

British Columbia Society for Public Education

Protecting the integrity of BC's public schools

www.bcspe.ca

October 2007

Secondary School Tracking Survey

Two years ago, BCSPE published the results of its first survey of Vancouver's secondary schools. Earlier this year we embarked on our second survey. With help from Vancouver's secondary school PACs and administrators, we hope to gather sufficient information to provide meaningful comparisons to the situation of two years ago. Because the survey arrived in schools shortly before the summer holidays, however, many secondary schools have not yet responded.

The tracking survey is aimed at providing parents and others with information that is meaningful to them in understanding the resource situation facing secondary schools in Vancouver. We do not make comparisons between individual schools for purposes of ranking or evaluation.

Our survey has questions about class size, course offerings, course fees, support services, staffing levels and fundraising activities. The information gathered in our first survey was very well received by parents, teachers, administrators, trustees and the public.

A startling finding from our first survey was the significant role that fundraising played in Vancouver's secondary schools — parents alone raised in excess of \$680,000 in 2004/05. And not only did PACs raise money, students, teachers and other parent groups were fundraising as well.

We encourage the collection of survey information to be coordinated by an involved parent. An administrator should be able to supply most school based information without additional research. The survey can be filled out on-line. **Please email cevans@bcspe.ca to receive the link to the survey or call 604-779-0522 if you would rather have a paper copy of the survey form.**

Our long term goal in carrying out this tracking survey is to help build strong and well-resourced public schools that meet the needs of all students.

About BCSPE

BCSPE is a registered society dedicated to upholding the values and tradition of public education in Canada. Our volunteer Board of Directors is made up of graduates of BC public schools, parents whose children have graduated from BC public schools and parents whose children are currently in BC public schools.

We support advocacy to strengthen public education, believing that the best advocacy is rooted in sound research and analysis. We are active in carrying out our own research and in highlighting the research of others as it relates to public education.

We have a website that we encourage you to visit: www.bcspe.ca.

Our 2007 Board of Directors consists of: Annie Ehman, Catherine Evans, Janet Khuu, Helesia Luke and Allison McDonald.

Math Woes

Finding a math tutor seems to be becoming a routine activity for many students in grades 10, 11 and 12. It hasn't always been like this, and we don't think that we should just accept this situation as the new normal. Too many otherwise successful students seem to find the B.C. math curriculum unduly difficult, often getting worse as they move through secondary school. We want to know why.

To help answer this question, we are developing a short questionnaire that we hope to distribute in conjunction with the Vancouver District Students' Council.

This questionnaire will also be made available on our website and we invite both students and parents to fill it in. Please visit: www.bcspe.ca.

