



Backgrounder / Fact Sheet

History/Mission

The Parent Advocacy Network for Public Education (PAN) is a grassroots organization comprised of parents who want to address the chronic underfunding and cuts to education services in British Columbia. We are a non-partisan volunteer group who share a common commitment to public education and extreme concern for its future. We share research and information about public education and current policies that impact Vancouver schools, as well as upcoming advocacy initiatives happening in Vancouver.

We see an urgent need for schools to connect with one another (through PACs and parents, or through advocacy groups) to stand together and protect public education against the impact of cuts to resources and programs, the lack of maintenance, the pressure to fund everything from books to photocopy paper, and the growing inequalities between schools. In June 2015, the Vancouver School Board (VSB) was subject to a financial report by EY, which recommended closing 19 schools. We believe that by supporting one another in advocacy, we can more effectively produce change.

We are inviting parents from Vancouver schools to participate as network contacts to receive news on advocacy issues and share PAN information with your PAC and/or fellow parents.

The more parents connect with one another for advocacy, the more change is possible. Together, we are stronger!

Actions/Advocacy

Since its inception in July 2015, PAN has been working diligently to pressure the Ministry of Education for increased funding, and connecting parents across the city through advocacy. Our achievements include:

1. Presented to the all-party provincial Select Standing Committee Finance & Government Services on October 14, 2015

We secured a time slot during the second round of feedback sessions in Vancouver and developed a presentation, including Questions on Notice with key points which were also shared with numerous school administrators, select MLAs, and Vancouver PACs.

2. Delivered a detailed presentation to the VBE on November 10, 2015 regarding the EY report

The VSB held a special public input meeting for feedback on the proposed response to the June 8 EY recommendations. These recommendations included the closure of 19 East Vancouver schools to meet a district capacity target of 95%. Common themes emerged, including the concern over selling school land, the privileging of corporate efficiency over educational wisdom, and the need for the board to remain transparent to stakeholders in its decision-making processes. PAN highlighted the negative impact on students, learning environments and the arts that the 95% capacity target would create.

3. Launched a Vancouver-based Postcard Campaign targeting the Liberal government in December 2015

As a result of the Select Standing Committee on Finance & Government Services recommendations, which found that the top priority for British Columbians is K-12 education funding, PAN worked in conjunction with Families Against Cuts to Education (FACE) to establish a grassroots postcard campaign focused on the provincial government. The goal of the campaign is to deliver thousands of postcards declaring "I Stand with the Standing Committee" to the Minister of Education, the Hon Mike Bernier. The postcard includes the Standing Committee's list of recommendations for K-12 funding, and a space to include personal comments.

- 4. Launched a BC-wide online Petition for increased education funding in January 2016**
 Our goal is to make a bulk delivery of both signed postcards (#3 above) and online signatures to the Minister of Education and the Treasury Board to demonstrate that parents will be holding the government accountable to adequately fund public education during Budget 2016. The petition can be found here: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/305/769/792/>
- 5. Sent a letter to Minister of Education, the Hon. Mike Bernier, on January 20, to further pressure the provincial government regarding the conditions of the Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) to be submitted by VSB January 31, 2016**
 There is a limited window to significantly pressure the Liberals with respect to the conditions of the LRFP, which will outline how the VSB will reduce 'surplus capacity' within the district over the next 15 years to meet a capacity target of 95%. This is roughly the equivalent of eliminating 7,000 seats, or 280 classrooms. PAN surveyed local PACs to obtain data on space usage – any purpose-built music or art spaces, or any rooms being used for those programs or for any community-based or pre-school programs. If the provincial government continues to demand or forces VSB compliance with the 95% capacity goal, it will have devastating impact on many communities in the district, involving wide-scale school closures and criteria that will severely limit the kind of education possible in public schooling for the foreseeable future.

District #39 Schools currently with PAN Representation

Admiral Seymour School	Killarney Secondary	Queen Alexandra Elementary
Bayview Elementary	Kitsilano Secondary	Queen Victoria Annex
Britannia Secondary	Laura Secord Elementary	Shaughnessy Elementary
Charles Dickens Elementary	Lord Beaconsfield	Simon Fraser Elementary
Collingwood Elementary	Lord Byng Secondary	Sir Charles Tupper Secondary
David Livingstone Elementary	Lord Roberts Elementary	Sir James Douglas Elementary
Dr. A.R. Lord Elementary	Lord Selkirk Elementary	Sir Kingsford Smith Elementary
Edith Cavell Elementary	Lord Strathcona Elementary	Sir Sanford Fleming Elementary
Eric Hamber Secondary	Lord Tennyson Elementary	Southlands Elementary
General Brock Elementary	Maple Grove Elementary	Strathcona Elementary
General Wolfe Elementary	McBride Elementary	Tecumseh Elementary
Gladstone Secondary	Nootka Elementary	Templeton Secondary
Hastings Elementary	Norquay Elementary	Trafalger Elementary
Henry Hudson Elementary	Point Grey Secondary	Tyee Elementary
James Douglas Annex	Prince of Wales Mini School	Weir Elementary
Jamieson Elementary	Prince of Wales Secondary	

Meetings

We meet monthly, on a Monday, at 7pm at the Tipper Restaurant on Kingsway. Our next meeting is Monday February 1, 2016. All are welcome.

Web and Social Media

Email: parentadvocacynetwork@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.panvancouver.ca/>

Twitter: **PAN Vancouver@PAN_Vancouver**

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PANVancouver