



**The 12th Tri-national Conference in Defense of Public Education
Vancouver, BC
May 2016**

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Friday, May 13, 2016

Time	Activity	Place
19:00 – 21:00	<p>Public event: Catching up—Education struggles in Mexico, the United States, and Canada Chair: Glen Hansman, President-elect Indigenous welcome BCTF Host Welcome—Jim Iker, President, BC Teachers’ Federation Mexico—Raciél Gutierrez, SNTE/CNTE Section 18, Sara Unda, Professor at UNAM United States—Maria Moreno, Chicago Teachers’ Union, William I. Robinson—Professor at University of California Santa Barbara Canada—Mario Beauchemin—CSQ (Quebec), Harvey Bischof—Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation, Jim Iker—BC Teachers’ Federation</p>	South Great Hall Level 2 The Nest

Saturday, May 14, 2016

Time	Activity	Place
	Breakfast	
8:00 – 8:50	Sign in, if have not already done so	South Great Hall
09:00 – 10:30	<p>Plenary:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Many struggles, many strategies</p> <p>Chair: Teri Mooring—1st Vice-President-elect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Canadian Teachers’ Federation challenges neo-liberal policies—Heather Smith, President • The disappeared 43 students in Mexico and the link to teacher struggles—Maria de la Luz Arriaga • The crisis in Puerto Rico—Rafael Feliciano • Students in the economy and education crisis—Veronica Teneria • Innovative strategy—“walk-ins” 	South Great Hall
10:30 – 10:45	Break – coffee, tea, water provided	South Great Hall
10:45 – 12:15	<p>Workshop session 1 – choose 1 (locations posted)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resisting austerity and attacks on labour rights 2. Education technology and neo-liberal education practice 3. Precarious academic work – The impact on students and teachers 	South Great Hall North Great Hall 2306 + 2309
12:15 – 1:15	Lunch – food trucks (use ticket)	parked near Nest
1:15 – 2:45	<p>Workshop session 2 – choose 1 (locations posted)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Struggles against privatization 5. Resistance to the criminalization of youth and exclusion by gentrification 6. Democratic unions and the participation of the base in the organization 	South Great Hall North Great Hall 2306 + 2309
2:45 – 3:00	break	
3:00 – 4:30	<p>Workshop session 3 – choose 1 (locations posted)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Working with parents and communities in support of public education 8. Recognition of the rights of Indigenous communities, students, and teachers 9. Alternative education and Non-sexist and inclusive pedagogy 	South Great Hall North Great Hall 2306 + 2309
4:30 – 6:30	Break, social time	
6:00 – 6:30	Meet and mingle; no-host bar	South Great Hall
6:30 – 9:30	<p>Dinner and cultural event</p> <p>Host: Jim Iker, BCTF President</p> <p>Speaker: Jim Sinclair, past-president, BC Federation of Labour</p> <p>The Git Hayetsk Dancers will share West Coast First Nations mask-dancing</p>	South Great Hall

Sunday, May 15, 2016

Time	Activity	Place
	Breakfast	
	Check out of accommodation; store luggage for departure	
8:45 – 8:55	Group photo	South Great Hall
9:00 – 10:00	3 action workshops - discussion - action plans	South Great Hall 2306 + 2309 2311
10:00 – 10:15	Break – coffee, tea, water provided Certificates available for pick-up	South Great Hall; foyer
10:15 – 11:30	Concluding assembly Host: Domenic Bellissimo, OSSTF - hear from 3 action workshops - Vancouver Declaration - wrap-up – Jim Iker - closing	South Great Hall
11:30	Box lunch distribution to everyone	South Great Hall
11:30 – 12:30	BCTF participants – Strategic Planning Facilitators: Julia MacRae and Paula Naylor, BCTF International Solidarity Committee - bring your box lunch - other delegates can also attend	South Great Hall
12:30	Conference co-ordinators' evaluation meeting	
Afternoon	For participants not leaving until late Sunday, or on Monday – exploring Vancouver	

Indigenous Educators Encounter

Sunday afternoon to Tuesday, mid-day

If you are participating in the Indigenous Educators Encounter, the program will be provided to you.

Saturday workshops at the Tri-national Conference in Defense of Public Education

The objectives of the workshops are fourfold:

1. Develop an understanding of ways that neo-liberal policies in education are challenging public education, as seen from multiple contexts and perspectives.
2. Engage participants through interactive processes that encourage participation (not easy with groups as large as 50 and operating in two languages).
3. Design possible actions that are not just defensive, but assertive in promoting policies that reflect social justice and democratic values of public education, and that contribute to the construction of an international agenda of action.
4. Deepen and expand the bonds of solidarity and unity of international action.

Each of the workshops will have a facilitator responsible for working with co-facilitators from across the three countries in designing and facilitating the workshop. Each workshop will have a structure appropriate for the particular topic.

Nine workshops will each be offered once. Three workshops will be concurrent in each of three workshop blocks of 90 minutes each. The need for simultaneous interpretation in English and Spanish places some limits on the organization of the workshops.

Each workshop should spend some time on possible actions, which will be reported to action workshops on Sunday morning. Facilitators should bring some ideas for actions that can be introduced to the workshop, to ensure that some ideas come forward to the Sunday workshops.

Saturday morning, 10:45 am to 12:15 pm — Workshop Session 1: Select one of three workshops:

<p>1. Resisting austerity and attacks on labour rights</p>	<p>2. Education technology and neo-liberal education practice</p>	<p>3. Post-secondary education and precarity</p>
<p>Conference participants will be coming with common, but also diverse, experiences with neo-liberal policies, and forms of resistance to their impact on public education, students, and teachers. This workshop presents a forum to focus on types of resistance carried out, particularly those that have had some success in pushing back. It also provides an opportunity to think about forms of mutual solidarity that transcend borders, and building a common international agenda in response to the crisis of capitalism. In particular, it should reflect on the strategies for opposing budget cuts, restricting funding to pay pensions, while increasing the use of public resources to finance private education, to pay down the public debt, and on the military.</p>	<p>Susan Robertson says that neo-liberal education produces the neo-liberal person. While many elements of technology in education are important to examine, seldom is it analyzed in the context of how it shapes social practice in a neo-liberal frame. McLuhan and Franklin point out that we shape our tools, and the tools then shape us. Digital technology brings into the school privatization, corporate profits, individualism, and tools that may undermine social values.</p> <p>This workshop provides an opportunity to focus on bringing these often-hidden elements to the surface, and exploring alternative approaches that redefine the use of technology in education.</p>	<p>“Flexibility” and responding to the market are neo-liberal watchwords in more and more areas of employment. Flexibility is there for only one side—the employers—when they pursue maximum profit by ensuring that the employees do not have the protection of collective agreements or policies that recognize the right to be able to plan one’s life and develop in a profession with some commitment and regularity. Labour deregulation, and the disappearance of contracts and labour agreements are some of the impacts.</p> <p>Precarious work has become a standard in academic work, with few qualified people able to get a full-time job, and where most students have temporary contract instructors for many of their undergraduate courses. This has become a field of academic piecemeal rather than one of teachers who are able to carry out research and teaching with confidence in a career and freedom of expression.</p> <p>This workshop will provide opportunity to share experiences and the types of actions that could be taken to promote a system that provides important conditions of security.</p>
<p>Lead facilitator: Domenic Bellissimo (OSSTF—Canada); Co-facilitators: Concepcion Neves (CETG-CNTE—Mexico); Kimberly Goldbaum (Chicago Teachers’ Union—USA)</p>	<p>Lead facilitator: Larry Kuehn (BCTF—Canada); Co-facilitator: Graciela Muñoz (Academic Delegation UPIICSA, IPN—Mexico)</p>	<p>Facilitators: Vicki Legion and Lalo Gonzalez (City College of San Francisco—USA); Saúl García (Mexico)</p>

Saturday, early afternoon, 1:15 pm to 2:45 pm — Workshop Session 2: Select one of three workshops:

<p>4. Struggles against privatization</p>	<p>5. Resistance to the criminalization of youth and exclusion by gentrification</p>	<p>6. Democratic unions and the participation of the base in the organization</p>
<p>Privatization and commercialization are approaches that remove services and rights from the public sector and make them subject to the market and the inequalities that are a central result of neo-liberalism and the decline in the state as a social actor.</p> <p>Charter schools and voucher systems are forms of privatization that are best known. However, corporate intrusion into education has exploded, including the production of classroom teaching resources, online tests, and student information systems. Testing of teachers to gain or maintain teacher certification is opening more markets for corporations. Now the Pearson corporation is not only organizing its business to be digital and everywhere, it is also opening chains of for-profit schools globally.</p> <p>The use of public funds to finance the private sector is growing, with the costs of education transferred from the state to the community.</p> <p>Privatization is an instrument used by corporations and governments to change the direction of education and advance a business agenda of education. This creates a focus on training students to be inserted into a precarious labour market, rather than providing a scientific and humanistic education. This has an impact not just on students, but also on the labour and professional realities for workers in education.</p> <p>This workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to identify the nature of privatization in their context, as well as to share strategies used to oppose and challenge privatization.</p>	<p>Marginalized youth are particularly vulnerable to ending up in the criminal system and exclusion from the education system in all three countries—African-American youth in the U.S., Indigenous youth in Mexico, and Aboriginal youth in Canada.</p> <p>This workshop will look at the extent and nature of the issues, and how they relate to neo-liberalism as an ideology that encourages marginalization and exclusion from the benefits of the economy, and forms of oppression and displacement of people of colour. Actions will be identified that can be taken in organizing against racism, for free education that is critical, humanistic, and liberating as a social right.</p>	<p>The strength of a union that is dedicated to promoting social equity as well as pursuing the interests of teachers depends on democracy and participation of members.</p> <p>This workshop will provide an opportunity to share approaches that participants have used to ensure democracy and encourage participation in the union and to make suggestions to the action workshops on Sunday.</p>
<p>Lead facilitator: Chris Baehrend (Chicago—USA); Co-facilitator: Ramses Valenzuela (FADES-CNTE—Mexico); Sherri Brown (BCTF—Canada)</p>	<p>Facilitators: Rosemary Lee (UTLA—Los Angeles, CA); Johnae Strong—CTU, Black Youth Project 100); Shane Prasad (BCTF—Canada); Veronica Teneria (Mexico)</p>	<p>Facilitators: Tammie Vinson and Sarah Chambers (Chicago—USA); Arlette Cerón (Mexico)</p>

Saturday, later afternoon, 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm — Workshop Session 3: Select one of three workshops:

<p>7. Working with parents and communities in support of public education</p>	<p>8. Recognition of the rights of Indigenous communities, students, and teachers</p>	<p>9. Alternative education and Non-sexist and inclusive pedagogy</p>
<p>Allies from the community are crucial in many struggles on behalf of public education. However, communities can also be opponents if genuine collaboration with parents and others is not a part of the program for defending public education and the interests of the people who work in the schools. The defense of the right to education is a task for the whole society.</p> <p>This workshop provides an opportunity to share experiences—positive and negative—as the basis for the kinds of actions that can be recommended in working with parents and communities.</p>	<p>Participants in the workshop will include Indigenous teachers from Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia, Ecuador, the United States, and Canada.</p> <p>This workshop provides an opportunity to hear about the context and realities for Indigenous teachers from a variety of Indigenous communities. Each of the Indigenous teachers is asked to make a short presentation about their community and the conditions and issues specific to education. These presentations will provide a basis for the group to identify what are common experiences as well as what are different experiences of Indigenous teachers.</p> <p>As examples, there may be common experiences around maintaining language and culture, use of standardized tests that marginalize students and teachers, alternative programs in public schools that recognize cultural diversity, and teacher training that supports Indigenous teachers.</p> <p>The final section of the workshop will develop suggestions for action that might be carried out by the Tri-national Coalition in support of Indigenous education and teachers.</p>	<p>The struggles of workers in the education of our countries are not restricted to the defense of labour rights, but also occur in the construction and development of a critical education—scientific, liberating, and for the development of democratic societies and social justice.</p> <p>Many educators have developed alternative pedagogies from our specific historical and cultural contexts: from concepts such as community, autonomy, dialogical education, non-sexist and inclusive education, and others. This workshop aims to be a forum for exchange of those experiences, and to support reflection on action to rethink our teaching, transforming education and developing closer links with communities.</p>
<p>Lead facilitator: Rebecca Martinez (Chicago—USA); Co-facilitator: Lucia Morales (MPMV-CNTE—Mexico); Mike Lombardi (School Trustee, Vancouver School Board—Canada)</p>	<p>Lead facilitator: Chris Stewart (BCTF—Canada); Co-facilitator: Julian Jimenez (CMPPIO—Mexico)</p>	<p>Lead facilitator: Barb Ryeburn (BCTF—Canada); Co-facilitators: Aleyda Gaspar (SUTUACM—Mexico); Esperanza Tasies Castro (Costa Rica) and Daysi Marquez (Honduras); Jennifer Johnson and Adam Heenan (CTU—USA)</p>

Sunday morning, 9:00 am to 10 am — Action workshops: choose one

Each action workshop will hear a report from three of Saturday's topic workshops. The objective is to synthesize the types of actions that might be taken, with a particular focus on actions that have an element of international solidarity.

Action Workshop #1	Action Workshop #2	Action Workshop #3
Reports from Resisting austerity, Education Technology, and Precarious Academic Work	Reports from Privatization, Student Exclusion, and Democratic Unions	Reports from Working with Parents, Indigenous Rights, and Alternative Education
Facilitator/synthesizer—Moirra Mackenzie, BCTF	Facilitator/synthesizer—Jackson Potter, Chicago Teachers' Union	Facilitator/synthesizer: Rosemary Lee—United Teachers of Los Angeles

Return to South Great Hall for concluding assembly....

Tri-national links:

Tri-national Coalition website: <http://www.trinationalcoalition.org/>

BCTF's 12th Tri-national conference website: <http://www.bctf.ca/IntlSolidarity.aspx?id=39549>

The Vancouver Declaration will be added to this page.

Facebook: Trinational Coalition To Defend Public Education USA