

How Can We Get Better Public Schools?

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Friday, May 13, 2011

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Well, the first thing we can do is carve out some time to ponder, imagine, dream, inhale, exhale, chat, brainstorm, breathe some more, and forget for a minute that we've had a decade of hard-core privatizing, de-funding of the public education system.

It's hard to imagine a better future when we're constantly fighting the latest [Shock Doctrine](#)-based assault on the public education system in BC.

One solution is on the horizon next week, but first, read this great assessment of the current two-tiered education system we've had in BC all along:

There are a few fully private schools in B.C. They get no government cash. They enroll 544 students.

The "private" schools getting government money enroll more than 69,000 students.

These are public schools that you, the taxpayers, cannot access without paying extra. Usually thousands of dollars extra, per child, per year.

This is the issue that no one wants to talk about in B.C. education, the boil they don't want to lance for fear of seeing the horrible stuff that would seep out.

We have a two-tiered education system in this province, subsidized by everyone for the benefit of the upper middle class and the wealthy.

via [Who pays for private schooling?](#).

So what's the solution coming up next week?

On Tuesday night, [COPE is holding an event called Re:Imagine Schools](#) to ponder the future of public education. We'll take a couple hours Tuesday night to try to forget the crush of crises we fight every day to listen to some inspiring perspectives and imagine where we want our education system to go.

Because if we can't imagine what we want our system to be, it's hard to fight through the attacks.

The event costs only \$10 and is free for students.

It's been a rough year for public schools in BC. It's not a new thing, but the end of each school year takes a little bit of our resilience away from us. We need nights like next Tuesday to re-invigorate our capacity

to dream.

It will be a tonic for the weary and a stimulant for the visionaries who dream of better schools sooner rather than later.