

27. Roots of Empathy Multi-Year Funding

SUBMITTED BY: *SD46 (Sunshine Coast)*

BE IT RESOLVED:

That BCSTA urge the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development to restore the multi-year funding to the BC Roots of Empathy organization to enable this evidence-based, province-wide, classroom-based, social emotional program to be delivered virtually (and in person, where possible) in school districts across the province as part of the BC Government's current Mental Health in Schools Strategy.

Rationale:

This program will support the BC government's Mental Health in Schools Strategy (MHiS). Funding this program would leverage the existing networks and collaboration already established between the organization and many BC school districts.

The new Roots of Empathy Recovery Program has been developed to help support students' mental health, well-being and adjustment back into the regular routine of school. The curriculum focuses on the development of emotional literacy skills, essential for supporting children to be resilient during the pandemic, when the social and emotional challenges are even more complex.

Working with elementary school students, the program starts early in addressing mental health and can make all the difference down the road.

The Roots of Empathy program is one of the few evidence-based social emotional learning programs that is in alignment with and supports core competencies of the B.C. curriculum.

Nineteen years of research have shown that the Roots of Empathy program significantly reduces disruptive behaviours and increases prosocial behaviour, i.e., kindness, caring and inclusion; and supports children's mental health and well-being.

In 2021 the Roots of Empathy program was chosen by the HundrED Academy as one of the most innovative education programs in the world.

References:

- [Roots of Empathy Brief Research Summary](#)
- [Summary of Roots of Empathy Research 2001 – 2018](#)

- [HundrED Academy](#)
- [UBC, K. Schonert-Reichl et al., “Investigating the Impact of the Roots of Empathy Program on the Social and Emotional Competence of School-Aged Children”](#)

This is an action motion and does not change or contradict any existing Foundational or Policy Statement.

This motion relates to Policy Statements 4.2.3P (Preventative Health Care Programs), 4.2.7P (Bullying) and 4.6.1P (Coordination of Services).