

### **1. Candidate Name and Electoral District**

Fin Donnelly – Coquitlam-Burke Mountain (NDP)

Selina Robinson – Coquitlam-Maillardville (NDP)

Rick Glumac – Port Moody-Coquitlam (NDP)

Mike Farnworth – Port Coquitlam (NDP)

**2. Right now, our teachers are facing challenges with large class sizes as well as many covid-related health and safety concerns in their classrooms. Districts and locals are working together to make things work, but Provincial support is falling short of where teachers feel things need to be. As an MLA, what will you do to help improve the safety of teachers' working conditions in the Tricities region?**

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. On top of this \$288 million in funding 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. We understand district needs differ across the province, so through our education partner COVID019 working group that includes parents, teachers, administrators, trustees and public health professional, we remain committed to navigating any issues or concerns that arise during this school year and beyond.

**3. Implementation of contract language restored in November 2016 by the Supreme Court of Canada continues and there remain challenges in supporting our diverse learners in their classrooms. The language entitles extra support for classes whose size and composition exceed contract limits, this extra support is not consistently forthcoming in many cases. Keeping in mind that per student funding in BC is well below the national average, what specifically will you do to ensure that the restored language is fully supported and funded?**

For the 2020/21 school year, the BC NDP government is providing an additional \$133.6 million in operating grants to school districts this year for a total of \$5.536 billion. In our first three years, we have increased per-student funding by 20%, while other provinces have only grown by 5% or less over that time. The funding the BC NDP has added to the education system amounts to an increase of \$1,900 in per-student funding. We recognize that after we have more work to do to reverse the years of cuts under the BC Liberals, and a re-elected John Horgan government remains committed to increasing support to school districts to continue to deliver a world class public education

**4. Our school district is facing serious recruitment and retention issues and there is a teacher shortage in all curricular areas but especially in advanced languages like French and Mandarin Immersion programs, as well as Tech Ed. What will your party do to ensure our district can recruit and retain more certified teachers?**

By fighting publicly with teachers, ripping up contracts and repeated cuts to funding, the BC Liberals waged a war against public education in this province for more than a decade. It made young people think twice about entering the profession and those already delivering a world class education in BC were pushed to the brink. But the BC NDP made different choices when forming government. 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 to reverse the course of the previous government, we are committed to making this province an attractive place for those who seek education as a profession.

**5. Many teachers do not have enough sick leave to stay home if they are told to self isolate because of a COVID-19 exposure or if they are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms. Do you support a specific leave for COVID-19 in these circumstances? If yes, what actions will you take to ensure a positive outcome?**

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.

**6. Teachers and students throughout BC are confronted with increasing demands for data-gathering assessment simply to satisfy provincial and district achievement goals, rather than to support student learning. Given that these demands for more and more data are contrary to the more personalized learning focus of the modern curriculum, 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.

**7. Last year, the government continued a review of the funding model for education in BC. What was being proposed by government triggered concerns from all stakeholders, of particular concern to teachers was the proposed switch to a prevalence-based method of funding students with special needs. What are your views on the funding model review broadly and prevalence-based funding specifically?**

The BC Liberal government imposed the current funding model in 2002 after no consultation and downloaded costs on districts until B.C had the lowest per student funding in Canada. After forming government the BC NDP appointed an independent review panel to undertake a review of how public education is funded for the first time in almost 30 years. The panel made 22 recommendations to improve equity, accountability and financial management and we are moving forward with a two-phased approach to implement those recommendations. For the 2020/21 school year, the BC NDP is providing an additional \$133.6 million in operating grants to school districts this year for a total of \$5.536 billion. We did not move ahead with prevalence-based funding and a portion of our first phase was dedicated funding to children and youth in care. We recognize that after we have more work to do to reverse the years of cuts under the BC Liberals, and the BC NDP remain committed to increasing support to school districts to continue to deliver a world class public education

**8. How will you work with the Coquitlam Teachers' Association to ensure teachers' concerns and issues are part of your caucus' and party's priorities?**

We believe that open lines of communication and being seated at the table together are integral to working through issues and concerns in a constructive and beneficial manner for all parties. If elected, we commit that the Coquitlam Teachers' Association will have open access to our offices and can bring any issues or concerns to our attention, and we promise to strongly advocate for them amongst my colleagues and party. We believe the best outcomes are met with a collaborative attitude towards problem solving.