

Inclusion BC 2017 BC Election Questions & Party Responses

Inclusion BC Question	Response: BC Greens	Response: BC Liberals	Response: BC NDP
EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION			
<p>If elected, will you support an immediate provincial investment to end waitlists for early intervention therapies and supports for children and youth with special needs and their families?</p>	<p>The B.C. Greens will prioritize early intervention. We will allocate \$80 million to fund a range of strategies, all aimed at early intervention in youth. This includes direct funding for early intervention, support for youth mental health initiatives and community-based centers for mental health.</p> <p>A B.C. Green Government will enhance supports for children and families, particularly through significant investments in youth mental health services, public education and early childhood education. We will work with stakeholders, including front-line service delivery agencies, Indigenous people, local governments, educators, and community not-for-profit agencies to ensure that children's needs are met and that essential services and supports are in place.</p>	<p>Today's BC Liberals have committed almost \$800 million in new funding over three years to support families, individuals, and children most in need. This includes \$120 million for family supports and reunification, culturally appropriate services, and additional staff within Indigenous communities that will begin to address the recommendations of Grand Chief Ed John's report on Indigenous Child Welfare.</p> <p>Our government's 2017 budget provides the Ministry of Children and Family Development with an additional \$332 million over three years – building on a \$72 million increase last year. This new funding will allow the Ministry to hire more front-line child protection workers, strengthen programs and services, and reduce wait lists.</p>	<p>John Horgan and the BC NDP have committed to a \$28 million targeted budget boost for children with special needs.</p> <p>After delivering this budget boost we will further review waitlists for early intervention therapies and supports for children and youth with special needs to determine if further increases are needed to ensure quality, accessible services for children across the province.</p>

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<p>If elected, will you support a provincial commitment to strengthen early childhood intervention by working with families and service providers to solve the problems identified by Inclusion BC and its partners?</p>	<p>Yes, a B.C. Green government will strengthen early childhood intervention and work collaboratively with families and service providers. Early intervention can improve quality of life and provide significant cost savings. Empowering youth, educators, and health professionals with a better understanding of mental health can help alleviate the social and economic impact of some mental health problems.</p>		<p>A BC NDP government will work together with organizations such as Inclusion BC to identify ways to make our province a better place for children with special needs.</p>
<h3>EDUCATION</h3>			
<p>If elected, will you support sufficient investment to fully cover costs of the 2016 Supreme Court decision?</p>	<p>Yes, we will fully implement the 2016 Supreme Court decision. However, we have actually gone beyond what is legally required to invest additional resources that we deem necessary to build a strong public education system. Public education is our number one priority.</p> <p>The B.C. Green Party is committed to ensuring adequate funding of public education. Our public education system is chronically underfunded. This isn't just tough on kids and families, it also ignores that education is the best investment society can make.</p> <p>A B.C. Green government will increase funding for public schools, beginning in</p>	<p>Our education system enables students to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.</p> <p>BC's total education budget for public and independent schools is \$5.9 billion in 2017-18 – this is a record \$314 million (5.6%) increase from the 2016-17 school year.</p> <p>Annual education funding is up 44% since 2000/01, or more than \$1.8 billion, at a time when there are fewer students in the school system. This historic funding has contributed to BC students consistently achieving high scores in international studies. Our Grade 10 students were recently</p>	<p>Yes. Christy Clark and the BC Liberals caused 16 years of instability in our classrooms and used your tax dollars to fight against our public schools all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. And in every court, at every level, the BC Liberals lost and our kids won.</p> <p>And now, with the Supreme Court ordering Christy Clark to respect commitments to the success of our kids in schools, the BC Liberals are acting like they care. Parents in BC know, based on 16 years of experience, that they don't.</p>

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	<p>2017/18 at \$220 million and rising to \$1.46 billion in 2020/21, to allow schools and school districts to invest in every child and prepare students for the emerging economy, and to invest in innovation and technology. This is in addition to the \$330 million committed by the B.C. Liberal government to address the recent Supreme Court ruling on class size and composition.</p>	<p>ranked first in the world for reading, second in science, and sixth in math by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).</p> <p>Our graduation rates have also improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 83% of high school students are graduating– 8% more than in 2001-02. • 66% of students with special needs are graduating– 103% more than in 2001/-02. • 65% of Aboriginal students are completing high school– 51.5% more than in 2001-02. • 87% of English language learners are completing high school– up 10% since 2001-02. <p>The record level of investments we are making in our schools today is only possible because we have been able to get to yes on economic development. Today’s BC Liberals will continue to deliver a well-funded system that supports students and helps them achieve their full potential.</p> <p>A critical consideration to meeting diverse needs is students with special needs. This year, funding for students in B.C. with special needs is close to \$1 billion – including basic student funding and targeted supports. Since 2001, total funding for students with designated special needs has gone</p>	<p>John Horgan and the BC NDP believe that the best way to build a strong economy for today and tomorrow is to invest in the success of our kids, and unlike the BC Liberals, we don’t need the Supreme Court to tell us to fund education properly.</p>
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		<p>from \$521 million to \$993 million - a 91% increase. Budget 2017 provides an additional \$10 million in funding.</p> <p>We have a far more inclusive approach to education today. How we describe, assess, and support students with special needs has changed significantly over the years. And the results speak for themselves – we’ve seen dramatic improvements, with completion rates more than doubling under our government.</p>	
<p>If elected, will you support a new process where all parties work together to help rebuild inclusion in strong public schools?</p>	<p>A B.C. Green government will provide significant funding for the public education system to ensure that schools are able invest in each and every child, and that all children have their needs met. We will review the funding model for the K---12 public education system with a view to ensuring equitable access for all students. This will address targeting funding to public schools with the greatest need and increasing local autonomy regarding funding priorities and distribution. We will also invest \$140 million over three years to increase training for teachers. We will work collaboratively with education partners to build strong, inclusive public schools and ensure that schools have the resources necessary to support all students.</p>		<p>A BC NDP government will be a champion for inclusion in our public school system and we will bring people together to make it happen.</p>

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<p>If elected, will you say “no” to segregated special education schools and instead rebuild expertise in public schools so they can successfully include all students?</p>	<p>The B.C. Greens believe we need to make significant new investments into our public education system, which includes new resources for building expertise in public schools. We will invest \$140 million in teacher professional development, and we will work with Indigenous leaders, teachers, universities and colleges to develop policies and strategies to attract highly qualified teachers to the profession, and support recruitment and retention. This will also include teachers with the expertise to ensure inclusion of all students in the classroom. We will work collaboratively with education partners to build strong, inclusive public schools and ensure that schools have the resources necessary to support all students.</p>		<p>A John Horgan BC NDP government will ensure our public schools are welcoming, inclusive and supportive for all students.</p>
<h3>Disability Supports</h3>			
<p>If elected, will you support a one-time investment to end CLBC’s service backlog, plus future funding that matches changes in the number of eligible adults and the cost of living?</p>	<p>The B.C. Greens believe that the highest priority of government should be to promote the health and wellbeing of British Columbians. A B.C. Green government will make significant investments into ensuring income security for all British Columbians.</p> <p>We will take steps to increase the supply of affordable housing, ensure</p>	<p>Today’s BC Liberals are committed to increasing the budget for community living services by \$135 million over the next three years to continue to provide support for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.</p> <p>Going forward, we are committed to consulting with families to</p>	<p>Our first BC NDP budget will include a boost of more than \$58 million for community living. We will work with stakeholders to assess the impact of those funds and plan future investments going forward.</p>

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	<p>that our tax system is shifted to a more progressive system, and work to implement innovative new solutions that will allow everyone to experience greater income security. All of these measures would assist CLBC in ensuring that adults drawing on its services are better supported.</p> <p>We will invest in home care supports to enable people who need assistance to stay in their own homes and live with dignity. We will seek to work with organizations such as Inclusion B.C. and ensure that provincial funding for agencies such as Community Living BC is adequate to meet the needs of B.C. residents.</p>	<p>develop long-term care plans for Community Living BC clients with aging parents. In addition, Today's BC Liberals will double the Home Renovation Tax Credit to \$20,000 for improvements to accommodate family members with disabilities. And we will introduce a Respite Tax Credit of up to \$2,500 for people caring for family members with disabilities.</p>	
<p>If elected, will you require CLBC to track and publicly report on the number of eligible adults not getting all the supports they need?</p>	<p>The B.C. Greens are committed to transparency in government and addressing our challenges directly. We would work in consultation with CLBC and work to establish new systems that ensured transparency on these issues.</p>		<p>Our goal is to ensure every eligible adult gets the services they need. However, a BC NDP government will strengthen and improve accountability at CLBC by requiring yearly reporting on service benchmarks.</p>
<p>If elected, will you support an independent, collaborative and transparent review of CLBC's governance, resources and capacity to</p>	<p>We would seek to better understand the challenges that CLBC faces, and undertaking a review of CLBC is one initiative we would consider. We are committed to ensuring that CLBC has the resources to fulfill its mandate, and would consult with CLBC about</p>	<p>If re-elected, we would be pleased to meet to discuss your perspectives about CLBC's governance.</p>	<p>A new government will bring a new eye to the challenges at CLBC. A BC NDP government will put the focus on meeting the needs of clients first, and we will work with clients, families and advocacy organizations such as</p>

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<p>meet opportunities and challenges?</p>	<p>the best path to accomplishing that goal.</p>		<p>Inclusion BC to address concerns about governance at CLBC.</p>
<h3>Income Security</h3>			
<p>If elected, will you support an increase in PWD monthly rates to \$1,200/month in 2017, with yearly cost of living increases and portable housing subsidies?</p>	<p>Yes, a B.C. Green Government will take immediate steps to begin the transition to liveable incomes with an increase in all income assistance rates, including for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Rates will increase by 10% effective October 1, 2017, and rise to 50% above the current level on April 1, 2020. This increase will be supplemented by other programming to support those on assistance programs. Under this increase, an individual with a PWD designation will receive \$1,136/month as of this October, up from the current rate of \$1,033/month. By April 2020, they will receive \$1,549/month. We believe that nobody should be living below the poverty line in a province as wealthy as BC. This significant increase to income assistance rates we view as the first step toward a transition to liveable incomes for all British Columbians.</p> <p>We will also work in consultation with advocacy organizations and experts to design a basic income pilot project that will test its ability to reduce poverty, and improve health, housing</p>	<p>Today's BC Liberals have made jobs and economic growth a priority to ensure that we are able to take care of the people that we love. It's because we are a leader in economic and job growth that we are able to make significant investments in things like health care, education, and programs to help people in need.</p> <p>Changes we have made to support persons with disabilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Became the first province to fully exempt child support payments for families on income or disability assistance. • Became the first province to introduce annualized earning exemptions of \$9,600/year for persons with disabilities. • Increased asset limits for people on disability assistance. • Extended the Home Renovation Tax Credit to include persons with disabilities. • Created the WorkAble internship program for new graduates with disabilities to enter the BC 	<p>The BC NDP has committed to raising PWD rates by \$150 a month if we form government, as well as increasing earnings exemptions by \$2400 a year and offering a \$400 yearly renter's rebate which would be available to all PWD who rent their home.</p>

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	<p>and employment outcomes. We believe that basic income has the potential help us alleviate poverty and foster healthier families and more resilient communities. It could reduce the stigma and complexity of our current social assistance system, and provide people enough income security that they are able to escape the poverty trap and take care of their families and lead healthy lives.</p>	<p>Public Service - 75% of first year interns still work for the Public Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established a network of business leaders to engage with employers to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.• Modernized the Guide Dog and Service Dog Act to strengthen the rights of those with service dogs.• Cut red tape by simplifying the disability assistance application process.• Provided \$10 million to BC Food Banks to expand refrigeration and storage capacity for perishable foods. <p>We also support persons with disabilities with the Single Parent Employment Initiative (SPEI). The SPEI was created in response to hearing of a series of practical barriers within the government's system of supports that created a disincentive to single parents on income or disability assistance who wanted to find work or improve their training for a job.</p> <p>This program removed many obstacles, and has cleared the way for 4,600 parents to sign up with</p>	
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over 900 now working. On average, 40-50 new single parents join each week and 47 are finding a job each month. That is real progress –we know that the best thing for any family is a job.

Today's BC Liberals will also develop a Low Income Families in Transition (LIFT) pilot program that will provide temporary assistance to low-income single working parents so they can take time away from their current employment or reduce their hours without financial penalty, and assist with training, childcare and transit costs while upgrading or acquiring new skills.

In addition, Today's BC Liberals will:

- Provide an additional \$199 million to increase the assistance rates for about 100,000 people with disabilities by \$50 per month.
- Work to become the province with the most generous child benefit exemptions for the calculation of income and disability assistance.
- Increase the net income threshold for low-income individuals to \$19,749 to qualify for the BC Tax Reduction Credit.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Minister responsible for accessibility who will work to make BC the most accessible jurisdiction for disabled people in North America. 	
<p>If elected, will you support increased investment in employment programs for people with disabilities, in consultation with community partners?</p>	<p>We are committed to preparing British Columbians to succeed as the economy changes, and we will prioritize providing people the supports that they need in order to live healthy, prosperous lives. Our income security strategy includes a number of initiatives to better support British Columbians to get the tools they need to find employment, and escape the poverty trap. Investing specifically in employment programs for people with disabilities is one initiative that a B.C. Green government will consider. We will work in consultation with community partners and advocacy groups as we develop employment programs and other programs to support people with disabilities in B.C.</p>		<p>A John Horgan BC NDP government will work closely with community partners on initiatives aimed at improving the lives of people with disabilities, including employment programs.</p>