

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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**Public Opinion Survey Finds Most British Columbians Think the Government is
Not Doing Enough to Fund Schools**

VANCOUVER— Today the BC Society for Public Education (BCSPE) released the results of a province-wide public opinion poll conducted by Angus Reid Public Opinion. The poll asked people's opinions about the provincial government's support for and funding of public schools.

Eight-one percent of those polled said that the provincial government should do more to protect public education. Seventy-nine percent said that the provincial government should increase funding to public schools.

The third and last question, asked if the province should continue to provide funds to private schools. Two out of three people surveyed did not agree with continued public funding for private schools.

BCSPE spokesperson, Catherine Evans, says her society commissioned the survey to find out what the majority of people throughout BC are thinking about the government's current direction on public education. "We were surprised by the strength of the response. It is clear that most British Columbians can see through the governments' messages. This survey tells us that most people understand that government funding has not kept up with rising costs."

Up till now, funding shortfalls have hit small schools and students needing extra support the hardest. This year, however, year virtually no student will be untouched as boards try to balance their budgets by cutting staff and programs. "We have a world class public school system in BC but we're concerned that the system cannot sustain continued year-over-year funding decreases without eroding the quality of education for BC's students," notes Evans. "It also seems a substantial number of British Columbians are also questioning whether it is government's role to fund private schools."

Survey Methodology

From April 12 to April 14, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 800 randomly selected British Columbia adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.5%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of British Columbia.

Who We Are

The British Columbia Society for Public Education (BCSPE) was formed in early 2005 by a group of parents committed to protecting and improving public education in British Columbia. The goal of BCSPE is to provide clear, accurate and accessible information to students, parents, the general public and decision-makers at all levels of government about the state of affairs in BC Schools. The full survey report is available online. For more information or to offer your opinion online visit: at www.bcspe.ca

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