

From: [Nicole Smith](#)
To: [Board of Education](#)
Subject: Exclusion of Students with Down Syndrome in BC School
Date: Thursday, October 5, 2023 1:06:54 PM

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Dear Lee-Ann Tiede,

Children with Down syndrome are experiencing exclusion and discrimination in the BC School system.

School Districts were given \$743M in ‘Supplemental Special Needs Funding’ in the 2022/23 school year and will receive an estimated \$838M this coming school year. This funding is meant “to provide an inclusive education system in which students with special needs are fully participating members of a community of learners” which is not the reality for many students with Down syndrome.

This is unacceptable. The stories I am hearing about how children with Down syndrome are being treated are absolutely shameful and a terrible example to set for all children and the community as a whole.

Some children have been told to stay home a day, a week, or more with no education assistant assigned or hired to support them.

Some children come to class and their EA is changing every day, no routine or any semblance of one.

Some children have not been given a desk or chair, while all other children in the class had one.

Some children have been secluded against a wall or corner of the classroom, away from the rest of their peers.

Some children have not had access to needed bathroom equipment for weeks, denying them the opportunity to maintain independence.

I’m sure that this is not what British Columbians want or expect from our public school system. What can you do to improve this situation? I want to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Nicole Smith