



# BCEdAccess

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## **Exclusion Tracker Interim Report: February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

Since September 4th, 2018, BCEdAccess has been collecting data on the exclusion of students with disabilities from schools in BC.

In this, our second interim report, we note that all grades, from K-12, are represented by survey respondents. Here are some of the findings so far:

### **Districts:**

#### **Nearly every school district has a report of exclusion**

We know that the survey's reach is limited because of its digital nature. If we were to do more outreach in some of the more unrepresented districts we might see more exclusion. We know from the data that this is not an issue that's isolated to only a few districts. Some of the more populated districts have a larger piece of the pie chart, but this could be due to over-representation - it's hard to ascribe the results to any one district having more or less successful outcomes.

The takeaway? It happens everywhere, in urban and rural districts, it's not rare and it's not unusual. In truth, we have connected with organizations across Canada and around the world, and it seems that exclusion is a rising concern everywhere.

### **How many people?**

**As of this writing we've had 363 reports. But this doesn't tell the whole story.**

The majority of the submissions are a single report documenting repeated instances of exclusion. As of January we modified the survey so that multiple days of exclusion can be noted with one entry.

**We made the attempt to tally the single instances of daily exclusion. It was difficult to be precise, but the number is over 2600.**

### **What kind of schooling?**

#### **95.8% of public schools and 1.7% of independent schools**

For comparison, overall independent school enrollment is 12.9% of all students in BC.

### **Is your child designated?**

4.5% of respondents said their child is waiting for assessment.

What are the designations of the other 93.8%? Highly varied.

All categories of designation have been reported as excluded.

Category descriptions:

(A) Physically Dependent

(B) Deafblind

(C) Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability

(D) Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment

(E) Visual Impairment

(F) Deaf or Hard of Hearing

(G) Autism Spectrum Disorder

(H) Intensive Behaviour Interventions or Serious Mental Illness

(P) Gifted

(Q) Learning Disabilities

(R) Students Requiring Behaviour Support or Students with Mental Illness

**G (Autism Spectrum Disorder) is the designation of the students most excluded.**

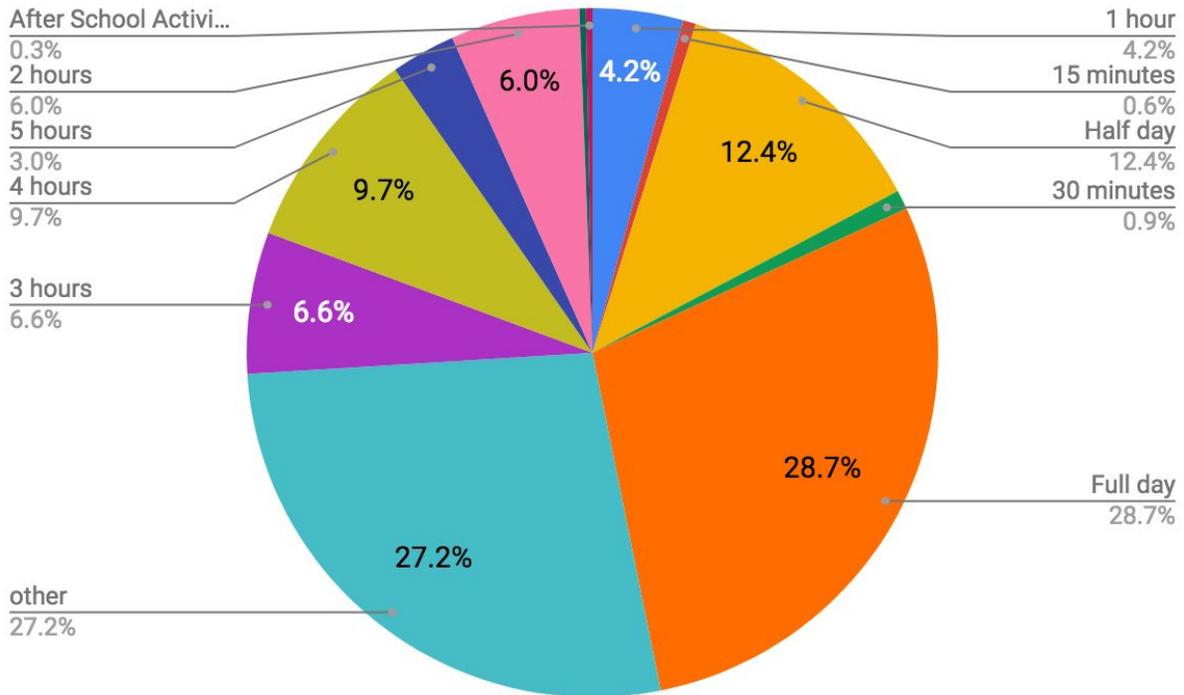
**H (Students Requiring Intensive Behaviour Intervention) is the second most excluded designation.**

### **How much time was missed?**

This was very well covered by BCCPAC in their 2017 report. They surveyed over 800 parents and documented clearly just how much educational time has been missed by students not attending full days of school. Here is their report:

<https://bccpac.bc.ca/upload/2017/11/2017-11-03-Full-Day-Summaryresults.pdf>

Here's how it looks so far in our survey:



This pie chart requires some discussion. By far the largest category is full day.

**Most respondents chose the "Other" category so that they could cite either multiple days of exclusion, or an issue that is continuous and ongoing. We have since changed the tracker so that it can specifically track ongoing exclusion.**

**7% of respondents specifically cited in the comments that their child is only allowed to attend partial days.**

This leads into why children are being excluded. Below is just a sampling of the types of exclusion cited.

**There are multiple examples of each type of exclusion listed:**

- Being asked not to bring their child for the first one to four weeks of school
- Is only allowed to attend 2 hours per day

- Is not allowed to attend until there is an EA in place
- Missing a half day weekly
- excluded because of bullying or other safety concerns
- If parent can attend, child can attend, but if not, child cannot attend as there are no supports
- can only attend a short part of the day; no plans to extend the time because there is no staff
- Not enough funds to support child full time
- Excluded from every field trip so far
- Excluded from all extra-curricular activities
- Excluded from course because the course materials are not adapted
- Excluded from elective high school courses

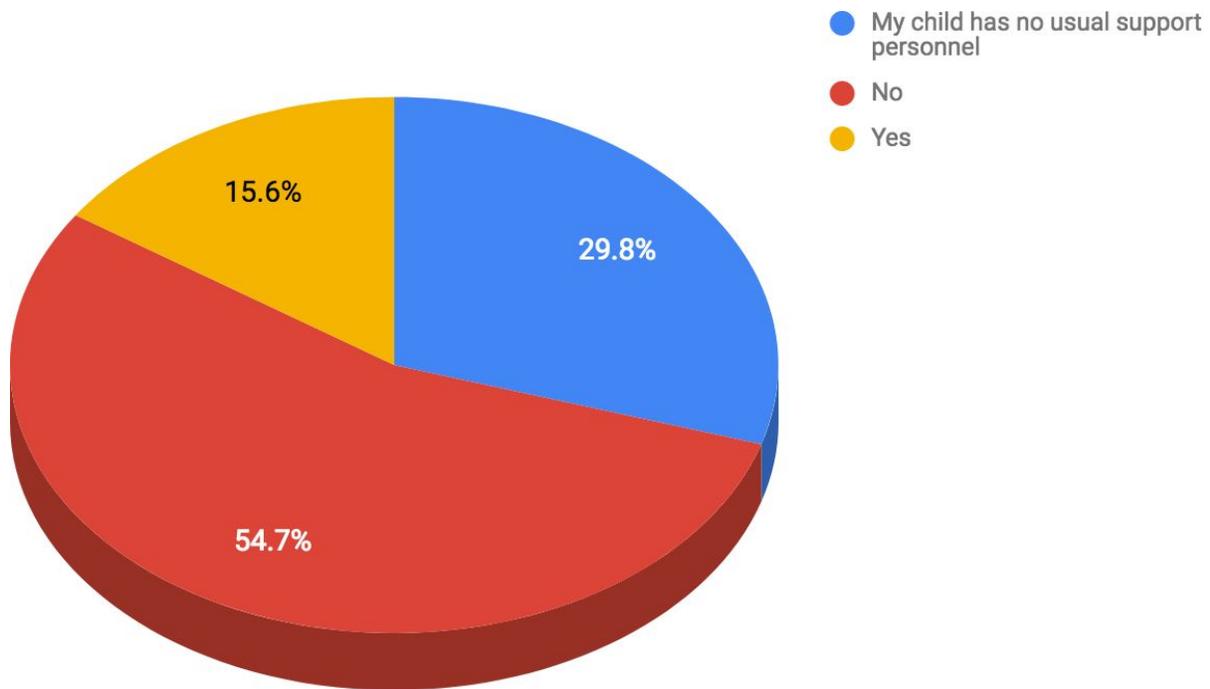
*Is it exclusion when parents agree?*

*Often we hear from school districts that these exclusions are mostly agreements with parents. I suppose they can say this because parents often do agree. It's written into their IEP, or they are called to ask to keep their child home for the day, or to pick them up, and they say yes. What needs to be considered:*

- a) Most parents don't know it's an option to refuse*
- b) Many parents cite feeling 'forced' into agreeing to the exclusion*
- c) Often parents are concerned about the safety issue for their children*
- d) Only some parents are actually appealing the decision.*

*For the most part, families are more apt to try to work collaboratively with the school, in the meantime disrupting things at home to find a way to make these shortened days or unexpected exclusions work.*

**Was the child's usual support personnel absent?**



We had expected to see that the most common answer was “yes”.

**In fact, the two biggest answers were 'No', and "My child has no usual support personnel'.**

There are at least three things that a ‘no’ answer to this question could mean:

1. That the usual support personnel need more support and training in how best to work with students
2. That the usual support personnel are there but not for enough hours
3. That the usual support personnel are there but their time is divided between several students and/or classrooms so they can’t adequately support students.

We believe that this would be a worthwhile area to look into, to discover more about exclusions and why they are happening. The answers could point to solutions for districts.

29.8 percent of children being excluded have no support personnel at all, also something worthy of notice.

**Was your child physically restrained?**

Inclusion BC has done 2 reports on this issue at this point - Stop Hurting Kids 1 and 2. Read them here:

<http://www.inclusionbc.org/stophurtingkids>

Their surveys indicate that not only does seclusion and restraint happen alarmingly frequently, but that there has been no great change over a 5 year period. This requires urgent attention.

**Our survey shows, so far, that 4 percent said yes, their child was restrained. That's 13 (out of 360 who responded to that question) children too many.**

Also worrying is the 16% of respondents who said 'not sure'. With some children being nonverbal or having other communication deficits, it's hard to know for sure what is happening at school.

### **Is there anything else you would like to include?**

There was a great deal that respondents wanted to add. Many were more specific descriptions of the circumstances of their child's exclusions. Some took the time to say how important the relationship with the school team was to them, and they expressed their fear of jeopardizing that by complaining. **Mental health concerns feature prominently.**

**Throughout the school year and even as recently as yesterday, over 5 months into the school year, respondents whose children are only attending partial days are still waiting to hear about whether their children will be allowed to attend school for a longer period. One noted their child is attending only 30 minutes a day. 53 respondents specifically cited their child is only allowed to attend partial days.**

We'll finish up this report with just a few of the quotes from the 360 respondents. They speak for themselves.

*"When I dropped my child off at school, I was asked to take them home, because my child is Deaf-blind, and there would be no one there with my child"*

*"My child has never had any real education"*

*"They will not allow my child to come for more than one hour a day. There has been no incident and this is a new school."*

*"They left it up to me to send him or not which is wrong. I would not be a responsible parent if I were to set him up for failure. But they seem to be taking their time and leaving the follow up to me which is wrong as well."*

*"Desperate to find an advocate to convince the principal together with me, with the experience of special need rights to deal with the the principal."*

*"According to school staff they are not funded enough to support our son full time."*

*"Just because a child is well behaved in the classroom doesn't mean he should miss out or be left to flounder academically in the classroom"*

*"We've been told there is only enough funding to support my daughter with an EA 50% of time"*

*"2 years and 4 months and NO proper safety plan despite multiple elopements and safety incidents."*

*It was an agreed upon part of the IEP due to lack of resources.*

*Child was recommended SLP assessment on his IEP the last 3 consecutive years but has never been assessed. We are now paying privately - today was part 2 of 3 sessions to assess*