

SEPTEMBER 2022

# SCHOOL BOARD PLATFORM 2022



**green**  
PARTY OF VANCOUVER

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



01 INTRODUCTION

02 TOP PRIORITIES

03-04 STUDENT SUCCESS

05-06 INCLUSIVE LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS

07-10 HEALTHY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

11-12 FULLY FUNDED PUBLIC EDUCATION

13-14 FOOD SECURITY AND EDUCATION

15-16 LAND RIGHTS AND RECONCILIATION

17-19 CLIMATE ACTION

20-21 GOOD GOVERNANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

# YOUR SCHOOLS. YOUR FUTURE.

Students are at the centre of public education and our schools are the hearts of our communities. Your Green Vancouver School Board Trustees will work hard to ensure that every child in our city has the tools and sense of identity they need to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Green Trustees will take a holistic and long-sighted view for public education in Vancouver. We will support the district to nurture students' physical and mental wellbeing, academic achievement, as well as their sense of belonging to their communities. Imagine a school district where every child plants a tree that grows as they do, while also providing our city with more greenspace and shade to help adapt to climate change. Envision a city where students can access emerging forms of education like forest schools. Our kids deserve to graduate with purpose, dignity and a sense of excitement about their future.

Green Trustees will seek out and listen to the voices of students, parents and guardians, teachers, support staff, administrators, local communities, including Indigenous communities, as we advocate for our students, support neighbourhoods, and ensure good stewardship of our school district. We will work collaboratively with local First Nations, Metis and Inuit representative organizations, and all levels of government.

We will support kids and their families to navigate the social, environmental and development pressures that are a part of our everyday life as we learn from the past four years and adapt to a world with Covid.

# YOUR SCHOOLS. YOUR FUTURE.

## Green Trustees' top priorities include:

- Exploring all possible means to increase school-age childcare spaces to meet the demand across our city.
- Building on the successes of expanding outdoor classrooms during the pandemic and finding more ways to encourage students and teachers to get into nature.
- Exploring creative ways to supplement educational funding and resources.
- Continuing the work established in the [Food Framework](#) and exploring creative ways to maximize gardening/food cultivation for students on school grounds.
- Ensuring the recently unanimously approved Equity statement is enacted across the district.
- Acting on Anti-racism and Non-discrimination strategic plan goals.
- Continuing the district's Reconciliation journey.
- Advocating to City Council for increases to family-oriented density around schools that have more spaces for students

# 03



## STUDENT SUCCESS

Our goal is that every student in the Vancouver School District attends a school that gives them the best opportunities to build their lives and contribute to their communities. Green Trustees will work to enhance the collaboration and sharing of best practices within our district, acknowledging the dedicated staff at every school and workplace. Green Trustees will:

- **Ensure we are on track in supporting student success by reviewing the district data and priorities set in the Annual Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)** The most recent priorities were literacy, social emotional learning and supports for Indigenous learners - we will assess what actions were taken and how they have helped students.
- **Set up every student for success as they transition from K-12 education to work, entrepreneurship, or post-secondary education, including trades and apprenticeships.**

# 04



## STUDENT SUCCESS

- **Encourage STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math)/STEAM (STEM + Arts)** as an option for all students to consider, to experience the tangible connections between math, music, arts and science while exploring the wonder of the earth, universe, and their unique place amongst the cosmos.
- **Ensure that our district** encourages and supports students to excel.
- **Strive to provide a continuum of lifelong learning** by supporting preschool programs such as Strong Start, Ready Set Learn, and Welcome to Kindergarten, as well as adult education.
- **Work to ensure a robust teacher/support staff on-call list** so that classroom absences will be fully covered.
- **Explore opportunities to improve students' voices and representation**, by listening to students and building on the role of the student trustee and the Vancouver District Student Council.

# 05

## INCLUSIVE LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS



Every child has unique learning needs and we need to meet students where they are at to help them reach their full potential. We know the importance of early identification of when and where additional support is needed. Green Trustees will work to advance the district's work on equity - guided by the VSB's Education Plan Equity Statement.

Green Trustees will:

- **Support wellness and mental health initiatives for all students and staff** and, in particular, acknowledge and address that many students experience an increase in stress and anxiety as a result of the pandemic.
- **Continue the implementation of the Accessibility Act** including the creation of an Accessibility Plan, an Accessibility Committee and feedback mechanism.
- **Enact the three goals of the Anti-Racism and Non-Discrimination Strategic Plan**, Truth and Reconciliation, Racism and Discrimination and Expression of Identity, and Sense of Belonging.

# 06

## INCLUSIVE LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS



- **Further the development of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices** in all schools to ensure more inclusive learning environments. Advocate to increase support and funding for students with diverse learning needs.
- **Continue the successful SACY (Supporting and Connecting Youth) program** to advance substance use prevention and support students who are impacted by the opioid crisis. Encourage a more active response by all levels of government in managing this deadly crisis.
- **Support English language learners, Multicultural Liaison and Settlement Workers in schools (SWIS), and family support programs** through advocacy to higher levels of government. We recognize family/community support is integral to student success. Ensure our district works collaboratively to support new immigrant and refugee families.
- **Continue support for SOGI123** and ensure students of all sexual orientation and gender identities feel supported and welcomed in Vancouver schools.
- **Continue the school re-naming process**, using the procedures developed through the working group to bring together school communities in this work.

# 07

## HEALTHY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Schools are so much more than buildings where students learn during the day - they are places that bring communities together. Green trustees will seek out and leverage external partnerships to better support students, their families and communities.

Green Trustees will:

- **Explore all opportunities to expand childcare spaces on school sites**, for both before-and-after school and 0-5 childcare. Closely monitor the current Seamless Day childcare pilot and push for the Ministry of Education and Child Care to provide additional support and funding to align with the Ministry's name change.
- **Nurture current partnerships with the many non-profit/community organizations and explore new opportunities.** Partnerships open students' eyes to new possibilities and enrich their lives, for example Artists in Residence (AIRS) and Fresh Roots.



# 08

## HEALTHY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



- **Support and seek to expand arts and music programs in our schools**, including showcasing students' art and performances, as for many students this is key to their identity. Collaborate with the City and Park Board with the intent to improve community access to VSB space for arts, music and cultural activities. Continue to reach out to arts organizations for cross pollination and mentorship opportunities.
- **Develop partnerships for housing, with a focus on student housing.** Explore student housing collaborations that could be advanced through use of VSB land, seeking data and information on underhoused teens' needs. With new schools and seismic upgrades we will consider the example set with the new elementary school at Coal Harbour where the school, social housing and childcare are in one development.
- **Ensure full roll out of Living Wage Employer certification**, working in collaboration with the program's organizer.

## HEALTHY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



- **Advocate for city council to increase family-oriented density** specifically around schools that have more spaces for students. For the Jericho Lands development, advocate for an elementary school site to create a complete neighbourhood.
- **Support the use of school spaces outside school hours** by local non-profits to provide more opportunities for students in their neighbourhoods.
- **Seek to increase opportunities for students to enhance their skills and experience**, such as swimming, financial literacy, entrepreneurship and work experience, through community partnerships.
- **Continue to ensure our district accesses the Jordan's Principle enhanced services** as needed to serve Indigenous students.
- **Explore a new framework with local police** (Vancouver Police Department and RCMP) which identifies clear responsibilities and expectations as the role of critical responders in schools evolves. We have heard directly from students in the March 2021 School Liaison Officer (SLO) Engagement Report and need to develop a new relationship that does not include the return of embedded SLOs in schools.

# 10

## HEALTHY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- **Consider the impact of the Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act on school districts and the recommendation for an independent civilian-led oversight body.**



## FULLY FUNDED PUBLIC EDUCATION



A fully-funded public education system is the best investment we can make for today's young people and to create a better future for our province. The Ministry of Education and Child Care is responsible for funding public education, but after many years of limited funding district needs are increasingly falling short. Green Trustees will seek to hold the government accountable while looking towards alternative funding opportunities.

Green Trustees will:

- **Advocate for funding that** meets our students' needs, both for day-to-day operations and for building and maintaining schools. During the province's 2023 budget consultation the VSB advocated for more funding for school food programs and this may have influenced the new, one-time, Student and Family Affordability Fund.
- **Seek provincial support to build new schools** in areas across the city where there are more students than school spaces and areas of rapid development, such as Olympic Village, downtown (Elsie Roy Elementary and King George Secondary) and along the Cambie Corridor.
- **Advocate for improved funding to maintain and improve school buildings.** As of 2020/21 there is approximately \$927 million in deferred maintenance for VSB buildings and needs include painting, roofing, accessibility, electrical, plumbing and washrooms. The BC School Trustees Association is also advocating for Increased School Life Cycle Funding.

# 12

## FULLY FUNDED PUBLIC EDUCATION



- **Work with BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) to continue to advocate to the province for minimum air quality specifications.** A Lois Chan-Pedley motion (#13) was taken to BCSTA by the VSB and approved provincially.
- **Continue to advocate for covered outdoor learning spaces.** A Lois Chan-Pedley motion (#12) was also taken to BCSTA by the VSB and approved provincially.
- **Continue to advocate on Ministry Area Standards** to ensure new schools have adequate space to provide an excellent learning environment and are designed to be climate-resilient, especially as the climate crisis worsens.
- **Seek creative ways to generate additional capital and operational funds.** Trustee Lois Chan-Pedley proposed a motion in May 2022, asking staff to investigate additional income sources beyond Ministry of Education and Child Care funding.
- **Advocate for increased funding for students with diverse learning needs.** The current Ministry allocation, which is supplemented by the VSB, is inadequately supporting students to achieve their best.
- **Build relationships to explore grants and in-kind donations** to enhance students' learning experiences, physical and mental well-being and sense of identity.
- **Continue to request accessible playgrounds** - recent provincial funding has given 7000 students playgrounds, yet the benefits of such playgrounds are crucial to support healthy and active lifestyles.



## FOOD SECURITY AND EDUCATION

Food and learning go hand in hand. Students cannot be at their best mentally and physically, ready to learn, if they go to school hungry. Healthy minds and healthy bodies need healthy food to achieve their educational excellence. Green Trustees will build on the collaborative work to date building the Food Framework Vision and find creative ways to introduce food systems into all Vancouver schools.

Green Trustees will:

- **Champion the Food Framework** with the vision that “Every student has access to nourishing food at school; they develop the skills they need to choose, eat, grow, prepare, and share food through VSB School Food programs.” Green trustee Estrellita Gonzalez brought forward this idea and chaired the Food Framework Ad Hoc Committee.
- **Support the continued access to food programs for vulnerable students** and work to reduce barriers to access, or any stigma associated with school food programs. The ultimate goal is to have universal food programs for all students.

## FOOD SECURITY AND EDUCATION



- **Explore ways to strengthen the connection students have with growing, preparing, and eating food**, for example by supporting school cafeterias, food programs, gardens and food-related community partnerships such as the pioneering Think & Eat Green. Most schools already have space set aside for garden plots; Green Trustees will support the ongoing efforts of planting and maintaining these spaces.
- **Explore creative ways to maximize gardening/food cultivation** for students on school grounds with Indigenous food gardens. Consider Traditional forms of gardening, as well as exploring new technologies such as agricultural hydroponics farming
- **Ensure the smooth roll out of the Student and Family Affordability Fund** with its focus on expanding school meal programs. Engage with PACs and school communities, local First Nations and other Indigenous organizations on how to best meet students' needs.

## LAND RIGHTS AND RECONCILIATION



Green Trustees are committed to respectfully continuing the VSB's Reconciliation journey with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, one of the three priorities of the VSB Education Plan. We will follow local First Nations protocols, seeking guidance where needed, and be flexible in working on their priorities and timelines, not ours. We will continue to seek a deeper understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and learning and work to improve student success, representation, and language instruction.

Green Trustees will:

- **Seek to enhance Indigenous students' sense of belonging in our schools.** We will increase knowledge, appreciation, and respect amongst all Vancouver students for Indigenous cultures and their contributions
- **Address barriers to Indigenous student success** by looking at quantitative and qualitative data and learning from students, families and communities about structural barriers. Continue to support a range of pathways to success, such as Xpey' Indigenous Focus Elementary School.

# 16

## LAND RIGHTS AND RECONCILIATION



- **Respect protocol in naming new schools** and, following the completion of the re-naming pilot program, continue this in a thoughtful manner that brings school communities together.
- **Explore options to create Local Education Agreements (LEAs)** with local First Nations and respect the work of and guidance from the VSB's Indigenous Education Council (IEC).
- **Support development of Indigenous language programs** with the guidance from the VSB's Indigenous Education Council (IEC) and the representatives from the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.



## CLIMATE ACTION

The climate crisis is here and it will take everyone working together to build the resilient and sustainable future we need. Educating students and equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the future is paramount to Green Trustees.

Green Trustees will:

- **Ensure students are given opportunities to engage with the natural world**, and to learn to value and respect the land, plants and animals for their own value. Plant trees!
- **Continue the implementation of the VSB Environmental Sustainability Plan**, with its focus on education, and seek input, especially from students, on how to evolve the plan.
- **Increase biodiversity on VSB lands** by supporting schools to explore new and creative ways to use school lands such as the Miyawaki Method and other evidence-based approaches. Explore opportunities to create Indigenous food production spaces, including food forests.
- **Support student climate advocacy**, by allowing students to attend climate action events and continuing the Student Sustainability Conference.



## CLIMATE ACTION

- **Continue to support the Active Routes to School partnership with the City**, ensure action plans are implemented, and seek to increase the number of schools participating each year.
- **Advocate for increased safety for active transportation** (for pedestrians, bikes and kids using scooters) noting the successful [BCSTA motion](#) requesting the province amend the Motor Vehicle Act to require drivers to provide 1 meter of passing space on roads.
- **Explore options to implement renewable energy and cost saving projects in Vancouver's schools**, such as solar panels on school roofs or over parking lots, that would enable short to mid-term cost recovery.
- **Advocate to the provincial government for sustainability upgrades** in conjunction with seismic school projects.
- **Support student- and teacher-led initiatives to increase access to the outdoors**, both on school grounds and in the community. Nearly half of the [VSB's 2021/22 Sustainability Grants](#) were used for green spaces.

## CLIMATE ACTION

- **Expand, improve and connect safe cycling networks & greenways.** Greens at School Board, City Council, and Park Board will work together to complete a safe, green active transportation network in Vancouver that connects cycling routes to schools, community centres, parks, transit, and employment areas.





## GOOD GOVERNANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

For Green Trustees the care of nearly 50,000 students is our top priority; parents are trusting us with their children's care and well being. We frame good governance by following our core Six Green Core Values - social justice, sustainability, participatory democracy, ecological wisdom, non-violence and respect for diversity - and always consider how our decisions impact students today, as well as the future generations to come.

Green Trustees will:

- **Champion the full implementation of the Education Plan** guided by the Equity statement and Anti-racism and Non-discrimination Plan.
- **Ensure VSB lands are used for public good**, as central to our work is educating students in local public schools. We will maximize the potential of sites, such as Kingsgate Mall, to provide revenue for our district while considering possible community benefits that may include social housing/co-ops and services for children and youth.
- **Continue to work towards the goals of having seismically safe schools for all students**, giving all students the option to attend their catchment school, and ensuring all schools are accessible and well maintained.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE AND STEWARDSHIP



- **Continue to be open to hearing from the many voices invested in public education**, knowing that different people are comfortable engaging in different ways.
- **Explore options and opportunities for Indigenous representation in governance**, building from the work of the VSB Indigenous Education Council.
- **Understand the importance of the board having strong, respectful relationships with the other levels of government** as we advocate for the best interests of all students.
- **Work collaboratively and respectfully with all trustees**, and contribute to a productive and effective board to advance the success of all students.