



British Columbia  
School Trustees  
Association

July 18, 2017

**The Honourable Rob Fleming**

*Minister of Education*

PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC

V8V 9E2 Canada

**RE: Request to meet for discussion of common purposes and shared initiatives**

Dear Minister Fleming,

Let me first begin by congratulating you on becoming B.C.'s new Minister of Education. I am sure you are excited about taking on this key leadership role at such a pivotal and exciting time for our K-12 education system.

The BC School Trustees Association, representing Boards of Education across the province, is committed to working with you in a co-governance relationship to help provide leadership and oversight of what we believe is our province's key asset – a strong public education system serving the individual needs of children and youth. In reviewing your party's election platform, I noted many areas of commonality with our association's vision and goals. I look forward to working with you on such initiatives as responsive funding for school districts, capital planning and school construction, deferred maintenance, Aboriginal education programs, youth mental health, and leadership development. There are certainly many opportunities for boards of education and the Ministry of Education to work together toward shared goals and objectives.

Our board of directors and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future to begin discussion of both your immediate priorities and the current initiatives of BCSTA. A face to face meeting would be a great way for us to introduce ourselves and begin what we hope will be a productive working relationship. I would ask that your staff contact our office in order to set up such a meeting. Understanding how busy you will be over the coming days, we would be happy to travel to Victoria and work within the dates and times that you have available. I have also attached our association's current strategic plan as a starting point to what I believe can be a very constructive conversation.

BCSTA has a long history of advocacy and support for the K-12 public education system in B.C. Our members are dedicated to making our education system the best in the world. As trustees, we also recognize our responsibilities for governance, oversight and leadership within our individual school districts. The students, families and communities of the province are best served when local boards of education and the Ministry of Education recognize and support each other's role in developing and maintaining a high quality education system that strives to meet the needs and aspirations of individual children and youth. Without doubt, I believe that the citizens of B.C. are best served by locally elected boards of education working effectively with you and your provincial colleagues.

On behalf of the member boards of BCSTA, I would like to once again congratulate you in your new role as our Minister of Education. We look forward to meeting with you in the near future to begin discussion and planning on how we might bring our shared vision and objectives for K-12 education to fruition.

Sincerely,

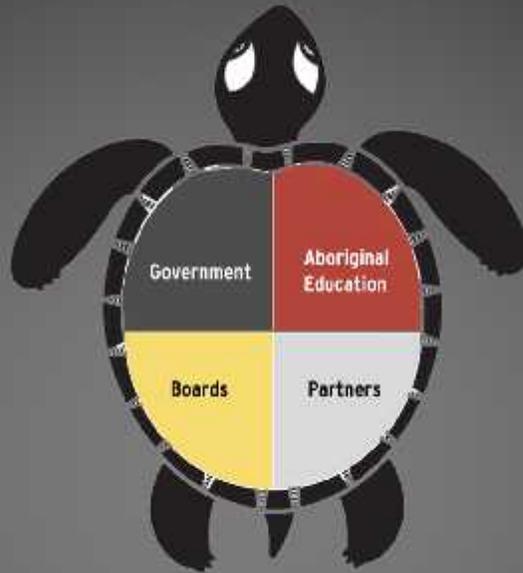
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Swan', with a stylized 'B' in the middle.

**Gordon Swan**

*President*

BC School Trustees Association

cc: Deputy Minister of Education  
BCSTA Member Boards of Education



# BCSTA's Journey Forward: Our Strategic Vision, Direction and Work Plan

British Columbia  
School Trustees Association  
2017 - 2018

Gordon Swan - President  
On behalf of the  
BCSTA Board of Directors

## INTRODUCTION

The BCSTA board of directors and I are pleased to share with you BCSTA's "Journey Forward" for 2017/18. This annual strategic direction and work plan begins with the resolutions passed at our Annual General Meeting each spring. It takes into account any current relevant external factors, as well as continuing goals from the previous year, toward setting forward our current focus. The Board of Directors engaged in three planning sessions in the development of a strategic plan that will serve to move us forward in a time of relative uncertainty and change. We are excited and pleased with the results presented here, and have already begun the work of implementation and goal attainment.

You will notice three specific changes in our Strategic Plan for this year. First, we thought it was important to add clear Vision Statements at the start of the document to anchor our work. Our second key decision was to create a specific focus area on Aboriginal Education. You will find our goals regarding Aboriginal Education articulated both within this defined section as well as imbedded where appropriate in other sections. Lastly, Section 5 details our ongoing commitments from the previous year. It was important to your Board of Directors that work started last year be tracked and seen through to final completion. Forty items from our 2016/2017 Strategic Plan have been identified as continuing work for the year ahead.

As with previous strategic plans, this year's "Journey Forward" is intended to be a living document that holds us accountable to you as members and serves to guide our Association's work for up to 24 months into the future. We will need to remain nimble this year as new issues come about as a result of the first minority provincial government since 1952. BCSTA is uniquely situated to provide steady and experienced leadership to the sector. We will continue to work with all parties and partners to provide the stable leadership necessary to ensure that the educational needs of the students of British Columbia remain a priority for our new government.

It is my hope that you can see your Board of Education's own objectives reflected in this plan; a compilation of motions from our Annual General Meetings, Provincial Council meetings, standing and ad hoc committees, and Branch meetings. You will receive regular progress updates from us, but we welcome your feedback and comments on our strategic direction and the accompanying work plan both now and throughout the year. All of this information serves as input and direction to your Board of Directors.

Thank you for your active engagement in public education in British Columbia, both at the local level in your district and at the provincial level. The sum of our efforts create far greater impact than our individual actions. This strategic plan is an acknowledgement of your active engagement and our ongoing work together.

Respectfully yours,



Gordon Swan  
President - BCSTA

## BCSTA VISION STATEMENTS FOR 2017-2018

1. To become the advocate voice and key provincial influencer for public education in the province, inclusive of our co-governance relationship with government.
2. To ensure we provide value to all members through services and support of strong, functional boards.
3. To provide the foundational structures, policies and procedures necessary to achieve the Association's strategic plan and meaningfully support our member boards.
4. To emphasize the importance of locally elected boards of education in maintaining a strong public education system.

## WORK PLAN SECTION 1 – OUR FOCUS ON BOARDS OF EDUCATION

### **Within 4 months – by the end of August 2017**

- Board of Directors to reach out to all newly elected trustees
- Complete trustee assignments to BCSTA committees with consideration of broad provincial participation
- Develop a member survey regarding BCSTA services and suggested improvements, including consideration of communications
- Communications staff and CEO to review current BCSTA publications and bring recommendations to Board for potential changes
- Board of Directors, in consultation with staff, to determine an expanded protocol for all incoming and outgoing Association correspondence
- Request Branch presidents communicate branch meeting dates to BCSTA as soon as possible so they may be posted to our website
- Create and circulate defined requirements for confidentiality and embargo regarding BCSTA conference calls
- Professional Learning Committee to develop suggested strategies for implementing the new *Learning Guide* and submit them to the Board of Directors
- Board of Directors to establish an ad hoc bylaw review committee
- Include in calls and meetings with board chairs the discussion of election results, the impact on public education and their local board concerns

### **Within 8 months – by the end of December 2017**

- Establish protocol with the Ministry of Education re: Boards Chairs 'heads up' calls and sharing information with other trustees and senior staff
- Launch strategies for new BCSTA website toward improving communication and member service
- Launch new on-line *Guide to School Legislation* for member and sector use
- Identify opportunities for expanded Branch learning through BCSTA presentations
- Identify expanded opportunities for joint Education Partners professional learning opportunities and events
- Create a mechanism for BCSTA committees to report out to the Board of Directors following each of their meetings, including work plan updates
- Create a BCSTA ad hoc committee to begin development of an expanded trustee mentorship program to be launched following the October 2018 trustee elections
- Gather local board reflections regarding the implementation of the MOA toward informing the development of bargaining objectives for 2019
- Ad hoc Bylaw Review Committee to establish process timeline and work plan
- Aboriginal Education Committee and Professional Learning Committee to align their work plans with the Board of Director's strategic plan and report back to the Board of Directors

**Within 8 months – by the end of December 2017 (continued)**

- Professional Learning Committee to create a long-term ad hoc committee to oversee the *Learning Guide* implementation plan and yearly review process
- Identify and initiate processes in support of youth mental health through CSBA and the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health
- Board of Directors to host first of regular 'Town Hall' conference calls with Trustees to hear "What's happening? / What supports are needed?"
- Board of Directors to review member input survey and consider suggestions for improved services to boards
- Implement any suggested changes to BCSTA publications as determined by the Board of Directors
- Work through BCSTA Aboriginal Education committee as well as external groups on follow through of AGM motions related to Aboriginal Education
- Board of Directors to establish updated Terms of Reference and objectives for repurposed Election Engagement Committee, with focus on 2018 trustee elections

**Within 12 months – by the end of April 2018**

- Board of Directors to host the second 'Town Hall' teleconference with trustees
- Develop a staff cross-training program to ensure key capabilities, including succession planning, are protected
- Review implementation and success of all current year projects
- Promote "Why public education and locally elected boards are key"
- Complete development of the new trustee mentorship program (for initiation in October 2018)
- Professional Learning Committee to include program sessions on student mental health and well-being, sexual orientation and gender identity for either Academy 2017 or AGM 2018
- BCSTA Standing Committees to review their Terms of Reference and report back to the Boards of Directors with any recommendations for change
- Publish updated Terms of Reference and accountabilities for all BCSTA committees

**Within 18 months – by the end of October 2018 (the current trustee term)**

- Election Engagement Committee to distribute "So you want to be a Trustee" materials and strategic plan in support of the October 2018 trustee elections by June 2018
- Professional Learning ad hoc sub-committee to table annual updates and revisions of the *Learning Guide* for implementation
- Professional Learning ad hoc committee initiate the first annual review of the *Learning Guide*
- Complete input process to development of March 2019 Provincial Bargaining objectives in cooperation with member boards, the MOE and BCPSEA

**Within 24 months – by the end of April 2019**

- Ensure direct participation of BCSTA representatives on the BCPSEA provincial bargaining team (anticipated to begin negotiations in March 2019)
- Assist member boards with implementation of the new Funding Distribution Formula (once confirmed) by providing technical support and education

## WORK PLAN SECTION 2 – OUR FOCUS ON ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

### **Within 4 months – by the end of August 2017**

- Meeting dates with First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) executive jointly established
- Board of Directors to review Office of the Auditor General, Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Ministry of Education recommendations on Aboriginal Education
- Provide initial feedback to MOE on response plan to recommendations of the OAG report on Aboriginal Education

### **Within 8 months – by the end of December 2017**

- Board of Directors, in consultation with the Aboriginal Education Committee, to initiate a work plan for supporting appropriate OAG, TRC and MOE response plan recommendations
- Board of Directors to meet with MOE Aboriginal Education program staff regarding opportunities to further support their initiatives
- The Aboriginal Education Committee to review the MOE “How Are We Doing?” report and make recommendations as to how BCSTA can better support Aboriginal student academic achievement
- In consultation with the Aboriginal Education Committee, develop a strategy to support the creation and implementation of Local Education Agreements (LEA's) in every school district with an identified local band
- Aboriginal Education committee and Professional Learning committee to align their work plans with the Board of Director's strategic plan and report back to the Board of Directors
- Consult with Aboriginal Education Committee and external groups on follow through (i.e. work plans) on AGM motions related to Aboriginal Education
- First meeting with FNESC executive completed, with the goal of improving our relationship with FNESC through discussion of issues and joint opportunities

### **Within 12 months – by the end of April 2018**

- Expansion of working relationship with FNESC to match that of our education management partners
- Coordinate BCSTA member feedback regarding any recommendations for policy change arising from the MOE review of the OAG's Report on Aboriginal Education
- Utilize our position as co-governors to fulfill the joint mandate to improve Aboriginal student achievement rates
- Produce a “What Does This Data Mean?” guide that will provide boards and district staff with a handbook on how to read and understand data related to Aboriginal student academic success

**Within 18 months – by the end of October 2018 (the current trustee term)**

- Three meetings with the FNEESC executive completed by Directors
- Board of Directors work plan for supporting OAG, TRC and MOE recommendations completed
- Work with the MOE and FNEESC on the final implementation of policy changes arising from the Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education and accompanying MOE strategic response

**Within 24 Months – by the end of April 2019**

- Assist member boards with implementation of MOE policy changes arising from the Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education as well as the monitoring the success of the overall implementation process

## WORK PLAN SECTION 3 – OUR FOCUS ON GOVERNMENT

### **Within 4 months – by the end of August 2017**

- Initiate letters to all provincial party leaders reintroducing BCSTA, including a request to meet, and our desire to work with them through their new term in office
- Request meetings with provincial political party caucus groups and UBCM re:
  - o What is public education?
  - o The role of boards of education and co-governance
  - o Review of their election platforms and potential legislative change
- Establish a positive working relationship with the new Minister and Deputy Minister, including:
  - o Immediate 'face to face' contact with president and board
  - o Discussion of BCSTA priorities for the next year
  - o Discussion of our co-governance relationship
  - o Invitation to CSBA Congress 2017 in Whistler
- Present to new education Minister, Deputy Minister and MOE staff re:
  - o The role of Boards, co-governance and operationalization of the MOU
  - o BCSTA's role and responsibilities
- Request new Minister participate in meeting with Board Chairs to discuss:
  - o Ministry of Education's new strategic direction
  - o Joint letter on the pending review of the Funding Distribution Formula
  - o Completion of the Rural Education review process
- Implement quarterly meetings with BCPSEA, PSEC and MOE re: bargaining
- Begin discussion on bargaining structure consultation process, including:
  - o Participation in BCPSEA regional meetings
  - o Discussion with member boards of education
- Begin preparation for presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance
  - o Build alignment with partner groups to inform presentation
- Initiate contact with the Union of BC Municipalities regarding:
  - o A request to present at the UBCM conference on the role of Boards
  - o Discussion to find common areas of interest
  - o BCSTA representatives' attendance at UBCM fall convention
  - o Establishment of a stronger working relationship with UBCM, including joint executive meeting opportunities
  - o Invitation for a UBCM representative to bring greetings to our conferences
  - o Co-ordinate with partner groups topics for the Select Standing Committee on Finance presentations for consistency and impact

**Within 8 months – by the end of December 2017**

- Board of Directors to meet with the MOE Executive to review each other's Strategic Plan and supporting initiatives
- Obtain a commitment from the MOE on the timeline and terms of reference for the Funding Distribution Formula review process, including direct BCSTA participation
- Provide feedback to government on implementation of the MOA based on information gathered from member boards, with an emphasis on informing policy development for bargaining in 2019 and needed resourcing
- Develop an internal BCSTA structure to support bargaining preparation in 2018 and bargaining in 2019, which includes input from member boards
- Develop a Toolkit for Boards to establish relationships and educate local MLAs
- Support the Funding Distribution Formula review process using current BCSTA structures, with consideration of:
  - o Branch Meeting, Provincial Council, Academy and AGM
  - o Use BCSTA motions on funding to inform the process
  - o Discussion with a broad range of partner groups
- Provide feedback to the government and BCPSEA regarding implementation of the MOA, including policy considerations and objectives for bargaining in 2019

**Within 12 months – by the end of April 2018**

- Coordinate member and BCSTA feedback regarding any recommendations for policy change arising from the MOE response to the Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education
- Utilize our position as co-governors to fulfill the joint mandate to improve Aboriginal student achievement rates

**Within 18 months – by the end of October 2018 (the current trustee term)**

- Work with the MOE and FNEESC on the final implementation of policy changes arising from the Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education and accompanying processes

**Within 24 months – by the end of April 2019**

- Assist member boards with implementation of MOE policy changes arising from the Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education as well as the monitoring the success of the overall implementation process

## WORK PLAN SECTION 4 – OUR FOCUS ON EDUCATION PARTNERS

### **Within 4 months – by the end of August 2017**

- Communicate with BCPSEA member board resolutions that pertain to the BCPSEA mandate, including governance and bargaining
- Request to present to partner group conferences re:
  - o The role of Boards, their importance to student achievement, and how best to work with local Boards of Education
- Confirm meetings with key partner groups by end of June 2017 to discuss:
  - o Strategic plan alignment and support
  - o Consistent messaging on key common issues
  - o Scheduled meeting dates set for the year (executives)

### **Within 8 months – by the end of December 2017**

- Work with media on a provincial basis to:
  - o Have BCSTA be the #1 'go to' representative for all things education related at the provincial level
  - o Be in increased contact with local Boards of Education
- Provide improved tracking of non-print media stories to member boards
- Improve our relationship with FNEESC through increased joint meetings of our executives to discuss issues and opportunities
- Produce a "What Does This Data Mean?" guide that will provide boards and district staff with a handbook on how to read and understand data related to Aboriginal student academic success
- Continue to monitor MOA implementation and work with partners to provide consistent feedback to the MOE regarding issues

### **Within 12 months – by the end of April 2018**

- Leverage the BCSTA membership in CSBA toward achieving our established vision, goals and AGM resolutions
- Have presented at, or be scheduled to present at, partner conferences on "The role of the board, and how to work with the board for student success"

### **Within 18 months – by the end of October 2018 (the current trustee term)**

- Plan and establish processes for transitioning partner groups connections through the coming trustee elections

### **Within 24 Months – by the end of April 2019**

- Ensure regular meeting schedules have been re-established with all partner groups post-election

## WORK PLAN SECTION 5 – ONGOING COMMITMENTS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR

The following items and work from our 2016/2017 Strategic Plan are highlighted as continuing for the coming year (and in many cases onward) even though they have not specifically been included as new/additional items for implementation by the BCSTA Board of Directors.

### **ONGOING ITEMS: OUR FOCUS ON BOARDS OF EDUCATION**

- Finance Committee ad hoc subcommittee to initiate office lease review
- Board Ad Hoc committee established to support updated curriculum for trustee professional learning
- Aboriginal Education and Professional Learning committees to initiate plan for collaboration on BCSTA events and programs
- Reconfirm Terms of Reference for all BCSTA committees
- AGM professional learning events to include Aboriginal Education component
- AGM structural change review initiated for April 2017 (finalize for April 2018)
- Provide Boards with a detailed update of BCSTA Strategic Plan completion
- Continue annual meeting with chairs and vice-chairs
- Ensure Friday and Saturday themes at Provincial Council are connected
- Regular meeting schedule with all partner groups established
- Board liaison improved (ear to ear contact)

### **ONGOING ITEMS: OUR FOCUS ON GOVERNMENT**

- Meeting with Minister of Education to present AGM motions and action plan
- Request K-12 Aboriginal Education partners table attendance of senior MOE official
- Review signed K-12 Aboriginal Education partners' agreement toward reaffirmation
- Recommend government hosted Aboriginal Education working group to implement response to OAG report on Aboriginal Education
- Continue work with BCPSEA, PSEC and MOF regarding exempt staff issues including philosophy/implications for leadership/compensation/succession/retention
- Reflect on ongoing MOU feedback from member Boards of Education
- Continue MOE-BCSTA executives' quarterly meetings
- Continue meetings with PSEC re: trustee governance of BCPSEA
- Liaise with BCPSEA regarding development of bargaining mandate (policy)
- Complete meetings with all provincial political party caucuses
- Continue involvement in Supreme Court of Canada decision implementation process

## **ONGOING ITEMS: OUR FOCUS ON EDUCATION PARTNERS**

- Support K-12 partners' table conversation on creating a shared understanding of accountability to support Aboriginal student success
- Work with management partners to develop common strategy to solve exempt staff compensation and related issues
- Support boards regarding implementation of strategies to help ensure every district has an effective alternative to previously required Enhancement Agreements
- Clarify success and concerns for revision of MOU based on member feedback
- Joint presentation with partner groups expressing the need for MOF to engage in discussions on common understanding of financial reporting
- Create templates (including graphics) for boards to use when advocating for funding
- Complete work of Financial Health Working Group on common financial language
- Support BCPSEA to set consultation and communication timelines in regard to addressing key bargaining issues and recommendations
- Find opportunities to work with education partner groups to develop their knowledge and shared understanding of effective Boards of Education
- Strengthen and increase our leadership role with education partners including BCSSA, BCASBO, BCTF, BCPVPA, UBCM, CUPE BC, BCCPAC and FNESC

## **ONGOING ITEMS: OUR FOCUS ON THE PUBLIC**

- Include an Aboriginal Education article in each issue of the *Education Leader*
- Update all BCSTA website materials and information to ensure currency
- Encourage School Districts to have their websites link to BCSTA
- Explore ways to facilitate discussion of alternatives to required Enhancement Agreements with Boards
- Expand BCSTA's social media presence
- Build *Education Leader* readership through targeted sign-up
- Create template of budget graphics for boards to share with the public
- Complete BCSTA website improvements regarding content and accessibility
- Expand *Education Leader* and *Boards Making A Difference* to cover all member districts
- Expand *Education Week* and *Public Education Day* celebrations

## GLOSSARY

<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>BCASBO</b>	BC Association of School Business Officials
<b>BCCPAC</b>	BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
<b>BCPSEA</b>	BC Public School Employers' Association
<b>BCPVPA</b>	BC Principals' and Vice Principals' Association
<b>BCSSA</b>	BC School Superintendents Association
<b>BCSTA</b>	British Columbia School Trustees Association
<b>BCTF</b>	BC Teachers' Federation
<b>CSBA</b>	Canadian School Boards Association
<b>CUPE BC</b>	Canadian Union of Public Employees BC
<b>LEA</b>	Learning Enhancement Agreement
<b>LDWG</b>	Leadership Development Working Group
<b>MOA</b>	Memorandum of Agreement
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MOF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>NTGAE</b>	National Trustee Gathering on Aboriginal Education
<b>OAG</b>	Office of the Auditor General
<b>PSEC</b>	Public Sector Employers' Council
<b>TRC</b>	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
<b>UBCM</b>	Union of BC Municipalities