



## Happy #WorldTeachersDay and #WomensHistoryMonth!

A big thank you for all that you do! We appreciate all of the teachers who work with and inspire us! If you're looking for resources for Women's History month, check out our lesson plan, "[A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words](#)," and our 2017 exhibit, "[100 Years of Women and the Vote](#)"!



### Explore Democracy and Poetry this Fall!

This fall we'll be both launching the K-12 *Democracy & Me* Poetry Contest and hosting a virtual learning session for teachers! To learn more about and to register for the ProD event, "Democracy & Poetry: Youth Civic Voices", on October 22, click [here](#). And stay tuned on October 27 for a special contest announcement from the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia! For more information about *Democracy & Me*, visit the [website](#).

### 2021-22 School Programs

#### School Tours

After over a year and a half without any school groups in the Parliament Buildings, we are pleased to resume offering in-person tours for students this fall! Groups are being limited to 30 students and 5 adults. For more

information and to book your tour, please visit our [School Tours page](#). Please note that the Legislative Assembly has implemented a [Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#).



### **Virtual Classroom**

For those of you who are unable to bring your students to visit us in person, we would be pleased to connect with you online with our interactive Virtual Classroom program. Via the magic of Zoom or Teams, one of our Tour Guides will share information on the history of the Parliament Buildings, walk you through our [Virtual Tour](#), and explain how laws are made. Sessions can be booked for 30 or 45 minutes in length. Please visit our [Virtual Classroom](#) page for more information.

*"The guide did a fantastic job. He facilitated our students SO well and was such a passionate, animated presenter. It was a good reminder that passion for a topic is contagious. I would highly recommend this field trip, as it was one of the best virtual field trips I've attended!"*

- 2020-21 Teacher

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### **Self-guided Virtual Building Tour**

Another way to discover the beauty of our Parliament Buildings is through our new [Virtual Tour](#). This program allows you to control where you go and what you see as you take a virtual walk through the halls of the Parliament Buildings. Teachers may also be interested to have their students search for the missing animals that are hidden throughout the Parliament Buildings with our [Online Scavenger Hunt](#). No booking required!

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### **Virtual Speaker in the Schools**

The Speaker is an MLA who presides over debates and ensures that the Assembly's established rules of behaviour and procedure are followed. The Honourable Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Raj Chouhan, will continue the popular Speaker in the Schools program online during the 2021-22 school year. Students learn about the Legislative Assembly and role of the Speaker, and are able to ask the Speaker their questions during

a fun and informal 45-minute Zoom session. To learn more, visit [here](#) and follow the Speaker [here](#)!

## BC Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy

We hope to offer the next in-person BCTI in late February of 2022. Stay tuned for more updates to share with your colleagues and/or to apply as a Facilitator!



### In the House

The Legislative Assembly resumed on Monday, October 4. Bring your class to watch the debates from the [public galleries](#) or watch [online](#) Monday through Thursday (here's a link to the [Parliamentary Calendar](#)). You can also find out more information about your school's MLA [here](#). If you have any questions, visit [Discover Your Legislature](#) or email us at [peo@leg.bc.ca](mailto:peo@leg.bc.ca)

### MLAs in the Classroom by Katie Glover, SD35 teacher & BCTI alumnus

There have been few activities I have done with my students that have been as effective and inspirational as visits from our local representatives.

BC teachers should know that our MLAs and MPs are more accessible than one might think. I used to be incredibly nervous about contacting them but once I mustered the confidence to reach out, I was extremely impressed with the results. The past few years I have engaged with Student Vote and whenever there was a federal or a provincial election I arranged an All Candidates meeting for the students. To organize this event, I would usually contact the incumbent first and find some potential dates around their schedule. Once that was confirmed, I would reach out to the other candidates (I always found they were eager and enthusiastic to attend!).



I often held the event in the theater so many Socials classes could join. More recently, we

used Microsoft Teams and Socials classes streamed the meeting. Since I invited multiple classes to participate, I would ask the Socials teachers to send me their students' questions in advance, then compile the most relevant questions, and create a schedule with which student would ask each question. This helped the event go smoothly. Many students commented that the All-Candidates meeting was a highlight of their Socials class that year.

Inviting the MLA and MP to my class when it was not an election was even simpler! For my Political Studies class, I invited our local MLA, Andrew Mercier, and our local MP, Tako van Popta, to speak to my class at different times. To schedule Andrew Mercier, I phoned his office, and his Constituency Assistant was very excited to hear from me. She scheduled a time for him to speak to my class over Teams, and she even sent a box of goodies, such as stickers, pencils and information packets, to distribute to my class. Before the meeting, I reviewed the role of the provincial government with my Grade 11s and 12s, and we looked up Andrew Mercier's responsibilities specifically. We also had learned about political ideologies and party platforms. For this meeting, I had students prepare written questions and keep them on hand during the visit. I did not create a schedule as the visit was a bit more informal. MLA Mercier was incredibly gracious and gave us an hour of his time, ensuring that all of the students' questions were fully answered.

One of the biggest highlights for my Political Studies class was when Mr. Mercier mentioned his virtual visit to Brookwood in the Legislature. He commended my students' questions and even called them out by their names. This experience was exceptionally valuable for the students!

I strongly recommend that other teachers reach out to their local representatives and invite them to attend their classes. In my experience, they have all been eager to speak with my class and the visit was incredibly meaningful for the students. Feel free to reach out if you have further questions about planning one of these events: [KGlover@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:KGlover@sd35.bc.ca)



## Educational Resources

### ShareEdBC

PEO is proud to be a contributor to [ShareEdBC](#), the province's online platform for sharing educator resources that are aligned with BC's curriculum. At the moment, PEO has begun uploading the BCTI Lesson Plans to the ShareEdBC site, and in the coming months, we'll be adding the rest of our learning resources too! With ShareEdBC's detailed search criteria, locating PEO resources that fit your particular curricular needs has never been easier. For example:

- Wanting to teach your class about political change and representation in government? The [Continuity and Change Lesson Plan](#) offers practical exercises that illustrate the changing nature of democracy!
- Teaching social studies during an election? The [Analyzing Political Campaigns Lesson Plan](#) can help students improve their critical thinking skills when it comes to electoral advertising!

- Thinking about holding a student debate? The [Don't Hate Debate Lesson Plan](#) contains a range of lessons and resources for structured debate!

See our current offerings on the ShareEdBC site right [here](#). If you or your school district don't have access to ShareEdBC, don't worry! All of our learning resources are also available on the [Legislative Assembly website](#).

## Educational Steering Committee Update

Despite most things being put on hold in our lives, PEO's Educational Steering Committee (ESC) has been more active than ever. Educational resources, professional development planning, and virtual programs--you name it, the ESC helped us with it. After many Zoom meetings over the year, we finally met in person on August 16 for our annual one-day retreat. PEO and our five advising teachers worked on future iterations of current programs, the development of our next contest, and how to continue offering quality hybrid tours and teaching programs for the 2021-22 school year. Stay tuned for more educational programming and for future opportunities to join the ESC!



## Elections BC: Free Teacher Resources

**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 [the RBCM website here](#).

**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, resource booklet, activity booklet, pens, pencils, and 'future voter' stickers.

**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](#) (scroll to the bottom of the webpage to find the videos).

For more information about Elections BC's resources, please email [outreach@elections.bc.ca](mailto:outreach@elections.bc.ca).



### Parliamentary Trivia!

**Q:** What was approved on October 15, 1987?

**Q:** Who addressed the Legislative Assembly from the Bar of the House on October 15, 2007?

**Explore Discover Your Legislature to find the answers!**

*Hint: Place and History*

Email us to win prizes!

### ***Land Acknowledgement***

*We wrote this newsletter in the Parliament Buildings, which are located on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen-speaking (pronounced Le-KWUNG-en) peoples. Now known as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, these Coast Salish peoples have a rich culture and history dating back thousands of years. We are thankful to live and work here.*

