CHAPTER 7:

Adequacy of resources to address learning gaps and poverty-related needs of students in BC public schools

This report is one of a series documenting the findings of the Poverty and Education survey. For additional information, see: http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx

A BC Teachers’ Federation study. This survey was conducted by BCTF Research in collaboration with the Anti-poverty action group of the Committee for Action on Social Justice.

Poverty and Education survey: A teacher’s perspective
About the Poverty and Education survey

The Poverty and Education survey: A teacher’s perspective was conducted by BCTF Research in collaboration with the BCTF Anti-Poverty Action Group of the Committee for Action on Social Justice, building on the findings of focus group research that explored poverty and education issues with teachers in four school districts. The purpose of the provincial survey was to assess whether and to what extent the focus group findings reflect teachers’ experience across the province, to deepen our understanding of how poverty and education issues vary by regional, socio-economic, and school characteristics, and to identify what resources are most needed to address poverty within BC schools and the community.

Contributions and acknowledgments

BCTF Research Department

- Research design, data analysis, and reporting of survey results: Margaret White, Senior Research Analyst
- Assistance in all phases of the research project: Anne Field, Research Assistant
- Leadership and support for the project: Larry Kuehn, Director, Research and Technology Division

Committee for Action on Social Justice—Anti-poverty action group

As staff and committee members have changed since the study began, we would like to acknowledge those who contributed, past and present, at various phases of the research project.

- Leadership, co-ordination, and input into final reports, Barb Ryeburn, Assistant Director, Professional and Social Issues Division
- Leadership, co-ordination, and survey promotion: Kathy Hartman, Assistant Director, Professional and Social Issues Division
- Leadership in the early phases of survey design: James Chamberlain, Assistant Director, Professional and Social Issues Division (up to August 2012)
- Pre-testing, survey promotion, and/or input into survey results: Amy Dash, Sue Spalding, Debbie Sabourin, Annie Ohana (current members as of May, 2013) and ongoing input from members of the CASJ Anti-Poverty Action Group
- Survey development and questionnaire design: Ilse Hill (former member of the CASJ Anti-Poverty Action Group)

We would like to acknowledge former members of the CASJ Anti-Poverty Action Group (Ilse Hill, Julia MacRae, Stacey Kemp), and Linda Young of the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers’ Association Anti-poverty Committee, for their contribution to the focus-group research in phase one of the study. We also wish to acknowledge the contribution of all the teachers who took the time to complete the survey, assisted in the pre-testing, and the teachers who participated in the focus groups that led to the development of this survey.

We also wish to thank Adrienne Montani of First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, for taking the time to review a draft of the survey, and First Call for providing us with opportunities to share the research results with community groups across BC.

We also wish to acknowledge the BC Teachers’ Federation for supporting this project.

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1 White, M., Hill, I., Kemp, S., MacRae, J., and Young, L. (2012). Poverty and education: A teacher’s perspective—Summary of the findings of the focus group research. Available at: www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx
Chapter 7: Adequacy of resources to address learning gaps and poverty-related needs of students

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Information on study design and who responded to the survey: See Chapter 1, Teachers who responded to the survey and the students that they teach, at www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx.
Introduction

What we learned from the focus group research

Prior to the development of the survey, BC Teachers’ Federation conducted focus groups with teachers in four BC school districts to explore poverty and education issues\(^2\). In the focus groups, teachers expressed concern about the wide learning gaps between students, noting that many of the students with learning difficulties were also dealing with poverty issues. Teachers described the wide range of developmental skills, language fluency, and special needs of students in a single classroom and the challenge this can pose for teachers when there are not adequate resources to address diverse learning needs. Teachers told us that budget cuts to educational services mean there are fewer learning specialist teachers, education assistants, and youth/family workers available to support vulnerable students, making it more difficult to implement strategies to address learning gaps. Some teachers also reported difficulty getting non-designated “grey area” students assessed. Teachers also told us they would like to see resources to meet the basic needs of students in the classroom, such as food being available at all times for hungry students, and ample supplies so all students have the tools required to complete school work. Some teachers expressed concern about how cuts to food programs affect students’ well-being, their ability to learn, and their attendance. Teachers reported having students in their class(es) with unmet needs for vision, hearing, and speech/language development services, and encountered many challenges when assisting low-income families to access health services for their children.

Survey objectives

The themes that emerged in the focus groups informed the design of the questions in the Poverty and Education: A teacher’s perspective survey. The purpose of the provincial survey was to assess to what extent the poverty-related issues identified in the focus groups reflect the experience of teachers across the province. The objectives of this section of the survey were to assess and document: 1. the adequacy of staffing resources to support students in need of extra support to address learning gaps; 2. the overall adequacy of resources and how this varies by socio-economic context and geographic region; 3. the extent to which students have the basic resources they need at the start of the school year and how much teachers are spending on resources for unmet needs in the classroom; 4. the extent to which students have access to technology required for learning and teachers’ views on the impact on students who do not have access to technology at home; and 5. the sources of funds at the school to address poverty-related needs and teachers’ views on school fund-raising.

Organization of the survey results

This chapter, Adequacy of resources to address learning gaps and poverty-related needs of students in BC public schools, presents the survey results for the five key topic areas identified above. The summary of the qualitative findings for the section on technology-related issues is extensive, and is therefore included as a separate report to accompany this chapter, as Chapter 7 Supplement: Widening the socio-economic gap? Teachers’ concerns about unequal student access to technology and the impact on learning. A summary of the findings, and discussion of the implications for education funding, is also published separately, as Chapter 7 Summary: Resources fall well short of the need: Summary of the findings in the context of the underfunding of BC public schools. Also in a separate report, Chapter 8: Students in need of vision, hearing,
and speech/language support, and poverty-related barriers to accessing these services, are the findings on the unmet need for vision, hearing, and speech/language services for students, and the challenges encountered by teachers when assisting low-income families to access community health services. All can be found online at [http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx](http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx).

### Survey results

#### Students in need of extra learning support and the adequacy of staffing resources to address learning gaps

This section reports on the proportion of students in need of extra learning support who have not been assessed, and the adequacy of staffing resources at the school to address learning gaps. This section also presents the qualitative insights teachers provided into the need for additional learning specialist teachers and other types of staffing resources to assist students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty.

#### Students in need of extra learning support to address learning gaps

Most teachers indicated having at least some students they would consider to be “grey area” students who are in need of extra learning support and have not been assessed. Of the 727 teachers who responded to the question, 47.7% indicated that “Less than one-quarter” and 35.1% indicated “Between one-quarter and one-half” of the students they currently teach are “grey area” students in need of extra learning support and have not been assessed. Some teachers indicated that at least one-half of the students they teach are “grey area”—8.1% indicated “Between one-half and three-quarters”, and 3.3% “More than three quarters”.

![Bar chart showing the proportion of teachers who have students in need of extra learning support and have not been assessed](chart.png)
Adequacy of staffing resource levels to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps

The survey asked teachers to rate “How adequate are staffing resources at our school to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps” on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all adequate” and 5 is “very adequate”. The following chart shows the percentage of teachers who rated the staffing resource as either “Not very” or “Not at all” adequate (combined percentage), for each type of staffing resource listed.

The survey results suggest that at least one-half of teachers do not feel the current level of staffing resources is adequate to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps. Two-thirds of the teachers (for whom it applied to their teaching situation) rated staffing resources for Counsellors/Psychologists (66.7%), and English as a Second Dialect (66.1%) as either “Not at all adequate” or “Not very adequate” (combined). At least one-half of teachers rated staffing resources as either “Not at all” or “Not very” adequate for most other resources, including Special needs assessment (57.6%), English Language Learning (55.6%), Learning Assistance (52.1%), Education Assistants (51.7%), with Aboriginal Education just under one-half (45.3%).

See Appendix 1 for tables showing percentage responses for each level of adequacy.

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3 Percentages are calculated after excluding “Does not apply” responses and are based on valid responses (excludes those who did not answer the question).
Adequacy of staffing levels—Learning specialist teachers

The following chart shows the average level of adequacy, for each type of staffing resource, to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps. All types of staffing resources were rated below “somewhat adequate” (equal to 3 on a scale of 1 to 5). This was the case for each of the six types of learning specialist teachers and for Education Assistants. Teachers rated the level of staffing resources as the least adequate (2.12) for Counsellor/Psychologists, followed by ESD teachers (2.14) and Special needs assessment (2.31).

These survey results indicate that, based on teachers’ assessment of the situation in their own school, the level of staffing resources for all types of specialist teachers and for education assistants are inadequate to address learning gaps. The tables on the next page examine how the adequacy of staffing resources varies by socio-economic context and regional zones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Resource</th>
<th>Level of Adequacy (Average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal education teachers (n=692)</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Assistants (n=713)</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL ESL teachers (n=617)</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Assistance support (n=725)</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special needs assessment (n=724)</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESD teachers (n=457)</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor/Psychologist (n=727)</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excludes missing values and “Does not apply” responses.
Professional staffing resources—Socio-economic context
The table below shows the average level of adequacy for each type of staffing resource by the socio-economic context of the school. Teachers in high-income schools rated the level of adequacy the highest for all seven types of staffing resources. But even in more affluent schools the ratings are still below “somewhat adequate” for each type of staffing resource. Teachers in middle income schools rated the adequacy of staffing resources the same or lower than teachers in low income schools for all types of staffing resources. Teachers in low income (2.00) and middle income (2.00) schools rated the adequacy of staffing for Counsellors/Psychologists the lowest (“not very adequate”). The adequacy of staffing for Aboriginal education teachers is rated the lowest by teachers in middle income schools (2.56).

Adequacy of staffing resources (on average) to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps – Comparison of means by socio-economic context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic context of the school</th>
<th>Special needs assessment (n=722)</th>
<th>Learning Assistance support (n=723)</th>
<th>Counsellor/ Psychologist (n=725)</th>
<th>Aboriginal education teachers (n=690)</th>
<th>ELL ESL teachers (n=615)</th>
<th>ESD teachers (n=456)</th>
<th>Education Assistants (n=711)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low income</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle income</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high income</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed incomes</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample average</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excludes missing values and “Does not apply” responses

Professional staffing resources—Regional zone
A comparison of the average level of adequacy by zone shows the level of adequacy is rated the lowest in Kootenay for five of the seven staffing categories, and the highest in Okanagan for six of the seven staffing categories. The rating for the adequacy of staffing resources for Counsellor/Psychologists is below “Not very adequate” for Kootenay (1.88) and for Vancouver Island North (1.99). The adequacy of staffing for Aboriginal education teachers is rated the lowest in Metro Vancouver Area and West (2.32) and the highest in Kootenay (3.03). The adequacy of Education Assistants staffing is rated the highest in North Central/Peace River (2.84) and Okanagan (2.75), and the lowest in Metro Vancouver Area and West (2.17).

Adequacy of staffing resources (on average) to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps – Comparison of means by zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone in which the school is located</th>
<th>Special needs assessment (n=724)</th>
<th>Learning Assistance support (n=725)</th>
<th>Counsellor/ Psychologist (n=727)</th>
<th>Aboriginal education teachers (n=692)</th>
<th>ELL ESL teachers (n=617)</th>
<th>ESD teachers (n=457)</th>
<th>Education Assistants (n=713)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kootenay</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okanagan</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central/ Peace River</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser Valley</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Vancouver area &amp; West</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanc. Island North</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanc. Island South</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample average</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excludes missing values and “Does not apply” responses.
Adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs of students who are of Aboriginal ancestry

Students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry

Schools with a high proportion of students of Aboriginal ancestry are also likely to have a higher proportion of students who are experiencing poverty. One-half (48%) of status First Nations children and 28% of other Aboriginal children live in poverty (2006 Census data). The BC child poverty rate for status First Nations children is three times higher than the non-Indigenous child poverty rate (17%)\(^4\). For this reason, schools with a high proportion of students of Aboriginal ancestry may receive some provincial CommunityLINK funding\(^5\) to provide services to students “vulnerable” to poverty, including school meal programs, academic supports, counseling, youth workers, and after-school programs. The K to 12 funding formula for public schools also provides targeted Aboriginal Education funding for each school-age student of Aboriginal ancestry to “integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture or language or both”\(^6\), some of which may address educational barriers related to poverty.

One objective of the *Poverty and Education survey: A teachers’ perspective* is to assess the adequacy of overall resources at the school to support students to overcome education barriers related to poverty, as well as the adequacy of staffing resources for students who require extra support to address learning gaps. This section of the report analyzes the data to assess whether current sources of Ministry of Education funding are adequate to address the poverty-related needs of students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry.

Most teachers responding to the survey indicated having students in their class(es) who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry. About two-thirds of teachers in the survey indicate “Less than one-quarter”, and one in six teachers indicate “Between one-quarter and one-half”, of the students they currently teach are of Aboriginal ancestry. One in ten teachers indicate at least one-half of the students they teach self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry (5% indicated “Between one-half and three-quarters” and 4.9% indicated “More than three-quarters”)\(^8\). The following tables show how the adequacy of resources to support students to overcome education barriers related to poverty, and the adequacy of staffing resources to address learning gaps, changes with the proportion of students in the class(es) who are of Aboriginal ancestry.

Overall adequacy of resources to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty

The survey asked teachers to rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, “Overall, how adequate would you say the resources are at your school to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty?” Teachers with the highest proportion (more than three-quarters) of students in their class(es) of Aboriginal ancestry rate the overall adequacy of resources the lowest (2.41). As

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\(^5\) See [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/community-partnerships/communitylink](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/community-partnerships/communitylink)

\(^6\) For policy, see Targeted Aboriginal Education funding: [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education).

\(^7\) BC school districts were allocated a total of $66.2 million for 55,414 Aboriginal students ($1,195 per student) through the Aboriginal Education supplement in 2015–16 (based on March estimates). For Aboriginal Education allocations see: Table 4b: [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/k12funding/funding/15-16/welcome.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/k12funding/funding/15-16/welcome.htm)

\(^8\) Based on the 758 respondents who answered the question, see *Chapter 1: Teachers who responded to the survey and the students that they teach*, p.10, [http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx](http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx).
noted previously, on average, teachers in the survey rated the adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs at the school very low (2.65); this data indicates resources are even less adequate in schools with a very high proportion of Aboriginal students.

A confusing aspect of these results is that teachers in classes where “between one-half and three-quarters” of students are of Aboriginal ancestry rated the adequacy of resources the highest and those with class(es) where “more than three-quarters” of all students are of Aboriginal ancestry rated the adequacy of resources the lowest (see Appendix 2). The geographic area where the school is located may be one reason for this result. Teachers in remote areas of BC are much more likely to indicate “more than three-quarters of all students” are of Aboriginal ancestry (18.9%) compared to teachers indicating “between one-half and three-quarters” of student in their class(es) are of Aboriginal ancestry (0.0%) and the sample (1.9%).
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Adequacy of staffing resources to meet the needs of students of Aboriginal ancestry who require extra support to address learning gaps

Teachers who indicated “more than three-quarters of all students I currently teach” are of Aboriginal ancestry, rated the adequacy for staffing resources to address learning gaps the lowest for Counsellor/Psychologist (1.88) and Learning Assistance support (2.06), and the second lowest for Special needs assessment (2.15) and Education Assistants (2.24). Teachers with no students of Aboriginal ancestry in their classes rated the adequacy of staffing resources to address learning gaps the lowest for Special Needs assessment (2.09) and Education Assistants (2.15). This suggests that other factors related to classroom composition may contribute to Special Education staffing being adequate to meet the needs of students at the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of students in the class(es) they teach who are of Aboriginal ancestry (Excludes “Don’t know” responses)</th>
<th>Special needs assessment (n=713)</th>
<th>Learning Assistance support (n=714)</th>
<th>Counsellor/ Psychologist (n=716)</th>
<th>Education Assistants (n=702)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than one-quarter</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-quarter and one-half</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-half and three-quarters</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three-quarters</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>2.30</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.40</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Averages are based on the total number of respondents who answered both questions, for each type of staffing resource.

Adequacy of staffing resources specific to Aboriginal education

Aboriginal Education teachers

The K to 12 funding formula provides targeted funding for each school-age student of Aboriginal ancestry participating in Aboriginal education programs and services to “integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture or language or both”\(^9\). The Poverty and Education survey asked teachers to rate the adequacy of staffing of Aboriginal Education teachers to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps. The results suggest there is a considerable unmet need for Aboriginal Education teachers (sample average of 2.64). Teachers with the highest proportion of students in their class(es) of Aboriginal ancestry (more than three-quarters) rated the adequacy of staffing for Aboriginal Education teachers the lowest (2.29).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of students in the class(es) they teach who are of Aboriginal ancestry (On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is &quot;Not at all&quot; and 5 is &quot;Very&quot; adequate)</th>
<th>Adequacy of staffing: Aboriginal education teachers (n=625)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one-quarter</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-quarter and one-half</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-half and three-quarters</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three-quarters of all students I currently teach</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>2.64</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Averages are based on respondents with Aboriginal students in their classes (Excludes “None” and “Don’t know” responses).

\(^9\) Further information about Targeted Aboriginal Education funding is available at: [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education)
English as a Second Dialect (ESD)
The British Columbia policy and guidelines for English Language Learning programs in BC schools includes the following description: “services for students who speak a variation of English significantly different than that used in school are referred to as English as a Second Dialect (ESD) services”\(^\text{10}\). In an article by Battisti et al. (2015)\(^\text{11}\) on their study to assess ESD services and educational outcomes for Aboriginal students in BC schools, the authors note:

In practise, the students who are supported by this funding are almost exclusively Aboriginal, and English as a Second Dialect (ESD) funding has grown to be an important source of supplemental funding for Aboriginal students in many school districts... Based on their research, the study authors conclude that English as a Second Dialect services had ‘a sizeable positive effect...on grade seven reading achievement among Aboriginal students’.

The Poverty and Education survey asked teachers to rate the adequacy of staffing for English as a Second Dialect (ESD) to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps. The data in the following table is based on those teachers who have at least some students in their class(es) who are of Aboriginal ancestry. On average, these teachers rated the adequacy of staffing for ESD services at the school very low (2.14). Teachers with the highest proportion of Aboriginal students in their classes (more than three-quarters) rated the adequacy of ESD staffing at the school the lowest (1.90). These survey results suggest that many Aboriginal students who may benefit from ESD services do not have access to this type of learning support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of students in the class(es) they teach who are of Aboriginal ancestry</th>
<th>Adequacy of staffing for ESD teachers (n=418)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one-quarter</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-quarter and one-half</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-half and three-quarters</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three-quarters of all students I currently teach</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample*</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Averages are based on respondents with Aboriginal students in their classes. (Excludes “None” and “Don’t know” responses)

Summary and discussion (students of Aboriginal ancestry)
Most teachers in the survey indicate having students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry. These survey results provide evidence that current funding to address the poverty-related needs at schools with Aboriginal students falls well short of the need. Teachers in the survey rated the adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs at the school very low (2.65); this data indicates resources are even less adequate in schools where there is a high proportion of Aboriginal students. And staffing resources (Counsellors/Psychologist, Learning Assistance teachers, Aboriginal Education teachers, and English as a Second Dialect services) to

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\(^{10}\) See p.4 of the document British Columbia policy and guidelines for English Language Learning programs in BC schools; [http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/english-language-learners/guidelines.pdf](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/english-language-learners/guidelines.pdf)

meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps are least adequate in class(es) with the highest proportion of Aboriginal students. As these schools are more likely to be located in remote areas of BC, there may be specific geographic barriers to providing and accessing these services.

These survey results also provide evidence that staffing for teachers in the Aboriginal Education and the English as a Second Dialect programs are inadequate to meet the needs of students of Aboriginal ancestry. These findings suggest that many Aboriginal students who may benefit from ESD services do not have access to this type of learning support. This is of great concern for the English as a Second Dialect program, as recent research evidence shows a meaningful improvement in reading scores of Aboriginal students who have had access to ESD services\(^\text{12}\).

The survey results also suggest staffing levels for Aboriginal Education teachers are inadequate to meet the needs of students in the Aboriginal Education program. And since this survey was conducted (2013), Ministry of Education statistics show that FTE teachers in the Aboriginal Education program have decreased. While the number of Aboriginal school-aged students eligible for targeted Aboriginal Education funding increased by 1,329 students between 2012–13 and 2014–15\(^\text{13}\), the number of FTE Aboriginal Education teachers decreased slightly (see Appendix 3), over the same period.

These findings are based on a provincial survey of a sample of teachers across the province. A more comprehensive assessment is needed to fully assess the adequacy of funding resources to address learning gaps and poverty-related needs of students attending BC schools who are of Aboriginal ancestry. The funding formula for BC public schools provides targeted Aboriginal Education funding for each school-age student of Aboriginal ancestry intended to “integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture or language or both”\(^\text{14}\). A recent (2015) report by the Auditor General of British Columbia, *An Audit of the Education of Aboriginal students in the BC Public School System*\(^\text{15}\), concluded that while there have been improvements in the graduation rate for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, “there continue to be persistent and significant gaps in many school districts”. Among the many recommendations, the report recommends that the Ministry of Education “evaluate the effectiveness of targeted funding” as a strategy “to close the gap in educational outcomes”.


\(^\text{13}\) BCTF calculation based on figures for Aboriginal student (headcount) enrolment in Ministry of Education grant summary: Estimated Operating Grants –Provincial totals, for 2014–15 (55,666) and 2012–13 (54,337) http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/k12funding/.

\(^\text{14}\) Further information about Targeted Aboriginal Education funding is available at: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education

\(^\text{15}\) Auditor General of British Columbia. *An Audit of the Education of Aboriginal students in the BC Public School System*, November 2015, p.5.
Students newly immigrated to Canada (within the last two years)

Overall adequacy of resources at the school to support students new to Canada to overcome educational barriers related to poverty

The survey asked teachers to rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, “Overall, how adequate would you say the resources are at your school to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty?” Teachers with the highest proportion (more than three-quarters) of students in their class(es) who are newly immigrated to Canada rate the overall adequacy of resources the lowest (1.80), well below the sample average (2.65). As there are only five respondents in this category, caution should be used in making comparisons to other categories. For all other categories, the average is similar to the sample average of 2.65. This suggests that whatever the proportion of students who are newly arrived to Canada, resources are less than adequate to meet the poverty-related needs of students.

![Bar chart showing overall adequacy of resources at the school to support students new to Canada to overcome educational barriers related to poverty (n=696).]

- Sample average = 2.65
Adequacy of staffing resources to meet the needs of students new to Canada who require extra support to address learning gaps

The Poverty and Education survey asked teachers to rate the adequacy of staffing resources to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps, on a scale of 1 to 5. The table below shows the average level of adequacy by the proportion of students newly arrived to Canada, for each type of learning specialist teacher. The adequacy of staffing resources for Learning Assistance support and Counsellor/Psychologist is rated the same or higher by teachers with students in the class(es) who are new to Canada as by teachers with no students in their classes who are new to Canada, except for the category “more than three-quarters of all students I currently teach are new to Canada”.

Teachers with the highest proportion (more than three-quarters) of students in their class(es) who are new to Canada rate the overall adequacy of resources the lowest for Special needs assessment (1.80), Learning Assistance support (1.60), Counsellor/Psychologist (1.80), ESD teachers (1.00) and for Education Assistants (2.20). As there are only five respondents in this category, caution should be used in making comparisons to other categories.

### Adequacy of staffing levels to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps (On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Not at all” and 5 is “Very” adequate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of students in class(es) who arrived in Canada in the last two years (Excludes “Don’t know” responses)</th>
<th>Special needs assessment (n=705)</th>
<th>Learning Assistance support (n=707)</th>
<th>Counsellor/psychologist (n=708)</th>
<th>ESD teachers (n=466)</th>
<th>Education Assistants (n=696)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than one-quarter</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-quarter and one-half</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-half and three-quarters</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three-quarters of all students I currently teach</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample average</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.30</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.41</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.15</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Averages are based on the total number of respondents who answered both questions, for each type of staffing resource.

The data in the table below is based on those teachers with students in their class(es) who are newly arrived to Canada. On average, these teachers rated the adequacy of staffing for ELL services at the school quite low (2.45). Teachers with the highest proportion of ELL students in their classes (more than three-quarters) rated the adequacy of ELL staffing the highest (2.80).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of students in the class(es) they teach who are newly arrived to Canada (less than two years) (On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is &quot;Not at all&quot; and 5 is &quot;Very&quot; adequate)</th>
<th>Adequacy of staffing for ELL teachers (n=431)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one-quarter</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-quarter and one-half</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between one-half and three-quarters</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three-quarters of all students I currently teach</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>2.45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excludes “None” and “Don’t know” responses.
What teachers had to say about the need for staffing resources to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty

The survey also included a question asking teachers “Are there other staffing resources not listed above that are needed at your school to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty?”

The most-often mentioned staffing resource that teachers identified as needed in addition to the professional staffing resources already listed include Child and Youth Care Family Support Workers, Speech Language Pathologists, Teacher-Librarians, Occupational therapists and Physiotherapists, Nurses, Social Workers, and First Nations Support Workers. Other teachers identified the need for support workers for students and families newly arrived in Canada, including Home Support workers, Multi-cultural workers, Settlement workers, and translators. Several teachers provided comments on the need for additional staffing resources in Special Education for assessments and behavioural support, and for Counsellors, Psychologists, and other Mental Health professionals.

Class size was also raised as an issue by some teachers in the context of staffing resources, suggesting that smaller class sizes allow for more individual attention for students needing extra learning support, and should be considered as part of the solution. Some teachers commented that the Education Assistants (EAs) assigned to students in their class do not always have sufficient training to provide the learning support that is needed.

The following quotes by teachers are organized according to the type of staffing resource needed at the school to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty.

**Mental health professionals and child/youth/family support workers**

Some of the comments reveal the urgent need for additional staffing resources to support students dealing with mental health issues such as counsellors, psychologists, and psychiatrists.

**School counsellors**

Several teachers spoke to the need for more counsellors, especially for students with mental health issues:

> I’m finding students with more mental health issues and our school only has a counsellor one day a week?! This counsellor also has 5 other schools that he attends too.

> Mental Health services have lengthy wait lists, and school counsellors get overwhelmed.

> SEVERE lack of school counselling resources.

> Counsellors need more hours to help support students, but they’re not adequately funded.

> Counselling and collaboration with other service providers is sorely lacking.

> We need a FULL-TIME Counselor—right now we are at 1 counselor for 575 students ONE time per week.

> My present school has a higher average income than my last where more than 50% lived in poverty. One of the biggest services my former students needed was access to counseling and SSW [School Support Worker] support for transitions. Being in a remedial class I was told used up all their dollars so no other services
were provided. Not that the rest of the kids in the mainstream were getting enough service either.

Counsellors should have a direct line to drug and alcohol rehab for students and members of their family, and crisis support for students experiencing sick and dying family members.

Mental health professionals in addition to counsellors

We are in desperate need of Mental Health Professionals to work with our students, as their anxiety/behavioral issues are making academic education impossible.

We have limited access to a Psychologist to conduct Psych Ed testing so we have a cap on how many we can test each year so some students are on the wait list for many years as the students with the most severe behavioral concerns are prioritized.

Programs for Mental Health Challenge—many more children are struggling with anxiety, depression, self-regulation issues.

Psychiatrist/someone to work with kids with mental health issues.

Extensive drug and alcohol counselling. Access to an on-site Registered Nurse, addictions counsellors and social worker.

Child/Youth/Family Support Workers

The following comments illustrate the value teachers place on the role of child, youth, and family support workers in bridging the gap between home and school and providing support for students with behavioural issues and mental health concerns.

Child and Youth Care Family Support Workers—we need more of this bridge between school and home, many parents are struggling with parenting skills.

Child care workers are very important support staff to help out with students that are struggling with poverty. Though they generally deal with behaviour issues, without their help, a proper education may not occur.

A YFC that we were promised at our school at the beginning of the year to work with students with mental health concerns (both students & family suffering), so for the YFC to work with both the school & home would be a huge support to our students.

We have one VERY overworked youth care worker who tries to deal with home issues, make home visits, access outside resources, etc. We could easily do with another.
Special Education assessment and learning support

Special Education—Assessments
Some teachers described the limitations of the current approach to assessment such as some students being on a wait lists for years, spending a lot of time in team meetings with no results due to lack of funding for assessments, and concern the ministry criteria for funding special education designations is too narrow, leaving some children without the learning support needed to address learning gaps.

We have limited access to a Psychologist to conduct Psych Ed testing so we have a cap on how many we can test each year so some students are on the wait list for many years as the students with the most severe behavioral concerns are prioritized.

Regardless of the number of at risk children, or extremely low functioning children, no funding or testing is available in spite of repeated school based team meets, and extended school based meeting, feels like a wasted gesture.

There needs to be much more psych-ed and speech language assessments of students to determine their learning strengths and weaknesses, and then support available if needed.

The need for staffing for “grey area” students who are not designated as a student with special needs but are in need of extra learning support was also identified as an issue by some teachers:

The ministry has narrowed the criteria for claiming students with special needs. Last year I ended up with 22 students who required significant support and alternate learning materials. I felt that each of these students should have been claimed. The class compositions in our school are absolutely ridiculous. They are burning us out one by one.

The school does a fairly good job of helping identified special needs students but doesn’t have the resources to help all the “grey area” students who just need a little support to thrive.

In our school we have 95% of students who fall into the so-called grey area.

Special Education—Speech and language development
Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) was one of the most-often mentioned staffing resources needed at the school, with teachers’ comments suggesting there is an urgent need for both assessment and speech-language support services. As one teacher stated, without this support students are “left to flounder without adequate diagnosis and support”.

Speech and Language pathologists are desperately needed. Many students with language delays and speech difficulties are left to flounder without adequate diagnosis and support.

Speech language pathologists—several students in kindergarten arrive with almost no understanding of basic concepts, poor speech development, and the speech language needs are often greater for the students who are poor.

Speech Pathologists are in very short supply for our kids with communicative disabilities.
We need regular Speech-Language Pathologist support (none at our school for the last two years, though there are students who have been assessed as needing support).

**Special Education—Training for EAs**

Some teachers commented on the limitations of Educational Assistants such as not having sufficient training to provide the learning support that is needed, or too few hours available to address the needs of students in the class who require extra support. Two teachers suggested having a smaller class size with more individualized attention from a classroom teacher may be a better solution in some situations.

*Education Assistants aren’t always a useful resource for this issue.*

*Education assistants not suited for the student they work with so less support given than needed.*

*There is inadequate training available to educational assistants.*

*EAs that don’t have subject specific knowledge often aren’t particularly useful and unfortunately that’s what I’ve experienced as a Math/Physics teacher. As well, having these resources means that a school has chosen to fund these initiatives rather than actual classroom teachers... not sure what’s the better option, having support but large classes or no support but manageable sized classes.*

*We need trained School Support Workers ... We need to have SSWs replaced when they are away. We need professional, consistent, and adequate support in order to teach. At this time, I don’t feel at all supported by my SSWs.*

*Although important, EA support in the classroom should NOT be the goal, smaller class size with more teachers is what most of my staff support.*

*We have two students who MUST have full time EA time and yet each child is only funded for 7.5 hours weekly which means other students cannot benefit from those two EAs.*

*SEA [Special Education Assistant] support is utilized for high demand children who cannot be alone or unsupervised in the classroom and is not available to support individualized learning programs for students who need support to be successful academically.*

**Teacher-librarians and literacy resources**

Several teachers identified the need for more teacher-librarians and staffing to provide literacy programs. The comments suggest that these services were once available in some schools but have been lost as a result of funding cuts.

*Struggling readers often have poor self concept. Students suffering poverty are often in this group. Access to reading materials that fit student needs is sorely lacking.*

*There were some programs (literacy, etc.) in place at the elementary school in the years before I started there that helped according to teachers that were there, but have now been pulled due to funding issues.*
Teacher-librarian time is being slashed across BC. How can we teach critical thinking or have “Learning Commons” if the library is not staffed with qualified Teacher-Librarians to help guide the learning and the searching?! My one school only has 0.5 librarian time, yet it is an inner city school with very needy students. Their parents, in many cases, don’t read to them or help with homework. A full-time librarian could help boost their achievement.

More librarian time! We only have a part time librarian but we need one full time librarian AT LEAST! Especially when parents are not available to support student learning/projects/reading.

There needs to be more before and after-school support for the children living in poverty, such as tutors on site to help them with their homework or language learning needs.

This year, our school is a pilot site for reading and math interventions at the Middle School level; no further staffing was provided for this, but learning materials and a literacy training teacher (6 months) have been provided. Within this program, we are starting to address the assessment issues.

Staffing resources for Aboriginal students
Some teachers identified the need for more staffing resources for Aboriginal students, including special education assessment, additional teaching support, and Aboriginal Support Workers.

The Aboriginal students suffering from poverty need MUCH more assistance than they get. Probably 50–75% of them are not meeting grade level expectations in some way or another, due to all kinds of factors. Far too many of them have been tested but do not meet Ministry requirements for being designated with a special need (most often because they test as being low in all areas, rather than high in some and low in others, which would allow a learning disability designation)... Many of them would need one-on-one or one-on-two attention from a teacher (not an aide) for many hours a week (10–12, in my opinion) in order to make enough progress to be able to continue to manage to progress through the grades (which is borne out by our district’s <29% Aboriginal graduation rate).

We have some Aboriginal Support Workers but could use more. More classroom teachers would help to decrease the teacher/student ratio so that children could stay in the regular classroom but receive more individualized attention from the teachers.

There needs to be more access to extra support for the First Nations children.

Services for students in need of English Language Learning support
Some teachers commented on the need for English Language Learning (ELL) services to support students and their families who are newly arrived to Canada and/or experience language barriers to accessing services.

In order to access in-school resources for behaviour issues, a student is required to attend an outside program in the community. When a parent is dealing with language and emotional barriers of their own, this expectation can be extremely detrimental, resulting in a child who receives no support at all.
It is impossible for the ELL and Special needs teachers to service all the students they are responsible for. The teacher assigned to me cannot possibly help all of the students (100% of my class are ELL). There is also a lack of SEAs. There are times when students go without support who require full time care!

Language ability is one barrier to assessing for students who may need extra support. Another barrier for whether a student can be assessed is whether the student is being funded or not (i.e. ESL or international students). Many of these students have learning needs that are not assessed or that are grouped under “language limitations” rather than “learning challenges/disabilities.”

Lack of translators—and ones that understand the nature of schooling.

There needs to be more access to extra support for... new Canadians to help the parents to understand the expectations of a Canadian classroom.

**More overall staffing resources to address learning gaps**

Some of the comments from teachers speak to the complexity of learning needs in a classroom, with teachers appealing for more resources for students who require additional learning support:

The amount of poverty is rising. Due to these issues students are coming unprepared to work and learn. They struggle with focus. There needs to be more resources in place to support these children. There needs to be more adults in the classroom.

I wish there were more learning assistance teachers and counsellors available to help our students. After working a few years at a job, it should get easier. I’m finding teaching is getting harder and harder as the years go by because resources keep getting cut back. I have students with more learning difficulties in writing or math who need more one-on-one support.

Most need intensive learning and emotional support. We are stretched very thin trying to provide the support necessary. We are mostly holding the lid on and not able to provide the intensive support needed for future success and well-being.

All resources to support the at-risk students are inadequate. The earlier the support/interventions the greater chances of success and change.

We need regular Speech-Language Pathologist support (none at our school for the last two years, though there are students who have been assessed as needing support), regular OT/PT [Occupational Therapist/Physical Therapist] support for students.

Greater funding all round! Our students need more resource support, more opportunities for lower teacher-student ratio direct service, more opportunities for speech language pathologist, physiotherapists.

Access to OT/PT and SLP time, adaptive technology, dental care, hygiene products and access to hot water, clean clothes, public health nurse visits, transportation to specialist doctors, access to mental health specialists, home care support for parents unable to cope on a day to day basis.
Student access to basic learning resources

School supplies and clothing required for school activities

The survey asked teachers to indicate how many students in their class(es) have all of the resources needed for school at the beginning of the school year (or term), if it applied to their teaching situation. Of the teachers who provided an answer, 72.7% (combined) indicated either “Most” or “All” students have basic school supplies, and 68.6% (combined) indicated either “Most” or “All” students have the clothing required for school activities at the start of the school year. About one in ten (combined percentage) of responding teachers indicated that “none” or “a few” of the students in their class have pens, paper, and binders needed for their school work. About one in five teachers indicated only “some” students in the class have these supplies at the beginning of the school year (17.8%) or clothing for school activities (22.9%).

While these findings suggest that about seventy percent of teachers indicate the students in their class(es) have access to the basic resources required for school at the start of the school year, the following charts show that the results vary greatly by the socio-economic context of the school.
Basic resources—Socio-economic context of the school

The charts below show the percentage of responses by teachers within each group in relation to the socio-economic context of the school. Almost all teachers in high-income schools indicate “Most” or “All” students have access to school supplies such as pens, paper, binders (93.9%) and the clothing required for school activities at the start of the school year (97%). This is about twice as high as the proportion of teachers in low-income schools who indicate “Most” or “All” of the students in their class(es) have the school supplies (53.2%) and clothing required for school activities (45.7%) at the start of the school year.

School supplies (pens, paper and binders)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic context of the school</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers who indicated &quot;Most&quot; or &quot;All&quot; students have school supplies (pens, paper, binder) at the start of the school year</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle income</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed incomes</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td></td>
<td>97.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clothing for school activities (e.g., gym wear, running shoes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic context of the school</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers who indicated &quot;Most&quot; or &quot;All&quot; students have clothing required for school activities at the start of the school-year</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle income</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income</td>
<td>97.0%</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed incomes</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td></td>
<td>97.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Total for calculating percentages is based on the number of responses after excluding missing values, “does not apply,” and “do not know” responses.

See Appendix 4 for data tables with complete responses to this question.
Adequate study space

Teachers were also asked to indicate how many students in their class(es) have access to adequate study space. About 200 fewer teachers answered this question than the question about school supplies, suggesting that many teachers are not aware of study conditions in the home. Of the 447 teachers who indicated how many students have access to adequate study space, four in ten teachers (42.1%) indicated “Most” or “All” students, and 38.5% indicated “Some” students. One in five (19.5%) indicated “None” or “A few” of the students in their class(es) have access to adequate study space.

By socio-economic context of the school

The chart below shows the responses by teachers within each group for socio-economic context of the school. Almost all teachers (94.4%) in high-income schools indicate students have access to adequate study space compared to about one-half of teachers in middle income (58.2%) and mixed incomes schools (53%). Less than one in five (17.6%) teachers in low-income schools indicated “Most” or “All” students have access to adequate study space.
What teachers had to say about the adequacy of basic school supplies and learning resources

Basic school supplies and learning resources
Several teachers commented on the available funding for school supplies being inadequate to meet the needs at the school:

- We need money for school supplies, construction paper, pens, glue. Our kids don’t come to school with them. If we charged for school supplies half of our populations simply wouldn’t pay.

- The level of funding is inadequate for school supplies. Paper is rationed for art projects and photocopying.

- We cannot even get “White Out” or whiteboard markers at our school. We have to purchase these materials out of our $100 budget for the year.

- We don’t have good enough sources for basic supplies which need to be replenished throughout the year.

- We even run out of paper have to beg for supplies.

- Give us money to buy supplies so we can use them in our class. Of course have applications in place but we should not have to beg in order to get basic supplies.

The following quote illustrates how stressful it can be for families when they are unable to provide their children with the school supplies they need:

- We need a budget just for these kids to have the basics. This year we had a family actually break into tears when we presented their children with a backpack full of pencils, rulers, paper and basic supplies. Why isn’t the government doing this????

Shortage of textbooks
Three teachers commented on the shortage of textbooks at their school and the challenge of having to share scarce resources with other classrooms:

- Lack of adequate resources. Old text books and sets of books that are shared with 2 or more classes. E.g. one set of social studies textbooks shared with 2 same-grade classes who have to use the books daily. Lots of juggling and conflict. Books can’t go home for students to complete work or use. Lack of books for specific subjects. The only consistent book is a set of dictionaries. All others require major photocopying on a daily basis.

- Almost all the books in my class were purchased by me. The reading texts are 40 years old and falling apart. They suggest we use downloadable books which are unattractive and mostly poorly written. My kids need real books with appeal, and I buy them for them.

- Parents and I have had to supply books for 2 classrooms.
Poverty and Education survey: A teacher's perspective

Schools charging a fee to families for school supplies
Several teachers raised the issue of school fees when asked to comment about the adequacy of resources to support students experiencing poverty. Three teachers described their school bulk-buying school supplies to avoid parents having to purchase a list of supplies, and to cover the cost of supplies for families unable to pay the fee.

Bulk buying seems to offer a more equitable way to purchase school supplies in that parents do not have to purchase supplies directly, all students receive the same supplies, and funds are available for students whose families are unable to afford the fee.

We use bulk buying power in our district, so that all students who can afford the supply fees get an excellent price and so that students who cannot afford the fees are covered by the process. Everyone in class gets the same supplies regardless of whether they paid for supplies or not.

We don’t expect families to shop for school supplies. All supplies are order through Monk, and then there is a fee for each student. Some pay, some are covered through band funding, some are subsidized by the school. This way, everyone has the same items. This system works fairly well. It would be great if there wasn’t a need to charge families at all for basic school supplies like pencils and paper.

Some teachers expressed the view that schools should not be charging fees for school supplies or course materials:

All basic resources should be provided free of charge to all students. There should be no student fees for anything curricular. Fees restrict participation, and choice in what to be able to participate in.

We shouldn’t be charging a math book and arts and crafts fee.

And, if the schools were properly funded, they we would not have to charge the families additional fees over the year; in this way, the families living in poverty would not feel the pressure to pay.

One teacher commented on how charging a fee for learning resources in a school unfairly puts pressure on parents with limited means to purchase basic learning resources:

Some parents are unaware of what is really needed in school i.e. what they need to supply for children vs. what the child says they need. I find most parents will try their best to pay even if they can’t to save face. They do not want their child to look bad in front of the teacher or other students. I cannot do as many field trips or order math workbooks or writing books as we do not have the money for it. Teachers have to keep their own stash and if they run out, too bad!

Another teacher noted the burden charging for locker fees can place on students:

I do not feel that any student should have to face paying any fee for any resource or service in public education. Those students who are unable to pay their locker fee have to carry most of their books everywhere, and I allow some students to store their stuff in my class in order to off load some of their weight.

The issue of School Fees is discussed extensively in Chapter 4, School fees and equal access to participation in school activities (www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx).
**Amount teachers spent on supplies for students (on average, per month)**

The survey asked teachers “Do you use your own material or monetary resources to provide school supplies/resources that students need to complete assignments?” and if so, to estimate how much money they spend on school supplies, and/or other resources, on average, per month.

Two-thirds (68.1%) of teachers said they use their own material or monetary resources to provide school supplies/resources that students need to complete assignments. Of these, 511 teachers provided estimates for how much money they spend on school supplies and/or other resources, on average, per month. These teachers spend an average of $53.57 per month on school supplies and/or other resources for students. The following chart shows that 10.8% of teachers spend $100 per month and another 4.9% spend over $100 per month on school supplies for students in their class(es). These 511 teachers spend a combined total of $22,262 per month or $222,620 over a ten-month school year on supplies and/or resources for students.
What teachers had to say about their expenditures on classroom resources and student needs

When asked about whether they had any comments to make about the adequacy of resources at their school to support students experiencing poverty, many teachers shared their insights and experience about spending their own money on school-related expenditures.

Teachers spend money to meet the basic needs of students

We have often donated money out of pocket, or managed clothing drives to help our own school families during periods of crisis—especially in the winter. Many staff members have bought shoes and coats for students who had nothing adequate. We always provide food hampers at Christmas for our neediest families, in addition to general Food Bank donations.

Our youth worker will take students to the dentist and pay for emergency dental work if required. As far as I know that money comes out of her pocket.

If there is a need, I do my best to fulfill it. It can be supplies for the entire class, or just giving to one student at a time.

Teachers spend money on a wide range of classroom items

The following comments illustrate the extent to which teachers are covering the cost of classroom resources, technology, and even furniture. It seems reasonable to expect that these resources would be covered by school district budgets.

It used to be I would spend my own money just on extras and fun stuff. Now I am spending my money on teaching manuals, student books and supplies, furniture for my classroom, cleaning products so I can take up the slack from janitorial time, tools to take up the slack from decreased maintenance support and food and clothing for students who need it. Shoes, runners, hats, scarves and mittens etc.

I think it always falls on the teacher to pay for things, such as photos for memory books, foods for the healthy living program. I’ve even bought $400 of blinds for my class and spent $500 of my own money for a projector in our class and for school wide slideshow monthly presentations.

Teachers are using their own technology, books etc. - resources to support student learning.

One teacher noted she spends money for all students in the class, not specifically students experiencing poverty:

I don’t supply resources out of my own pocket to support children in poverty; I supply them because I need the resources to teach ALL the children. There is a tremendous lack of funding for education in general, not just children in poverty.
Many teachers spend their own money on course materials and supplies to enhance learning

The comments by teachers reveal that many spend money to supplement course materials for art, science, and textiles/sewing classes, to enrich the learning experience for all students.

- We have a local second hand store where I often purchase material and have it available for students who cannot afford to buy material for their textiles projects.

- We don’t have students in poverty at my school... the money I spend on supplementing supplies/materials in my classroom is for art projects usually, or science materials.

- The things that I purchase are not “necessary” to complete assignments, but are things that are not covered by normal school supplies or instructional funds.

- Teachers receive so little to help they buy what they need to do experiments in science, art materials etc. It is ridiculous that we have to buy what we need so that the students get the full benefit of a good education!

- While I do not spend money for things that students need to complete assignments, I probably spend $100 or more per month to make their programs more interesting...

- I spend several $100 dollars each year to support MY TEACHING NEEDS. I need a better textbook section or worksheet or poster to help illustrate a topic OR to increase my PRO-D and better understand new and emerging science topics. I will also buy resources for classroom use if I know the science department cannot fund it to demonstrate ideas to students; to help with lab supplies; etc.

Unfair to depend on staff to cover the cost of supplies and course materials

Some teachers expressed the view that it is not fair for teachers to have to pay for resources that should be covered by education budgets.

- For years I have collected things that are on the “approved” list of Kindergarten items. When I change schools I am taking my materials with me; however, is that fair that I have had to collect these things so that the children at my school get the same advantage as the children in the south end schools where these materials are readily available?

- Teachers should not have to pay for additional school supplies, or food for students b/c they are hungry—but many of us do!

A few teachers commented that spending their own money on classroom needs is financially challenging for them:

- I get very frustrated about spending my own money in my classroom. I am a single parent myself, and funds are often tight, but I continually need to fund my own classroom as there is VERY little in terms of extras.

- As a matter of principle, I try not to spend much of my own money on the classroom due to being financially stretched myself.

- Due to my own declining financial stability, in the last two years, I have cut down dramatically on the amount of money I spend on my class.
Reasons some teachers stopped spending money on unmet needs in the classroom

Some teachers mentioned they have stopped spending their own money on unmet needs in the classroom. These two teachers explained that they no longer want to bear the burden of responsibility for the underfunding of the education system:

I want to say that I used to purchase from my own funds. I do not do this anymore as I see it as “enabling” the government to continue inadequately funding the public school system.

I used to spend my own money but stopped 2 years ago. I refuse to further fund the education system out of my own pocket.

Another teacher stopped buying school supplies and clothing for children because the needs were becoming so great:

I used to spend my own money to support students – clothing, footwear, school supplies and food. I stopped because the need just keeps getting greater.

Other teachers also commented that the poverty-related needs of students are far greater than what can reasonably be met by donations and staff contributions:

We do the best we can with what we have, and we rely on the generosity of staff and the general public, but there never seems to be enough money to support the needs of our students.

The staff at our school work tirelessly to help support our students and provide a great deal (including food and winter clothing) out of their own pockets. The problem is so great, however, that we could easily bankrupt ourselves and still not provide all of our students with everything that they need.

Other comments related to teachers spending their own money on classroom needs

Teachers should be able to claim the money they spend in their classroom on income tax. We should get an allotment to spend on personal teaching resources.

I get $2500 dollars a year if I do the READY SET LEARN initiative at least once a year. I used to spend plenty of my own money but now I do not do so. Also, our PAC gives us $100.00 to $200.00 a year as well.
Student access to technology resources outside of school and the socio-economic context of the school

The objective of this section of the survey was to document teachers’ perceptions of how many students in their class(es) have access to internet at home and to computer use outside of school hours. The survey also invited teachers to comment on how the increased use of technology in learning affects students who do not have access to internet and computers at home.

Access to technology resources outside of school

The survey asked teachers (if it applied to their teaching situation) how many students in their class(es) they are aware of who have access to the internet at home and how many have access to computers outside of school hours (at home, community library, or friend’s house). The following table shows that of the teachers who provided an estimate of how many students in their class(es) have access to technology, one in eight teachers (12%) indicated that either “none” or “a few” of the students in their class(es) have access to internet at home or access to computer use outside of school hours. At the other end of the continuum, just over one-half indicated either “Most” or “All” students in their class(es) have access to internet at home (58.1%) and either “Most” or “All” have access to computer use outside of school hours (55.4%). (See Appendix 5 for all responses.)

A slightly higher proportion of teachers indicated either “Most” or “All” students have access to the internet at home than for access to computer use outside of school. This discrepancy may be because some students do not have a computer at home they may have another type of device for accessing the internet such as a tablet or smart phone.

Percentages are calculated after excluding “Does not apply” or “Do not know” responses and are based on valid responses (excludes those who did not answer the question).
Access to technology resources outside of school—Socio-economic context
The above findings suggest that teaching situations vary greatly in the amount of access students have to internet and computers outside of school. A further analysis of the data by the socio-economic context in which the school is located reveals that the percentage of teachers who indicate most or all students have access to technology outside of school is considerably lower for low-income schools than for high-income schools.

Access to the internet at home—Socio-economic context
The following chart shows that only one-third (36.1%) of teachers at low-income schools indicated either “most” or “all” students in their class(es) have access to internet at home, while 74% of teachers in middle-income schools and 93.1% of teachers in high-income schools indicated either “most” or “all” students in their class(es) have access to internet at home. Two-thirds (66.5%) of teachers in mixed-income schools indicated either “most” or “all” students have access to the internet at home, higher than the sample (57.9%), but lower than middle- and high-income schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic context</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers who indicated either &quot;most&quot; or &quot;all&quot; students have access to internet at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle income</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed incomes</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentages are based on total responses after excluding missing values, “Does not apply,” and “Do not know” responses.

These findings suggest that the cost of home internet service may be out of reach for many low-income families living on a limited budget. These students will have less opportunity to communicate by e-mail, participate in collaborative online projects, conduct internet research for school assignments, and develop computer skills, than students in middle- and high-income schools. Teachers in schools located in low-income neighbourhoods will face more challenges related to student access to technology as the curriculum and teaching practices become technology based, and as communication with students and parents moves to an electronic format.
Access to computer use outside of school—Socio-economic context

Similar results are found in comparing the proportion of teachers indicating students have access to computers outside of school hours, by the socio-economic context in which the school is located. The following chart shows that less than one-third (30.9%) of teachers in low-income schools indicated either “most” or “all” students in their class(es) have access to computer use outside of school hours, while 68% of teachers in middle-income schools, and 92.6% of teachers in high-income schools indicated either “most” or “all” students in their class(es) have access to computer use outside of school hours. Two-thirds (65.8%) of teachers in mixed-income schools indicated either “most” or “all” students have access to computer use outside of school hours, higher than the sample (55.2%), but lower than middle- and high-income schools.

These results also suggest that the cost of owning and maintaining a home computer may be out of reach for many low-income families. Some of these students may have access to other electronic devices, but these may not be suitable for preparing and printing school assignments. And some students may not have easy access to a community library or other places to check email and do internet searches, limiting their ability to utilize technology relative to students in middle- to high-income families. Teachers in schools located in low-income neighbourhoods would also face considerably greater challenges integrating technology into school assignments than teachers in schools in middle-income and high-income neighbourhoods.

Teachers commented extensively on issues related to student access to technology, with the qualitative analysis providing insights into the implications for students who fall behind in learning expectations because they lack access to the same technology as their peers. The broad thematic areas that emerged in the qualitative analysis are included below, and reported in detail in a supplementary report, Chapter 7 Supplement.
What teachers had to say about the impact on students who do not have the same access to technology at home as other students

Teachers were asked to comment on how the increased use of technology in learning affects students who do not have access to internet and computers at home. Teachers’ comments indicate that not all families are able to afford internet service and computers and that some rural areas do not have reliable internet service. Teachers expressed concern about the widening gap between students who have access to the latest technology and those who do not. Some teachers said they limit the type of homework assignments so a computer is not required, and leave the classroom open for computer use at lunch to help address this inequity. Some teachers commented that outdated technology and limited hours for students to use technology at the school can further restrict access. Teachers noted students without access to technology are disadvantaged in completing assignments, skill development, and social opportunities (school blogs, group-work, social media). Some Primary teachers expressed concern about the effects of overuse of technology at home on student well-being. Other teachers expressed concern that even when students have plenty of access to technology, it is used primarily a source of entertainment rather than for educational purposes. The qualitative responses also provide insight into the potential impact of lack of access to technology on the emotional and social well-being of students and the degree to which students and parents can participate in the school community.

Thematic areas

One-third of survey respondents provided qualitative comments in response to the question “Do you have any comments to make about how the increased use of technology in learning affects students who do not have access to internet and computers at home?” The qualitative results for the responses to this question are organized into seven major topic areas, with illustrative quotes provided for each theme within each of the topic areas.

The broad topic areas are: 1. Access to technology at home or in the community; 2. Teachers’ concerns about the use of technology by students; 3. Access to technology for students while at school; 4. Teachers’ concerns about expectations on families to provide devices; 5. Teachers’ views on the impact of students not having access to computers and the internet at home on school assignments; 6. How not having the same access to the same technology as other students can impact the emotional and social well-being of students; and 7. Internet access at home and electronic communication by the school with students and parents.

The summary of the qualitative findings for this section on “Student access to technology outside of school: Socio-economic impact” is extensive, and is therefore included as a separate report to accompany this chapter, in Chapter 7 Supplement: Widening the socio-economic gap? Teachers’ concerns about unequal student access to technology and the impact on learning, available at http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx.
Overall adequacy of resources at the school to address poverty-related needs of students

The survey asked teachers to rate the overall level of adequacy of resources at the school to address poverty-related needs of students. Of the 714 teachers who answered this question, only 10.4% rated the adequacy of the resources at their school to address the poverty-related needs of students as “Quite adequate”, and 1.8% rated it as “Very adequate”. One-third (32.6%) rated the adequacy of resources as “Not very adequate” and 6.9% as “Not at all adequate” to address the poverty-related needs of students at the school. The remainder (40%) rated the adequacy of resources as “Somewhat adequate”.

The charts on the following page show how the overall adequacy of resources to meet the poverty-related needs of students varies by socio-economic context of the schools and by regional zone, based on a comparison of means (average) for each of these variables.
Adequacy of resources—Socio-economic context
On average, teachers in schools in low-income areas rated the adequacy of resources to address the poverty-related needs of students the lowest, and teachers in schools in high-income areas rated the adequacy of resources the highest. Overall, the adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs of students is rated below “Somewhat adequate” for all socio-economic groups except schools in high-income areas. Even at these more affluent schools, resources are rated as only “Somewhat adequate,” suggesting that while there may be fewer families who are struggling economically, there are not necessarily enough resources to address their needs.

Adequacy of resources—Regional zone
The following chart shows there is little variation across zones in the rating of the overall adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs of students, with the lowest rating being for Kootenay (2.53) and the highest for Okanagan (2.79). Overall, the adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs of students is rated below “Somewhat adequate” for all zones.
What teachers had to say about the adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs at the school

This section presents the themes that emerged in the analysis of teachers’ comments about the adequacy of resources at the school to support students experiencing poverty, that have not already been reported on in other sections of this report.

Resources needed to meet basic needs of students

When asked about the adequacy of resources to address poverty-related needs, some teachers emphasized the need for resources to meet basic human needs such as food, clothing, and shower facilities.

Not enough access to $ for clothing or hygiene supplies. Need a shower for students to access.

It just seems that those who need support need: food, clothes, counselling!! to help parents...the children have no choice.

Extra clothing for any outings that require rain or cold weather gear. In ALL schools. OR a clothing exchange area.

Food should be available for all at all times—breakfast and lunch provided. The fruit program is excellent—it has made such a difference for us.

A lunch program isn’t very effective since the day is almost over and students have missed out on breakfasts and recess snacks already at that point in the day.

There is no program to support students who may not have food for snack or lunch. Students and staff tend to share food with others when this occurs.

Two teachers described more fully the types of services that would address and improve daily life for students experiencing poverty.

We need a washer, dryer and showering facility for kids. A clothing room with extra clothes would be great. Better quality food for the lunch programme. Better quality after-school care would be wonderful. Advocacy services for parents to help them access community resources.

More needs to be done to identify students who are truly living in poverty and then support be provided for them. Every inner city school should have a clothing bank or food bank open at least one day a week—perhaps a travelling van—so that parents can have easy access to much needed essentials.

One teacher considered the school “lucky” to have funding to address poverty-related barriers:

We are very lucky because our school is a partnership between the local Band and School District, and therefore we can access additional funding at times.

Without this additional funding students would face more barriers to education.

Other types of resources teachers identified as being needed to support students experiencing poverty include attendance support, parenting programs, and training for school staff on providing resources to students in need (bus tickets, lunch program) in a way that is supportive and does not leave them feeling embarrassed or singled out. Access to technology required to support learning was also identified as a need; for detailed coverage of this topic, see Chapter 7 Supplement, at http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx.
Teachers’ insights into how underfunding impacts students experiencing poverty
These teachers provide thoughtful insights into the ways in which the underfunding of public schools impacts students experiencing poverty who cannot afford to pay for much-needed services, and how the cumulative effects of stress on families may affect their ability to access services:

The entire education system is underfunded. But because students facing poverty have far fewer resources to ameliorate the effects of underfunding related to their specific needs, they are more profoundly affected than their more affluent peers.

The more cut backs we experience in the schools, the more the students suffer. The poverty stricken students suffer the most because they cannot afford to pay for or get to outside services. It affects them all directly.

Poverty affects every aspect of struggling families’ lives, and has a cumulative effect on the family’s stress level, their ability to tackle everyday problems in a calm and thoughtful way. As a result some of these families become chronic avoiders of the help and resources they need to deal with poverty, while other families depend on and actively seek out any resources that will help them stretch their income.

Another teacher’s comments illustrate the potential long-term impact on students when resources are inadequate to address learning gaps at the time extra support is needed:

By high school it is kind of too late—because it is so obvious the poverty has a huge impact on school performance. The students I teach are mostly LD [Learning Disability], and perfectly capable of educational success with the right adaptations and accommodations, yet they will not be able to graduate because they are so far behind. It is all the family support, the tutors and summer experiences that they miss out on. By high school you can see that these make a huge difference to students with a learning disability.

When poverty is less visible it is harder to provide support to students
A few teachers expressed concerns that the needs of low-income students in their largely-affluent school may be overlooked, as poverty tends to be invisible. The comments suggest that this may be because there is less awareness of poverty issues, staff concerns about stigmatizing a child, and students not wanting to draw attention to their economic situation.

As we are situated in a nice neighbourhood with some extremely successful families, there seems to be a bit of a blind spot re. families dealing with poverty and related issues.

I think we do a really good job when we identify students in need; I worry about the students we are not aware of and what more we can be doing to help.

It is almost totally invisible, and hard to deal with because there is also plenty of conspicuous consumption, luxury goods etc on parade.

Our area is so wealthy everyone thinks there is no poverty, and so there are zero resources targeted at our school. The students experiencing poverty at my school, though fewer in number, do not have their needs addressed in the same way as at other schools where poverty is understood. In my school’s community, people
who experience poverty are blamed and shamed. Those students who live with poverty feel intense shame and go to great lengths to hide it.

So much of it is unseen. We don’t want to draw attention to the individual student, so it’s difficult to ‘spread the word’ about how little ministry funding covers.

There are more gray area families, families who have to budget very carefully but are not in poverty are left out or don’t fit the profile as being in need. Sometimes these children miss out more than those who are living in poverty.

**The widening gap between the “have” and “have not” schools**

As previously mentioned, the spread between the “have” and “have not” as well as the number in the “have nots” seems to be growing. The number of working poor seems to have increased and people who would not have needed to access food bank services a few years ago need to use them now.

Not all schools are the same for finances. Some are “have” school and then there are “have not”.

Another teacher noted resources are adequate at the school, located in a largely affluent area, acknowledging that some schools are not so “lucky”:

> We are ok. I know we have some issues and those parents are helped as much as we can without ostracizing or stigmatizing. We are a relatively affluent catchment and lucky in that way. Two catchments to the North East of us the story is VERY different and they are fully inner city. We know they need more help than us.

**Government responsibility—Poverty is a political issue**

Several teachers commented that it is the government’s responsibility to develop a poverty reduction plan to address poverty and ensure families have sufficient income to meet their needs:

> It should not be us—our provincial government should support families and collective bargaining so that people can make a living wage and we no longer have one of the highest child poverty rates in the country.

> Poverty [is] not usually the only difficulty a family has. It is a complex problem that fund raising is not going to address. It is a political problem that requires adequate funding for mental health services, a liveable wage, daycare, support for new immigrants and job training.

> This is a serious need for the provincial government to come up with a plan to help these children and their families.

> It is not the school’s responsibility to ensure that the students in poverty are provided for - it is the GOVERNMENT’S responsibility that these children and families are provided for.

> If the FSA [Foundation Skills Assessment] testing identifies students at risk, and we have income data of communities in our province, why is there not a plan to provide needs-based funding in our communities?

> Kids are vulnerable—if we do not provide the services they need early on we pay a much larger cost to rehabilitate them later in their teen and early adult years.

> Early literacy and early detection of issues works much better than the waiting game that we are currently doing.
Sources of funding to address poverty-related needs at the school

Background

This section reports on the sources of funding available at the school to provide services to “vulnerable” students, as indicated by teachers. The types of funding sources listed in the survey question included CommunityLINK (Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge) grant funds for programs and services such as breakfast, lunch, and snack programs, academic supports, counseling, youth workers, and after-school programs”16. Community schools funding such as the Vancouver School Board (VSB) Community School Teams, whose role is to provide support for the academic, social-emotional, and behavioural needs of vulnerable students and to enhance community connectedness17 and Inner-City Schools Program which qualify for additional resources to address the needs of students vulnerable to poverty. One such example is the VSB’s Inner City Schools Project schools, established 25 years ago, which has recently undergone a major review18. Also listed was Aboriginal targeted funding for school-age students participating in Aboriginal education programs and services19. While the purpose of Aboriginal Education funding is to “integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture or language or both”20, these programs and services may also help address poverty-related needs of Aboriginal students.

Schools may also receive support from private donors and from non-profit organizations that partner with districts to provide nutritional support for students, including Breakfast for Learning (provides food and equipment for breakfast and snack programs at BC schools), Breakfast Clubs of Canada (supports community-based breakfast programs for vulnerable school children and youth), and BC Dairy (delivers nutrition education and school milk programs to schools). Parent Advisory Committees (PACs) conduct fund-raising activities at the school for a variety of purposes. A BCTF research report21 documented the extent to which school fund-raising is subsidizing the cost of public education:

Parents, teachers, and others in the community face pressure to make up for the underfunding of education by the provincial government. The magnitude of the subsidy from sources other than the provincial government is indicated by looking at one type of “special purpose fund” that school boards report to the Ministry of Education: “School-generated funds”... School-district audited financial statements indicate a provincial total for the 2012–13 school year of just over $170 million in “other revenue” for School-generated funds. This is mostly money raised at the school level.

A district table in the report shows that school-generated funds can vary greatly by district, even for those similar in size such as Vancouver ($28,072,595) and Surrey ($13,851,687).

16 See http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/community-partnerships/communitylink
17 See Community School Teams at http://www.vsb.bc.ca/communityschoolteams
18 Vancouver Board of Education. Re-visioning Inner City and CommunityLINK Resources in Vancouver schools: Final report, February 2014.
19 For Aboriginal Education allocations see: TABLE 4b: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/k12funding/funding/15-16/welcome.htm
20 For more about Targeted Aboriginal Education funding, see: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education
Funding sources to address poverty-related needs at the school

The survey asked teachers “Does your school receive any of the following types of funding to provide services to ‘vulnerable’ students?” One-half of teachers indicated their school receives Aboriginal targeted funding (51.7%), while less than one-third (29.6%) indicated the school has CommunityLINK funding. One in five teachers (19.2%) indicated the school receives Community Schools funding, and one in seven (14%) indicated Inner-City Schools Program funding. The most prevalent type of funding source to support “vulnerable” students selected by teachers is Parent Advisory Council (PAC) fund-raising (70.4%). Some schools also received private individual or corporate donations (20.8%), or support from the non-profit organization Breakfast for learning BC (17%),

The survey also asked teachers if there are other types of funding at the school available to support vulnerable students. Other types of funding received include local community donations such as the local firefighters’ association, church and food bank, community agencies such as Big Brothers, the YWCA after-school programs, Tzu Chi Foundation, and Strong Start programs; and business donations such as the Vancouver Sun’s Adopt a School Program. School fund-raising from snack shops and vending machines and teacher donations were also mentioned.
What PAC funds are used for at the school

The chart on the previous page shows that the most prevalent type of funding to support “vulnerable” students is Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) fund-raising. This suggests many schools depend on fund-raising efforts at the school to address poverty-related needs of students. The survey asked teachers to indicate the types of activities and resources for which the school relies on fund-raising.

Two-thirds of teachers (67.7%) indicated that their school depends on fund-raising for field trips, one-half (51.4%) selected Library resources and one-half selected the School playground (51.9%). Three in ten respondents (29.6%) indicated their school depends on fund-raising for other school-related needs. These include classroom resources (school supplies, books, yearbooks, art supplies); sports (team uniforms, sports equipment, gym clothing); technology (math and language programs, computers, tablets, projectors and Smart Boards); Band and music programs (trips, sound equipment); Drama and Fine Arts performances, Graduation expenses (ceremonies and events, scholarships); practical resources (clothing, footwear and food); and extra-curricular activities (sports, gardening, swimming lessons, school clubs, and camps).

The following section reports on the extensive qualitative comments made by teachers in the survey describing their issues and concerns about school fund-raising.
Teachers’ concerns about school fund-raising: A qualitative inquiry

Teachers had a lot to say when asked to describe any concerns they have as a teacher regarding school fund-raising. While a few teachers viewed fund-raising as a beneficial activity for the school, and several teachers expressed appreciation of the efforts of the Parent Advisory Committee, most teachers expressed concern about a growing reliance of schools on fund-raising to compensate for inadequate provincial funding. Teachers are especially concerned about disparities in the amount of funds generated by PACs in schools located in affluent neighbourhoods relative to schools in low-income neighborhoods.

Schools fund-raising to cover the most basic needs at the school...

Comments by teachers suggest that schools are relying on fund-raising to cover the costs of basic educational resources that they expect to be funded by government in a public school system.

Government should ensure students, staffs, and schools have all that they need in order to be part of a vibrant learning environment. We’ve even had to use fund-raising to purchase basic things like paper and pencils, when these ran out!

I find it horrifying that we are fund-raising for basic school needs and appalling that the government keeps cutting funding to public schools.

If the educational system were properly/adequately funded, we wouldn’t need to fundraise. Schools are now fund raising to pay for things previously paid for by government as they should be.

Schools/teachers are [in need of] more and more financial support to provide basic needs for education as things are constantly stripped.

Fund-raising is being used to supply basic supplies so wealthier schools have better resources than poorer schools. BC schools desperately need adequate funding so all children have access to a good education.

Nothing left in the well

Some teachers commented that there is a limited amount of money that can be raised in the local school community and then “the well dries up” as the capacity of the community to donate has reached its limit. In some cases, teachers noted that they themselves make up the shortfall in a fund-raising project. A few teachers also noted that it can be very discouraging for students and the school when fund-raising efforts fail to raise much-needed funds.

Our parents are “fundraised” to death and many of them cannot really afford to participate.

Our school seems to have reached its limit for fund-raising. We have a very small PAC. They have tried many, many ways to raise money but no one is buying.

Our school has a very active PAC who ceaselessly seem to be fund-raising—some initiatives successful, others not... seems logical that few families could afford to support each fundraiser that comes along (I know I can’t, either).

Parents and schools are at a wall with fund raising. We can’t keep hitting up parents and local businesses. They are getting upset and rightly so.

Small town, same businesses being targeted time and time again.

You are always going to the same “well” and eventually it will run dry...
Impact of school fund-raising on students and their families

Teachers expressed concern about the emotional and financial pressure fund-raising places on families who often cannot afford to contribute to fund-raising efforts. Some teachers also described the impact they observed on students who are unable to contribute or participate in a school fund-raising activity for financial reasons.

On families

*It seems odd to expect low income families who are struggling to support their own families to continually be bombarded with requests for money to support schools.*

*I do not think families need extra pressure from (well-meaning) fundraisers (often PAC)—many families need to save the money for their own needs and shouldn’t feel pressured to help fund-raise, even if it is “for a good cause”.*

*Our school does a lot of fund-raising, and sometimes parents complain it is too much. That said, the money all goes back to the kids. I think they just feel inundated by it at times.*

*PACs are being expected to raise far too much money. Parents have said, “I didn’t know going to school was so expensive”.*

*It’s become WAY too much—A different fundraiser every other week. And they have kids competing for prizes to get money raised (which teaches them nothing about being charitable). Parents are paying taxes and then paying towards fundraisers as well (essentially being taxed again).*

*Both school playgrounds were built with PAC funds and they also pay for a lot of our technology. I worry as the money for this often still has to come from our parents, many of whom are low income and cannot afford to be purchasing PAC fundraiser items but want to support the school.*

On students

*The gap between the have and have not kids is growing. Fund raising is usually for the teams, activities etc. that the really poor kids wouldn’t attend anyway.*

*During the pre-Christmas food drive, many of our kids were accessing the food bank and would donate food to the school food drive out of their own family hampers in order to not appear ‘different’.*

*Not all PACs are created equal. If you are fund-raising from low-income families you don’t get much. Pizza Fridays...unfortunately it is the “have” students that order pizza. I feel sad for those students who can’t afford $2 for a slice.*

*I don’t mind the fund-raising that just goes home from the PAC, but I think it is wrong for kids to be asked to participate in fund-raising for overnight trips, etc. What end up happening is that parents and families who can afford to, buy whatever their kids are selling, and kids living in poverty feel as though they have very little to contribute.*
Impact of school fund-raising on teachers and the classroom

Teachers’ role is to teach, not to fund-raise

Several teachers expressed the view that it should not be the role of teachers to fund-raise. Some teachers described the fund-raising efforts at their school as “overwhelming”, “exhausting”, “too much”, and “arduous”, with some comments revealing how much fund-raising can add to a teacher’s workload. Teachers were especially concerned about the amount of time that fund-raising takes away from teaching:

Fund-raising for any activity uses up valuable time/effort on the part of teachers who have a job to do on top of planning/organizing/collecting/counting/documenting the monies collected at the school level.

I don’t believe fund-raising should be part of the expectations on teachers. Learning should be the focus and helping all our students be successful...the government and community needs to step in.

I think schools should be well-funded by the Province and school communities should not have to spend time and effort fund-raising. That time and effort should be spent on the kids.

If our taxes were allocated differently, teachers could concentrate on meeting educational needs instead of worrying about resources in the workplace.

It shouldn’t be part of our job. All of my time should go to planning learning activities and teaching my students.

It takes up instructional time and we are sometimes overwhelmed with the number of permission slips and fund-raising forms we have to send home. It all takes time to collect them.

Teachers do not have the time or resources to properly fundraise for school activities. It’s not our forte and it should not be our job.

I feel that the more people fundraise for schools, that the less the govt feels that they need to do. Politicians should be made to work in inner-city classes and see first-hand the problems that teachers face every day trying to teach children when the teacher’s energies are being stretched to the limits by having to fund raise.

Another issue raised by teachers is that teachers do not always have a say on how the funds raised are spent, and are allocated for purposes other than what teachers view as most necessary:

The PAC has money but there are restrictions on where they can spend it and many times those are the places we’d like the money to go.

Casino gaming funds earmarked only towards capital projects, so there is no funding that can be used by the parents from the government to work on poverty issues needed immediately.

PAC, parent, corporate/non-profit fund-raising is problematic in terms of equity across schools (neighbourhoods with more money end up with more money in their schools) and equity within schools (Who decides where the money goes? Who decides which teacher’s class gets that new Smartboard or goes on the field trip?).
School fund-raising: A social justice issue

Parent Advisory Councils vary widely in their capacity to fund-raise

The teachers’ responses about fund-raising reveal how the amount of funds generated from fund-raising by the Parent Advisory Committees varies greatly depending on the financial capacity of parents in the school community. The following comments illustrate how widely the fund-raising experiences and the funds generated can vary depending on the socio-economic context of the area in which the school is located.

PACs with limited fund-raising capacity

Because our parents are working class or lower income and are also not fluent in English, many cannot also support the fund-raising efforts, thus the level of fund-raising funds available to the school is significantly less than other schools in our district.

Fund raising in an inner city school is not at all the same as fund raising in South Surrey or other affluent areas.

I am appalled that a PAC in the south end can raise money for a playground in a year and the school I work at has a PAC that took 10 years (no exaggeration) to raise funds for same playground. THIS IS DISGUSTING! The districts/province need to address this imbalance.

In our community, PAC fund-raising and fund-raising via parents (e.g. silent auction or raffle at events, etc) is minimal. There just isn’t extra money to go around.

It can be difficult with so many low income families within our neighbourhood to raise those funds for school field trips and other important food programs.

It is difficult for poor parents to contribute! Playgrounds are a particular concern. We should provide playground equipment for poorer schools. We also have a bussing concern. Our school has to pay for any field trip bussing. Often we simply will not go on field trips to avoid bussing costs. This is not a concern for schools in town.

In a working class neighbourhood, contributing to fund-raising events is like paying an extra tax, and even contributing a little bit towards fund-raising is more difficult for these families that have very little in the way of disposable income to begin with.

PACs with ample fund-raising capacity

Being a somewhat wealthy neighborhood with a very active PAC, my school has a lot of available funds. I have three times the classroom budget this year at my school than I did last year at my school in [a low-income area].

I don’t think that schools should have to rely on their PACs to fund raise in order to have field trips and books in the library, because this obviously creates ‘have’ and ‘have not’ schools. I am fortunate to work at a school that does have a very involved and supportive PAC who give money each year for field trips, classroom resources, and other learning resources.

Schools like mine, with mostly well-to-do parents, can easily fundraise, in a 2-week blitz, over $15,000 for a new playground. It is not fair because schools in
other neighbourhoods would take years to raise that amount of money. It is creating huge gaps from school to school.

When a school depends on fund-raising to access basic requirements for classrooms, there is a HUGE problem! Our school is better off than many, but if we had no PAC fundraisers, we would have little to no resources available that we all use on a regular basis.

The comments illustrate how teachers in schools with limited fund-raising capacity are aware of the disparity this creates between other, more-affluent, schools:

In a lower income community we are unable to generate funds for our school, but within the next school boundary, the school generated funds allow for the purchase of i-Pads, playground. It is a have vs. have not situation, and our students are clearly at a disadvantage both at home and at school.

Schools who have strong PACs who are fund-raising-savvy are at an advantage over schools who do not have strong PACs. All students should have the same advantages from our public school system, not just those whose parents or adults in charge know how to organize.

I am very concerned with the amount of pressure put on PAC to try to fill the gap left by the funding formula change and reduced amount of provincial budget. And the disparity this creates between wealthy areas and poor. My kid’s school raises more money in one night of fund-raising than my old school could do in a year.

School fund-raising increasing inequality between schools

The most predominant theme in the qualitative responses relates to the inequities that arise between schools with varying degrees of capacity to generate funds through fund-raising efforts. Many teachers expressed concern about the widening disparities between schools in affluent and low-income neighbourhoods, as schools become increasingly reliant on fund-raising to cover the cost of basic educational resources.

Fund-raising is most effective in neighbourhoods that are already well-off. In the area around our school, many people live below the poverty line, and have no extra funds to donate to us. The increasing reliance on school fund-raising only exacerbates inequality.

I am concerned with the inequality between schools in terms of ability to raise funds as well as the use of fund-raising for essential items (e.g. library books).

I am in a school where we have the ability to fundraise—a “have” school. Many schools do not have the resources in the community to support fund-raising—the “have not” schools. There is a real disparity.

Inequity between schools across the province; many communities who need funds lack money in the community and people who are able and capable of doing this fund-raising; teachers spend time writing grants and fund-raising rather than teaching/planning.

Disparity of fund-raising base between schools in affluent catchments vs. working-class catchments. Boards and trustees don’t want to wade into this issue.
The responses reveal the sense of injustice many teachers feel that the growing reliance of schools on fund-raising for educational resources favours affluent communities, increasing economic inequality instead of ensuring that all students have equal access to the same level of resources in a publicly-funded school system.

School fund-raising is another one of those aspects of today’s education system that causes the gap between poor and well-off to widen. Schools that have many families struggling with poverty are less able to raise funds, and therefore have less money to support the system.

The schools in our district that have a wealthy catchment area have PACs that have the ability to fundraise more—more stay-at-home parents, and more disposable income to spend on fund-raising projects. This leads to a big disparity in what different schools have, for example Smartboards, etc.

There is terrible inequity in fund-raising around Vancouver. I know of one school where there was a corporate grant of $250 000 given to a school to rebuild the library. The staff had to write an application to receive it. Their library is beautiful—full of new books, a lovely reading area with soft chairs, carpets, beautiful decorations,... Another school within 10 blocks where the staff of the school also applied for the same grant from the corporation, got nothing. I find it disturbing that teachers are competing with each other to fund their schools. If the corporation was going to donate such a large amount, why not break it up equitably?

It’s grossly unfair. My friend who teaches at a public school in...told me that the PAC is fund-raising to put SmartBoards in every classroom. We have 3 and our PAC is fund-raising for playground equipment.

Parents who barely have the financial resources to support the basics for their families are being asked to subsidize a publicly funded school to meet the standards of more economically stable populations...we have schools in our district that have TV monitors and projectors in every classroom and some schools that do not have enough chairs and desks for their students.

Especially difficult and discouraging to hear about less needy schools receiving donations of technology (when inner-city schools seem to need tech to keep students engaged in school).

Technology should be part of a school’s budget, not reliant on the PAC. There should be a way for all schools to be on par where technology is concerned. There shouldn’t be such big gaps between schools.

These comments by teachers illustrate how, as public schools become increasingly dependent on other sources of funding to compensate for inadequate provincial funding, schools in more affluent areas are much better able to absorb the impact compared to schools in low-income areas. The schools with the greatest need have the least capacity to fundraise, widening disparities between schools. Over time, and especially during a period of rapid advances in technology, students attending schools in low-income areas have less access to learning resources than those attending middle- to high-income schools.
School fund-raising: A political issue

Fund-raising and corporate donations another form of privatization

A few teachers expressed unease about how accepting corporate donations at the school may be tied to expectations on the part of the corporate donor:

I also think we need to be really careful about corporate sponsors. Public education is not the right place for brand names and product placement—companies get HUGE buy-in from parents and students when their “free” products are used.

Too much!!! Too much corporate sponsorship—all expecting their sign visible to all.

I don’t like the idea of corporate sponsorship. If taxes were raised 1% and earmarked for poverty and education, that would take care of a lot of the problems.

Parents should not be asked to directly fund what is considered public education. In lieu of our reliance on fund-raising and donations, we cannot technically call our education system public—there is an element of privatization that is evident here.

The following comment illustrates how schools in low-income areas with the least capacity to fundraise may feel especially dependent on corporate donations:

Our PAC does not have the ability to raise large amounts of money we need for learning resources, fieldtrips, etc. As a result, we rely heavily on private and corporate donations to help run our school.

Fund-raising—A government strategy to download the costs of public education

Many teachers expressed the view that the government is effectively downloading the costs of educational resources onto schools rather than adequately funding the public school system.

I feel that currently parents are expected to make up for the funding shortfalls of our government.

Fund-raising is great, but having to rely on it for school activities is not okay, parents have subsidized lack of government funding for years, just like teachers.

Government needs to fund public schools. If and when we fundraise we enable them to slash funding and place the cost of education further onto our backs. We become enablers.

More and more fund-raising is being asked of parents. Another downloading of government responsibility onto the backs of taxpayers.

It upsets me that our families are expected to make up for a shortfall in funding, especially for resources, such as library, music, and playground, that are clearly necessary for students.
Teachers speak out: Schools should not have to fundraise for learning resources
Several teachers expressed the view that school fund-raising needs to be viewed as a political issue—that by engaging in fund-raising, schools are unwittingly enabling the government to avoid its responsibility to adequately fund public education:

*It just encourages the government to underfund education. By fund-raising we are enabling the government to be remiss in their fundamental duty, which is to disperse funds equitably.*

Schools should be adequately funded to do the job they are expected to do. It should not be up to PACs and staffs to raise money to provide basic programs.

Schools should be fully funded. Children shouldn’t have to fundraise in order to have a playground, books to read, or the ability to learn in the community.

[Schools] should not have to fund raise to replace outdated school equipment, because of chronic underfunding of the public school system.

More and more, teachers are being expected to ask parents for fieldtrip money or to use school time to participate in fund-raising activities for school resources. As a result, I feel that the provincial government then has an excuse not to put more money into public education—that [it] is being taken care of through donations and on site fund-raising.

Fund-raising in the past twenty years has replaced government funding. As a result, schools like mine have all they need; schools that cannot raise money are becoming more disenfranchised. As a parent I refuse to participate in fund-raising for things that are part of every child’s right to publicly-funded education.

I feel that we need to stop asking our parents for money and begin demanding sufficient funding from the provincial government.

Chapter 7 Summary:
A summary of the findings and discussion of the implications for education funding is published in Chapter 7 Summary: Resources fall well short of the need: Summary of the findings in the context of the underfunding of BC public schools, at [http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx](http://www.bctf.ca/PovertyResearch.aspx).
Appendix 1: Level of adequacy of staffing resources

The survey asked teachers to rate the adequacy of staffing resources at their school to meet the needs of students who require extra support to address learning gaps, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all adequate” and 5 is “very adequate”.

Level of adequacy of staffing resources at the school to meet the needs of students who require extra learning support to address learning gaps – percentage of total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Special needs assessment (n=724)</th>
<th>Learning Assistance support (n=725)</th>
<th>Counsellor/psychologist (n=727)</th>
<th>Aboriginal education teachers (n=692)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all adequate</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not very adequate</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>25.2%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat adequate</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite adequate</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very adequate</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentage of total calculated after excluding missing values and “Does not apply” responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ELL* teachers (n=617)</th>
<th>ESD** teachers (n=457)</th>
<th>Education Assistants (n=713)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all adequate</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very adequate</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat adequate</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite adequate</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very adequate</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentage of total calculated after excluding missing values and “Does not apply” responses.

* English Language Learning
** English as a Second Dialect
Appendix 2: Geographic area and proportion of students who are of Aboriginal ancestry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of geographic area</th>
<th>Proportion of students I currently teach who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between one-half and three-quarters (n=38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote area</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Change in FTE learning specialist teacher positions: 2001–02 to 2014–15

This table shows the difference in FTE learning specialist teachers between the years 2001–02, and 2014–15. These figures do not include teaching positions funded by the Teacher Education Fund.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library services</td>
<td>921.8</td>
<td>730.0</td>
<td>635.8</td>
<td>646.6</td>
<td>627.5</td>
<td>577.1</td>
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<td>-37.4%</td>
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<td>Counselling</td>
<td>989.6</td>
<td>915.8</td>
<td>870.1</td>
<td>871.1</td>
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<td>3,446.5</td>
<td>3,282.3</td>
<td>3,381.3</td>
<td>3,236.8</td>
<td>3,082.7</td>
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<td>-23.9%</td>
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<td>English language learning</td>
<td>1,015.6</td>
<td>788.7</td>
<td>673.7</td>
<td>686.2*</td>
<td>816.8</td>
<td>792.6</td>
<td>-223.0</td>
<td>-22.0%</td>
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<td>Aboriginal education</td>
<td>206.9</td>
<td>193.4</td>
<td>196.0</td>
<td>204.7</td>
<td>203.1</td>
<td>200.9</td>
<td>-6.0</td>
<td>-2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,185.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,074.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,657.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,789.9†</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,742.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,509.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>-1,675.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>-23.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in FTE learning specialist teacher positions: 2011–12 to 2014–15

This table shows the difference in FTE learning specialist teachers between the years 2011–12, and 2014–15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTE specialist teachers</th>
<th>2011–12</th>
<th>2014–15</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library services</td>
<td>635.8</td>
<td>577.1</td>
<td>-58.7</td>
<td>-9.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>870.1</td>
<td>856.6</td>
<td>-13.5</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>3,282.3</td>
<td>3,082.7</td>
<td>-199.6</td>
<td>-6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language learning</td>
<td>673.7</td>
<td>792.6</td>
<td>118.9</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aboriginal education</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>200.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
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BCTF Research tables: totals calculated with figures from BC Ministry of Education, Staff by Year and Program Code (unpublished Form 1530 data, various years).

* No staffing was reported by SD34 for Program 1.30, ELL, for 2012–13—an unexplained anomaly in the data.
† The total for 2012–13 is affected by the asterisked note, above. As well, it appears that, for 2012–13, SD87 reported all teachers under Regular Instruction, and none as learning specialist teachers.
Appendix 4: Student access to basic resources

The following table shows the responses to the question “How many students in your class(es) have access to adequate study space” for all categories: None, A few, Some, Most, or All.

Percentage of respondents* indicating “None”, “A few”, “Some”, “Most” or “All” students have all of the resources needed for school at the beginning of the school year (or term)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pens, paper, binders (n=659)</th>
<th>Clothing for school activities (n=656)</th>
<th>Adequate study space (n=447)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a few</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Total for calculating percentages is based on the number of responses after excluding missing values, “does not apply,” and “do not know” responses.
Appendix 5: Student access to technology resources

The following tables show the responses to the question “How many students in your class(es) have access to technology resources” for all categories: None, A few, Some, Most, or All.

### Percentage of teachers indicating how many students have access to internet at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many students?</th>
<th>Access to internet at home (n=592)</th>
<th>Computer use outside school hours (n=589)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a few</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages are based on total responses after excluding missing values, “Does not apply” and “Do not know” responses.

### Percentage of teachers indicating how many students have access to internet at home: Socio-economic context of the school (n=590)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic context of the school</th>
<th>none</th>
<th>a few</th>
<th>some</th>
<th>most</th>
<th>all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low income</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed incomes</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages are based on total responses after excluding missing values, “Does not apply” and “Do not know” responses.

### Percentage of teachers indicating how many students have access to computer use outside school hours: Socio-economic context of the school (n=587)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-economic context of the school</th>
<th>none</th>
<th>a few</th>
<th>some</th>
<th>most</th>
<th>all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low income</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed incomes</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages are based on total responses after excluding missing values, “Does not apply” and “Do not know” responses.