



leadership makes a difference

leading edge policy and inspirational initiatives for communities



CENTRE FOR CIVIC GOVERNANCE

Going for Green
Leadership Series
Volume 2

Leadership Makes a Difference:
Leading Edge Policy and Inspirational
Initiatives for Communities

Going for Green Leadership Series
Volume 2

Columbia Institute Centre
for Civic Governance, 2007

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ISBN 978-0-9784309-0-0



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Introduction

The momentum for “going green” is building. Canadians want action on climate change and the triple bottom line of social, environmental, and economic sustainability. Communities are rising to the occasion with inspiring strategies and meaningful action.

From Squamish’s global warming pledge, to Okotok’s pioneering build-out boundaries, to the Ucluelet sustainability plan that took the UN’s top prize, to tackling issues like the pressing problem of affordable housing, this reader provides examples of how local governments are forging innovative, homegrown methods of making environmental, economic, and social sustainability their reality.

At the same time, school trustees have an opportunity to take action against climate change while enhancing conditions for student learning – and improving budgets – through building green schools and supporting innovative curricula.

As part of its mandate to build strong, progressive communities, the Columbia Institute Centre for Civic Governance has gathered some of the best hard-won wisdom and examples of leadership making a difference in this second volume in the Going for Green Leadership Series.

PART 1

What the People Think

The Columbia Institute Centre for Civic Governance Checks in on the Public Pulse

A poll commissioned by the Columbia Institute Centre for Civic Governance shows that citizens trust their local government officials above all other levels of government. In particular, the public supports local governments taking strong action on global warming and they're willing to pay more taxes and give up other services to make it happen. Continue reading to find out how the numbers stack up.

> LOCAL GOVERNMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MOST RESPONSIVE

Respondents were asked, "In general, when you're facing a problem in your community, whom would you expect to be most responsive in dealing with that problem?" In B.C., 34.5 per cent indicated their local councillor, while in Ontario 60.6 per cent of respondents felt their local councillor was most responsive.

MORE FUNDING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Seventy-one per cent of Ontarians and 69 per cent of British Columbians believe that the provincial and federal governments should provide local governments with more regular and more flexible sources of funds.

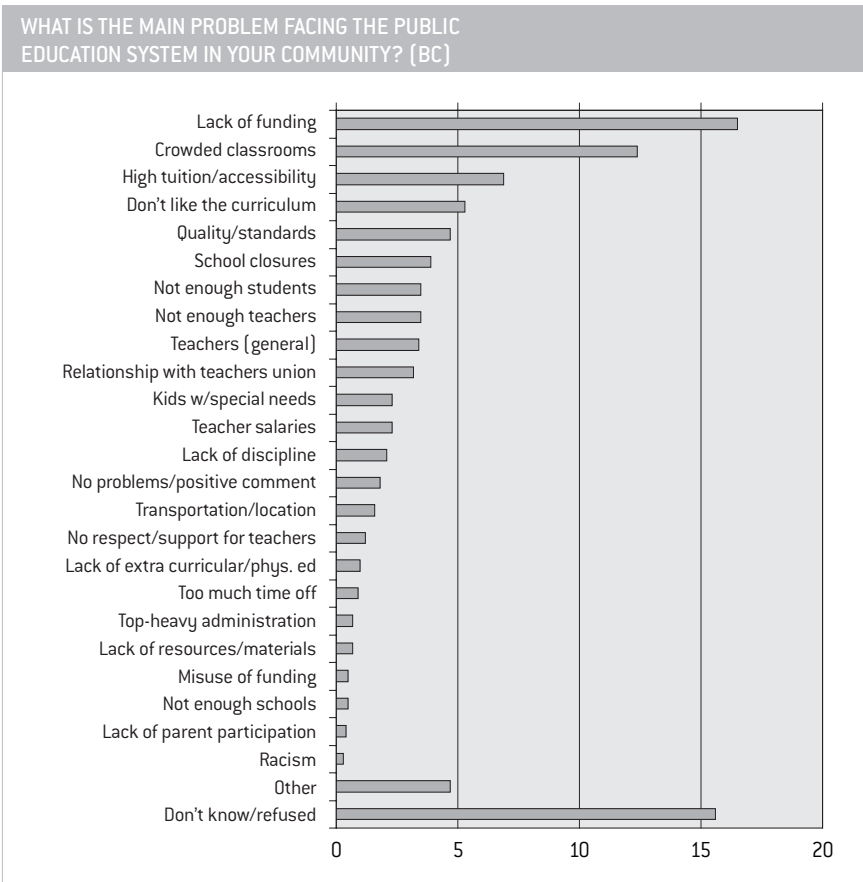
> PUBLIC EDUCATION

TRUSTEES MOST TRUSTED WITH PUBLIC EDUCATION

When asked “Who is doing the best job in relation to the public education system in your community?,” 44.8 per cent of Ontarians responded that their local school trustee is doing the best job, while just 20.7 per cent named the Ontario government. In B.C., more than half of respondents – 56.1 per cent – named their local school trustee and only 15.8 per cent cited the provincial government.

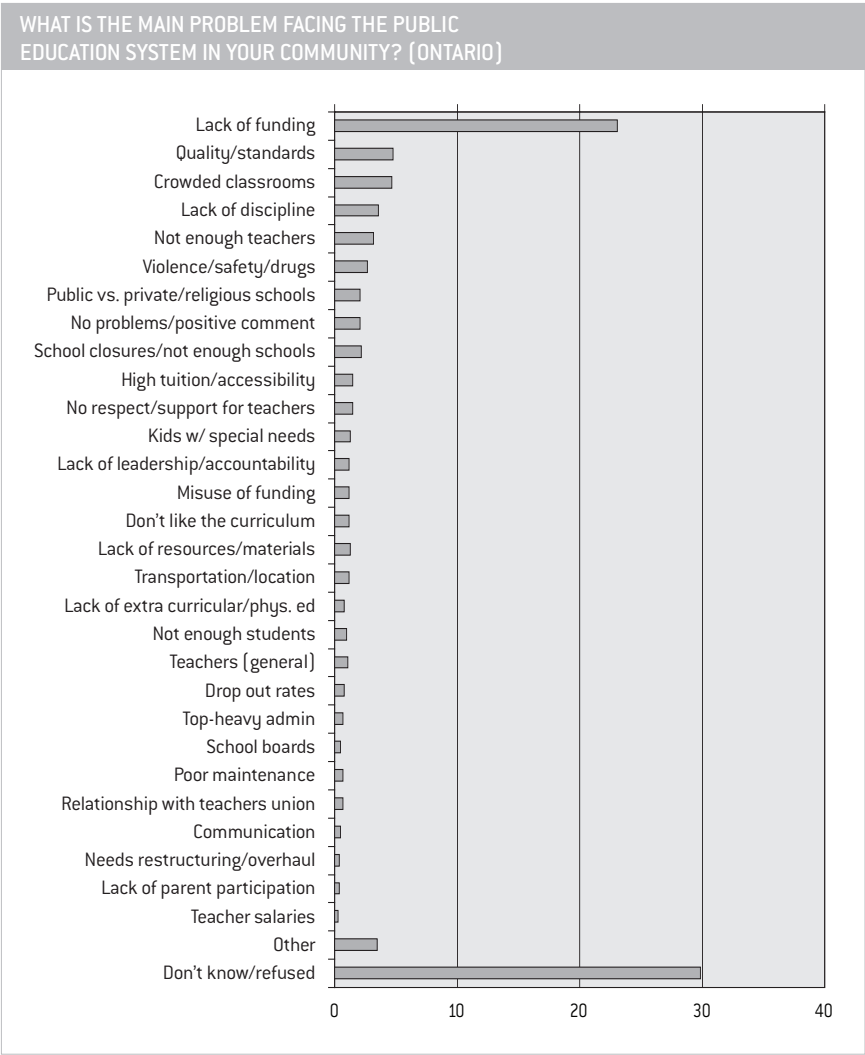
LACK OF FUNDING TOPS THE LIST

Lack of funding is the most pressing issue facing the public education systems in British Columbia and Ontario. Concerns stemming from a lack of funding



add up to 40.3 per cent in British Columbia and 36.6 per cent in Ontario, by far the biggest group of responses in both provinces. Such concerns include crowded classrooms, help for students with special needs, school closures, too few teachers, lack of resources/materials, and lack of extra curricular activities.

Concerns stemming from a lack of funding add up to 40.3 per cent in British Columbia and 36.6 per cent in Ontario, by far the biggest group of responses.



> GLOBAL WARMING: LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLES

GLOBAL WARMING A PRIORITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In our poll, 58.4 per cent of British Columbians said they agree that local government should take strong action on global warming, even if it means having fewer funds available to provide other important services to the community. A similar number – 59.4 per cent – of Ontarians also agreed with this statement.

HIGHER TAXES FOR GLOBAL WARMING ACTION

Even stronger support for action on global warming was shown by British Columbians and Ontarians when they were asked if they would pay higher taxes in order to enable local government to take strong action on global warming. In the poll, 64.8 per cent of British Columbians and 53.2 per cent of Ontarians answered yes.

Both the British Columbia and Ontario polls were fielded by Strategic Communications and are accurate 19 times out of 20 with a margin of error of +/- 4 per cent. The Ontario poll was fielded between June 5 and 11, 2007 and the British Columbia poll was conducted between March 15 and 27, 2007.