

# Shuswap Teachers' Association

**It's  
about  
time...**

## **STRIKE VOTE – OCTOBER 10**

The STA has set their strike vote for October 10, 2001. The BCTF has called for the vote because, despite the efforts of your bargaining team, the Employers' Association (BCPSEA) has repeatedly sent the message to BC teachers that they are not interested in negotiating a contract that is fair.

BCPSEA claims they would like to reach a deal at the negotiating table, but their actions speak louder than their words. The proposed contract stripping would increase teachers' workloads, create inequalities among colleagues, and worsen learning conditions for our students. See the last issue of The Pointer for a list of contract stripping, or visit the BCTF web site at: <http://www.bctf.ca/bargain/negotiations/facts/positions.html>.

BCPSEA offered teachers a salary increase that is substantially below the rate of inflation (~2.3% over 3 years). The teachers have directed their bargaining team to negotiate a substantial pay increase. As Bill Gorkoff, President, Kootenay Columbia Teachers' Association put it: "to table this insulting salary proposal at this stage of negotiations, hardly seems compatible with the stated intent of arriving at a negotiated settlement."

Now BCPSEA has made a preemptive application on essential services to the LRB. This will make it more difficult to negotiate a collective agreement. Again, BCPSEA's actions speak louder than their words.

For all these reasons, and a continuing lack of progress at the table, it is more important than ever that members vote "yes" on October 10. A strong strike vote will send a message to the employer, and give our bargainers the support they need to bring pressure at the table.

A strike mandate is required before teachers can take job action of any kind. The two phased job action plan 'A Time to Teach' and 'Time is Up' cannot happen without a successful strike vote. Remember, voting "yes" does not mean an immediate picket line.

The vote itself will take place in all schools in the district. Your staff representative will have information concerning the specific times and places for the vote. Members who are not assigned to specific schools can vote at any school or at the STA office.

Remember Premier Campbell's own words: *"In order to attract and retain the highest quality professionals in our public service, we need to ensure compensation levels are as competitive as possible, both with other government public service sectors in B.C. and across Canada, as well as with the private sector."* Surely, Campbell did not intend these words to describe only his buddies in senior bureaucratic positions.

Now is the time to demonstrate your fervent opposition to the employer's proposals. **Vote "yes" and let BSPSEA know that you demand a collective agreement that meets the needs of teachers and students.**