



THE NOSTA RATTLER

North Okanagan-Shuswap Teachers' Association

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www.bctf.ca/local83

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Teachers Reject "Christy's College"

Teachers in British Columbia voted overwhelmingly to reject Christy's College of political hacks, with **89%** voting in favour of not paying their college fees. They will pay their \$90 fee to the BCTF's "Democratic College Fund", rather than to the government appointed College. NOSTA teachers joined a majority of teachers who took part in the vote from November 17th to the 18th.

Teachers were forced into taking this action when the BC Government took the controversial move of unilaterally re-organizing the College of Teachers, making it less democratic. Since taking power, the "Liberal" government seems to have gone out of its way to impose, without consultation, drastic measures that worsen the working and learning conditions in public education -- from making big monetary cut backs, to stripping hard won provisions in our collective agreement, and now this.

Teachers now await the reaction of the government as an increasing number of school boards across the province express their concern in regards to the college (see story on page 2). The latest polls also show that a large majority of the public does not support the changes, including almost 75% of those who identified themselves as Liberal supporters. Given this level of public support for our position and the clear solidarity of teachers the government would seem to have no option but to reconsider its position.

The NOSTA executive urges all members to pay into the Democratic College Fund, to keep abreast of and to give input for our developing strategy, and to support each other as we move forward towards a Democratic College.

Board Concerned about Undemocratic College

At their November 18, 2002 meeting, the Board of Trustees for district #83 passed a motion calling on Christy Clark to co-operate with the BCTF to resolve controversies arising from the government's political takeover of the College of Teachers. Our Board joins over 33 other school boards province-wide that, so far, have passed motions and or written letters to Minister Clark urging a fair resolution to the dispute. Of course, the BCTF asked the Minister to discuss this issue, but she refused to meet with Teachers' representatives.

The motion passed by our Trustees reads, "With respect to the College of Teachers, the Board advise the Minister of Education that they are concerned about the growing tension between teachers and government. The Board is also concerned about the subsequent potential for disruption to students and learning in the School District. We urge the Minister of Education, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and the College of Teachers to work together to seriously address concerns in regard to issues arising from the new legislation governing the college."

After our huge YES vote Neil Worboys, President of the BCTF, once again appealed to the minister to meet with teachers' representatives and help reach a solution, so that everyone can get back to the more important work of teaching and learning.

Our board should be congratulated for taking this step and encouraged to take further action to protect democracy in public education.

Return to Sender

Teachers are reminded that correspondence received from the College of Teachers is to be returned to sender. Simply write refused on the envelope and put it back in the mail. The same should be done for email. Simply reply asking that your name be removed from their mailing list. Be sure to be brief, to the point, and professional in any message you send to the college.

An exception to the above would be any correspondence of a serious nature dealing with an investigation or some similar matter.

Elvis lives! The Kang a'Rock & Roll was last sighted leaving Maggie's Restaurant in Sicamous on November 22 and was overheard uttering the quote below.



The Kang says: "Return to Sender!, 'cause, man, this Christy's College thang is cuckoo crazy."



A New Name for the NOSTA Newsletter

As you can see on the front page your newsletter is now called the "NOSTA Rattler" -- we've got bite! Thanks to all those who submitted suggestions for our new name.

Professional Standards or Intimidation?

Recently the new BCCT issued its Professional Standards for teachers. Christy's political appointees prepared it without consulting teachers.

The standards are now the equivalent of by-laws and policies of the BCCT. They will be enforced by the Discipline Committee and will be used to deal with complaints with potentially serious consequences. Teachers can now be disciplined for not following vague standards, such as acting "appropriately." The worst potential consequence, however, would be to silence the teachers' voice.

The new standards go far beyond clearly defined requirements about teacher competency, and intrude on virtually every aspect of a teacher's life. They will strain the relationships between teachers and students, teachers and parents, and teachers and their colleagues, as almost any interaction could form the basis of a complaint.

Some of the more dramatic statements from the standards document follow:

Standards for the Professional Conduct of Educators in B.C. (numbering is from BCCT standards document):

- 2.2 Professional educators act ethically at all times, understanding that they are viewed as role models in society.
- 2.3 Professional educators ensure that the public interest supersedes any responsibility to another individual.
- 2.4 Professional educators behave at all times in ways that reflect positively on the public's confidence and trust in the education system.
- 2.5 Professional educators interact appropriately with parents, employers and others in a respectful and timely manner.
- 2.6 Professional educators do not knowingly distort or misrepresent facts concerning educational issues.

- 3.1 Professional educators exemplify behaviours that maintain the dignity and integrity of the profession.
- 3.3 Professional educators do not knowingly make false or malicious statements about other professional educators.
- 3.4 Professional educators do not use coercion, harassment or give special treatment in order to influence professional decisions.
- 4.1 Professional educators understand that professional autonomy is balanced by professional responsibility.
- 4.2 Professional educators understand the differences between professional regulation and advocacy.
- 4.3 Professional educators ensure that all communications to the BCCT are prompt, professional and respectful.
- 4.4 Professional educators co-operate in an investigation or inquiry conducted pursuant to the Teaching Profession Act. (see <http://bcct.ca/standards.html>)

We fear that the government's agenda will make teaching so perilous an occupation that teachers' voices will be silenced and the dismantling of the public education system can proceed unchecked. The changes seriously damage our ability to advocate for our students.

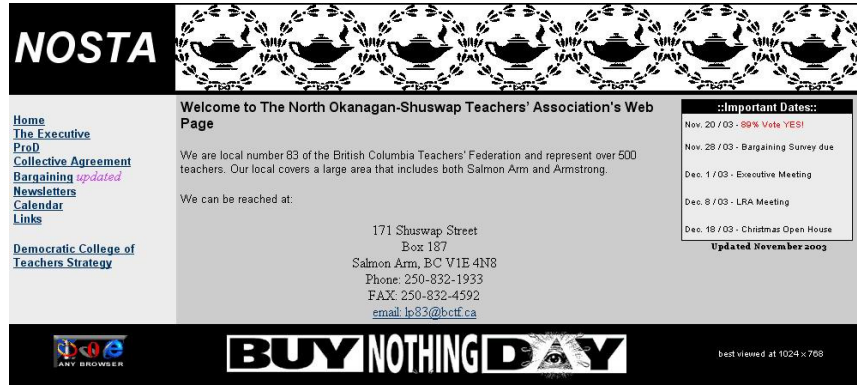
Premier Conduct? We think Not!

We mused in our last issue what it would be like if there were a College of Politicians. Well with a list of the new Standards for the Professional Conduct of Educators right here on the page, one can see what kind of mess the Premier would find himself in. As you read them over just replace educator with politician and you will see that more than a few investigations would be launched.



Gordon as a role model?
violation of section 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.3...well you get the idea!

NOSTA Web Site Info



The above image is of the NOSTA web site home page. The site is updated regularly and contains useful and updated information for teachers in our local. For instance, there is a page on our strategy on the College of Teachers, with information from our local and links to relevant information on other sites. Check it out at: <http://www.bctf.ca/local83>

Don't forget to bookmark it!

By the way, the web site does not cost NOSTA members any money directly, as it is hosted by the BCTF and is run by a teacher volunteering as web master.

What's Up Doc?

World Wide Web

www.bctf.cd/local83

NOSTA web page.
-or just leave off "local 83"
for the BCTF site.

www.canadians.org

The Council of Canadians.

www.policyalternatives.ca

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

www.handsoffhydro.com

Site dedicated to keeping BC Hydro in the hands of those who paid for it.

<http://www.strategicthoughts.com>

Analysis of BC political events.

<http://www.bcfed.com/index.htm>

BC Federation of Labour

Calendar of Events

Month	Day	Event
NOVEMBER	28	Bargaining Survey Due
	28	\$90 for Democratic College Fund
DECEMBER	01	Executive Meeting
	08	LRA Meeting
	18	Christmas Open House NOSTA Office 3:00 – 6:00

