



September 2, 2016

Ref: 190266

Dear Parent:

The start of a new school year is an exciting time for students and families. It is also an exciting time for the education sector.

We have a lot to be proud of here in British Columbia. Student outcomes continue to improve. Today 15 percent more students are graduating than in 2001. BC's education system is ranked first in the English-speaking world for outcomes in reading, science and mathematics. Students are finding success in music, in academics, in sports—and in every subject in between.

But we have to remember our world is changing. Rather than rest on accomplishments—we need to build on our success to make sure your child's education remains among the best in the world. BC's new curriculum is how we are going to do that.

Our new curriculum will still teach students the basics—reading, writing and math, but in a way that connects them to collaboration, communication and critical thinking skills, which are so important after high school. These are the core skills universities, colleges and employers tell us they are looking for. We are also bringing a new core skill into schools—coding, which teaches students the critical thinking and logical approach crucial for success in tech careers and in almost every other field. We are providing \$6 million for teacher training and technology purchases for schools to bring coding and the new curriculum to life.

During the last school year, we introduced draft new curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9. This year, that curriculum will be fully implemented and draft curriculum will be available for Grades 10–12. Teachers will have the option to provide feedback and use this draft curriculum in their classrooms.

While we call it “new” curriculum, it is also a reflection of what has been happening in our classrooms for years. It is the kind of innovation in action that I have seen first-hand, through visits to more than 30 school districts last year.

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Changes are also being made to the graduation program. Provincial exams in two core subjects will now be written between Grades 10 and 12, testing the bedrock skills of success—literacy and math. These are the core skills that cut across every subject and are what universities and colleges look at during admissions. And in science and social studies, there will be rigorous classroom-based exams, assessments, tests and projects to measure student progress.

Finally, over the coming months we will ask parents like you, how you want to hear about your child's progress in the classroom so you can have input on any changes. We will reach out directly later this fall.

Your children will graduate into a changing and exciting world—and the new curriculum will help make sure they are prepared to meet that future head-on and are equipped for success no matter which path they choose.

For more details on our curriculum, please visit <http://www.curriculum.gov.bc.ca>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bernier", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Bernier  
Minister