

BCTI Gazette

A Parliamentary Education Newsletter for BC Teachers

issue 1 | volume 22 | October 2019

Read Time: 6 - 7 minutes



Launch of **Democracy & Me Art Contest** for K-12 students

On September 16, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia and the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia partnered to launch the **Democracy & Me** Art Contest for K-12 students in British Columbia.

The contest encourages students to think about the importance of community, civic engagement and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and democracy. In developing creative responses to the contest questions, students can also reflect on how art offers a unique medium to express one's identity, culture and connection to community. There are three contest grade categories, each with its own unique question.

One winner will be selected from each of the three grade categories and their artwork will be displayed in the Parliament Buildings. Each winner will also receive a trip to Victoria in May 2020, including lunch with the Lieutenant Governor at Government House, a formal introduction in the Legislative Assembly and a behind-the-scenes tour of the Parliament Buildings.

Artwork must be submitted by **January 31, 2020**. Visit the contest [website](#) for all details – including accepted art formats, contest rules and information for teachers – and then encourage your students to get creative!



BCTI Alumni will notice that this newsletter has undergone a name change. All BC teachers are now invited to [subscribe](#) to the BCTI Gazette. We will continue to feature content from the Legislative Assembly of BC and our partners on topics related to parliamentary democracy. Please share this issue with your colleagues and encourage them to subscribe today!

Expanding Our Reach

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Use the federal election as a teachable moment

Elementary and high schools across the country are invited to engage their students in the October federal election through the free and non-partisan Student Vote program.

Student Vote uses the election as teachable moment and enables teachers to bring democracy alive in the classroom. This hands-on learning program empowers students to experience the voting process firsthand and cast ballots for the official candidates running in their school's riding.

Participating schools receive a variety of learning resources to teach about government, democracy and the electoral process, foster information literacy skills and encourage research into the issues and candidates. Ballots, ballot boxes and voting screens are also provided for the coordination of Student Vote Day.



This year's program will also feature many new tools, including Vote Compass: Canada Youth Edition, party leader Q&A videos, party platform summaries, and lessons targeted at English language classes.

Nearly 6,000 schools from throughout the country have registered to participate in Student Vote Canada 2019.

To register your class or entire school, visit www.studentvote.ca/canada or call toll free, 1-866-488-8775. Student Vote is a program of CIVIX. Student Vote Canada 2019 is made possible by Elections Canada.

Visit our table at teacher conferences this fall

Staff of the Parliamentary Education Office will be onsite at three teacher conferences this fall. Please visit our table for free resources about parliamentary democracy in BC and information about our school programs.

2019 BCSSTA Conference

October 25 | Vancouver

MyPITA Fall Conference

October 25 & 26 | Abbotsford

InspirED Christian Teachers Convention

November 7 & 8 | Langley



A bill to amend the *Provincial Elections Act* granted some women the right to vote in BC in 1917, but this was not the first women's suffrage bill submitted to the legislature. Since BC became a province in 1871, how many times was women's suffrage defeated in the house before it became law?

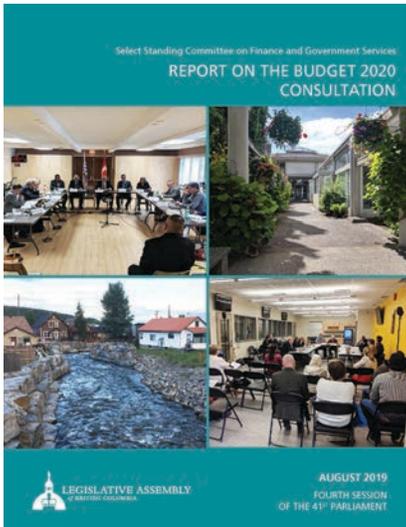
a, Three; b, Eight; c, Twelve; d, Seventeen

Email your answer to PEO@leg.bc.ca to win a prize from the Parliamentary Gift Shop!

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Report on the Budget 2020 Consultation

Every year, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services holds a public consultation on the next provincial budget. While the consultation typically takes place in the fall, the Budget 2020 Consultation took place in June.

In our May issue, teachers were invited to bring their classes to one of 15 public hearings held in different communities around the province. In addition to meeting with individuals and organizations either in person or via teleconference, the Committee also accepted written, audio and video comments and solicited feedback on key issues through an online survey.

On August 7, the Committee released its unanimous [report](#) on the Budget 2020 Consultation, including 106 recommendations for the next provincial budget and a summary of the concerns and priorities put forward by British Columbians.

Did You Know? Parliamentary Committees are appointed by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia to undertake business on behalf of the Assembly. These all-party committees are comprised of small groups of Private Members. Committees derive their powers from the House and must report their findings back to the House. Visit our website to find out more about the [Parliamentary Committee System](#).



Professional Development Day: Indigenous Governance and Parliamentary Democracy

When: November 22, 2019 | 8:30 am to 2:00 pm

Where: Royal BC Museum & Legislative Assembly of BC

Cost: \$75 per participant payable to the Royal BC Museum

The Parliamentary Education Office and the Royal BC Museum have partnered over the last few years to run a successful school program called [Governance and Beyond](#). This program gives space to explore both the Royal BC Museum and BC Legislature, while developing a better understanding of Indigenous governance and parliamentary democracy.

This Professional Development day for classroom and community educators will explore the big ideas of the program and methods of application in the classroom. Limited spaces available; [register online](#) today.

Parliamentary Tour Program: Summer Wrap-up

From May – August this year, our nine summer Tour Guides and six Parliamentary Players welcomed over 140, 000 visitors into the buildings and gave 1990 tours! This was also the first summer that we offered daily guided French, Spanish and Mandarin tours – something we would certainly like to continue offering next summer.

Summer Break Program

Loosening the reigns of a registered program, this summer the Parliamentary Education Office experimented with a drop-in program geared to children and families visiting the Legislature. Facilitated by a Tour Guide and a Parliamentary Player, the program ran every Friday in July and August – and what a hit!

We welcomed 186 participants who crafted, puzzled, toured and even snuggled our BC animal stuffies. Our youngest participant was a three-month-old who was fascinated by the chirping stuffed Stellar's Jay – conveniently for sale in the Parliamentary Gift Shop! Our eldest (self-identifying) participant was an 87-year-old woman who brought the three children of a refugee family being sponsored by her church. It was a ton of fun for everyone involved and will surely be on offer again next year.



Free Voting-Themed Resources for Teachers

Museum Outreach Kit: The Royal BC Museum created an outreach kit in partnership with Elections BC called *Having a Voice: Voting Rights and Democracy in BC*. Teachers anywhere in the province can borrow the kit for two weeks for free (including free shipping). It includes activities and primary-source documents that relate to voting and democracy, such as maps, images, and letters. It is designed to fit the grade 5 social studies curriculum, but all ages and classes are invited to borrow it. Teachers can choose which activities they want to use in the kit. For more information and to request the kit, visit: <https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/outreach>.

Mock election Kit: Elections BC has mock election kits that they can send to teachers, which will allow students to practice voting year-round. Teachers get to keep the kit; they do not have to return it to Elections BC. Kits have supplies for about 75 people, including a ballot box, voting screen, map of the electoral districts, sample ballots, pens, pencils, digi cleans (i.e. cellphone screen cleaners), 'future voter' stickers, and bookmarks.

Videos: Elections BC has short videos on their website that explain the voting process and the history of voting rights. You can access the videos here: elections.bc.ca/resources/learning-about-elections (scroll to the bottom of the webpage to find the videos).

For more information about Elections BC's resources, contact Melanie Callas, Outreach Coordinator at Melanie.Callas@elections.bc.ca or (778) 974-3311.



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your colleagues might
be interested in? Email:

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