

CALL TO ACTION BILL 8 ONLINE LEARNING

SEEKING TRANSPARENCY AND COLLABORATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Online Learning (OL) families, especially families of disabled learners, are asking the Ministry to slow down and include all relevant stakeholders and partner groups in meaningful dialogue before pushing ahead with proposed OL changes for the 2022-23 school year.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The Ministry has excluded the voices of OL and special needs (SN) families, independent school administrators, the Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA), and other crucial stakeholders in the implementation of Bill 8 OL and funding model changes. The lack of transparency around policy and implementation, and lack of collaboration with those directly impacted by the changes is concerning to the 10,000+ students currently enrolled in OL programs across BC, including over 2700 who are disabled or have special needs.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

- Potential closure of OL schools where children are accessing an equitable, supportive learning program
- Uncertainty around the nature and quality of online learning offered by district online learning schools
- Reduced and inequitable access to well-established online learning programs, especially for rural and remote families who are currently enrolled out of their district
- Loss of quality learning supports for vulnerable students traumatized by classroom learning or underfunded special education programs



WHAT IS NEEDED

- Extend interim agreements with all online schools until the end of 2023/24 to allow for meaningful consultation with **all** invested stakeholders and partner groups
- Host ongoing province-wide working groups that include Ministry representatives, OL administrators, OL parents, and FISA to ensure meaningful consultation on an online learning policy that serves **all** BC students
- Publish all OL policy updates and documents for public review and consultation prior to implementation, in the spirit of transparency
- Clearly define the criteria and selection process for new Provincial Online Learning Schools (POLs), and allow existing OL schools a full academic year to meet eligibility requirements and remain in operation