youth at the Booth](#) to your students, please contact [Elections B.C.](#) at jobs@elections.bc.ca or [1-800-661-8683](tel:1-800-661-8683). We will connect you with the local hiring office and provide further information.

Register for Student Vote B.C.

Empower your students to become active and informed citizens with the [Student Vote](#) program.

More than [170,000](#) are expected to participate in Student Vote, coinciding with the provincial election on [October 19](#).

Participating schools receive learning materials to teach about government and democracy, and facilitate research into the parties and candidates. Ballots, ballot boxes and voting screens are also provided for the coordination of Student Vote Day.

“Student Vote transforms abstract concepts into tangible, actionable experiences. This hands-on approach ignites their interest and deepens their understanding of political engagement. Seeing a student who was indifferent to politics become passionate about a particular issue or candidate reminds me of the power of education to inspire change.”

- Alistair King, School District 68, Nanaimo-Ladysmith

The learning materials are designed for grades 4 and up, and are available in English and French.

Student Vote is a program of CIVIX, a national charity dedicated to enhancing civic education. CIVIX is proud to collaborate with Elections B.C. to provide the Student Vote program free to schools for the October 2024 provincial election.

Register your school today: www.studentvote.ca or [1-866-488-8775](tel:1-866-488-8775).



Parliamentary Trivia

Q: What was B.C.'s newest symbol adopted last year?

The first correct answer will win a prize from the Parliamentary Gift Shop! Email PEO@leg.bc.ca to submit. Good luck!

By: [Elections B.C.](#)

A Teacher's Guide to Visiting Victoria: Tips and Tricks

Travel Considerations

If you are considering bringing your class to Victoria to visit the Legislature and explore other exciting and educational sites that the city has to offer, allow us to assist you in planning your trip. We have curated a compilation of valuable information to ensure that your visit is not only possible but also manageable. Furthermore, we are readily available to offer ongoing support throughout the entire planning process. This guide is for a group size of approximately 30.

The Parliamentary Education Office at the Legislative Assembly has many resources that you can use in your preparation and planning:

- School Tours (book via [online portal](#))
- Virtual Classrooms
- Little Legislators
- Parliamentary Play and Tour
- Educational sessions for visiting post-secondary classes



Sample Itinerary: Travel from the Southern Interior to Victoria

DAY 1: Travel from Southern Interior to Vancouver

6:00 a.m.	Depart drop off area by bus (teacher tip: highway coach buses are more comfortable for long travel days)
11:00 a.m.	Museum of Anthropology
1:00 p.m.	Eat bag lunch
1:30 p.m.	Tree Top Tour (teacher tip: plan activities within walking distance of each other)
3:00 p.m.	Board bus to travel to ferry (teacher tip: you must arrive 30 minutes in advance of the sailing time)
4:00 p.m.	Board ferry at Tsawwassen Terminal to Swartz Bay Terminal
6:30 p.m.	Arrive at accommodations (teacher tip: UVic has dormitories available to rent)
7:00 p.m.	Walk to restaurant for dinner (teacher tip: restaurants like The Old Spaghetti Factory and Red Robin will send you a menu to pre-order)
8:00 p.m.	Board bus to accommodation
8:30 p.m.	Evening activity
9:15 p.m.	Lights out

Snack Suggestions

- Egg bites
- Nut-free granola bars
- Juice
- Fruit cups

DAY 2: Victoria

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast (teacher tip: bring pre-packed food to distribute to students)
8:00 a.m.	Bus to Victoria's Inner Harbour
8:30 a.m.	Arrive in Victoria's Inner Harbour
9:00 a.m.	Royal B.C. Museum
10:50 a.m.	Arrive at School Entrance of the B.C. Parliament Buildings
11:00 a.m.	Begin guided tour (teacher tip: tours are 1 hour, or 1.5 hours if attending question period)
12:00 p.m.	Complete tour and walk to restaurant for lunch
1:30 p.m.	Return to Royal B.C. Museum for self-guided or guided tour
2:30 p.m.	Walking tour of Victoria's Inner Harbour
4:30 p.m.	Depart Victoria's Inner Harbour for dinner
5:00 p.m.	Dinner at restaurant
6:00 p.m.	Evening activity
8:00 p.m.	Board bus to accommodation
9:00 p.m.	Lights out

DAY 3: Travel from Victoria to Southern Interior

7:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m.	Bus to Beacon Hill Park
9:30 a.m.	Depart Beacon Hill Park for Swartz Bay Terminal
11:00 a.m.	Board ferry to Tsawwassen Terminal
11:45 a.m.	Lunch on ferry
12:35 p.m.	Depart ferry for Southern Interior

Budget Considerations

If you are travelling from the Interior, planning the trip more than one year in advance allows for fundraising and organizing. It is absolutely worth the effort. We are now beginning to plan for a trip in May 2025.

	Students (26)	Total
Bus/ferry/driver accommodation	\$320.42	\$8331.00
Activity 1 (MOA)	\$13.00	\$338.00
RBCM	\$14.40	\$374.40
Groceries	\$25.00	\$650.00
Activity 2 (Treetops)	\$22.80	\$592.80
Activity 3 (Centre for Salish Sea)	\$11.00	\$286.00
Swimming	\$8.00	\$208.00
Accommodation	\$161.00	\$4185.00
Dinner (x3)	\$94.00	\$2444.00
Lunch (x3)	\$75.00	\$1950.00
Movie	\$30.00	\$780.00
Incidentals	\$57.70	\$1500.00
	\$832.32	\$21,638.80

Teacher tip: there are lots of free outdoor activities in Victoria, so conduct research to find out what works best for your students.

Additional Considerations


The administration required for individual school field trips can vary throughout the province. These are notable considerations if you are planning on visiting Victoria, or trips with your students more generally.

1. Sample Letter for ferry travel to Vancouver Island

As a strong advocate for this Place Based Learning Opportunity, here are some helpful notes to book your visit when faced with administrative paperwork or procedures. If you're a colleague travelling from a Vancouver School Board school:

- Consult the Legislative Assembly of B.C.'s website and book your visit
- Book your ferry trip (teacher tip: visit the [group bookings site](#))
- Letters require: school letter head, sentence stating that the trip is for educational purposes, signatures from your principal and vice principal (teacher tip: you need two letters for the trip to and from Victoria)

Sample Letter



KERRISDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
 5555 Carnarvon Street
 Vancouver, B.C V6N 1J2
 Main School: Tel: 604-713-5446 Fax: 604-713-5448
 Annex: 604-713-5488 Fax: 604-713-5490

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to verify that _____, a classroom teacher here at Kerrisdale Elementary, is travelling with her class of 27 students and a maximum of 3 parent chaperones via Ferry for a school sponsored, educational field trip.

This group will be travelling from Tsawwassen to Swartz Bay, visiting the BC Legislature on May 4th, 2023 at 11:00am.

Thank you for allowing our students to pay the reduced rate.

Sincerely,

(signature)
 First Last
 (Principal)

2. Some schools required a detailed safety/trip plan to be completed in advance of travel. The following information is useful to consider:

- Key contact details
- Assistants/volunteers (chaperones)
- Modes of transportation
- Equipment/supplies needed
- Communications plan
- Emergency procedures
- Names and locations of nearest medical facilities (teacher tip: the nearest hospital to the Legislative Assembly is Royal Jubilee Hospital)
- Risk management plan (teacher tip: review what is considered for overnight and higher risk activities in B.C. related to field studies)

Teacher tip: if the VSB hub is accessible to you, you can submit field studies administrative forms via the VSB hub in TEAMS.

Form Sample: Transportation

Form Sample: Risk Management

Transportation		
Driver(s) aware of route and safety expectations (see <i>Safety First!</i>)		Driver(s) Initials
Vehicle 1	Licence #	Driver(s) Name(s)
Vehicle 2	Licence #	Driver(s) Name(s)
Vehicle 3	Licence #	Driver(s) Name(s)
Other modes of transportation (e.g., buses, planes trains, boats)		

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN			
Risks	Hazards	Mitigation Strategies	Plan/Notes

By: Michele Cumberland, Independent School (Penticton), Education Steering Committee Member & Toula Kontos, School District 39, Education Steering Committee Member

For more information or to ask questions related to activities and transportation, please contact mcumberland@cisnd.ca or tkontos@vsb.bc.ca).

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the above article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect that of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia.



SIGNIFICANT DATES

 <p>June 14</p> <p>2006- B.C. adopted its new provincial flag. Review the information page!</p>	 <p>JUL 19</p> <p>1985- B.C.'s Coat of Arms was adopted. Review the fact sheet for more information!</p>
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Parliamentary Play & Tour for Schools: An Interactive Offering

Looking for a new and exciting way to connect kids with parliament? Sign your class up for the [Parliamentary Play & Tour for Schools](#), an interactive program that includes a guided tour of the Parliament Buildings and an award-winning traveling historical play on the legislative precinct. This year, the Play and Tour for Schools will run from [May 21 until the end of June](#). The session is offered twice a day, at 10:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., and runs roughly 80 minutes total. Teachers have two programs to choose from:

[My Place in Politics](#) takes audiences back to 1947, where they meet suffragists, students, and chocolate bar strikers. It focuses on how worker groups developed a plan of action to address issues like discrimination, inequality, and the fight for human rights. Then, inside the building, students will learn about participation and representation at today's Parliament Buildings. This program is designed to complement the Grade 5, 6, and 10 social studies curricula but is fun for all grades.

[A House for Democracy](#) explores how the parliamentary precinct has been shaped by Indigenous history, colonialism, nationalism, and World War I. Audiences go on a journey through time with notorious architect Francis Rattenbury then venture inside to discuss what the buildings mean to British Columbians today. This program is designed to complement the Grade 9 and 10 social studies curricula, but it is fun for all grades.

Last year, the Parliamentary Play & Tour for Schools debuted to enthusiastic reviews. One teacher raved, "the play was brilliantly written so that it's interactive, informative, and entertaining all in one." Students also expressed their appreciation, saying it made them feel "welcome... in the Parliament Building," and "excited and interested to learn more about government." Some students even announced that after the show, they wanted to work at the Legislative Assembly someday!

Journeying back in time to witness the events and movements that shaped British Columbia is [completely free](#). Just sign up for the [Parliamentary Play & Tour for Schools](#) by visiting the Legislative Assembly website.

By: [Nicholas Guerreiro](#), Player Program Coordinator

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wrote this newsletter in the Parliament Buildings, that are located on the traditional territories of the Lekwugen-speaking peoples. Now known as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, these Coast Salish peoples have a rich culture and history dating back thousands of years.

We are thankful to live and work here.

CONNECT WITH US



[Educational Programs & Workshops](#)



PEO@leg.bc.ca



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