

	NDP-Tesicca Chi-Ying Truong	GREEN PARTY-Stephanie HENDY	LIBERAL-Michael Lee
Questions on the Issues			
As an MLA, what will you do to help improve the safety of teachers' working conditions in Vancouver?	<p>I am committed to listening to teachers, families, students, and support staff and continuing to improve safety conditions in our schools.</p> <p>The September safe school restart guidelines were developed in consultation with teachers, parents, administrators, trustees and public health officials and it is the BC NDP's expectation that these guidelines are being followed by districts. \$288 million in combined provincial and federal funding is being distributed to districts for the 2020/21 school year for COVID-19 related resource needs. These funds have gone towards technology upgrades, as well as hiring more teachers and support staff to better support alternative learning options. To date more than 600 new teachers have been hired, as well as nearly 100 new education assistants.</p> <p>We understand that district needs differ across the province, so through our education partner COVID-19 working group that includes parents, teachers, administrators, trustees and public health professionals, we remain committed to navigating any issues or concerns that arise during this school year and beyond.</p>		
Do you support increasing education funding in both K-12 and Adult Education to ensure provincially mandated expenses are covered and that BC schools are funded to at least to the national average? If yes, what actions will you take to ensure a positive outcome?	<p>I can't state strongly enough how important this issue to me. I spent my time in the public education system under a BC Liberal government and know first-hand the impacts of underfunding. Education funding is crucial. For the 2020/21 school year, a re-elected BC NDP government will make an additional investment of \$46.2 million for a total of \$344.2 million in funding. In 2020/21, we are investing an extra \$166 million to operate K-12 schools, for a total Education budget of \$6.7 billion. This school year, districts will receive an estimated \$627.4 million to support students with special needs, a \$162.8-million (35%) increase since 2016-17. Our government also restored tuition-free Adult Basic Education and English Language Learning. We recognize that we have more work to do and a re-elected John Horgan government remains committed to increasing support to school districts to continue to deliver a world class public education.</p>		
What will your party do to ensure our district can recruit and retain more certified teachers?	<p>As a millennial and someone who has seen so many of our friends and peers move away because of the impossible cost of living in Vancouver, this issue deeply resonates with me. One of the key issues is the cost of housing – we need to address the housing crisis and allow people to stay in their communities. We made our province's public education system a priority and made historic investments into capital and operating budgets which has led to the smallest class sizes in a generation. We've invested \$2 billion into more than 100 new school capital projects across the province. We've increased operational funding to record levels. While we have more work to do, we are committed to making this province an attractive place for those who seek education as a profession.</p>		

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Do you support a specific leave for COVID-19 in these circumstances? If yes, what actions will you take to ensure a positive outcome?	Yes - Even prior to the pandemic, John Horgan and the BC NDP were vocal in their advocacy for an enhanced national sick leave program. When the pandemic hit, John Horgan reached out to Prime Minister Trudeau to renew his call for a national program and in July the federal government announced a \$1.1 billion national program that will give 10 days of paid sick leave to all British Columbians. A re-elected BC NDP will continue to work with the federal government to implement this program in the province as soon as possible.		
Do you support eliminating the Foundation Skills Assessment? If yes, what actions will you take to ensure a positive outcome?	The BC NDP cancelled the Foundation Skills Assessment scheduled for this Fall as we felt that it was important for educators and students to have greater capacity to adapt to the changes that a school year during a pandemic has brought. We realize it's important that student progress is monitored by teachers, administrators, parents and the Ministry of Education. A re-elected BC NDP commits to continue the conversation with our education partners on whether the Foundation Skills Assessment is the best way to monitor that progress.		
Many teachers and students, in both K-12 and Adult Ed, have been speaking out about the systemic and overt racism happening in our communities and our schools. What is your strategy to address these issues?	<p>Thank you for asking this question. As a racialized person, an organizer, and activist, this issue is deeply personal for me. And it affects too many students, families, and teachers in ways that are very harmful. I have been working on inclusion, anti-racism, and equity issues for almost a decade. That's one of the reasons I'm proud to run with the BC NDP.</p> <p>Equality, anti-racism, and human rights are priorities for the BC NDP. Some of our government's proudest moments include bringing back the Human Rights Commission, and introducing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. We are proudly committed to enhancing and strengthening initiatives and curriculum in BC schools that promote Diversity and Inclusion and Anti-Racism as well as SOGI education. In the last three years the BC NDP implemented new First Nations history curriculum and expanded course offerings in Indigenous languages. There are 17 First Nations languages that have been approved to be taught in schools and six more in development. We also led the way as the first jurisdiction in Canada with a tripartite agreement to ensure equitable education for First Nations students, no matter where they live. We also commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Paving the way for race-based data collection to help modernize sectors like policing, healthcare and education · Work with stakeholders to create a new Anti-Racism Act that better serves everyone in BC. 		
What steps do you believe need to be taken in order to ensure a respectful bargaining process going forward?	It is key to have a government that believes in and supports our public education system and in working with teachers - not fighting them - to create the best learning environment for our kids. The BC NDP believe that a strong public education system is the best way to ensure a fair and equitable society where opportunities are equal regardless of financial status. The BC NDP put in place the Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate in December 2018 that works to balance the need for improved services for people, with fair compensation for public sector workers. We've made record investments into BC's education system over the last three years, which has led to the largest capital and operating budgets in the province's history. After more than a decade of cuts by the BC Liberals, we understand we have more work to do and the BC NDP remains committed to working with our education partners to address any concerns or issues that arise.		

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How will you work with Vancouver Elementary Teachers' Association to ensure that public education issues are part of your caucus' and party's priorities?	I have extensive experience bringing people together to discuss some of the most pressing issues of our time – like anti-racism, climate crisis, and housing. I am a practitioner in practices of dialogue and I look forward to using my skills and experience to bring together VESTA, families, and colleagues to discuss how best to serve our learning community.		
In Student Vote campaigns, children frequently indicate that fighting climate change is their top concern. If elected MLA what actions will you, or your party take to fight climate change?	I absolutely agree with the students – this is the most crucial issue of our time and future generations on counting on us. This is why I'm running for MLA for Vancouver Langara now – the climate crisis won't wait. We need elected leaders who put climate front and centre. I have had the opportunity to serve on the B.C.'s Minister of Environment and Climate Change on the Climate Advisory Council as the youngest member. We helped develop Clean BC which is the most ambitious and strongest climate plan in North America. I've also been awarded Vancouver's Greenest City Leadership Award.		