

Privatization and privilege come at a price

#BCED can be, and needs to be a public good, not a private right

By Ryan Cho

For those working, studying, or simply invested in education in British Columbia, there is a sense of change in the air. It is well-recognized that the world is in transformation and has transformed, and that education must develop and evolve to ensure that we have the capacity to work successfully with emerging challenges in the emerging world.

What that evolution should look like is where debate and conflict arises. Much of this conversation focuses on curriculum, assessment, or school structure reform while excluding a question that is even more fundamental—is education a public trust done for the public good, or a private right based on access to personal choice?

For the BC Liberal government, a shift from public to private is an explicit and implicit part of their education mandate. The government's official "International Education Strategy" aims to increase the number of K-12 international students studying in BC by 50% over the next four years, with each K-12 international student



Original source: Design Pics

spending approximately \$24,370 a year for the opportunity to live and attend school in BC. BC education currently has 34 privately run BC curriculum schools operating outside of Canada, with a further 16 schools awaiting certification. Within the province itself, FTE enrolment in independent schools has increased significantly compared to public schools, something that is documented in reports by the Federation for Independent School Alternatives, the BC Ministry of Education, and the BC Teachers' Federation.

There is also serious discussion about privatizing facilities management and project design in K-12 public schools and post-secondary institutions.

The rising of independent schools and partial privatization of BC's public education system is framed by its advocates as a positive movement that facilitates student choice, generates new revenue, and reduces costs. However, arguments in support are often cut along ideological lines, don't always stand up to in-depth analysis, and generally:

1. focus on positive outcomes to students who already have degrees of educational privilege, while ignoring the marginalization of students who are at risk.
2. are made with an incomplete understanding of the key role public education plays in a functioning democracy.
3. ignore that privatizing education exacerbates social and economic inequity, which has negative consequences for everyone regardless of who they are.
4. are paired with a misleading narrative of financial scarcity, which can be addressed fairly easily.

Options for the privileged, scarcity for the needy

There is nothing inherently wrong with a person or group offering an additional program or service that supports the needs (learning, physical, or religious) of a student in a way that the public system cannot. Countless young people pay for dance classes, take private music lessons, play league hockey, or participate in science enrichment camps that are meaningful and foster their development and growth. In this context, the ability to choose and access a program that best fits your interests is a good thing. However, "school choice" in BC overwhelmingly refers to the ability to access independent schools or for-profit enrichment with costly tuition fees. Because of this, "choice" is restricted to a privileged few who can afford it, or to middle class families who are willing to financially compromise themselves to participate.

Our attempts to use privatization to make up for revenue lost in underfunding also exclusively caters to the rich.

Whereas privatized education opportunities exclude the majority of BC students, public education as a public good works to improve the opportunities for all students regardless of their background and actively supports the students who need the most help, or who are the most vulnerable.

What is so disturbing about the movement to privatize BC education is that the story of private choice is not just one of enrichment for a privileged minority, but of the marginalization of the poor and middle class through simultaneous cuts to public education. In 2011-12, BC education spending was 15.14% of the provincial budget compared to 19.67% in 2001-02. Class sizes in public schools have increased as a result; special needs class ratios have also increased. When budgets contract, programs set up to support students with learning disabilities and

who are at risk are often the first eliminated. The loss of special ed programs because of underfunding have driven major court cases where school districts were sued and found guilty of discrimination against students with special needs for cutting programs that are essential for their success. Arts and elective programs that are important ways students, specifically economically vulnerable students, engage positively with their school are also usually targeted for cuts during budget squeezes.

The move to "expand school choice" combined with the deliberate de-investment in a public service is a technique that renowned lawyer and writer Joel Bakan calls "starve the beast."

A pattern that comes up repeatedly in neoliberal strategy, it happens when a public service is purposely defunded to the point that it degrades, and then free market advocates use indicators of that decline to justify more privatized "solutions."

A policy of privatization that reinforces inequity amongst BC citizens is not just bad news for the poor or those excluded from privilege. In the long run, it is bad for everyone, rich and poor, and works to erode our capacities as a province, culture, and society.

A public good, not a private right

Rich or poor, privileged or not, everyone in a democratic society is interdependent. Education as a public good recognizes that the success, health, and opportunity available to the most vulnerable have an impact on the well-being of everyone, even the advantaged who might at first appear insulated from the hardships of the poor.

Education has a direct and unique effect on how our governments perform. Democracies are

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On the inside

Proposals for change across many aspects of education are coming thick and fast from the Ministry of Education. Much of this material is vague and ill-defined but the intent is discernible in general terms. Documents spanning changes in curriculum and assessment, special education, data collection, and the very nature of schooling are out for study. A number of articles in this issue attempt to clarify what may be "in the works."

With the provincial election looming there are timely pieces on childcare and whether

"families first" represents anything more than words.

The plight of adult education is examined and an interesting study in teacher education along with a feature on the art museum as a teaching tool illustrate the varied forms of enquiry being conducted by members.

The BCTF Annual General Meeting will be held in March and herein can be found the statements of candidates running for office, special resolutions, and the agenda.

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President's message



Susan Lambert

In our year of provincial action, March is the month we highlight the role of non-enrolling learning specialist teachers. We've lost over 750 of these teachers since 2002. These teachers, from teacher-librarians to counsellors to learning support teachers and teachers of students with special learning needs, provide critical support to classroom teachers. The decimation of their presence in schools has contributed to the immensely increased workload of teachers remaining in the system.

We need 6,800 teachers

I was shocked to learn last month that according to Stats Canada's latest report we, in BC are now 6,800 teachers short of the national average student-educator ratio. We knew that Stats Can's 2009 report had us short 5,800 but to learn that we had dropped 1,000 teachers lower was another blow.

The figure represents the vast discrepancy between public school teachers in BC and our colleagues across the country. It also represents the herculean workload teachers in this province carry. And yet despite this enormous lack of capacity within our system, we still manage to stand our own on

international assessments. We are still providing students a high quality learning program. But at what cost? The workload of teachers in BC has become unsustainable. We have such a dedicated workforce determined to give students their best but this effort simply cannot last. There has to be some relief soon.

Learning specialist teachers provide services that both teachers and students rely on. Their presence adds to the quality of instructional programs and allows these programs to be designed to fit individual student needs. Their absence requires classroom and subject teachers to fill in the gaps and this on top of burgeoning class sizes.

Teachers buying preps

Many teachers are trying to relieve this pressure by reducing their assignments. In effect they are buying their own prep time, going part-time work to survive.

Some administrators are trying to relieve this pressure by hiring educational assistants rather than qualified teachers. Much of the LIF funding has gone to this expedient. SEAs provide valuable services to students and teachers rely on these colleagues to implement modified and adapted instructional programs to match student needs. But replacing qualified teachers with SEAs is not the answer. In fact this is a cost-cutting measure that exploits SEAs and undermines the quality of instruction for our most vulnerable students.

Some administrators are trying to relieve the pressure by encouraging students (elementary students as well) to enrol in electronic distributed learning (DL) courses. I find this practice unconscionable. While DL provides students who are unable to attend

face-to-face classes a crucial alternative, it is not instruction that can ever replicate the richness of a classroom. DL should never be encouraged as an alternative to regular classroom programs unless a student is simply unable to attend school.

The ministry is trying to relieve the pressure on the system through what they call "decategorization." While Universal Design theories (UDL) and Response to Intervention practices (RTI) are both positive trends to address the challenges students with special needs face in schools, this policy defines "\$18,000" children (low incidence students with special needs) as financial problems to be solved. Uncovering this objective of the ministry's "decategorization" agenda is of critical concern to teachers because we have been subject to unfunded educational change innovations too often this past decade. We know that programs such as UDL and RTI require funding to support classroom and school conditions that will allow and promote their implementation. They cannot be implemented within the current education funding policies of the province.

Bad choices

Our current provincial government has decided that public education is not a priority. It has made a conscious choice to allocate funding to other priorities instead. Think of the enormous price we are paying for the superfluous hydro power from private "run-of-the-river" power projects. Think of the relentless dense advertising campaign we are subjected to on the radio and TV. Think of the retractable roof on BC Place. These are but a few of the choices our government has made rather than properly funding public education.

We do not live in the third world. We live in a rich province in a rich country. We have what we need in BC to nurture a high quality public education system. We have dedicated, passionate, and highly trained teachers. We have a sound public education system that has never stopped evolving and improving as teachers, as lifelong learners, and researchers continually improve their practice and we have the means to nurture the system, nurture teachers in their work even in this economy. This government could make the choice to restore the capacity we need to truly "personalize" learning, but instead this government has chosen to rob the system of the funding it needs and then blame teachers.

Teacher cuts deliberate

The loss of 750 learning specialist teachers and approximately 3,000 classroom and subject teachers is by design. As disheartening as this sounds to all of us, this loss is a result of intentional government policy. The policy called "Flexibility and Choice" was legislated through Bills 27 and 28 in 2002. It is a political choice of a government that puts private alternatives before public education.

As I write this column, government has made yet another similar choice. It has decided to fund adult education for private schools. This, while adult education in the public system suffers from chronic underfunding and neglect.

In March, we are highlighting the need for learning specialist teachers. In May we must highlight the need for a government that values the critical role public education plays in building a robust civil and democratic society.

Readers write

A tribute to *Teacher* newsmagazine

As one who has written occasionally for *Teacher* over the past decade and worked with three different editors, I am troubled by the cuts imposed on the newsmagazine. I am concerned about the potential negative impact of future cutbacks on the production, operation, and delivery of *Teacher*. I believe the cuts will dim the power and punch of a very fine professional magazine and that they are coming at a very inopportune time with a crucial provincial election in the offing and one in which the Federation has an enormous stake.

Teacher newsmagazine is regarded as one of this country's finest professional teacher magazines. The many and varied awards it has received in several distinct categories over the years, accorded it by the Canadian Educational Press Association and the Educational Press Association of America, confirms this status.

I fully realize that all organizations have at times to undertake a belt-tightening process but sometimes this process sees efficiency trump effectiveness. Such I believe is the case of impending cutbacks with *Teacher*.

Teacher newsmagazine has a circulation of close to 60,000 readers reaching a varied readership of MLAs, university faculty, union representatives, municipal officials, media members, community organizations, retired teachers, parent representatives, and the

wider BC education community in general. Despite its relatively small size it packs a punch far beyond its size as it is the authentic voice of those who serve the province's 500,000 K-12 public school students. It reaches every corner of this province, even our most remote schools. It offers a forum to every one of the Federation's 40,000 plus members on a topic of their choosing. It is the embodiment of free and unfettered expression ranging from letters to the editor and opinion pieces on emerging concerns in any one of the province's 60 school districts. The Federation has at its very heart the defence of a strong, vibrant, and above all, high quality public education system.

Teacher newsmagazine is one of the Federation's key communication tools and occupies a particularly valuable position in the communications world of the organization. It, I would submit, is a unifying force in a far-flung geographic province such as BC. And most importantly it eloquently speaks truth to power again and again, on behalf of students, staff, and parents since this magazine was first published in 1919.

This year *Teacher* retained some issues in a print format and will produce three issues in an online-only format.

Not all parts of the province are online thus restricting the reach of the online edition and the hand-held edition with its extended articles, accompanying photos,

stories, and cartoons has its own unique appeal. Commentary and constructive criticism of current and impending legislation, pressing and emerging social issues, educational trends, local and province-wide controversies that impact schools all find a special home in the print edition of *Teacher*. As the forum and voice of the rank-and-file member, it can illuminate in detail the circumstances and intricacies of local problems in a way in which an online vehicle will not do.

The savings versus the influence argument must be carefully weighed at this time.

Yes, we live in a wired world. A world of e-mails, Facebook, Twitter, and myopic multitasking. I must ask: Is the printed word of newspapers, magazines, and books really obsolete? I recently acquired an e-reader but I find myself returning again and again to the bulky novels and pulp fiction that I love. I wonder if we are giving up some of the magical interactive tangibility of our books, newspapers, and magazines as we rush to modernize and save money. But much more importantly, are we vacating the meditative and thoughtful world of reports, analyses, and commentary to something that in its brevity and instantaneous response could be less so and not suited to many of the complicated topics in our education world. To some, this is a gross oversimplification of the issue and perhaps an outdated perspective.

Lastly, I respectfully suggest that a decision to cut back on the funding of *Teacher* at this time should receive a serious second look and a possible deferral for a year or so, certainly until the entire province is fully wired.

Noel Herron

A sample of responses to the new format for *Teacher*

I especially like that I can keep current and read it on any of my iDevices using the Issuu app. Keep up the good work.

Brian Cousins

Sorry to say that I find an online-only edition of the newsmagazine limiting. If that is the only format, then I won't be reading it. I enjoy holding paper in my hand while reading. I enjoy highlighting things that excite me or cutting out things that inspire me. I missed the October edition and now I know why. I will likely not read the Jan/Feb. version either. I am sorry but I have difficulty reading from a screen.

Paula Wild

So I've read the digital version two times now and find it a lonely period of time spent in front of the screen. Not having it hanging around the staffrooms of schools means there is less chance to comment together or ask if one has read a certain article or grumble at something in the presence of colleagues, and so reading it has become too much an individual experience...alone. Finding the physical hard copy in my office box at school would lead to a conversation of some kind on the content, whether positive or negative, but at least there was a sense of shared reading. I miss it and would take it in a hard copy version if given the choice.

Anna Feddema

I'm all in favour of going digital—I find it easier for my old eyes to read, less wasteful of resources and all the other clichés that apply. I do, however, object to the current format. There is no good reason to try and preserve the print layout in a digital format. I suggest that you re-examine your layout to be something more like Flipboard or Pulse—a truly digital experience.

Dallas Hinton

I am a very environmentally conscious person, I'm even on VESTA's sustainability committee. I know that we should cut down on printing, paper and shipping costs by having *Teacher* online but I find it difficult to read in that format. Maybe we could just send out a few copies per school and they could share them? Or print every other month?

Susan Russell

Teacher

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dependent on the presence of a literate, informed, and engaged electorate; citizens must have a working knowledge of how their government and political structures work, feel empowered to participate in the process, and be able to understand and critique policy, all of which are influenced by public education. When these abilities are weak, public policy decisions take a turn for the worse. The more people who are knowledgeable and engaged in our civic processes, the better our governments function, and the better policies we create.

Whereas privatized education opportunities exclude the majority of BC students, public education as a public good works to improve the opportunities for all students regardless of their background and actively supports the students who need the most help, or who are the most vulnerable.

Public education quality is also strongly linked to economic performance. We can only grow or develop industry in areas where our population has skills, training, or capacity. In a changing economic world, if we are unable to change with it, the economy will stagnate and poverty will increase. Higher poverty is correlated with everything from higher crime rates, to shorter lives, and poorer health, all of which cost society both in lost opportunity and government money. However, when the economy is more prosperous and poverty decreases, all of these areas improve.

Privatization increases inequity, and that affects everyone (negatively for the most part)

The privatization of public education contributes to growing inequity in BC, and regardless of who you are, inequity is bad

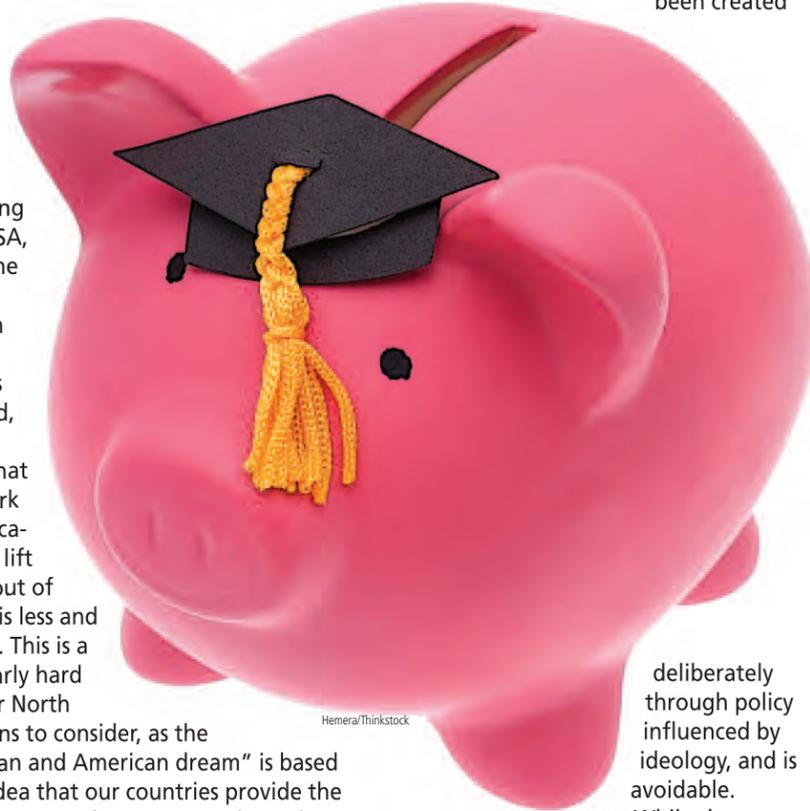
for you, and bad for where you live. Life expectancy, child well-being, and levels of trust all decrease when inequity increases. At the same time, high school dropout rates, violent crimes, mental illness, and stress also increase with inequity. Studies show that these outcomes are connected with the gaps between rich and poor and not with the overall wealth of a country or province. It doesn't matter how rich a country is as a whole; what matters is how much inequality is there.

Perhaps most shocking is that social mobility decreases significantly when social inequity rises. This is now

happening in the USA, where the gap between rich and poor has exploded, and the dream that hard work and education will lift people out of poverty is less and less true. This is a particularly hard thing for North Americans to consider, as the "Canadian and American dream" is based on the idea that our countries provide the opportunity to achieve success through education and hard work regardless of a person's starting point. The irony is that by defunding and privatizing education, the BC government is transforming a traditional avenue of social mobility into a structure that undermines it by reinforcing inequality.

What we can do about it: addressing the false narrative of scarcity, and working toward equity

Supporters of privatization often tell a story of scarcity when advocating for privatized reforms. Their thinking is that tough times have depleted funding sources, and public services must turn to the private sector for money because there is no way to generate them in the public sphere. However, the current financial shortfall has been created



deliberately through policy influenced by ideology, and is avoidable. While the

percentage of BC GDP spent on public education fell from 19.67% to 15.14% over the last 10 years, the BC economy grew by about 4.8% between 2006 and 2009. This gap in actual funding is even worse when you take inflation into account. At the same time, corporate income tax rates in BC are amongst the lowest in North America at around 11%, in some cases close to half of what they

are in other parts of the world. Despite the conservative belief to the contrary, studies have shown that lower taxes for the rich and corporations do not correlate with faster economic growth or more jobs.

"...scarcity is not unavoidable; it is as simple and complicated as two more points of GST, which would put every province in this country in a very different position when it comes to funding public education." – Heather-Jane Robertson

This "scarcity" of funds could be easily addressed with minor tax increases on corporations and high-income earners. The revenue generated from modest tax reforms on these two groups would dramatically improve services, especially for those most in need.

Despite the resistance of many of our political leaders to undertake tax reform like this, several recent studies have highlighted that the majority of Canadians and British Columbians actually support tax increases, and want politicians to take leadership on tackling issues of poverty and inequality.

#BCED needs to be a properly funded public good, and there are things that we can do to make it that again. The upcoming BC provincial election in May 2013 is an opportunity to push the issue. Advocating to electoral candidates and communities that education in BC needs to stay public, and that funding needs to be increased are essential elements, but alone are not enough; they need to be paired with a push for all political parties, regardless of affiliation, to commit to tax reform that allows that vision to be possible.

If this is something that you are concerned about, I implore you to make some noise, contact your MLA candidates, and let them know that this is important to you. Public education, poverty, and inequity are not partisan issues or class issues; they are social issues, and social justice issues that impact everyone. It is time for us to come together, and to act on them.

Ryan Cho
Terry Fox Secondary School, Coquitlam

The great Canadian shoreline cleanup

This spring, make a difference for your local shorelines, and your community. The Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, a national conservation initiative of the Vancouver Aquarium and WWF, is seeking school, scout, and youth groups in British Columbia to help clean local waterways and shorelines, ensuring their health for the wildlife and communities that depend on them.

Presented by Loblaw Companies Limited, the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup spring program is the perfect opportunity to learn about shorelines and clean up litter that would have a serious impact on the health of our oceans, lakes, and rivers—and ultimately our communities.

This spring, make a difference for your favourite shoreline

The spring cleanup program runs from April 1–June 30, 2013

Register today at ShorelineCleanup.ca or call 1-877-427-2422



Looking back

70 years ago

Money spent on schools and teachers and education generally has been spent grudgingly nickel by nickel, dime by dime, as if education were something wasteful, foolish, an extravagance. Yet – if we really want to have a democracy based upon responsible citizenship – we ought to regard education as the very foundation of our country, its people and its future. We ought to regard money spent on education as the finest investment of all, an investment in the future of our own Canadian people. Money spent on education is money saved, for ignorance, in the long run, is a great deal more expensive than education. – *The BC Teacher*, March 1943

50 years ago

Shouldn't we provide time to perform those tasks we all realize are important? Teachers need time to relax, to contemplate, to reflect, to re-examine their methods, to keep up with general educational developments, not just their own specialty – if they can even do that. Yet time, most precious and necessary as a revitalizer, is not available. A teacher needs time to re-energize his system, to re-examine his ideals, his philosophy of education. How long does it take for a teacher to succumb to the "routine"? Should we spend so much time and energy bargaining for money when the great problem is a shortage of time? – *The BC Teacher*, March 1963

30 years ago

I'm getting tired of people in responsible positions taking ill-conceived shots at the public education system. By almost any

measure, our schools are doing a better job now than they ever have. They are doing a better job for more people, despite the fact that they are being expected to provide these people with a wider range of services and are having to cope with a bewildering array of social problems. Bill Vander Zalm's political support has been disintegrating. Politicians who base electoral support on fear and misunderstanding find that their cynical efforts are rejected by the many voters who have children in the public system. They know that that system was rendering good service until the minister made it the centre of so much controversy. – *The BC Teacher*, March–April 1983

10 years ago

Businesses see schools as good marketing opportunities. Young people significantly influence the spending decisions of families, and many older students hold part-time jobs that give them significant discretionary income. The large corporations, like Coke and Pepsi, are interested not just in sales today, but in long-term customer loyalty. Whatever products are sold in the school receive an implicit stamp of approval from an institution that is still well respected by many. In accord with neo-liberal ideology, the B.C. provincial government has jumped into a form of commercialization ahead of everyone else. In Bill 34, the B.C. government provided for school districts to create private for-profit companies to sell education services. This is grand-scale commercialization and privatization. – *Teacher*, March 2003

Chris Bocking
Keating Elementary School, Saanich

Recent developments in special education/inclusion

By Charlie Naylor

Several recent documents and presentations, most but not all from the BC Ministry of Education, suggest that considerable changes are being floated as options for redesigning inclusive educational approaches in the BC K–12 public education system.

The BC Education Plan

The Special Education section on the Education Plan website states that the ministry is “working with district partners to develop a number of tools and resources” linked to early intervention and classroom practice, but fails to specify what they are. Similarly it reports work “with district partners and BC CASE” to “streamline processes,” including IEPs, but sheds little further light on who is involved and any progress to date. However, it appears likely that the 10 pilot projects identified in the conference PowerPoint presentation (below) reflect the work with district partners.

In the words of Rod Allen, there will be “no labels and no medical model. In a 21st century personalised world, I’ll tell you what a special education looks like if you can tell me what a ‘normal’ education is.”

Global Education Leaders’ Program (GELP) Case Study: Developing an Education System for the 21st Century—British Columbia, Canada

With somewhat exaggerated statements, the credibility of this document is questionable. It states, for instance, that:

An explicit programme of citizen and stakeholder engagement over two years has resulted in a broad consensus around the need to transform education in BC and the nature of the changes required.

This doubtless comes as news to some stakeholders who have not been engaged, and the claims of broad conceptual or implementation consensus are dubious at best. However, the ubiquitous Rod Allen added one more riddle but no clarification in the following section of the report:

Decategorization of special needs education. In the words of Rod Allen, there will be “no labels and no medical model. In a 21st century personalised world, I’ll tell you what a special education looks like if you can tell me what a ‘normal’ education is.”

Rod Allen also makes an appearance in “GELP: the movie” in which CISCO and the Gates Foundation appear prominent. This eight-minute movie also features Valerie Hannon and Tony Mackay. Their visits to BC, including one at the International Conference for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI), were events that in part initiated BC government interest in personalized learning. GELP’s home page states:

The Global Education Leaders’ Program is a community of key education system leaders, policy-makers, thought-leaders and world-class consultants collaborating to transform education at local, national and international levels. The aim of these transformations is to equip every learner with the skills, expertise and knowledge to survive and thrive in the 21st century. GELP is led and co-ordinated by Innovation Unit and sponsored and funded by Cisco, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ellen Koshland Family Fund, and Prometheus.

Considerations for the future of Special Education in BC (BC Ministry of Education PowerPoint presentation to the Family Focus conference, October 2012)

The 16 slides in this Ministry of Education presentation, which surfaced in October, provide considerably more information pertaining to Special Education than does the education plan. Borrowing heavily from (but not acknowledging) Saskatchewan’s “Actualizing a needs-based model to support student achievement,” this presentation signals an intent to shift away from designations to “needs-based” approaches utilizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Response to Intervention (RTI).

Three priority areas are stated in the presentation:

- RTI/UDL
- Early intervention practices
- Transition years model

The RTI model, reviewed by McIntosh, MacKay, Andreou, Brown, Matthews, Gietz and Bennet (2011) “is a system-level approach to school psychology service delivery that integrates instruction, the scientific model, formative assessment, and the psycho-educational assessment process.” (p. 21). With a focus on boosting the quality of school-wide instruction, implementing school-wide screening, and a tiered model of service delivery, the goal is to enable 80% of students to be successful through classroom-based, school-wide interventions. A second tier of interventions are “delivered to a wide range of students in the same way” (p. 24), with instructional decisions made by the school-based team. The third tier increases the intensity of support to a smaller number of individuals, with “special education eligibility” considered. This model is shown graphically with a funnel, the wider end being Tier 1—all students, Tier 2 the interventions to a smaller group, and Tier 3 at the funnel’s narrowest end with the most intensive interventions for a small number of students.

The focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is surprising given the province’s cutting of the SET-BC UDL project in 2010 after only three years. While SET-BC has managed to maintain a low-level focus on UDL, the cuts to UDL in 2010, and now the resurrection of UDL reflect an apparent level of confusion in the Ministry of Education. In 2010, UDL was of such little worth that even a fledgling project exploring UDL was wiped out, but in 2012, UDL is now heralded as “a key foundation for planning” (Slide 3 in the PowerPoint). This level of flip-flop, on/off approach, is the last thing needed in terms of building capacity. Instead, what the BC K–12 public school system needs are longer-term commitments to develop, share, and extend UDL practices and resources across the province.

Indeed, there may be three overt drivers for the impetus to “reform” special education:

- Various educational jurisdictions are arguing that Special Education is not working to produce improved outcomes for students.
- Paperwork takes priority over service to students.
- The increased prevalence of attaching of EAs to individual students appears to produce no improvement in outcomes.

These three “drivers” are well referenced in a (2011) report entitled “Steps to Effective and Sustainable Public Education in Nova Scotia,” authored by Ben Levin.

Do economics drive reform in this area? Never overtly, yet the cost of special education, whether in terms of designated funding or increased numbers of education assistants, is steadily increasing, so any model with the potential to reduce costs while appearing to meet needs, is of obvious interest to governments.

Damages were awarded to the Moore family to cover the costs of private schooling (\$100,000), as well as \$10,000 in damages for injury to Jeffrey Moore’s dignity, feelings, and self-respect.

Future directions for Support Services: Pilots and other projects that flow out of “The Plan.” Bill Standeven, BC Ministry of Education

This six-page document lists three key directions:

1. Develop and articulate an Early Intervention Practice and Collaborative Partnership Model for districts.
2. Develop an articulated provincial vision for a continuum of instructional support based on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework and Response to Intervention (RTI).
3. Develop a “transition years” model for school completion.

Seven other things to consider when addressing the three key areas are stated:

- Provide appropriate and relevant support for resource/support teachers who work with students with special needs.
- Provide significant professional development to support the delivery of research-based targeted or intensive support interventions
- Develop a school-wide resource allocation model that supports the principal and school team in the allocation of teacher assistant time.
- Transition the funding model for

student support services from one based on designation criteria to a mixed funding model (targeted and block).

- Change ministry accountability requirements from compliance audits to quality review self-audits that are based on student achievement information and plans for improvement as part of the reporting-out process.
- Develop a simplified IEP template.
- Support and promote self-directed IEPs for secondary students.

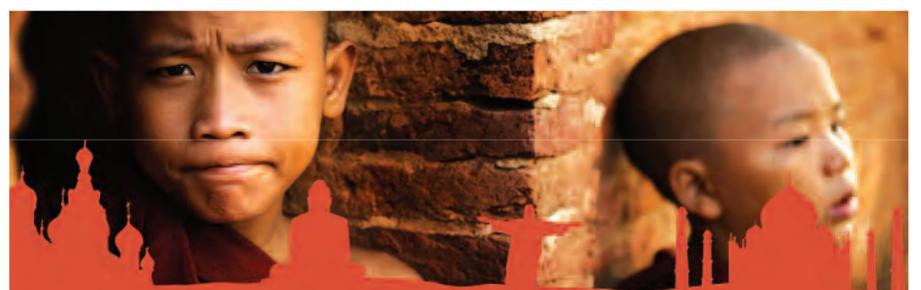
The Moore case

In November 2012, the Supreme Court of Canada found in a unanimous ruling that North Vancouver School District had discriminated against Jeffrey Moore, a student with a severe learning disability. They stated that the district had failed to provide a meaningful education and that their actions were discriminatory in nature. While the district argued that Moore’s treatment was not different to that of other students with special needs, the Supreme Court did not accept this premise, saying that were this to be accepted, then any cuts to special education services would be “immune from a claim of discrimination.” Damages were awarded to the Moore family to cover the costs of private schooling (\$100,000), as well as \$10,000 in damages for injury to Jeffrey Moore’s dignity, feelings, and self-respect.

What impact this case may have on services to students with special needs remains to be seen, but judging by the initial reaction from the minister of education, they appear to be learning little from the ruling except that they successfully (and literally) passed the buck of responsibility for the discrimination to the school district while bizarrely claiming that improved supports now exist for students with special needs.

Charlie Naylor, PhD
BCTF Research and Technology Division

This is a summary of the recent developments and a full report is available on the BCTF website: <http://bit.ly/V4yZtz>



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Keys to promoting self-regulated learning

By Nancy Perry and Philip Winne

Ideas associated with self-regulation and self-regulated learning (SRL) are catching hold in BC's schools. Important markers of this trend are the Ministry of Education's commitment to supporting students' development of self-regulation and SRL in the 2011 BC Education Plan, and initiatives such as Changing Results for Young Readers. We are excited but not surprised by these developments. More than 30 years of research about SRL demonstrates how self-regulating learners are successful in and beyond school. They tend to have high motivation and confidence for learning and use productive-thinking and problem-solving skills. These characteristics lead to task-relevant behaviour and high levels of achievement.

What is self-regulation? Broadly speaking, it is individuals' ability to control thoughts and action to achieve personal goals and respond to environmental factors (Zimmerman, 2008). Effective self-regulating learners attend to key features of tasks (e.g., What am I being asked to do?), resist distractions (e.g., What might I rather be doing?), persist when tasks are difficult and respond to challenges appropriately, adaptively, and flexibly.

SRL is a particular focus for general self-regulation. It involves meta-cognition, motivation, and strategic action (Winne & Perry, 2000) dedicated to learning. Effectively self-regulating learners are aware of strengths and weaknesses they bring to tasks. They draw from a repertoire of effective-thinking and problem-solving strategies when they encounter challenges. They are motivated to learn with a genuine interest in learning processes and beliefs that effort and strategy use leads to success. This makes them willing to try challenging tasks and inclines them to view errors, when they occur, as opportunities for learning. Importantly, the "self" in SRL identifies who regulates learning—the student, of course!

Learners are not equally effective at self-regulating. Some differences lead to difficulties in school. For example, some learners are impulsive. They don't take time to analyze environmental demands or consider how best to meet them. Other learners have difficulty with

What is self-regulation? Broadly speaking, it is individuals' ability to control thoughts and action to achieve personal goals and respond to environmental factors

attention or emotion control. And others lack self and other awareness, motivation for learning, or knowledge of strategies that lead to success. Also, self-regulation develops across the lifespan. What it means to effectively self-regulate learning varies as students move through the grades. What's common, however, is that learners of all ages need to continuously and flexibly adapt to diverse and changing demands in the multiple contexts where learning happens.

We view SRL as a skill. Developing and improving skills calls for extensive, deliberate practice where students have two key jobs. One is identifying, then trying out tactics and strategies for learning. The second is examining how well a tactic or strategy worked and, if it wasn't up to par, hypothesizing what to do about it. This two-part frame implies what teachers can do to enhance SRL. To organize these ideas, we outline a model of SRL proposed by Winne and our colleague, Allyson Hadwin at the University of Victoria.

According to Winne and Hadwin's four-phase model, ideally, students first survey features in their learning environment that probably affect learning (e.g., What am I being asked to do? Can I do it? Why or why not?). Their scan identifies resources (e.g., I can use the computer, or get help from my

peers), constraints (e.g., I'm feeling distracted today) and opportunities (e.g., the teacher said I can choose a topic that interests me). Second, students set their goals for learning and plan how to approach them. This step is critical. It creates benchmarks for keeping track of how well learning unfolds as it unfolds. Third, students start work and regularly probe it: "Am I on track?" Minor adjustments may be needed to improve how learning unfolds. Their plan may be taking too much time; or perhaps a strategy they chose isn't working, so a different tactic needs to come into play. Fourth, at major breaks or when the task is completed, the student reviews everything and asks: "How well did that go? What can I do to improve my learning in the future?"

We emphasize the "self" in self-regulation doesn't mean solo. Self-regulation supports both independent and social forms of learning. And more often than not, students' development of SRL depends on supportive interactions with teachers and peers. The term "co-regulation" describes the giving and receiving of instrumental support for SRL. It presumes at least one participant in an interaction has knowledge or skills that others need to achieve their goals. It reflects a transitional phase whereby learners gradually make SRL their own through, for example, feedback or metacognitive prompts (e.g., How well is that strategy working? What else could you do?). In classrooms, co-regulators can be adults or peers, but students can also co-regulate adults. They provide information that helps teachers tailor or adjust instruction to better meet their students' needs. In this way, students support teachers to be self-regulating, too.

How can teachers support their students' SRL? First, design learning experiences to provide opportunities for practising each phase of SRL. Create tasks complex enough to invite SRL but

not so beyond students' skills and abilities that it overwhelms them. Their work should be in what Vygotsky called the zone of proximal development where, with a bit of help, they can succeed. Second, don't program every last step to the nth degree. Students need opportunities to make meaningful decisions about their learning. Offer choices about what, who, where, when, and how to work on task. Let students control challenges (e.g., often through choices about what, who, where ...) and take responsibility for developing skills for checking their work (i.e., involve them in generating evaluation criteria and self-evaluating). Support SRL, for example, by asking metacognitive questions that prompt students to consider their characteristics (e.g., interests and abilities), a task's conditions (e.g., due date, who is a good collaborator for them) and strategies they can use. Finally, model thinking and problem-solving strategies for them and arrange varied and frequent opportunities for feedback, especially feedback about standards for examining learning strategies and options for strategies.

Our colleagues in BC and across Canada are working to promote more research and teaching that focuses on SRL. Visit our website at SRLCanada.ca for more information.

Nancy Perry, professor, Dept. of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education, UBC
Philip Winne, professor, Educational Psychology, SFU

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Mindfulness interventions for adolescents at school

By Diana Mogensen

Last fall I had the privilege of listening to Dr. Vo, assistant clinical professor at UBC and head of Adolescent Medicine at BC Children's Hospital, make a presentation to Teachers in Training at SFU. He presented his research to about 50 new teachers.

BC Teachers Promoting Mental Health in Schools, a chapter of Learning Assistance Teachers' Association (LATA) was happy to make this connection for Parm Midar, faculty associate, and her students. Student teachers found the presentation so exciting they started a Mindfulness Study Group.

Dr. Vo reported that 80% of youth claim to be under some degree of stress in their lives. Stressors include school, peer relationships, particularly at school, family conflicts, chronic health conditions, poverty, violence, and racism. When adolescents experience stress there are specific behavioural outcomes. These include risky sexual practices, substance use, depression, anxiety disorders, learning and attention problems, and even absenteeism from school.

Chronic stress leads to medical outcomes, which is why Dr. Vo is concerned about it in his practice. Chronic pain,

metabolic and immune dysfunction, as well as cardiovascular and neurological issues are all related to stress among youth. The impact of stress on learning is palpable. Stress is toxic for learning; it disrupts memory, attention, and executive functioning and may even look like a learning disability, ADHD or behavioural problems.

As educators we need to be aware of the impact of stress in our student's lives so that we can intervene and make proper referrals through school-based teams and our involvement with families when appropriate.

Dr. Vo explained that there is a vast body of medical research that demonstrates the practice of mindfulness helps reduce stress and thereby increases a student's ability to learn more effectively. The practice of mindfulness has been proven to dramatically increase brain and immune function helping with depression and anxiety; it helps with mood disorders, depression, and trauma. Mindfulness practice promotes the development of emotional regulation and resilience pathways and leads to improvement in sleep quality and self-esteem.

Many teachers in the Metro Vancouver area are practicing mindfulness in their classrooms once they discover the

enormous benefits for their students.

Dr. Vo also pointed out that teachers who practice mindfulness as part of their own self-care, reap all of the benefits their

The practice of mindfulness has been proven to dramatically increase brain and immune function helping with depression and anxiety; it helps with mood disorders, depression, and trauma.

students do. Teaching is socially and emotionally demanding and all teachers need a self-care plan. In addition to improving a teacher's overall well-being, it also improves effectiveness, teacher-student relationships, and classroom environments by increasing the pro-social behaviours of students. This leads to less stress for teachers at work.

It may be easiest to define mindfulness by what it's not. Although rooted in Buddhist practice, it is not a religious practice. It is not being blank or having an empty mind. It is not seeking bliss or relaxation exercises or zoning out. Nor is it navel gazing.

It can be informal, and occur while walking, eating, listening, and speaking or more formally by sitting in meditation, walking in meditation, and through mindful movement and art. It is being present in the here and now, practicing kindness, curiosity, observing while not judging, letting go. It is learning to change ruminative cognitive patterns, responding vs. reacting, coping across a range of stressors and changing our reactions to stress and pain. It is developing neuroplasticity and epigenetics.

For more information and resources, go to: bctf.ca/TeachingToDiversity

If you would like to arrange for someone to speak to your staff on Mindfulness and Teaching, contact Diana Mogensen co-chair, BC Teachers' Promoting Mental Health in Schools, a chapter of LATA. Mogensen can be reached, at dmogensen@cw.bc.ca.

*Diana Mogensen
Children's Hospital School Program
Vancouver*

Adult education programs: An essential element of a poverty reduction strategy

By Margaret White

Supporting young adults to complete a high-school certificate is an essential element of a poverty-reduction strategy. Why? Because not completing high school is a risk factor for poverty for young adults and families with children.

A new BCTF Research report draws on Statistics Canada data to show that individuals with less than high school are at risk for high unemployment and low earnings, and that adult education programs can play a significant role in improving graduation rates for young adults, thereby removing a significant barrier to overcoming poverty.

Offering adult education programs, for non-graduated adults, which are flexible and responsive to the needs of these young adults... can remove a significant barrier to moving out of poverty.

Young adults who do not complete high school are especially vulnerable to unemployment, and when they are employed, they work longer hours for less pay than high-school graduates, according to a Statistics Canada report, "Trends in drop-out rates and the labour market outcomes of young drop-outs" (<http://bit.ly/11fNKsv>). In 2009–10, the unemployment rate for young adults aged 20 to 24 years without a high-school certificate (23.2%) is double the rate of high-school graduates (11.9%) in the same age group. Young adults without a high-school certificate working full-time worked 0.7 hours more per week and earned \$70 less per week, on average, than high-school graduates in the same age group. The gap in median weekly earnings for 20- to 24-year-old full-time workers is even wider, with non-graduates earning \$97 less per week than high-school graduates. Completing a high-school education can also buffer families with children against poverty.

A 2008 report by the Canadian Council on Social Development, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Red Por Los Derechos de la Infancia en Mexico, "Growing Up in North America," shows that the child poverty rate was twice as high for the children of parents with less than a secondary education compared to those of parents who completed secondary/vocational or some post-secondary education, and five times higher as for families where a parent completed a university or college education.

Adult education programs improve chances of graduating significantly

Adult education programs can make a significant contribution to improving

high-school completion rates, removing a significant barrier to overcoming poverty. A 2010 Statistics Canada report by McMullen and Gilmore (<http://bit.ly/11fJObH>) shows that many students who do not complete high school by 19 years, do so by the age of 24 years. In British Columbia, the graduation rate in 2009–10 for youth aged 18–19 years is 80.5%, increasing to 92.7% for young adults aged 20–24 years. This data also tells us that young adults who live in rural areas, who are First Nations or Métis, and some immigrant groups face the most barriers to enrolling in and completing high school requirements. Offering adult education programs, for non-graduated adults, which are flexible and responsive to the needs of these young adults so they can complete high school and pursue further education, can remove a significant barrier to moving out of poverty.

Many adults have completed high school but do not have the course requirements to apply to post-secondary programs. Completing a post-secondary education further increases labour market opportunities, average earnings, and reduces the risk of unemployment. Statistics Canada data shows that the unemployment rate decreases with each level of education and over time, inflation-adjusted earnings increased for individuals with a post-secondary certificate but decreased for those with less than high school. The authors of the "Growing Up in North America" report conclude that a lack of post-secondary education poses a significant barrier to moving between the low-wage labour market and the higher-paid jobs associated with the knowledge economy.

Providing opportunities through adult education for young adults to complete high school and/or requirements to enter post-secondary training is an essential element of a poverty reduction plan.

An article in the January issue of *Teacher* newsmagazine describes barriers that make it difficult for low-income adults to complete high school requirements, from the perspective of adult educators. Much concern was expressed about how underfunding and the loss of self-paced programs will impact the most vulnerable of adult students. More needs to be done to identify and address barriers that prevent young adults from attending and completing adult education courses, especially young adults living in rural areas, who are Aboriginal, and immigrants from countries of origin with low graduation rates.

A more detailed BCTF Research Report and full list of references are available at: <http://bit.ly/VnWrPx>

Margaret White
research analyst, BCTF Research

The rEvolution: A beginning

By Steve Collins and Hermia Ting

For the first two weeks in January of 2012, 31 teacher education students from UBC participated in an innovation in the delivery of teacher education courses. They were immersed at Hamilton Elementary School in Richmond to complete an integration of two courses: Elementary Social Studies Methods and Educational Studies.

The outcome was beyond our expectations in terms of support from all stakeholders, the hard work of our students, the quality of the final product, and mostly, the learning that our students were able to express articulately.

Teaching is complex

Current approaches to the education of new teachers in universities tend to mirror the "reductionist" approach that is prevalent in modern society. It is the practice of breaking down complex processes into arbitrarily delineated elements so that they can be examined apart from the chaotic interactions throughout the system.

Our philosophy of teaching and theoretical grounding arise from complexity thinking. We view learning as systemic rather than mechanical. Learning environments are in a constant state of change because all of the participants in that environment are interacting continually. This interconnectedness means that students, others in the system, and the environment itself are perpetually interacting, and are therefore adapting, evolving—and learning!

The practice of breaking elements of the system down to examine separately, interferes with these interactions. For example, current educational practice at both the university and schools involves separating knowledge into arbitrary subject areas. This creates boundaries instead of a free flow of communication across disparate disciplines. The greatest chasm is between the academy and the practice—university and schools.

Enacted learning

In terms of teaching and learning, complexity invites an enactive approach whereby knowledge remains interconnected as it is in its natural state. Learners interact with knowledge in the real world while all of the elements are still connected and in a dynamic process of "co-evolving" with each other.

The implication of this for teacher education is that new teachers should learn to teach by teaching in the real world of the school for which they are preparing themselves. Teacher education faculties are aware of this and that is why every student learning to teach has a practicum experience in schools.

We propose that all university coursework can become relevant if it is taken up in schools.

This is our long-term vision, but last January, we took the first tentative steps at Hamilton Elementary School.

Teacher education at Hamilton

We provided an intensive and challenging program that asked students to develop a project plan that focused on their students' needs and interests first, and then to attend to broad government curricular mandates. They observed classrooms to inquire about the systemic roots of social injustice. We built in time for planning in partnership with their instructors, teachers, and kids. They had time to debrief their school experiences and allowed a continual monitoring of their planning progress. This all culminated in a Project Plan Expo in which students displayed artifacts of their plans and articulated their purposes, strategies, and methods.

Outcomes

1. Universal endorsements

Not only did this project pass the scrutiny of all of the many stakeholders as we planned and organized, after its completion, we also received strong endorsements at every level. We received written recognition of the project's success from the Richmond's superintendent and Hamilton's principal. At the expo, district representatives, the head of personnel, other instructors, and UBC co-ordinators all encouraged us to continue to develop the program. At this writing, we are in Year Two of "The Hamilton Experience."

2. Engagement of students

Our students were certainly focussed on their demanding tasks and it was very challenging and intense. However, at the end, all who commented said it was worth it in terms of the depth of understanding of content and their ability to teach what they had planned. This depth was evident when they explained their displays and intentions to visitors at the expo. The key factor was relevance. Everything they did was real and was tested with actual children and inspired by advice from actual teachers.

3. Integration

Our worry from the start was that it would be difficult to meet the learning criteria for two separate courses without sacrificing a seamless integration within an authentic school setting. In fact, in this case, we cannot claim complete success but what did happen was surprising. Our students examined issues of social justice in the school and community, presented on topics in groups while at UBC, and created a fictional case study. With these experiences in mind as they wrote their project plans, it was impossible to not include those perspectives regardless of the main topic of their plans from K to 7. Context is such a powerful influence that when we undertake learning to teach in the real world, everything is already naturally integrated.

4. Context overwhelms the "big picture"

We discovered that our vision of a completely immersed teacher education program had a flaw. The strength of our vision was context. This turned out to also be our biggest obstacle when we asked students to observe issues of social justice in the context of the school. They reported back what they saw in front of their faces. Previously when they were at UBC, they missed the relevance of the missing context to make the theoretical concepts relevant. Now we had the opposite problem. Context obscured systemic thinking. The big picture was obscured. We addressed this by promoting a web-like interactive reporting strategy. We also took them away from the school for a day to work on a fictional case study where an issue of social justice occurred. They did finally get the big picture and it was enhanced by experience within the context of a school. But this will continue to be a difficult challenge for anyone undertaking a contextualized approach to teacher education.

A healthy approach to teaching and learning to teach is an interplay between theory, philosophy, practice, and passion. This requires an interplay between context and theoretical grounding within an enacted teaching and learning environment.

Steve Collins, PhD
teacher education instructor, UBC
Hermia Ting
teacher, Richmond School District

To view the full report, go to: <http://bit.ly/129fr7n>

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Are families first?

By **Kristin Quigley**

The Liberal government in British Columbia has espoused a “Families First” agenda since the current premier, Christy Clark, took power. She wants the government to appear to be proactive about meeting the diverse needs of families with respect to employment, housing, education, and healthcare. Clearly, families with young children face many challenges.

Childcare is one of the challenges confronting families in BC. Most people agree that efforts must be made to ensure that children are presented with opportunities to flourish and develop their

Despite some past promises around childcare, almost federal and provincial governments manage to evade any serious commitment to implement a comprehensive childcare system.

full potential. Parents often experience frustration and even disappointment attempting to find appropriate care for their kids. For many families with young children, safe, reliable, affordable, regulated childcare is difficult, if not impossible, to access. Communities in both rural and urban environments struggle to offer childcare services that adequately meet the needs of their populations. These kinds of considerations, which impede parents’ ability to commit to definite work schedules, may force

families to change long-term goals or even require them to put their future on hold.

As part of the United Nations declaration formulated during the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to be cared for and educated. According to a recent UN report (Oct. 2012) “...Canada can afford to address these needs while developing, funding, and implementing a plan to advance universal rights in early childhood, such as, childcare. In fact, as a global leader, Canada should be held accountable for no less.” Despite some past promises around childcare, most federal and provincial governments manage to evade any serious commitment to implement a comprehensive childcare system. The notable exceptions are in the provinces of Quebec and PEI. Furthermore, “Canada is routinely...ranked among the wealthiest countries in the industrialized world and the weakest in public support for families with young children. As a result, child poverty is high, access to quality, affordable childcare services is low and many of Canada’s youngest children are cared for in unregulated settings.” – Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC, November 2012). The lack of action taken by Canadian governments to provide care for many of our most vulnerable young citizens is nothing less than shameful.

Our province is fortunate to have a strong action group known as the CCCABC. This non-profit agency has spent decades fighting for better childcare services and researching ways to implement an affordable, universal

childcare program that would be flexible enough to meet the various needs of families with young children in our province. By 2010, the CCCABC and early learning educators had developed a comprehensive Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Child Care and Learning. An essential feature of their proposal is that the childcare and early learning programs would come under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education.

Now is an opportune time to highlight the urgent need for childcare as we approach the provincial election in May

2013. Many families in our province are so busy just trying to get by that having access to affordable childcare delivered by trained caregivers would be a very positive way to address the many challenges facing young families in BC. Whoever forms the next government in BC needs to seriously consider implementing a province-wide system for quality childcare and early learning demonstrating that families really are considered first.

*Kristin Quigley
TTOC, Vancouver Island North*



Access to quality childcare: A right, not an elitist privilege

By **Gail Chaddock-Costello**

There is so much information to support the value of quality early-years’ care and education from so many reputable sources, that the challenge is to choose only a few of the most salient quotes. The facts speak for themselves, but so do the people, mostly single women and women with partners who are both working. Even then, these families still cannot access regulated, provincial government approved childcare. Why?

BC has the highest childcare rates in Canada, in excess of the cost of college tuition fees. Provincially, the average annual care cost is \$9,000 per year for a two-year-old and \$7,000 for a four-year-old. However, in Vancouver, those costs

BC has the highest childcare rates in Canada, in excess of the cost of college tuition fees.

escalate to \$14,000 annually for toddler care. These are after-tax dollars. Even with a government subsidy at the maximum of \$650 per month, those low-income families who do qualify don’t have the funds to make up the difference, assuming they can find a space for their child/children.

There can be no denying that BC’s reputation in regard to caring for its poor, its children, and its underprivileged is at an all time low. Internationally, BC has been slammed by the vice-president of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, Marta Maurás of Chile, who came to visit Canada to observe first-hand this country’s implementation of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. She stated in a press release that, “According

to the UNICEF scorecard for industrialized countries, Canada stands 24th out of 35, with one-in-seven children—and one-in-four First Nations children – living in poverty.... This is a clear deterioration from 10 years ago.”

BC had the highest child poverty rate for eight years in a row, and is now ranked second. This is not a statistic that should make this BC Liberal government proud. As teachers we know the positive, long terms effects of quality childcare and the links between preschool readiness skills and future success in school and life. This is not simply our impression or our opinion. It is well-substantiated by economic and societal studies. In a detailed *Special Report TD Economics*, paid for by the Toronto Dominion bank, multiple charts and graphs prove these points stating: “Ultimately, investment in early education can help to address core economic and social challenges facing Canada. It can help reduce poverty, address skill shortages, improve productivity and innovation, and a host of other national priorities.”

How can we move ourselves forward out of this downward spiral? BC’s best answer lies in implementing the made in BC, for BC families, “Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning.” This plan has been endorsed by the BCTF and the BC Federation of Labour, as this issue is a priority for the Status of Women’s groups at both organizations.

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC) is lobbying all political parties for a commitment to begin implementation of the plan on a graduated roll out, starting with infants and toddlers up to three years of age. Unfortunately, no political party has endorsed this plan to date, which I find disappointing. Given the

staggering amount of supporting research, including papers from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, on the health and economic benefits for BC’s families and BC’s economy, this plan should be front and centre on the BC NDP and Green Party platforms.

BC’s best answer lies in implementing the made in BC, for BC families, “Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning.”

Quebec has a plan for universally accessible, government-regulated childcare and it is returning to the economy a minimum of \$1.07 for each dollar invested, not including federal taxes, on income earned by parents now able to re-enter the work force. National studies suggest the return could be in excess of \$2 returned for each dollar spent. So why do governments avoid implementing a cost-effective and societally significant childcare program?

In BC, “care” has been seen as a private, family responsibility, and education does not begin until children enter Kindergarten. Less than \$400 on average per child is spent on preschool care, but at age five and/or in school, the province is prepared to spend over \$8,000 per child. For some children, Kindergarten will already be too late. The TD report, page 2, includes a chart demonstrating that the exposure to early childhood education improves a student’s chances of graduating and reduces their potential for being identified as a student with special

needs. These are significant findings considering the rate of students in BC identified as special needs has grown in direct proportion to the decrease in services for identified students by trained, learning specialist teachers, and increases in class composition over the past 11 years.

This plan calls for these early care and learning centres to be under the Ministry of Education, located within or near local schools and staffed by well-educated, well paid early childhood educators. Children entering the public education system from these centres would be significantly better poised to face the challenges of Kindergarten and, as research states, already ahead of the curve for academic and economic success.

Teachers, who become knowledgeable about this plan, promoting it to their provincial MLAs, endorsing it personally and referring it to their local teachers’ union, can play an important role in motivating government to act to implement.

Kids matter, teachers care—and here is a plan that would ensure all kids have access to quality care before they enter our public education system on a much more even playing field.

It is about equity, it is about individual rights, and it is about supporting the most vulnerable in our society, the youngest of children who do not yet have a voice to raise in their own defence.

*Gail Chaddock-Costello
president, Langley Teachers’ Association*



Will you STAND for social housing?

By Jean Swanson
and Dave Diewert

Most teachers are lucky enough to be able to afford decent housing. But many thousands of students live in families who can't afford adequate housing. Some are even homeless. Across BC the low estimates put the number of absolutely homeless people at around 10,000; hidden homeless (sleeping in a car or with friends) at almost 40,000, and at risk of homelessness at about 66,000. In addition, we need about 2,700 more units of social housing every year just to keep up with population growth. Indigenous people, migrants, and women are especially at risk.

While 10,000 units would cost about 1% of our BC Gross Domestic Product, it would create about 13,000 direct jobs.

But the federal government isn't funding new social housing and the province doesn't have an ongoing program for it either. A new Social Housing Coalition wants to make social housing an issue for the upcoming May provincial election. Made up of mostly Lower Mainland groups like the Renters' Union, ACORN, Carnegie Action Project, Streams of Justice, as well as provincial groups like the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations, the coalition wants federal and provincial governments to build at least 10,000 units of social housing a year for at least the next decade or so.

While 10,000 units would cost about 1% of our BC Gross Domestic Product, it would create about 13,000 direct jobs. The BC government has a number of capital projects that are finished (like the BC Place roof) and spending money on housing would be a good way to keep the economy spinning. Plus several studies show that it's cheaper to end homelessness than to maintain it.

As a way to generate popular political pressure for more social housing, the Social Housing Coalition is holding STANDS FOR HOUSING every Saturday at noon for one hour across the province. So far STANDS have been happening in Kamloops, Port Alberni, Vancouver, Surrey, New Westminster, Burnaby, and Victoria, with others posed to start in Campbell River and Smithers. The coalition hopes they will become contagious and spread throughout the province.

The idea of a STAND is based on the

action of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, an association of Argentine mothers whose children "disappeared" under the military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983. They stood in a city square every week for years and their white

All you need is a handful of people willing to gather on a busy corner in your community from noon to 1:00 p.m. on any Saturday beginning now.

scarves became an international symbol for peaceful protests against profound individual and collective loss.

The first STAND in Vancouver began in October 2007. Community Advocates for Little Mountain (CALM) held a STAND every Saturday on the corner of 33rd Avenue and Main Street to protest the destruction of social housing and forced displacement of a meaningful community.

In February 2008, Citywide Housing Coalition (CHC) expanded the STANDS within Vancouver to over a dozen locations, and over the ensuing months CHC and CALM organized STANDS across the province. At one point there were 75 STANDS throughout the province on a single day, and BC teachers played a significant role in that action.

Now we are asking people from around the province to take up a STAND for social housing.

Raising public awareness of the housing crisis in our province is fundamentally an educational effort; and mobilizing for a political solution through the provision of social housing is a social justice effort. On both counts, teachers have a vital role to play. So here is how you can get involved in a tangible way.

All you need is a handful of people willing to gather on a busy corner in your community from noon to 1:00 p.m. on any Saturday beginning now. The coalition will provide STAND kits with a banner that says, "Social Housing Now" on it, eight red scarves, and leaflets explaining the housing crisis and the demands for social housing.

If you would like to order a STAND kit and organize a STAND, please e-mail Dave Diewert at ddiewertt@shaw.ca.

Special resolutions to the 2013 AGM

Recommendation 2

That By-law 1.1(c) be deleted and replaced with the following:

1.1 (c) —Exclusions: *Those positions that create a conflict of interest such as Members of the Legislative Assembly, Officials and employees of the Ministry of Education, employees of the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association, employees of the British Columbia School Trustees Association, employees of the British Columbia School Superintendents' Association, employees of the Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, district superintendents of schools, superintendents of schools, assistant superintendents of schools, and administrative officers shall not be eligible for active membership in the Federation.*

Recommendation 3

That By-law 1.8 (p. 11) be amended to insert after "employed by another school district" the phrase "or excluded by By-law 1.1(c)" so that the by-law would read as follows:

1.8—An active member who is granted an unpaid leave of absence by the school district in which the member is employed is, unless employed by another school district or excluded by By-law 1.1.c, entitled to remain a member of the Federation without payment of fee for the period of such leave of absence.

Recommendation 4

That By-law 1.6 (p. 11) be deleted and replaced with the following:

1.6 —Affiliate membership may be granted by the Executive Committee on application and payment of a fee, pursuant to By-law 4.

Persons appointed as administrative officers in a school district shall be eligible, upon application and payment of fees and levies in accordance with By-law 8.5, for Affiliate Administrative Membership that shall entitle the member to participate in the Salary Indemnity Plan, established pursuant to By-law 8.7, for up to one year and such other benefit plans as the Annual General Meeting may determine, provided that the application is made within 30 days of that person's first appointment as an administrative officer.

Affiliate members shall not be entitled to vote or to hold office.

Recommendation 5

That a new By-law 1.10 (p. 11) be added, which states:

The Body (e.g., Executive Committee, Representative Assembly or Annual General Meeting) that confers a discretionary membership may remove such membership where appropriate.

Recommendation 6

That By-law 5.18 (p. 13) be deleted and replaced with the following:

5.18 Borrowing powers: The Executive Committee shall have power to borrow from any person or persons any sum or sums of money, and for that purpose shall be entitled to charge the assets of the Federation by way of mortgage, lien, debenture or otherwise, provided, however, that such power as aforesaid shall not be exercised except if it be assented to by at least two-thirds of the Executive Committee.

Recommendation 7

That By-law 6.11 (p. 14) be deleted.

Recommendation 19

That Procedure 13.C.02, Regulation 1.8 (p. 88) in its entirety, be replaced with: "1.8 Failure to acknowledge in writing, within three months at the request of the plan administrator, a willingness to participate or co-operate in a rehabilitation program that has been recommended by the member's physician, registered psychologist or psychiatrist and approved by the Salary Indemnity Plan will result in the termination of benefits, forthwith."

Recommendation 20

That the following be an amendment to the Salary Indemnity Plan Regulation 17.2 (p. 90):

17.2 Gainful employment means work that the claimant is medically able to perform:

- a. for which the claimant has the requisite qualifications by reason of education, training, or experience.
- b. which will provide a gross income of at least 60% of the pre-disability **full-time** equivalent gross employment income within five years of starting the new employment, this income to be adjusted annually to reflect the cost of living allowance the claimant would have received since the date of disability.

Recommendation 21

That the following be an amendment to the Salary Indemnity Plan Regulation 19.1 (p. 90):

19.1 Subject to Regulation 7.7, the benefit shall be 65% of the first \$40,000 of gross annual salary, 50% of the next \$40,000 of gross annual salary, and 40% of the balance.

Recommendation 22

That a new Regulation 19.1.a (p. 90) be added:

19.1.a Subject to Regulation 7.7, for new long-term claims effective from July 1, 2013, the benefit shall be 65% of the first \$40,000 of gross annual salary, 50% of the next \$40,000 of gross annual salary, and 40% of the balance.

Recommendation 23

That long-term claim payments incurred before July 1, 2013 be adjusted as at July 1, 2013, so that the member will receive the greater of:

1. the net benefit that would have been paid from July 1, 2013, in the absence of this recommendation, including all inflation adjustments to July 1, 2013; or
2. the net benefit calculated as though Regulation 19.1, as amended to July 1, 2013, applied when claim payments started, without any inflation adjustments to July 1, 2013.

AGM 2013 Agenda

March 16–19, 2013

FIRST SESSION

March 16, Saturday afternoon

2:00 p.m.

- Welcome
- First Nations recognition
- Preliminaries:
 - a. Adoption of chairpersons, scrutineers, tellers, resolutions committee
 - b. Chairpersons' orientation session
 - c. Introduction of ombudspersons
 - d. Adoption of agenda
 - e. Adoption of 2012 AGM minutes
 - f. Stewardship report on 2012 AGM
 - g. Report of the nominating chairperson

President's report
Susan Lambert

Annual General Meeting
Standing Rules of Order
– Recommendations 29–30

Leadership Report
– Recommendation 1

Constitution and By-laws
– Recommendations 2–7

Annual General Meeting
– Resolutions 102–104

SECOND SESSION

March 16, Saturday evening

7:30 p.m.

- Greetings and comments from invited guests
- Education policy
 - Recommendation 9
 - Resolutions 115–116
- Political Action
 - Resolutions 148–149
- Public Affairs
 - Recommendation 28
- Education Finance
 - Resolution 114
- Unfinished business

10:00 p.m.

Election statements from candidates for table-officer positions. Questions and answers for candidates running for table-officer positions.

Call for nominations

10:30 p.m.

Adjourn

THIRD SESSION

March 17, Sunday morning

9:00 a.m.

Finance

- Recommendations 10–17
- Resolutions 117–125

12:30 p.m.

Lunch

FOURTH SESSION

March 17, Sunday afternoon

2:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker—Candy Palmater

2:45 p.m.

Pensions

- Resolutions 145–147

Membership

- Recommendation 24
- Resolution 142

Ombudservice

- Recommendation 25

Aboriginal Education

- Recommendation 8
- Resolution 101

Unfinished business

5:00 p.m.

Election statements from candidates for member-at-large positions. Questions and answers for candidates running for member-at-large.

Call for nominations

6:00 p.m.

Adjourn

FIFTH SESSION

March 18, Monday morning

9:00 a.m.

Health, Welfare, and Safety of Teachers

- Recommendations 18–23
- Resolutions 135–140

Stewart Schon Health and Safety Award Presentation

Health and Welfare of Students

- Resolutions 126–134

12:30 p.m.

Lunch

SIXTH SESSION

March 18, Monday afternoon

2:00 p.m.

Bargaining

- Resolutions 105–113

Legal Services/Contract Information

- Resolution 141

Organization of the BCTF

- Resolutions 143–144

5:55 p.m.

Final call for nominations

6:00 p.m.

Dinner

SEVENTH SESSION

March 18, Monday evening

7:30 p.m.

- Elections—table officer positions
- Social Justice
 - Resolutions 156–157
- Bob Rosen Social Justice Award
- Professional Development
 - Resolutions 151–155
- Teachers Teaching on Call
 - Resolutions 158–159

Unfinished business

10:00 p.m.

Adjourn

EIGHTH SESSION

March 19, Tuesday morning

9:00 a.m.

- Elections—member-at-large positions
- Privatization and Commercialization
 - Recommendation 26
 - Resolution 150
- Professional Ethics, Rights, and Standards
 - Recommendation 27
- Teacher Education
 - Recommendation 31

Unfinished business

11:30 a.m.

- Awards
 - G.A. Fergusson
 - Honorary Life Membership
 - Recognition of retiring activists

Unfinished Business
Late Resolutions
New Resolutions
New Business

1:20 p.m.

Closing Courtesy Motion

1:30 p.m.

Adjourn

Candidates for Executive Committee

President



Jim Iker

Our passion to defend public education is driven by the needs of every child in our classrooms. Supporting all locals regardless of size and engaging members, new and experienced, is critical for a strong, effective BCTF. Together, we make a difference. We must:

- achieve a fair deal for all our members and increased supports for our students.
- advocate for restored and stable funding to at least the Canadian average.
- engage government in our plan for a quality public education

system including fair assessment policies.

- enhance professional development for members.
- affirm our role in shaping education change and policy at the local and provincial level.
- exercise our freedom of expression and professional autonomy.
- voice and protect our core values and principles.
- speak out for greater equity in our schools and communities.
- support and strengthen our social justice practices including responsible investing initiatives.

- resist the corporatization and privatization of our public services.

I believe in leadership that is thoughtful, respectful, and responsive. Promoting democratic processes, seeking and listening to member input and providing co-ordinated strategies are critical. I bring you my experience and energy and value the opportunity to continue working on your behalf as president.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF 1st Vice-president (3 yrs.), BCTF 2nd Vice-president (3 yrs.), Member-at-Large (5), Prov. Bargaining Team 2013–14 and 2011–12 (co-

spokesperson), 2006, Learning Round-table (2005–09), Social Justice Review Cttee. (1), CTF AGM Delegate (4), Bargaining Mobilization Cttee. Chair (1), Prov. Bargaining Team, 1995–96, 1998–99, GR/LR (12), AGM delegate (19), Local Presidents' Advisory Cttee. (2), Chair (1), BCTF Interim Bargaining Structures Cttee., Legislative Adv. Cttee/team, Staff Rep Training, Summer Conference (26). *Local:* President (15), Bargaining Chair (2), Chief Negotiator, Local Bargaining (3 rounds), Bargaining Cttee. WLC Chair (2), Staff rep, District H & S Rep (4), EAP District Cttee. (14). *Teaching:* 35 yrs. (full and part time) K/2/3/4/ 6/7, Learning Assistance, Counselling, Special Ed. *Education:* Honours BA McMaster, B.Ed Dalhousie, Various Counselling.

First Vice-President



Glen Hansman

Negotiations are under way and we are a few short months away from a provincial election that, with teachers' involvement, will bring about much-needed positive change. Much needs improving—not only in our working conditions and our students' learning conditions, but also in our communities and for other workers across BC. As a Federation of locals, our provincial body needs to continue to support all locals regardless of size, grow the participation networks and PSAs, engage parents

and the public, and work with other unions in all regions of the province. It's been a privilege to visit teachers in nearly every BCTF local—in schools, at meetings organized by locals, and at events hosted by PSAs. It's been eye-opening to see first-hand the diversity of our membership and locals, but also to see how the damage of the government's "flexibility and choice" agenda has played out regionally.

Teachers have a positive vision for public education in BC. Our Better Schools For BC platform will serve us not just in the lead-up to the provincial election, but in the year ahead—working with a new government, with parents, with the Aboriginal community, with our friends in the labour movement, and with other partner groups. I will continue to work with all locals and all members of the Executive Committee in order to defend members' rights and working conditions, and to work

for equity and justice in our schools and communities.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* 2nd Vice-President (3 yrs.), Member-at-Large Executive Committee (1 yr.), BCTF representative to many external bodies. *Local:* President (2.5 yrs.), Vice-President (2 yrs.), LR, various committees at local level and local representative to various district committees. *Teaching:* elementary and secondary teaching experience, and district level role. *Education:* MA (UBC), B.Ed. (McGill), BA (Carleton).

Second Vice-President



Denise Moffatt

After more than a decade of regressive education policy and depleting resources, the next few months offer the prospect of change. We are on the eve of a provincial election that will hopefully bring a new government and a more respectful relationship. As we head back into bargaining, we will be able to negotiate more items at the local table, and our long-anticipated court case will be heard in September.

These opportunities will not materialize without focused work.

Our success relies on the strength and engagement of our members. Therefore, we must continue to support strong locals and preserve services to members. We must improve and defend our collective agreement and continue to build our social justice and professional development networks. All of this must be achieved while being fiscally responsible.

As a current secondary art teacher and after spending four years as a local president, I bring both recent practical and political

experience. I am a clear communicator, a strategist, and a big picture thinker. When faced with a challenge, I explore every solution. I also bring experience managing a large budget. I would be honoured to serve the Federation as second vice-president and ask for your support.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF Member-at-Large (3 yrs.) BCTF Bargaining team with TFEU (1 yr.) BCTF Health & Safety Advisory Committee (3 yrs.), Health & Safety Trainer (2 yrs.), Ad Hoc Committee on

Benefits Co-chair, Provincial Returning Officer (2 yrs.), AGM Delegate (7 yrs.), BC Art Teachers' Assoc. member *Local:* (Surrey): President (4 yrs.), Secretary Treasurer (1 yr.) Grievance/ Health & Safety Officer (2 yrs.), Member-at-Large (1 yr.), Bargaining Committee (6 yrs.) Staff Rep (5 yrs.), Health & Safety Committee (2 yrs.), Convention Committee (4 yrs.), District Health & Safety Committee (2 yrs.), Economic Welfare Committee (2 yrs.) *Teaching:* Secondary Art, English, Drama (6 yrs.), Teacher-Teaching-on-Call (1 yr.) *Education:* Bachelor of Education (UBC), Bachelor of Fine Arts (UVIC)



Teri Mooring

We are a dynamic, influential member-driven organization. As such, the needs of our members need to be central to everything we do. All voices in our Federation need to be heard and respected; inclusion and member engagement are critical to our continued success.

We are facing incredible challenges both internally and externally. In the last 10 years we have been subjected to unprecedented government interference that has taxed our resources; our members have suffered under

increasingly deteriorating working conditions.

We have regained the right to address class size and composition in this round of collective bargaining; improvements are vital in order to allow teachers to focus on their amazing work in classrooms. Achieving necessary contractual gains in the current environment is formidable; creativity and strategic thinking are required.

United we have a powerful, persuasive voice; our tireless advocacy for public education will

continue, undaunted. Teachers need to be directly involved in decision-making around educational change. Our expertise needs to be respected and valued to ensure classrooms remain efficacious and dynamic.

I have the experience, passion and vision to represent the diverse needs of teachers. I will continue to work toward consensus-building while offering an independent voice.

I would be honoured to serve as 2nd vice-president of the BCTF.

EXPERIENCE: *International:* American Educational Research Association (1 yr.); *National:* Canadian Labour Congress delegate; *Provincial:* BCTF Executive member-at-large (4); BC Federation of Labour Delegate (6); BCTF Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee Liaison (2); TTOC Advisory Committee Liaison (2) Annual General meeting Delegate (19); *Local:* President (5), 1st Vice-president (6), Local Representative(4), Bargaining Chair (2), Gender Equity Chair (4), PD Chair (2), Social Justice Chair (2), School Union Representative (15). *Teaching:* 22 years of intermediate classroom experience; Resource Teacher (1). *Education:* Med (UNBC); Curriculum and Counseling; BA (SFU).

Member-at-Large



Liz Baverstock

Public education is the heart of democracy. Through education children learn to ask questions about the world and discover that nothing in it is in a permanent state: they can change the world for the better.

BC teachers are the key to a healthy democracy, not just as the professionals who oversee these vital lessons, but also as the citizens who put the lessons into action outside the classroom, and build the better world they envision. I am extremely proud of BC teachers

who make our democracy and our public education system outstanding.

A decade of underfunding has increased class sizes, reduced supports, and punished the most vulnerable children in our care. Yet BC teachers continue to shine, ensuring that our students excel nationally, internationally and, most importantly, socially and emotionally within our own communities.

Now more than ever we need to be the engaged citizens we teach our students to be. As a member-at-

large candidate, I offer my passion, critical thinking skills, and outspoken voice to all BCTF members. I am committed to building relationships and strengthening our resources to build on and carry forward the crucial work of the BCTF for teachers and children throughout BC.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* TPPAC/Pensions Committee (2012–present), BC Fed Delegate (2012), AGM Delegate (9 yrs.), Richmond Local Representative

(6 yrs.), Chem Ed Conference Committee (2004–05) *Local:* Working Conditions Officer (2012–present), District Health and Safety Committee (2012– present), TTOC Committee/Mentoring Workshops (2012–present), Staff Rep (15 yrs), Executive Staff Rep Officer (2 yrs), Executive Member-at-Large (2 yrs), SCC Chair (2 yrs) *Teaching:* Secondary Science and Chemistry (1992–2012) *Education:* B.Sc. Major Chemistry UBC, B.Ed. UBC, Technology Diploma SFU



Lynda Bennett

Together we have faced a decade of seemingly unending challenges.

However, we have also ensured that the public education system in BC remains one of the best in the world, largely due to the united and unwavering passion, perseverance, and dedication of our members.

Together we continue to campaign for better working and learning conditions. We have taken our advocacy to our employer, the government, the courts, and the public, in our determined pursuit

for what we know is right.

Together, through our social justice work, we continue to address the inequalities in our communities, province, and world.

Still, there is more to do.

I believe true engagement is created by fostering diverse positions, and recognizing the contributions of all. To face our challenges we must inclusively engage all members in the work of our union.

We must focus on planning for succession, locally and provincially,

by providing many training opportunities, strengthening our union now and in the future.

The power of our union comes from our membership and we need to work collaboratively to ensure all members are heard.

I am committed to my BCTF with a voice for all.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Bargaining Team 2013, Judicial Council (3 yrs), Income Security (year 1 of 3), AGM Delegate (7 yrs), *Local:* President (5 yrs), First Vice President (3 yrs), Grievance Officer/Committee, strong advocate locally for BCTF Health & Wellness, Bargaining Team, Strike Committee, Staff Rep, various local and district committees *Teaching:* Primary (11 yrs), TTOC (4 yrs) *Education:* Post Bacc (SFU), PDP (SFU), BA(Hnrs) Commerce



Gail Chaddock-Costello

Bargaining, budget cuts, and election campaigns—here we go again! BC teachers continue to stand strong in the face of adversity. I am sure it is our ability to excel at our profession, and maintain our professionalism despite legislation designed to distract, destroy, and dismantle the BCTF that awes even our biggest detractors. That strength is born of our internal commitment to each member, each local and speaks to our core values as individuals and union members. There may be many different points of view but in

the end, only one Federation, supported by our pillars of professional development, social justice, bargaining, and income security (health and wellness).

As a local president, I am often busy representing teachers or preparing for grievances. However, it is the opportunity to be in schools, meeting with and talking to members that most enriches and informs my perspective. Ensuring that I have a pulse on what matters to members, understanding life from their point of view, and appreciating how challenging each

new piece of legislation makes their job in the classroom keeps me grounded. To work for teachers locally and provincially is a privilege. I am sure in the end it is I who would benefit most by learning from you. I look forward to the opportunity.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF EC, 2008–09, Public Ed Conferences—delegate & presenter, BCTF parent presenter, FLI delegate, Zone meetings, CASJ 2009–13. SJ Workshop presenter, summer conferences, AGMs, New Teachers' Conf. presenter, Cross Currents presenter, BCTF spokesperson for special education, International Sp.Ed review

team (NS). *Local:* President, 2011–13, 1st VP 2008–11, PD (10 yrs.), Ed Change (1), WLC (2), 2nd VP (2), Budget (7), Bargaining (5), Building (7), school-based committees (15), Staff rep (10), Langley Sp.Ed. inquiry chief spokesperson, Dialogue on Debt—Community Consultations, BC Fed and NWDLC delegate(5) BC Fed SW (2) *Teaching:* 30 yrs. in special education (all categories, all levels), adult ed (2), adjunct professor, U of San Diego, practicum evaluator, education students (2). *Education:* BA, B.Ed. St. Mary's University (Summa Cum Laude), NS, M.Ed. Mount St. Vincent University, NS, Doctoral courses completed for educational leadership, dissertation pending, U of San Diego.



Marjorie Dumont

Dinī ze', ts'akē ze', skiy ze', Dzīn tabi honzu. (male chiefs, female chiefs and their children. It is a great day today)

I would like to raise my hands in honour and respect to the Coast Salish people for allowing me to live and work on their unceded shared traditional territories. I am grateful to the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil Waututh First Nations for allowing me to reside on their unceded shared traditional territory (Vancouver). As well as to the Semiahmoo, Kwantlen and Katzie First Nations for allowing me to work on their unceded shared traditional territories (Surrey).

My name is C'tan (Many leaves) and I

am known to many as Marjorie Dumont. My father's name is Chief Wah tah k'eght (Big man) and my mother's name is Chief Wila'at (Echo). My house chief's name is Chief Na'moks. I belong to the Tsayu (Beaver) clan of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation. My roots are also Gitksan.

I respect BCTF and the democratic principles of our union.

I am also grateful for the opportunity to be teaching and learning from the students, staff and community in Surrey, BC. My journey as a teacher is both great and challenging. The students' stories and experiences give me strength to help improve and protect the public education system. Despite the concerted

efforts of the provincial government's attack on public education, I am very proud of all teachers as we remain strong and united. We must continue to be courageous in our efforts to protect our professional autonomy and rights.

It has been a remarkable experience working for all teachers across the province at the BCTF office. Over the four years at the office, I had been blessed with the knowledge, wisdom, and proficiency to help me be a better advocate for students, teachers, parents and communities we work for. I believe my experience working with the AEAC and the AEA PSA, and the work with Education Partners, and other advocacy

groups prepared me for a member-at-large post to serve you.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF, PSA President, Aboriginal Education, SURT presenter, Summer Institute trainer and participant, BCTF AGM participant since 1999, Summer Conference participant and Aboriginal Leadership since 2003. *Local:* Ad hoc Aboriginal Education Committee, STA Staff Rep. *Teaching:* Elementary, Secondary, and LST (since 1997) and as an instructor for UBC Faculty of Education courses. *Education:* BEd UBC, MEd UBC (in progress)

Member-at-Large



Janine Fraser

"I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness because it shows me the stars." ~ Og Mandino

Teachers over the last 10 years have been enduring a darker phase in education. What is it that fuels you to continue in these tough times? For me, it is that perspective of learning from challenges and being able to "see the stars" that has helped me to endure. But despite the optimism that many teachers use to fuel themselves and the system, I firmly believe it is time

for the sun to come out. BC can't continue to have a quality system while underfunding it and creating a climate of disrespect of its teachers. It's now time for positive change in our system and I want to be a strong voice to be a part of that change. Please elect me to be your member-at-large, and I will serve you with experience, optimism, and integrity.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Finance Committee (1 yr); BC Primary Teachers' Association president (1 yr), BCTF rep for Ministry of Education CR4YR initiative (1yr), BCPTA newsletter editor (3 yrs), BCPTA member at large (1 yr); AGM Delegate (12 yrs.); Summer Conference Participant (2 yrs.); LR (3 yrs.). *Local:* Staff Rep. (3 yrs), Pro-D rep (3 yrs) *Teaching:* Boundary (4 yrs.), Surrey (9 yrs.), Kindergarten, primary, intermediate. *Education:* B.Ed. (SFU), MA.Ed. (U of Phoenix)



Teresa Grandinetti

There are four major issues facing the Federation in the year ahead: helping to elect an education friendly government; bargaining a collective agreement that includes class-size, composition, and staff ratios, and improvements to salary; leading the discussion on education change; and steering the Federation toward financial health. A BCTF Executive Committee priority must be to keep members active and informed in the challenging year ahead. Putting our financial house in order, although difficult,

must be done with thought and care while adhering to the principles and goals of the BCTF.

As a member-at-large I would work hard to be part of a diverse, independent-thinking Executive Committee whose members vote their conscience on all issues. I would work to create an Executive that is not afraid to take a hard look at the current state of the BCTF and be able to make difficult recommendations even if they prove unpopular.

I offer close to 30 years as a

teacher activist; 5 years in the private system, and the remainder as a teacher in Coquitlam School District. Through my experience as a union organizer, negotiator, table officer, and contract enforcer I have the ability to reach a solution while never forsaking my union principles.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* RA/AGM chairperson (3 yrs); BCTF Provincial Bargaining Team member (1.5); LR (5); AGM delegate (12); Summer Conference participant (10). *Local:* President: Coquitlam (3); CTA

First Vice-President (5); CTA Second Vice President (2); CTA Chief Negotiator (6); Grievance Presenter (8); CTA Negotiating Team (19); CTA Policy and Procedures Committee Chair (5); CTA Member at Large (5); Staff Rep (4). *Other:* President & Chief Negotiator, Catholic Secondary School Teachers' Association (Local 2). *Teaching:* (29 years) middle, junior high and secondary school math & science, learning assistance, behaviour and counselling. *Education:* Chemistry (UBC), PDP (UBC), Counselling Psychology (Adler).



David Komljenovic

As a result of our activism and persistence over the past decade there is potential for real and positive change for teachers, students, and public education.

We now have the ability to negotiate important working and learning conditions such as class size, composition, and caseloads for specialist teachers. As a member of the provincial bargaining team, I recognize how crucial it is that we regain these rights so fundamental to student learning.

The recent framework for

bargaining is a positive step. Through strategies developed to attain a greater voice for teachers at the local level, we have finally seen a shifting attitude by school boards. There is a greater willingness to explore a bargaining structure that gives more decision-making power at the local level.

As teachers, we continue to influence change in public education through the work we do in our classrooms and schools, and through the work we do in our neighbourhoods and communities.

The greatest impact we can have in ensuring these changes are sustained is in our involvement in electoral politics.

With some signals that the conditions in our classrooms and work lives may improve, there is a vital role for the BCTF to ensure that progress continues.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF Executive Member at Large (3), Provincial Bargaining Team (1), Canadian Labour Congress delegate (1), BC Fed delegate (2), BC Fed Resolutions Cmte (1), WLC/Barg

Advisory Cmte (4), Ad Hoc Cmte on Barg Structures (1), AGM Delegate (12), LR (2), BCTF SURT facilitator (3), AGM New Delegates Training (3). *Local:* President (3), 1st Vice President (3), Bargaining Chair (3), Chief Negotiator—Local Barg (5), Treasurer (2), Health and Safety Rep, Staff Rep (1), Strike Co-ordinator (1), Local Elections Contact (1), TTOC committee (2), District Labour Council Member at Large (2), District Committee on Assessment (1) *Teaching:* Secondary Math/Science/Physics (7), TTOC (1) *Education:* B.Sc. (UBC), B.Ed. (UBC), Dipl. Ed (Guidance) (UBC)



Paul Steer

As a member of the BCTF Executive Committee, I've been proud to have been able to contribute to our best collective efforts through these challenging times. I've travelled to some of the most rural areas of this province to deliver to teachers the BCTF's message of affirmation and support. I've worked hard to maintain and strengthen the positive connection between the BCTF and members. In my liaison role with the Health and Safety Advisory Committee, I have

encouraged and supported their work, and voiced their recommendations at the EC table. I'm very proud of the negotiating framework agreement we have crafted with BCPSEA, and I fully support our efforts to achieve a collective agreement that meets members' needs—before the end of the current school year. Looking ahead, our approach to meeting both current and future challenges will require focus, determination, and compassion. Re-elected, I promise to be a responsible voice for unity

within our Federation, a steady advocate for equitable distribution of our limited resources, and a conscientious proponent of democratic governance.

In short, I will speak up in support of a non-partisan approach to positive change within our union, and for a growing consensus among all who would build a better BCTF. Paul Steer's Facebook page: <http://on.fb.me/X5PFPQ>

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF Executive Committee (2 years); BCTF Judicial Council, (1 year); CTF delegate

(2 yrs); Teacher Newsmagazine Advisory Board (2, 3 yr. terms); Federation Leadership Institute (4 yrs); Summer Conference delegate (10 yrs); AGM delegate (14 yrs) *Local:* President (4 yrs); Vice-president (4 yrs); Local Rep (5+ yrs); Social Justice Chair (2 yrs); plus extensive local and ad-hoc committee membership and service. *Teaching:* Since 1981: Elementary, mainly Intermediate, but including some Primary; Special Ed; Junior & Senior Secondary; Library; Alternate Education, 1995-2005. *Education:* B.F.A. (UBC '79); PDP (SFU, '81), M.Ed. (USM '97).



Daniel Storms

The BCTF has met many challenges through its long history, yet we prevailed in spite of formidable odds.

Regardless of which party forms government, however, we will continue to face many challenges: upcoming court cases on Bill 27/28, the effects of 10 years of government attacks on teachers and public education; and low teacher morale.

At this critical juncture, we need to rebuild, renew, and re-engage our members in ways that reflect

the diverse passions and perspectives of all teachers.

That diversity needs to be reflected and represented within the BCTF Executive Committee. We need to have the resources necessary to maintain our services to members and our ongoing commitments as the social justice union the BCTF is known for and that teachers expect.

To carry on that proud tradition, we need to work together collaboratively and engage in open, respectful dialogue so that we can

make a broad range of decisions to benefit all members and the long-term health of the Federation.

I believe I can play a positive and constructive role due to my extensive involvement and experience within my local and provincially.

Serving my colleagues on the BCTF Executive Committee would be an honour and a privilege.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Attended FLI, Bargaining Conference, Bargaining Training, AGM (8 yrs), BCTF Summer Conference. *Local:* President, 1st Vice-President, Local Representative, BC Fed delegate, NVTA Member at Large, NVTA Bargaining Committee, NVTA Negotiating Team, NVTA Chief Staff Rep., NVTA Staff Committee Chair *Teaching:* (Secondary) Social Studies 8-11, History 12, AP History *Education:* B.A. M.A. Political Science (Simon Fraser); B.Ed. [Secondary] (UBC)



Wendy Turner

The May 2013 provincial election quickly approaches. This provides an opportunity for teachers to address the effect of 10 years of government policy that has eroded both our professional rights and the infrastructure of public education.

Concurrently, we are navigating through another round of provincial and local bargaining. We will proceed on a landscape of shifting sands in terms of whom we are bargaining with through this process. Our ability to adapt and be resilient will be tested.

Our message to the public and to political parties remains true to our professional principles: that real choice for children in education comes from a fully funded, equitable public school system.

Teachers are the professionals in the classroom with the knowledge of what is needed to address their students' needs, and how this is best supported within the public education system. We have the organizational skill to ensure that public education remains a central issue that must be addressed by

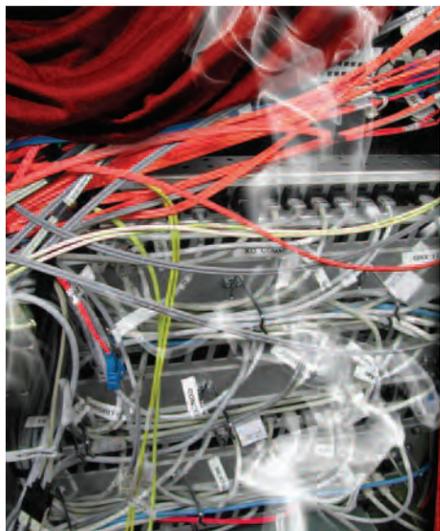
government.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and serving their needs as we move forward through these interesting times. Together, we are the BCTF!

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF Executive Member-at-large, Finance Committee, Ad Hoc Committee on TTOC Work in B.C., SURT Facilitator, Local Representative, AGM Delegate *Local:* President, Vice President, Bargaining Team, Local Election

Contact, School Staff Rep., TTOC Co-Chair *Teaching:* Music/Band, Grade 5 & 6 Elementary, Grade 7-9 Middle School (science, math, social studies) *Education:* Bachelor of Education (University of Victoria), Master of Arts in Administration, Curriculum and Instruction (Gonzaga University)

Danger warning: The chase after a new version of BCeSIS is under way



By Larry Kuehn

The ministry has issued the RFP (Request for Proposals) for a replacement for the current system that holds information on students in public and private schools in BC. It hopes to have a new system in place for initial use in 2013 and full implementation a year later.

The ministry getting it right this time is incredibly important for any teacher who plans to be around for many more years. They are looking for a contract to span a dozen years, shaping the work of teaching and learning through the entire cycle of a student from K to 12.

Ursula Franklin admonishes us that “every tool shapes the task.” Any information system that a teacher uses to keep track of data on students will shape the way they carry out the work of teaching those students. What data is collected will inevitably be more important than things that data is not collected on. Technology is not neutral.

So what are the dangers in this round of creating a student information system?

Asking for more than can be delivered

The ministry went through a process of building the requirements for the new system. They engaged nearly four dozen administrators, counsellors, and some teachers to contribute to defining what they system should do. These are called the “functional requirements” and cover about 50 pages.

Two themes jump out of these. One is to do the same but better than BCeSIS. Many of the requirements are what BCeSIS promised but could not deliver. This is the look back, asking now for what could not be built before. User-friendly, using a graphic interface, is the expectation, and features that are more flexible than the

single way permitted in the old program.

The other is to look forward. The ministry says that the education system will be transformed by the BC Education Plan. It will not be based on grades and credits and, instead will aim at broad, ambiguous, and deep objectives like critical and innovative thinking. The classroom will no longer frame the learning as students explore the world beyond the school.

What should a student information system look like to meet this vision, should it ever come about? The functional requirements call for the information system to deal with these effectively, even though they are at best a work in progress without any firm definition.

Can an information system be built that will effectively serve both a past and quite different projected future system?

The ministry says yes. They have been told by consultants that progress has been made in creating student information systems in the US. Huge expenditures on state-wide systems have been made to meet the reporting requirements for federal funding.

The kicker is this: These information systems are being built based on a more centralized curriculum through US national standards. These are being built on the basis of the kind of system we are supposedly leaving behind.

Skepticism is the most positive attitude possible when one looks at the hundreds of things the functional requirements document defines.

Same design, but more complex demands

BCeSIS is based on a centralized system. All the information is held on servers in one central place. Every teacher reaches the servers through the Internet, mostly through the ministry's limited capacity Provincial Learning Network.

While inadequacies of the software were the source of many of the user complaints, limits to access at peak times were also a matter of frustration.

The more that is included in the centralized database, the more it can slow down the system.

Yet, the new system is supposed to continue this entirely centralized model—but with lots more information and lots more time spent by teachers in supplying data.

BCeSIS only keeps for one year most of the data other than demographics. The plan for the new system is that it will keep

all the data on an ongoing basis. From the preschool Strong Start program through graduation will be held in the database—data on well over a million students over the 12-year proposed contract time.

A much broader range of data is projected to be kept in the new system—formative assessment data, project data, notes on incidents, etc.—every teacher will be entering data on every student on a daily basis.

Parents and students will have access at all times to the data on the students—potentially millions of folks—teachers, students, parents, and guardians for 600,000 current students. Parents were supposed to have access to BCeSIS, but no one even tried to put that into practice since it couldn't even adequately serve the teachers. Will a new system on the same design actually work any better than BCeSIS?

Quality beyond measure

Alfie Kohn's recent work has him talking about “quality beyond measure.” What he means by this is that many of the qualities that we want to encourage and shape in our students cannot be measured. Attempting to put them into a measurement system actually leads us away from important aspects of the teaching and learning process.

Kohn's concept is very relevant to the proposed student information system.

The centralized and extensive data approach is based on an assumption that the information can be used to improve education. This is the claim of the chief information officer (our government and ministry both have one).

The reason for creating this mass of data in a centralized system is to develop a data warehouse and analytics tools that feed details and trends. These are supposed to give us information that allows us to improve teaching.

Teaching as we know it now is primarily a craft. We learn to monitor student activity—individually and collectively—to find patterns and to judge success. These judgments are frequently wholistic, taking into account both concrete data about a student, but also incorporating intuition and sensitivity that helps to identify the many dimensions of growth and to challenge our students for future growth. That is really what people mean when they talk about a teacher who was a powerful influence on their life.

Yes, some data can be very useful. But building a system in which decisions become primarily data-based in the sense

of mining a data warehouse is a direction we should question. Maintaining a massive database of everything a student does in their childhood can only be justified if we believe that data analytics is better than teacher judgment in helping our students to grow and develop.

Surveillance is a side effect

Whether intentional or not, surveillance is a side effect of entering into this data-intensive approach to a student information system.

The surveillance is of the student, and also the teacher. We all know that the era of closing the classroom door and getting on with teaching is no longer the reality. Everything and anything in our environment can end up on YouTube.

We can, still, do what we can to protect childhood. It should be a time of exploring and testing, developing who they are and how they want to relate to the world. That exploration, and even “bad behaviour,” should not be a life sentence, sticking with the person in their virtual profile.

Security has to be an obsession

The more data on the more people and the longer it is kept, the more that security has to be an obsession.

If the ministry RFP for a new system produces the system described (not a sure thing), imagine how many people could have access on a single day: 50,000 teachers and clerical workers, 600,000 students in public and private schools, and more than a million parents and guardians of those students.

You need foolproof, unhackable systems, including complex authentication for every individual potentially on the system, frequent password changes and help available at all times. This guarding uses a significant amount of the resources of maintaining the system. It also uses the time of the teacher that could be spent in working with their students.

What should the ministry do?

Should the ministry spend tens and probably hundreds of millions of education dollars on developing a new centralized student information system? The ministry's dream of an all-expansive, flexible system may turn out to be another BCeSIS nightmare. That is probably the best hope for avoiding the worst aspects of what might happen if they proceed with the project as it is.

On the other hand, should the ministry let schools and districts work on the best tools for the everyday work, in the classroom and school, and only collect centrally the information that it really needs?

More analysis online at bctf.ca

There is lots more to say about the issues around student information systems. If you want to read a more extensive analysis, including the implications of the details in the RFP, check the BCTF website for articles beyond BCeSIS.

Larry Kuehn, director
BCTF Research and Technology Division



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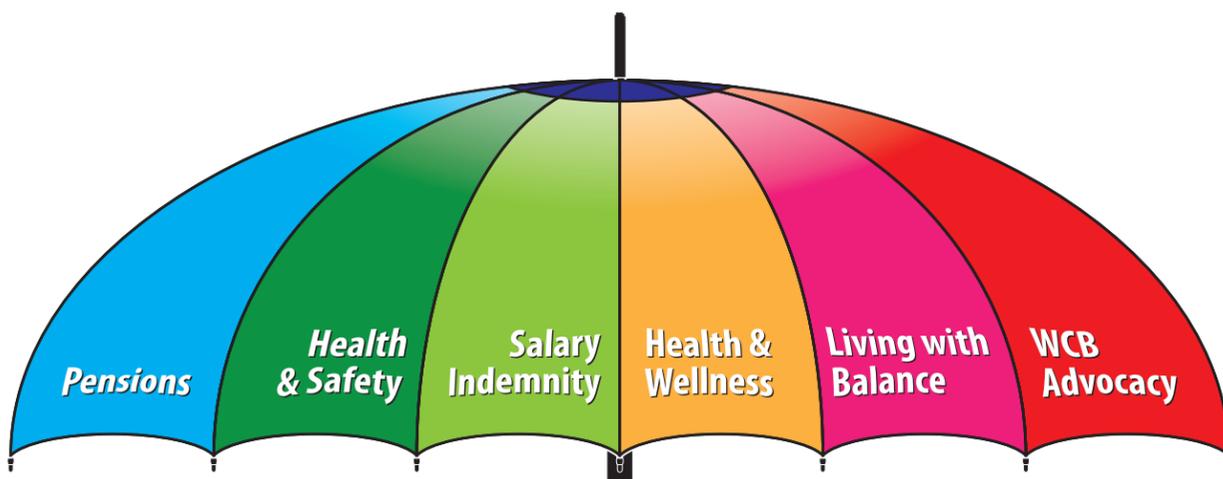
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SCENARIO: Jennifer is a 32-year-old primary teacher. She has a 1.0 FTE assignment in a primary class. Jennifer has been diagnosed with MS, but is in the early stages and is functioning well. Happy to be three months' pregnant with her first child, Jennifer is looking forward to her maternity leave and is planning for an extended maternity/parental leave, during which she and her husband plan to travel. She has 25 days of sick leave available to her.

Jennifer falls from a chair while putting up art work in her classroom. She sprains her wrist in the fall. Her doctor advises her to take two weeks off work, to rest and recuperate. She further advises a reduced assignment when Jennifer returns, out of concern for the pregnancy. Jennifer's wrist is slow to recover and it is anticipated that she will be restricted in the use of it for a further two months.

Health and safety (prevention)

Slips, trips, and falls are the number one cause of injury in schools. It is common practice for teachers to stand on chairs, stools, desks, and tables to reach heights. The questions are: Why do teachers do this knowing the risk of falling and injury? Why don't they use a stepladder or stool? The answer in many cases is that step ladders and stools are either not provided or are locked in the custodian's closet or there is one ladder per floor and it is being used by another teacher. Sometimes teachers stand on chairs even when a ladder is accessible. The other answer is that teachers do not receive training on the importance of using ladders to prevent injuries.

The WCB through WorkSafeBC has published a poster that says, "Principals and Vice-principals are responsible for preventing slips, trips and falls." This means that ladders must be easily accessible and teachers must receive training on the importance of using them.

The other point to consider is work practices and methods and determining if art work needs to be hung at a height and if so are there other ways to do so. For example, pull-down bulletin boards can be hung at a safe level and then raised.

The role of the health and safety committee is to make recommendations to eliminate or reduce injuries. Prevention is the ultimate goal. The effects of injuries last a lifetime.

WCB claims (advocacy)

Jennifer's claim should be accepted for a wrist sprain. If Jennifer does not seek first aid at school immediately after her fall or delays in reporting the incident to the principal, or does not visit her doctor the same day or the next day, then she may encounter difficulties in having her claim accepted. She also needs to phone Teleclaim (1-888-WORKERS) to report her claim to the WCB. The initial two weeks that Jennifer takes off work to rest and recuperate should be compensated by the WCB, provided the time off is medically necessary for her wrist to recover. If the time off is out of concern for the pregnancy, then Jennifer will not be

entitled to WCB compensation, she will have to use her sick days. Before Jennifer returns to work she should advise the HR department of her restrictions. Jennifer should contact her local union office to help her create a return-to-work plan with the employer and obtain an accommodation, if necessary. When Jennifer receives the decision letter on her claim from the WCB, if the claim is denied or not fully accepted for wage loss or healthcare benefits, the BCTF WCB advocate can assist with the appeal. Do not delay as time limits apply.

Salary Indemnity Plan (ST/LT benefits)

Jennifer will be able to use her sick leave to help her recuperate from her sprain and to support her during the time she is on a reduced assignment in accordance with her doctor's advice. Once she uses up the 25 days she has in her sick bank she will be able to apply for short-term (ST) benefits, which will provide her with 50% of gross salary tax free, for the portion she is unable to work. Should there be further complications in regards to her pregnancy she will be able to access ST benefits for up to 120 days. She will be able to stay on benefits if it is medically supported up until the time she goes on maternity leave. Once she returns to work after her maternity leave, the Salary Indemnity Plan will continue to support her with short- and long-term benefits if her MS progresses to a point where she is unable to work.

Pensions

Of course all members should check to ensure adequate medical coverage on any travel. In consideration of her pension, upon completion of her maternity leave, she may buy back the leave and be expected to pay her employee pension contributions, and her school board will pay the employer portion of this leave. She will be allowed to purchase up to three years, each term not to exceed one year for each child's birth/adoption. Other leaves (not parental/adoption/family responsibility/bereavement/compassionate care) require the teacher to pay both

employee and employer portions. All "Purchases of Service" must be done within five years after the last day of that leave as a lump sum payment at the current pension contribution rate and salary. Please contact the Teachers' Pension Plan (1-800-665-6770) to request a Purchase of Service Application to be filled out and sent in; the teacher will then be sent a statement quoting the exact cost of the leave. Alternatively, using the Pension Cost Estimator on the website www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca can generate an unlimited number of estimates. The cost information may help her in deciding this buyback or not. A second issue is her doctor's advice to take two weeks off to rest and recuperate that would typically be a use of her sick days. However, if she further takes a reduced assignment, it would reduce her pensionable service, affecting her pension income upon retirement. She should consult her local union office and the Income Security Division at the BCTF to discuss options that may include use of sick days, short-term disability, long-term disability.

Health and wellness

Jennifer would be well advised to voluntarily participate in the Health and Wellness Program. Through the program, Jennifer would be able to work with a rehabilitation consultant, who would work with Jennifer and her doctor in planning treatments and supports to assist in dealing with all her medical challenges. The consultant would likely arrange for an ergonomic assessment when Jennifer returns to work, to better ensure her safety and durability. The rehabilitation consultant would also work with local and school district representatives to plan the return to work. Such factors as limitations and restrictions would be considered, as well as Jennifer's ability to sustain her return to work, whether full- or part-time. While Jennifer may not need support in dealing with her MS now, she will continue to be able to access Health and Wellness Program support in the future as the MS progresses.

For further information, please contact:

Victor Choy, Pensions,
604-871-1949, vchoy@bctf.ca

Ritchie Kendrick, SIP administrator,
604-871-1935, rkendrick@bctf.ca

Michael Kimmis, ISD director, 604-871-1957,
mkimmis@bctf.ca

Sarb Lalli, WCB Claims (advocacy),
604-871-1890, slalli@bctf.ca

Karen Langenmaier, Health and Safety
(prevention), 604-871-1891,
klangenmaier@bctf.ca

Drusilla Wilson, Health and Wellness
Program, 604-871-1925, dwilson@bctf.ca

Visit the Member Portal:
<http://bit.ly/W5d1Ga>

Factor 90 or 65 years of age? Don't wait

You can save the long-term fee (approximately 1.2%) from the date you reach age 64 or "Factor 88." Members are no longer entitled to long-term benefits under the Salary Indemnity Plan once they hit "Factor 90" (age plus cumulative service) or age 65. The BCTF does not have access to your personal pension information, so it is up to you to apply to withdraw from LTD.

How and when to apply

A member who has attained age 64, or has reached "Factor 88," or is in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the long-term portion of the Salary Indemnity Plan. In making application for withdrawal, you should ensure that in the event of serious illness or accident you have sufficient accumulated sick leave, which, when combined with 120 days of benefit from SIP short-term, will protect your salary to the end of the month in which you reach "Factor 90" or the end of the month you attain age 65, whichever comes first.

To get an application, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/7qrrnxx> or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.

Retirement: There's more to it than money!

The B.C. Retired Teachers' Association (BCRTA) has developed a workshop for educators who are thinking of retirement within the next five years.

Retirement brings with it life-altering situations and a wide variety of choices—some financial, some legal, some physical, and some social. All are connected with lifestyle. Achieving a workable balance of activities and fulfilling dreams doesn't just happen. Once you have decided that you wish to retire in the near future, it is also time to concentrate on all the other aspects of this new adventure called retirement.

The BCRTA workshop, *Retirement: There's More to It than Money!*, is designed to complement the Teachers' Pension Plan pension seminars. Retired educator Carolyn Malm comments that, "Many teachers view retirement with mixed emotions and the workshops provide an excellent forum for realistic, informed discussion. The focus of these sessions is on life after retirement—the endless possibilities of redefinition lead to thoughtful conversations facilitated by BCRTA presenters." With limited enrolment to facilitate sharing and learning, participants are sure to appreciate the information, ideas, and experiences of the facilitators, who themselves are retired educators.

What are some important steps to take to prepare yourself, optimally, for your coming retirement?

Firstly, attend a pension seminar put on by the Teachers' Pension Plan.

Secondly, ask your BCTF local president or local PD rep to contact the BCRTA at 604-871-2260 or 1-877-683-2243 or www.bcrt.ca to book this highly acclaimed follow-up workshop.

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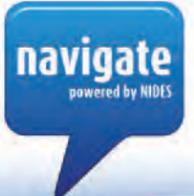
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SCHOOL TATTOOS. Temporary tattoos printed with your school's art. Free Graphic Service and Free Tattoo Proof. Website: www.schooltattoos.ca, E-mail: info@schooltattoos.ca or call 613-567-2636.

NEED TEACHERS to write self-paced courses for all secondary subjects. For examples and contact information, For examples and contact info, visit www.mathwncp.ca

FIELD TRIP. Book a Burns Bog field trip today! A two-hour guided tour costs \$150 per class of up to 30 pupils. Visites guidées en français aussi! Buy For Peat's Sake, our educator's resource guide to peatlands. www.burnsbog.org, 604-572-0373, info@burnsbog.org

TILING & PAINTING Want to get the job done right? Call Vito. Glass and slate specialist. Indoor, outdoor painting. Serving the Vancouver area since 1996. call 604-831-4013 or www.tile-rific.ca

PENSION QUESTIONS? Ask Arnie – now retired and available for expert, personal, one-to-one consultation including pension estimates, options, bridge, CPP/OAS, and pension splitting. Reasonable rates. Call Arnie Lambert at 604-354-5624 or e-mail arnielambert@shaw.ca

VOICE LESSONS, White Rock area. Ivy Charyna, SD#36 Music and Drama teacher. ivycharyna@gmail.com, 604-817-7174.

TEACH IN CHINA for 2 or 4 weeks in July 2013. Interested? Check us out at www.china-connection.ca

HOUSE SITTING service offered by retired teachers, in or near urban centre. If also interested in teaching English, will introduce you to our former university, Xiamen, China. More information: www.mindmyhouse.com/owners/sitter_listing/12753 or grahamleslie10@gmail.com

MINDFULNESS RETREAT for educators with Thich Nhat Hanh: Explore practices to help reduce anxiety and burn out, while increasing your capacity to cultivate happiness and handle strong emotions. Led by internationally respected Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, who was nominated by Martin Luther King for the Nobel Peace Prize. Retreat is especially for teachers. No experience necessary. August 2013, Brock University. Details at www.tnhtoronto.ca

TEACH IN CHINA and travel for free. A North American style school located in the most beautiful coastal city of China, Xiamen is offering a perfect 10-week and 20-week program for newly retired teachers. Contact xmforeignteacher@gmail.com for details.

RIVERBEND SENIORS Community Kamloops, (55+) 2 bdrm. Suite \$1700/mo., river view, spacious, wheelchair friendly, many extra. Email catherine_steele@hotmail.com, 604-408-1023 Van., 250-377-3686 Kamloops.

OPPORTUNITY. Seeking Savvy Business-Minded Person. Commissions, car allowance, all expense paid international trips. Immediate and long term income. Sales/marketing experience and/or committed entrepreneurial spirit required. Email letter of interest/resume: Cathy@SageIntentions.com

FIND STRENGTH IN ACTION LIFE COACHING. Kathy Richins, ICF certified life coach with teaching experience. Skype or phone sessions offered. Teachers deserve some extra support also. Call 778-471-2634, www.findstrengthinaction.com

VOLUNTEERS. Are you looking for interesting volunteer work? The Museum of Anthropology offers rewarding opportunities. Email Joyce Anderson or Mary Huffman at volunteers@moa.ubc.ca

WORLD UMBRELLA DANCE REHEARSALS. Pop open your umbrella with the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival! The awesome Shiamak Davar Dance Company will teach their funky choreography in beginner-friendly rehearsals all throughout March, in preparation for the spectacular World Umbrella Dance Saturday, April 13, VAG Plaza. Register now at vcbf.ca before rehearsals fill up!

RESOURCES. French immersion teacher has wealth of elementary and late immersion resources available. Contact ledwardson@sd43.bc.ca

PD Calendar

MARCH 2013

5 Online. Registration is now open for the BCTLA's Winter-to-Spring Webinar series, a package of four interactive sessions (February 19, March 5, April 9 and April 23, 2013) designed to provide practical support to teacher-librarians in their role as educational leaders. All four sessions are available as a package for \$20 per person. For individual session descriptions and registration information, please visit <http://bctf.ca/bctla/info/pro-dev.html>.

6 Burnaby. "Child Developmental Trauma—Successful Strategies for Caregivers and Professionals." The Children's Foundation is proud to present, David Melnick, LCSW at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts. Neuroscience is showing how developmental trauma has tragic consequences for children. Many of the behaviours used for survival ultimately impede the child's ability to relax, to attach, to learn and progress. We will examine the "five areas of impact" of developmental trauma: attachment, arousal, neuro-development, cognition, relationships. You will learn innovative strategies necessary to assess, treat, and educate impacted children and youth. For more information, or to register, please go to www.childrensfoundation.org, or call 604-434-9101.

8 SFU Harbour Centre, Vancouver. How Schools & Families Can Prepare Adolescents with Autism for the Social Challenges of Adulthood—presented by: Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D. Children with ASD grow up, and as the numbers of adolescents and adults with ASD expand, we need to consider how to prepare them for the challenges of adult life. This presentation will provide an overview of the components of effective, behavioral analytic intervention with older learners. Specific topics include community transition, employment, behaviour support, healthy sexuality, and quality of life. For details: <http://bit.ly/UDmZdE>.

8-13 Moviestorm Made Easy. Moviestorm is a fast, fun, easy software application that lets anyone make 3D animated movies on their computer. This CEET Meet will show you how to make a simple movie from start to finish. It covers set building, character creation, directing, dialogue, filming, editing, visual effects, sound and music, titles and credits, and rendering. The course tutor is David Le Blanc, an experienced online guide, Moodle expert and eLearning practitioner. Register at <http://ceetbc.ning.com/page/ceetmeets>

APRIL 2013

9 Online. Registration is now open for the BCTLA's Winter-to-Spring Webinar series, a package of four interactive sessions (February 19, March 5, April 9 and April 23, 2013) designed to provide practical support to teacher-librarians in their role as educational leaders. All four sessions are available as a package for \$20 per person. For individual session descriptions and registration information, please visit <http://bctf.ca/bctla/info/pro-dev.html>.

12-17 Online. Beyond the Bake Sale Building Community in Schools and Districts. This workshop will explore the notion of community, building trust, relationships, and social capital with parents and community through technology and social media; be it local, global, and blended. The course moderator is Dean Shareski, Community Manager of the Canadian Discovery Educators Network, Discovery Education. Register at <http://ceetbc.ning.com/page/ceetmeets>

19-20 Vancouver. First Nations Schools Association 17th Annual Conference and AGM—Shaping our Future: A Community of Learners, The FNSEA's annual conference brings together First Nations school personnel from across BC to learn about a wide range of effective practices in classroom instruction, school administration and other key professional growth areas. <http://www.fnsc.ca/conference>.

20 Victoria, BC. Solfa Success, Smart Recorder and Love to Listen presented by Denise Gagne. University of Victoria, MacLaurin Building, Room A166 from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Lunch included! Lots of great ideas! More info and registration at BC Kodaly Society of Canada website <http://www.bksc.ca>, or call 250-589-5108.

23 Online. Registration is now open for the BCTLA's Winter-to-Spring Webinar series, a package of four interactive sessions (February 19, March 5, April 9 and April 23, 2013) designed to provide practical support to teacher-librarians in their role as educational leaders. All four sessions are available as a package for \$20 per person. For individual session descriptions and registration information, please visit <http://bctf.ca/bctla/info/pro-dev.html>.

MAY 2013

3-8 Online. How to Develop Digital Literacy Skills: A Middle School Perspective. Literacy today depends on understanding the multiple media that make up our hightech reality and developing the skills to learn, create, communicate, and publish in a digital environment and society. As 90% of new jobs will require excellent digital skills, improving digital literacy is an essential component of developing future employable graduates. Courses that embed core digital skills, as well as subject specific use of technology, enable students to gain the skills and confidence they need to use digital technology not only to support their learning but also in the workplace. Join this workshop to learn how to engage middle school learners in digital literacy development! The course tutor is Tamara Malloff, Technology Coordinator at Mt. Sentinel Secondary School, SD#8 Kootenay Lake. Register: <http://ceetbc.ning.com/page/ceetmeets>

11 Vancouver, BC. Investigating Our Practices 2013, 16th annual conference. Co-sponsored by the UBC Faculty of Education and the BCTF. Teachers from different educational contexts convene at UBC to share their investigations, understandings and questions. Registration fee: \$25 (\$15 for students). Lunch and refreshments included. Scarfe Education Building, 2125 Main Mall, UBC. Proposals for presentations can be submitted online at <http://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/iop-cfp>. The deadline for submissions is February 26, 2013. For more information or to register for the conference, visit <http://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/iop2013> or contact Judy Paley at 604-822-2733 judy.paley@ubc.ca.

Future October PSA Days:
2013 - 2014: October 25, 2013
2014 - 2015: October 24, 2014
2015 - 2016: October 23, 2015



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PD Calendar website

<http://tinyurl.com/94nz4m5>

Additions/changes:

Contact Betty Goto at bgoto@bctf.ca

Reflections on a teacher institute

The museum as classroom

By Agnieszka Chalas

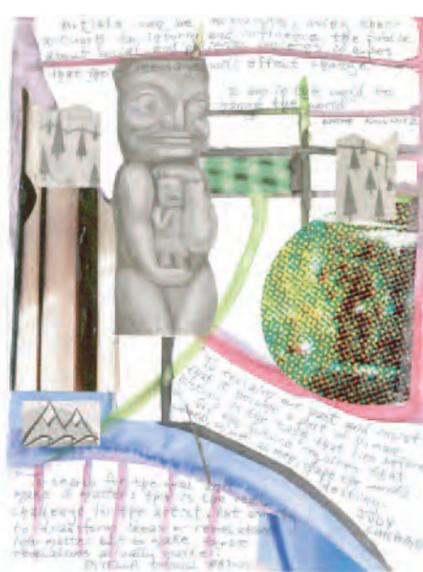
The arts have been a central component of my life from an early age that I have nurtured through academic study and by pursuing a career in the arts. When reflecting on my personal arts-related experiences, one pivotal learning experience from the formative years of my formal education stands out as having had a profound and lasting impression on me in the sense that it expanded my career possibilities—ultimately influencing my decision to pursue a career in art museum education—and informed my subsequent museum programming practice.

As a preservice art teacher, I participated in a teacher institute hosted by the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) while pursuing my Bachelor of Art Education at the University of British Columbia. Taught by Dr. Kit Grauer and Dr. Cheryl Meszaros, the then head of Public Programs, this credited teacher preparation course was an immersion into the Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: *Places of Their Own* exhibition which ran from June 15, 2002 to September 15, 2002, and introduced prospective teachers to interpretive strategies in the museum. Each day of the institute was divided among in-gallery exploration, interpretive activities, talks and demonstrations on interpretive strategies, in addition to lectures and panel discussions by artists, curators, art historians, and educators. Throughout the institute, I was encouraged to make personal and professional connections between the exhibition and the pedagogical content presented and my student teaching experience using a visual journal. For my final project I was required to express my new learning through either the creation of a body of artwork or the development of a teaching unit that dealt with some of the themes (nature, culture, self) explored throughout the institute, which was later exchanged with other participants.

While later working as the director of Public Programs and Education at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWIAG), an award-winning contemporary art museum in south-western Ontario, I often reflected on this experience when designing teacher-oriented museum programs, especially those aimed at assisting preservice teachers in integrating art museum resources into classroom instruction and increasing their understandings of the importance of museums in art education. At KWIAG, I experimented with new ways to provide teachers with professional development opportunities that would increase their efficacy in the use of museum resources. Teacher programs included model teaching sessions that introduced teachers to new art-making techniques and provided teachers with first-hand



It was this experience that I've endeavoured to recreate for teachers—one that capitalizes on the unique physical environment of the museum by providing them with high levels of accessibility to engage with artworks in an effort to increase their comfort levels in introducing them, and the concepts behind them, to their students.



experience with both museum collections and the development and implementation of exhibition-based activities. Curriculum-aligned teacher resources further offered background information on artists and artworks, discussion questions to engage students, and extension ideas. Teachers were also invited to participate in a virtual community to discuss issues and share ideas and resources related to the teaching of art.

A fundamental lesson from the teacher institute was the primacy placed on interaction with both the museum's art collection and the physical environment it was housed in. The opportunity to learn in this inspiring environment, to access real artifacts, and to gain practical experience in the development of activities that used the art collections as a learning tool for my students was a powerful new experience for me. It was this experience

institute all provided the opportunity for observation, participation, conversation, and active engagement. It was the ability to engage in a process of collective learning that encouraged me to simultaneously create and refine my own ideas while drawing from the knowledge and experience of the other participants, making it both enjoyable and memorable. With this in mind, a primary goal for me when designing teacher-oriented museum programs has been to offer opportunities for teachers to socially construct new knowledge by connecting with others in a learning community that promotes both individual and collective growth.

Significantly, the teacher institute also employed a constructivist and differentiated educational framework that made meaningful connections to individuals' lived experiences, while accommodating differences amongst their learning styles. This framework was used to structure all course content and

assignments, providing for a multiplicity of ways to engage with course material and express learning while encouraging participants to relate to their existing base of knowledge and prior personal and professional experiences. Being able to learn in my preferred learning style and negotiate new meanings through the lens of my own experiences helped me to understand and apply my new learning. I have adopted this theoretical framework into my own programs, consistently validating a teacher's experiences and knowledge as a means of building upon it.

It is my belief that the key to developing successful teacher-oriented museum programs lies in understanding teachers' needs and interests. My own experience as a participant in the teacher institute at the VAG helped inform my understanding of where teachers' values lie and where time and resources are most productively invested. By identifying what was transformative about this experience for me, I have discovered that a welcoming environment with maximum access to museum resources, a program organized to capitalize on learning as a social activity, and a constructivist teaching approach has served my needs and interests as a preservice teacher. While my museum programming practice and vision for teacher-oriented museum programs continues to evolve, the experience of participating in the teaching institute at the VAG had a profound influence on my approach to facilitating the learning and growth of others.

Agnieszka Chalas
co-executive director/manager
Community Engagement at ArtsSmarts

