

Teacher

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Essential service law imposed

Action plan adopted



Teachers rally at Premier Gordon Campbell's constituency office to protest essential service legislation and to press their demands for a fair collective agreement.

by Nancy Knickerbocker

It was the day BCTF leaders and members had been dreading all summer.

Tuesday, August 14, 2001: Labour Minister Graham Bruce rose in the legislature to introduce Bill 18, the Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act.

Along with changes affecting union certification rules province-wide and sectoral bargaining in the construction industry, Bill 18 expands the definition of essential services. Formerly essential services were only those that protect "the health, safety or welfare of the residents of British Columbia,"—now they include "the provision of educational programs to students and eligible children under the School Act." Under Bill 18, the minister may direct the Labour Relations Board to designate as essential all facilities and services necessary "to prevent immediate and serious disruption of educational programs."

BCTF president David Chudnovsky called a news conference later that day, where he spoke out against the legislation and warned that it will make achieving a collective agreement at the bargaining table much more difficult.

"Mr. Campbell likes to talk about four million student days lost due to labour disputes in schools since 1992, but he doesn't say that during the same time period, one billion days

were taught," he said. "That means 99.6% of days have been school days, and only 0.4% have been lost to strikes. For an average of 27 minutes a year, our democratic rights have been taken away."

Jim Sinclair, president of the B.C. Federation of Labour, and Colleen Jordan, secretary-

"Will B.C. parents who choose to take their children out of school for family vacations now be prosecuted for withholding essential educational services?"

treasurer of CUPE B.C., also spoke in support of full and free collective bargaining for teachers and school support workers.

A week later, at the BCTF's annual summer conference, more than 500 teacher leaders from throughout the province gathered at the University of B.C. for five days of training and discussion. In the opening plenary session, Chudnovsky challenged Premier Gordon Campbell and the Liberals to justify their "anti-democratic, anti-labour, anti-education" law.

He noted that the B.C. Liberals are alone in designating

education essential—even Ontario Premier Mike Harris's Conservatives did not impose such a law. No one knows precisely how it will be interpreted but there are some clear problems. For example, everyone has heard of parents who, for religious reasons, have withheld essential medical care from their children and have been prosecuted as a result.

"Will B.C. parents who choose to take their children out of school for family vacations now be prosecuted for withholding essential educational services?" Chudnovsky asked. Before the election, *The Vancouver Sun* reported that the Premier regularly used to take his own children out of school for two weeks prior to the Christmas break to take them to Maui. Two weeks times two students is 100 hours of class time lost by choice, compared to 27 minutes lost due to labour disputes.

Chudnovsky warned that members must guard against allowing the essential service legislation to pit one teacher against another. "We cannot say she's a little essential, and he's totally essential and that one is not essential at all."

BCTF lawyers are working on a legal strategy to broaden the Federation's ability to respond to and resist the impact of the legislation. And Chudnovsky emphasized that it "will not prevent us from taking job action if forced to do so." And, he said, while there's no doubt that the essential service

designation poses an obstacle to reaching a negotiated settlement, that is the Federation's goal. It is based on these four cornerstones:

- a significant salary increase
- reductions in teachers' workload
- improvements to students' learning conditions
- no concessions (no contract stripping).

At an extraordinary five-hour meeting of the Representative Assembly, delegates voted unanimously for a fall action plan that begins with an effort to increase the pace of negotiations. The BCTF bargaining team resolved to urge the employer to come back to the table full time and to bargain a minimum of 12 hours a day, five days a week, until a deal is reached. If no significant progress is made at the table within the first month, a provincial strike vote will be called at some time between September 27 and October 10, 2001.

On the last day of summer conference, hundreds of delegates rallied at Premier Campbell's constituency office. There was a festive atmosphere with Ginger Group playing *It's about time*, the bargaining campaign song, and *Solidarity Forever*.

After remarks by Chudnovsky and CUPE B.C. President Barry O'Neill, the most moving presentations came from new

President's message



BCTF President David Chudnovsky delivered this letter to Premier Gordon Campbell's constituency office on August 23, 2001.

Dear Mr. Premier:

More than 500 teachers, members of the B.C. Teachers' Federation, have been meeting this week in your constituency. We have met in the context of ongoing negotiations for a new collective agreement between our representatives and the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association.

Our members across the province are extremely upset at your governments' imposition of "essential services" legislation that will make achieving a collective agreement much more difficult, and make disruption in our schools this fall much more likely.

You have said many times that school strikes have caused four million lost school days since 1992. What you have not told the people of B.C. is that during that period there have been one billion days taught. In other words, 99.6% of the school days since 1992 have been teaching days, and only 0.4% have been affected by strikes. Students in our public schools have lost an average of 27 minutes a year to job action, significantly less than the disruption caused by colds, sniffles, dentist appointments, and family holidays. *The Vancouver Sun* has reported that you, Mr. Premier, when your own children were in school, removed them for two weeks in December to take them to Hawaii. That disruption to their education was 100 times what the average student has faced because of strikes. It is no wonder, therefore, that our members see your government's legislation as political opportunism rather than protection of students.

Mr. Premier, you and your ministers have claimed that

you want the best education system in the world in British Columbia. We call on you to provide the resources necessary to make that wish a continued reality.

The bargaining objectives of the province's teachers include the following and each of these will help to improve the public education system in British Columbia:

- a reduction in teacher workload, improvements to students' learning conditions
- no concessions, and
- most importantly, a significant increase in salaries and benefits.

Your legislation will not provide a single new textbook. It will not assure one new library computer. "Essential services" legislation will not attract one additional teacher to British Columbia.

Regardless of the actions of government, however, we will continue to advocate for teachers, students, and public education, and we will do so through collective bargaining. Teachers want to conclude a collective agreement at the bargaining table without any disruption in our schools. Your government has made that objective much more difficult. But we will negotiate a collective agreement that meets the needs of teachers and students, and we will do whatever is necessary to achieve that goal.

Yours sincerely

David Chudnovsky
BCTF President

Appreciate the focus on social justice

I am a retired teacher who taught in rural schools in the 1950s and later was an art teacher. Early retirement included teaching in Zambia for three years and China for two years. I'm now a "Raging Granny," helping to write songs relating to the planet and all its creatures. Thanks for articles like "Art counters prejudice" and "History texts should engage" in the April issue, as well as your support of "Project Overseas." I much appreciate the magazine's focus on social-justice issues.

Eileen Wittewall
Saltspring Island

Most violent video games are on PCs

In regard to your article on violent video games, (*Teacher*, May/June 2001) please publish this letter in the September issue.

Considering the fact that the dominant computing platform in the world is the IBM Wintel compatible PC, it is interesting to note your use of an image of an iMac on the front cover of the May/June issue, "Violence is not a game." Somehow this seems a little unfair and perhaps deceptive as almost all violent games are available only for the PC. Yes, more and more of those horrifically graphic, blood-filled games are being ported over to the iMac each year; however the relative percentage is still quite low.

As the info-tech teacher at Citadel Middle School, I have been asked by many parents over the years why they would buy a Mac instead of a PC when there is so much more software available for the PC platform. My response is that most good educational software and productivity applications are available for both platforms, but that if they want access to the huge number of "Killer" apps and blow-em-up-and-away games, they are better choosing the Wintel PC platform.

Perhaps it would have been more accurate for you to portray an IBM compatible as the computer of choice for violent gamers and leave the iMac to the creative users.

Lance Read
Coquitlam

Need to support new teachers

I refer to an article ("The Teacher Shortage," *Teacher*, April 2001) that discussed the approaching teacher shortage, and I have two comments.

First, the high percentage of teachers who drop out in their first years of teaching needs to be addressed by offering training to principals so they can support new teachers through their most stressful beginnings. Additionally, universities need to consider courses such as Behavioural Management as compulsory, replac-

ing Philosophy of Education. Further, I often hear teachers say they never took a course in how to teach math in the elementary school. It is no wonder the dropout rate is so high.

Second, I note that some 900 teachers come to B.C. annually, and I am one of those teachers. However, I would probably warn others against it in light of the fact that my master in education degree, which I received from a reputable Australian university, was downgraded to the equivalent of a Canadian bachelor of education degree by the BCCT. Additionally, I was given only an interim certificate until I had completed four courses, two of which were in my first language, English.

Mallee Stanley
Coquitlam

Recredentialed to teach in B.C.?

A research project conducted by members of the SFU Faculty of Education is documenting the experiences of teachers who have been required to recredential in order to teach in British Columbia. Our objective is to gain insight into your experiences to inform our work in teacher education. We want to know what experiences you found useful as well as the experiences that have made recredentialing difficult. We want to hear from teachers who have immigrated to Canada who are interested in participating in an interview at a location and time convenient to them. We want to interview individuals at all stages in their careers; those who have recently recredentialled and individuals who have been recredentialled for some time. We are particularly interested in the ways your out-of-Canada experiences were useful to you in recredentialing as well as in your subsequent professional work.

As a faculty member at Simon Fraser University, I am working in accordance with guidelines set out by the university for conducting ethical research. The interview will be audiotaped and all of the research material will be held confidential. Audiotapes and transcripts will be kept in locked file cabinets. Any published or unpublished reports of research will change individuals' names to assure confidentiality and anonymity. At any time during the course of the research you may withdraw if you wish to do so. We are hopeful that interviewees will be willing to be interviewed in approximately two years to see if there are changes in your ideas, however this is an option and not a requirement of participation.

If you are interested in helping out or if you have any questions, please e-mail June_Wyatt-Beynon@sfu.ca or fax 604-434-5160.

June Wyatt-Beynon
Burnaby

Administrators need to work with teachers

An article in the April issue, "Principals' president attacks agreement," says that Stu Dale thinks the current teachers' agreement is a negative influence. I, in contrast, find Stu's views limited and disappointing.

No doubt there have been negative influences on B.C. education, but the BCTF has not been one of them. As a former administrator, teacher, and associate in education, I can attest to the decades of positive work the Federation has done.

One major influence, however, was Bill Vander Zalm's arrangement, whereby administrators were separated from the BCTF. It seemed a retrograde step considering that both administrators and teachers were a team, serving education for about 60 years.

As you can gather, I do not favour separation but rather co-operation.

Perhaps Dale could be persuaded to hold a forum with members of the BCTF. This could lead to a better understanding and help, rather than increase divisions and confusion in our public education system.

Alex Goostrey
Surrey

BCCPAC represents PACS and DPACs

In your May/June issue "Readers Write," David Roy from Victoria alleged that the BCCPAC issues bulletins are somehow not representative of our members' views. He took particular exception to the bulletin on class-size limits.

BCCPAC represents PACs and DPACs from around the province. Any member PAC may submit a resolution to be considered at our annual general meetings. Prior to the meeting, resolutions are circulated to all members. At our AGMs in both May 2000 and May 2001, our members passed resolutions that expressed serious concerns about the detrimental effects that rigid class-size limits have on students.

Parents understand and support smaller class sizes as being an advantage to children. However, parents also believe that teacher training, evaluation processes, and classroom resources (such as music or art programs, learning assistance, library services, and textbooks) are also important areas that benefit student learning. Before additional funds are spent on class-size reduction, parents believe some planning and prioritizing needs to take place.

Roy accuses BCCPAC of having a bias. And it is true—parents around the province have one bias and one aim—to improve the public education and well-being of our students. When we talk about the funding of students with special needs, we share many concerns with the B.C. Teachers' Federation. When we talk about corporate sponsor-

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ship in public education, we share many concerns with the B.C. Teachers' Federation. When we talk about violent videos aimed at young people, our two organizations share many concerns. However, when we talk about rigid class-size limits, we disagree.

Roy signed his letter as a parent. We urge him to participate in his parents' advisory council and on behalf of all the parents, the PAC can put forward their issues to the members of BCCPAC and participate in the democratic expression of collective parental concerns.

Reggi Balabanov
President, BCCPAC

Thanks for the inspiration

I want to send my thanks to the writers and editors of the *Teacher* newsmagazine. Please pass this on to Peter Mason as well.

It's 5:10 on a Friday at the end of a very long week. We've had layoffs and bumping, special education meetings and union meetings after my teaching days this week. There have been tears and frustration as the job cuts are announced. In working as a support teacher, I have had conversations with teachers, parents, support staff, and administration, and of course there are no "magic fixes." We are facing cuts, some jobs will be lost, some students will lose all or some support, and still we carry on with today's tasks and planning for September.

Feeling very discouraged, I fortunately opened my *Teacher* newsmagazine and read the back page article, "To Believe in the Impossible."

The story reminds me why I'm doing this! Thanks for including a bit of inspiration so sorely needed right now!

Pam Hachey
Nechako

Inclusion is a function of our attitudes

Thank you for the article, "To believe in the impossible," by Peter Mason (*Teacher*, May/June 2001). If you are ever asked, What is inclusion? here is your answer. Inclusion is a function of our attitudes. Peter Mason and his class knew that including Ryan was an opportunity, not an obstacle.

Too often children who present us with challenges are defined by what they can't do. Ryan's inclusion on the trip provided an opportunity for team and community building and enriched the experience for everyone. Perhaps the article should have been titled, "To know what is possible and make it happen."

Carol Stinson
President, Burnaby Association for the Mentally Handicapped

Thank you Dianne Copeland

In 1967, I was a student at McLean Elementary, in Rossland, B.C., and was only in Grade 4. That is where I met the teacher who I believe has had the biggest influence on my life. Her name was Dianne Copeland. I was also fortunate enough to have her as a teacher the next year. She taught me more about myself and the satisfaction of completing tasks and rising up to challenges than any other teacher I ever had. I would like to hear from this wonderful teacher; I have so much to thank her for. Can you help me locate her?

Gary Allison
gallison@direct.ca

LOOKING BACK

70 years ago

We feel that it is unnecessary for us to emphasize the fact that the present year of the Federation will be a most crucial one, for, as is well known, we have been called upon by the Minister of Education to take part in a special Provincial Salary Commission, which will endeavour to determine Provincial Scales of Salary. This work will constitute our major objective and will involve a tremendous amount of effort and energy on the part of those who will be asked to assist in the many phases which will be under consideration. (*BC Teacher*, September 1931)

50 years ago

The July meeting of the BCTF Executive approved the merging of the Vancouver School Teachers' Credit Union, the New Westminster Teachers' Credit Union, and the Chilliwack District Teachers' Union into the BCTF Credit Union. This province-wide credit union will operate from the new BCTF offices in Vancouver and will expand throughout the province as rapidly as possible. We urge the teachers of B.C. to get behind their "co-op bank," owned, controlled and operated by themselves. (*BC Teacher*, September/October 1951)

Teacher newsmagazine wins awards

It was a proud year for our newsmagazine. The Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) recognized *Teacher* with its "Excellence in Writing" award. CALM represents over 500 labour organizations in Canada. Ed Finn, one of the judges, said, "The issue submitted was chock-full of interesting, cogently written stories about the problems, challenges, and achievements of the BCTF and its members. ...I was impressed by the uniformly high quality that permeated every article. A tribute to Editor Peter Owens and his gifted staff."

In June 2001, *Teacher* was also honoured by the Canadian Educational Press Association (CEPA), which represents teaching organizations across the country.

The categories and winners were:

Writing and Editing, Professional Development Feature

Lexi Charlie for "Understanding the Rules of Culture," Nov./Dec. 2000.

Writing and Editing, Educational Issues Reporting Corporate Sponsorship:

• **Chris Bocking** for "That's Where the Kids Are"

• **Sean Cook** for "Businesses Target Students"

• **Dianne Dunsmore** for "Corporate Partnerships: Gross Profit or Exponential Loss"

• **Garth Holmes** for "Schools B Us"

• **Seth Klein** for "Ideology of Greed Won't Serve Humanity"

• **Jim McMurtry** for "Schools Providing New Food for Thought"

• **Anny Schaefer** for "Corporate Involvement in School Survey"

30 years ago

School staffs are increasingly being given the right to develop the educational policies they believe will be of most benefit to the students of their schools. School trustees in various parts of the province have recognized that no one is in a better position to make sensible decisions about what should go on in schools than the teaching staffs, and have agreed to give them greater authority for educational decisions. For the past three years the BCTF has been encouraging the formation and use of staff committees in schools. (*BC Teacher*, September/October 1971)

10 years ago

Peace River North teachers reached a contract settlement, 102 days into the longest teachers' strike in provincial history. The strike, which started May 8, 1991, resulted in teachers' achieving a mainstream agreement consistent with other agreements won throughout the province. (*Teacher Newsmagazine*, September 1991)

Chris Bocking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich

• **Lucia Wolfe** for "Businesses Target Students"

Picture Story

Nancy Knickerbocker and **Peter Owens** for "Community Spirit Blooms in Grandview Garden," September 2000.

— Kathleen Smith

Notice to members: In-dispute lifted in West Vancouver

This is to advise you that as a result of a decision of the Labour Relations Board of British Columbia (LRB), the BCTF Executive Committee has lifted the in-dispute designation related to the "for fee" CHILD program offered by School District 45 (West Vancouver).

In its decision of June 15, 2001, the LRB has ordered the BCTF to:

1. rescind the in-dispute designation and to cease and desist from making any such further designation or declaration, and
2. communicate to all BCTF members that the in-dispute designation and the refusal to perform the CHILD program work, were held by the LRB to constitute an unlawful strike declaration and strike under the Labour Relations Code.

The LRB decision did not focus on the political concerns to our organization. The decision does not preclude the association or the BCTF from pursuing a continued campaign of political opposition to this program or from pursuing other legal remedies that may be available to us.

Members should contact either the BCTF or the West Vancouver Teachers' Association if you have more questions on this issue.

— Al Cornes

10 new BCTF lesson aids

1 LA 1002—The Editing Book
Shirley M. Campbell, 183 p., ©2000, \$27.95.

Coil-bound handbook provides simple, straight-forward information on writing forcefully, organizing and writing different types of essays and reports, analyzing poems and stories, recognizing and correcting sentence errors, and applying appropriate usage and punctuation. It contains models of good writing and an answer key to exercises that support the text. *Grades 8-12.*

2 LA 2040—A Culture of Peace, A Teaching Unit on Alternatives to War and Violent Conflict. Patrick Clarke, 57 p. ©2000. Co-Development Canada Association, \$18.95.

Written to help students develop an understanding of the causes and consequences of violent conflict and war, understand the concepts of conflict and peaceful resolution, and understand the potential for "a culture of peace," and be able to apply conflict resolution concepts to situations where violent conflict is present or possible. The unit is presented in four parts—Why War? The Reality of War; Alternatives to War and Conflict, and Building a Culture to Peace. Includes teacher information sheets and student handouts. Suitable for: Social Studies 11 and History 12 in conjunction with focus on 20th century conflicts; Social Studies 9 with study on war and revolution; English as a part of a thematic study on war and conflict; and as a library resource for independent projects on war and conflict. *Secondary.*

3 LA 2057—Us and Them: Canadian identity and Race Relations. Tabata Productions Inc., 45-min. videocassette, \$39.95

This award-winning documentary features the views of nine Canadian high school students as they discuss topics concerning Canadian youth. These young people come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and cultures—Quebecois, anglophone European, First Nations, Asian, and West Indian. Using passionate examples and personal experience, they explore important issues such as national unity, the spectre of Quebec separation, multiculturalism, First Nations self-government, our relationship with the United States, globalization, and what lies ahead for the 21st century. Their revealing comments emphasize the great strengths of Canada, as well as those issues to face that have been ignored by earlier generations of Canadians. The video brings vital topics for Canadian society into the classroom in a way that is both engaging and thought-provoking and comes with a teacher's guide written by Patrick Clarke specifically developed with application to Social Studies IRPs for Grades 8-11. *Secondary.*

4 LA 2332—Violence, (Bullying) What's That? Produced by Learning Through Drama, 23 p. ©2000, \$12

This unit looks at violence and bullying through the eyes of counsellors-in-training. This process drama is planned in three sections with role plays and activities, and includes a script for the teacher's initial convenience and guidance. Prescribed learning outcomes for drama, visual arts, language arts and personal planning. *Grades 4-12.*

5 LA 2575 How Music Came to the World and Other Stories. Produced by Vancouver Society of Storytelling, 3 CDs and 47p. guide, ©2000, \$22

This 3 CD set features 12 stories about musical instruments from around the world, enhanced with photographs, text, and video clips. This ground-breaking resource is a collaboration of world music artists and storytellers. *Elementary and Secondary.*

6 LA 8455—Thinking Skills—Grades 1-2. Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 88 p., ©2000, \$19.95

Nourish your Grade 1 & 2 students' thinking with challenges—questions to be answered, solutions to be found, and discoveries to be made. The 44 lessons in critical thinking presented here are each comprised of, a chart that poses a problem or question, notes to the teacher with suggestions and an answer key, and a reproducible student page to be used with that chart or as follow-up practice. The variety of activities in this book will strengthen students' thinking skills and enhance learning. The charts and student pages help students to think critically, think logically, think creatively, and solve problems. Clear charts and graphs are highlighted by cute, comical illustrations throughout this book. All 88 pages are perforated for easy removal. (Note that the book is published in the USA and contains some US-based standards). *Grades 1-2.*

7 LA 9307—Canada and the World Map Book 3. Apple Press. 48 p. ©2001, \$15.95

This is the third in a series of activity books designed to develop map skills. This book introduces Grades 4-5 readers to the special language of maps. Topics include landforms and water bodies on a map, interpreting a map legend, map boundaries, reading a map grid, latitude and longitude, and using map scale to solve a problem. *Grades 4-5.*

8 LA 9308—British Columbia—Land and People. Apple Press. 40 p. ©2000, \$14.95

Topics in this activity book include a cross-section of British Columbia, the Cordillera, climate, the Fraser River system, preserving a temperate rainforest, and natural resources. Other topics include Aboriginal place names, a traditional winter lodge, the Cariboo gold rush, fruit growing, copper mining, Pacific Rim National Park, the provincial capital city and emblems of British Columbia. Maps are also included to develop skills such as comparing a street map to an air photo, interpreting map symbols and using a map grid. *Grades 4-6.*

9 LA 9904—The Grade 1 Classroom and Multifaceted Intelligence. Maureen Millar Turney. 32 p. ©2000, \$5

This unit outlines practical applications of multiple intelligences theories in the primary classroom. Twelve identified intelligences are outlined. Included is an overview of a system for mixing and matching intelligences on a regular basis and how to prepare a teaching program and classroom so that none of the 12 intelligences are ignored. *Grade 1.*

10 LA 9966—The Master Teacher by Dan Lukiv. ©2001, \$6.50

This collection of published articles on survival for the modern teacher have been published in a variety of international education magazines. Fourteen chapters include a variety of subject topics such as sunglasses and evaluation, Lukiv's principles of instruction, motivation from a humanistic point of view, the curriculum god, the master teacher, you have learned to think, and burnout.

For a complete listing of over 900 BCTF Lesson Aids, consult the catalogue in your school library or the Lesson Aids online catalogue. www.bctf.ca/LessonAids

To order any of the above lesson aids enclose a cheque payable to the BCTF or authorized purchase order to BCTF Lesson Aids Service 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2. GST and postage/handling are included in the prices. Orders are sent by return mail.

Yours for the asking

Nine words most Canadians will never hear

"You have three minutes. Gather your family and leave."
"A Refugee Camp in the City" is an interactive exhibit that puts you in the shoes of a refugee. The outdoor exhibit, developed by Medecins sans frontieres/Doctors without Borders, is on a cross-Canada tour and stops in Vanier Park in Vancouver from October 25-29, 2001. Visitors to the exhibit will meet doctors, nurses, and non-medical volunteers who will explain the elements of survival (shelter, water, food, sanitation, vaccinations, education about landmines) for the 39 million people displaced by conflict in the world today.

During weekdays, there will be pre-scheduled 40-minute visits for middle and secondary-school students. MSF has developed a learning resource aimed at middle- and secondary-school teachers that can be used in conjunction with a field trip to the exhibit, or independently. The learning resource can be downloaded from www.msf.ca/refugeecamp. A virtual tour of a refugee camp, a learning resource on famine, and printable posters from the exhibit are also available on the Web site. All materials are available in both English and French.

To book a class visit to the exhibit, contact Emily Hines at 604-732-0673.

EnviroCareers

The Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry (CCHREI) has created the EnviroCareers resource package aimed at creating a greater awareness of the wide variety of environmental employment opportunities that exist. This product was designed for students in Grades 8 to 12, who are making career and educational decisions. The EnviroCareers package provides students with a detailed look at over 30 different environmental

occupations incorporating an interest-mapping tool, an interactive CD-based game and real-life practitioner profiles to engage students and spark their interest in environmental careers.

The package includes a Facilitator's Guide with lesson plans and curriculum matrices specific to each, an introductory video, an interactive CD-ROM, a printed career guide, and a variety of other resources. Preview these materials at www.cchrei.ca/ec.html.

Copies of EnviroCareers have been sent to every secondary school in Canada, to all employment centres, post-secondary institutions, and public libraries across the country.

For more information, contact Robert Lebel at envirocareers@cchrei.ca or call toll free at 1-800-890-1924.

Freedom from fear

The B.C. Ministry of Education is publishing and distributing the book, *Freedom from fear, the how-to guide on violence prevention, inspired by teens for teens*. The book shows how students, community groups, and schools can work together to prevent violence. A copy of the book will be sent to every high school in the province as part of the secondary school resource on harassment and intimidation.

This is a 60-page hands-on guide to creating a schools/community violence prevention partnership. It was co-created for SaltSpring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse (SWOVA) by a team of youth and adults. The book lays out the steps by which teens and adults can work together to develop and facilitate workshops on violence prevention for students of all ages. It outlines how to train students to become violence prevention workshop facilitators.

This book is part of the "Women and Violence: Education is Prevention" project, a partnership crime prevention project between SWOVA and SD #64 Southern Gulf Islands.

For more information or to order copies of the book *Freedom From Fear, the How-to Guide on Violence Prevention, Inspired by Teens for Teens*, visit www.saltspring.com/swova, Ph/fax: 250-537-1336, or at 390 Upper Ganges Road, SaltSpring Island, B.C., V8K 1R7. The book cost is \$12, plus \$3 for s&h.

Climate change awareness and action kits

These kits, developed by the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development, encourages students to take personal actions that lead to environmental and social solutions. BC Hydro has provided \$50,000 in funding to provide each secondary school in B.C. with one of the kits. BC Hydro is working in partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund (Wild BC), and the Pembina Institute to coordinate and deliver teacher training on the climate change kit. This project is one of the actions under B.C.'s three-year Climate Change Business Plan. Wild BC has a network of experienced facilitators throughout the province who will be delivering the teacher workshops.

For more information, teachers can call Wild BC toll free at 1-800-387-9853, ext. 6.

Nature's sweet mystery- Exploring food energy

The Canadian Sugar Institute Nutrition Information Service has an integrated curriculum resource for Grades 4-6. The resource addresses food chains, food production, the human digestive system, and healthy eating and physical activity. *Nature's Sweet Mystery* resource kit includes: teacher background information, including curriculum links, additional resource suggestions, reproducible diagrams and student activity sheets, and evaluation and assessment suggestions.

To receive one of these free, teacher-tested resource kits, contact Canadian Sugar Institute, Nutrition Information Service, 20 Bay Street, Ste. 620, Toronto, ON M5J 2R8, F: 416-368-6426, e-mail info@sugar.ca. Visit www.sugar.ca.

Quantities limited to one kit per teacher.

Grades 4 to 7 learning program

The Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education has a bilingual *Grades 4 to 7 Learning Program*. Building on the success of the Kindergarten to Grade 3 program that was launched last year, the program aims to teach children, ages 9 to 12 to *FightBAC!*™ against foodborne illness, by focussing on the four key messages: *Clean*-wash hands and surfaces often, *Cook*-cook to proper temperatures, *Chill*-refrigerate promptly, and *Separate*-don't cross-contaminate.

The program consists of a teacher's guide, poster, and video that can be used to inspire school-aged children to discover the science behind food safety.

To order, contact the partnership at 613-798-3042 or visit www.canfightbac.org in the classroom section and download the files. You can also obtain copies of the Kindergarten to Grade 3 Program upon request.

Generations CanConnect

Many schools and voluntary organizations across Canada have undertaken a challenging online educational activity called Generations CanConnect (GCC). This program is an Industry Canada initiative that promotes intergenerational communication through the use of technology.

Under the supervision of an adult project leader, youth first interview older Canadians to learn about their life experiences. Youth then write stories of a minimum of 150 words and produce a web site incorporating their stories and images using

provided templates. Then, their published work becomes part of the GCC Web site at <http://generations.canconnect.ic.gc.ca>.

If you would like to integrate GCC into the curriculum of your classroom or organization, encourage youth to interview Canadians on specific themes—cultural diversity, health, beliefs, holidays, religion, acts of heroism, accomplishments, careers, special people, historic events, music, animals, inventions, technology, food, etc. As a bonus, each completed project including a home page, an introduction and a minimum of 15 profiles, and a final report, will receive incentive funding of \$300.

One of the last project milestones is marked by a celebration event hosted by the participating school or organization. The event is a perfect time to gather all of the individuals involved to showcase the completed Internet-based project. As part of the program, the celebration event is also a great opportunity to have an Internet awareness session for the older Canadians that were initially interviewed. This initiative will help youth contribute to the development of their communities as well as increasing their chances for future employment by getting them introduced to information technology.

Over 440 schools and organizations have created Generations CanConnect projects that are posted on the Web for all to view.

Generations CanConnect will help older Canadians to be models and mentors to youth while developing their own knowledge and skills using the information highway. Take advantage of the numerous benefits offered by Generations CanConnect. A digital archive of stories and photos, program information and the registration form is available at <http://generations-canconnect.ic.gc.ca> for everyone to enjoy. For more information, contact the Generations CanConnect team at 1-800-575-9200.



What's new on the web?

The BCTF home page has a new look!

Read about current issues on the top page and follow the links for more information. Send a fax to your MLA about essential services legislation. The Index gives you direct links to all of the major categories on the BCTF web site. We are highlighting

Bargaining, which is a Federation priority.

We are linking to several sites that feature current labour news, including www.rabble.ca, and are promoting external observances and events, such as International Literacy Day and World Teachers' Day.

Check it out at www.bctf.ca

La rentrée 2001

Vos chefs syndicaux se sont réunis pendant l'été pour discuter de l'état des négociations et adopter un plan d'action. Ce sera un automne important pour tous les membres de la Fédération compte tenu des événements politiques de l'été et on vous demandera à maintes reprises de faire preuve de solidarité.

Quoique l'automne soit exigeant avec le début des classes, la mise en marche des programmes d'études et les premières rencontres avec les parents, réservez-vous de l'énergie pour soutenir la Fédération. Assistez aux réunions d'information organisées par votre syndicat local afin de bien comprendre les enjeux et de participer pleinement au débat. Ce n'est qu'en démontrant une présence forte et articulée qu'on atteindra nos objectifs.

Il faut plus que jamais appuyer nos chefs de file et offrir notre appui lorsqu'ils en feront la demande. Il importe de se tenir au courant de la

situation, ce que vous pouvez faire en visitant le site électronique de la FECB, en lisant les bulletins de négociations disponibles en ligne en français et au baillard syndical de votre école et en étant présents aux réunions syndicales. Ce qui assurera le succès de cette ronde de négociations, ce sera la confiance et l'esprit de solidarité que démontreront les membres dans leurs discussions et leurs assemblées. L'unité fait la force et, par les temps qui courent, nous devons faire front commun.

Bonne rentrée 2001!

- Paule Desgroseilliers

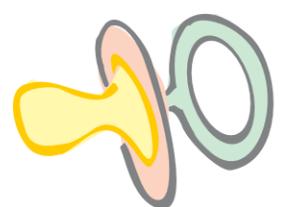
Synopsis

This article reminds teachers of the need for solidarity and of the importance of keeping informed. Teachers should plan on attending meetings organized by their local to understand what is at stake and to participate fully in the debate. In order to meet the Federation's objectives, teachers need to work together and to support their union leadership.

Notice to teachers who took maternity leave in Manitoba

If you are a teacher who has taken maternity leave(s) from a Manitoba school division prior to August 18, 2000—and you are not currently collecting your Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund (TRAF) pension—you are now eligible to purchase period(s) of maternity leave as pensionable service. Parental leaves and personal leaves are not purchasable.

If interested, you must apply to purchase those leave(s) before July 3, 2002. Contact TRAF, Rm. 330, Johnston Terminal, 25 Forks Market Road, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4S8 for a purchase request form.



Every Kid Counts:

A History of Vancouver's Inner-city Schools

by Noel Herron

The writing of the history of inner-city schools in Vancouver took much longer than I expected. Working closely with Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association's Inner-city Teachers' Sector, chaired by an enthusiastic Sam Phillipoff, the varied materials and controversial issues we dealt with seemed to expand exponentially.

We started with the historic 1974 North East Sector Project (NESP) (an area of Vancouver stretching from Main to Boundary, bordered on the south by Broadway and on the north by Burrard Inlet), through the issuing in 1988 of the principals' position paper, and on to the more recent efforts to establish more precise inner-city selection criteria, the history endeavours to chart the ups and downs of a reform movement that had a very significant impact on city schools and on many schools across the province.

It took courage and conviction by Sam Phillipoff and his NESP colleagues in the early 1970s to protest, in a widely distributed open letter, the blatant inequities of inner-city schools. These ranged from hungry kids, bleak playgrounds, inadequate resources, and grinding poverty, to disenfranchised parents. Their call for immediate action, while it caused considerable dissension among the ranks of teacher organizations, certainly did not merit the quiet campaign that smeared NESP supporters as radical socialist ideologues.

Given the conservative temper of the times and despite strong BCTF support, the negative response from both the Vancouver School Board and the Department of Education was hardly surprising. Although NESP's much-needed reforms, many addressing the dramatically changing demographics of city schools, were roundly



Student lunch program at Queen Alexander Elementary School, Vancouver.

rejected, they ultimately had a far-reaching impact on such areas as race relations, class size, curriculum relevancy, and parental participation.

However, it was not until the late 1980s that Vancouver's inner-city principals, by pointing to the unequal opportunities and outcomes (see Equity of education outcomes) between east- and west-side schools, that the Vancouver Inner-city Project came into being. At the same time as inner-city principals were calling for "a new framework" for their schools, the explosive issue of hungry kids burst on the public scene. Accounts by teachers, support staff, and principals of malnourished kids put great pressure on the intransigent Social Credit government of the day. Outrageous remarks by Premier Bill Van der Zalm and a mean-spirited directive by his Minister of Social Services and Housing, Claude Richmond (currently Speaker of the Legislative Assembly), ordering teachers to name "delinquent" parents, added to the uproar. It would take a change of government

two years later to bring relief through the setting up of a provincial food program. A history of inner-city schools in Vancouver would not be complete without an account of the struggles of two schools—Macdonald and Hastings. Although both schools used different approaches to obtain support, they shared a steely determination to improve the lot of kids at risk. Macdonald School, with a 50% First Nations population, adopted high-profile strategies over a two-year period. These involved a walkathon by parent Lana Wright from Prince Rupert to Vancouver and a 40-day camp out on school board grounds to draw attention to their difficulties. Hastings parents, over a six-year period, opted for a more traditional but equally determined approach using board presentations, letter and brief writing, freedom of information requests, and ultimately the setting up of a new organization called Vancouver Inner-city Parents (VICP). Parent groups in both schools felt disenfranchised by

an unresponsive board.

Many good news stories emerged from the history of these schools with innovative board, school, and community-based initiatives garnering widespread recognition. Community support in many areas was outstanding, and the untold story of the feeding of hungry kids by the former custodian and his wife at Carleton School for two years is a good example. Other issues we looked at were: the revolving door of inner-city school staffs; the need for specific pre-service and in-service for inner-city teachers and administrators; and the disproportionate and corrosive effect of 10 years of cutbacks on instructional programs. The history concludes with a chapter entitled "Envisioning the Future," based in part on a one-day inner-city forum convened by VESTA on January 31, 2001.

As the writing of this book drew to a close, the 16 months seemed at times like an eternity. However, time was irrelevant as this was a story that needed to be told. I hope that I have told it well.

Every Kid Counts is described by Joyce Preston (Child, Youth and Family Advocate, 1995-2001) as "a systemic advocacy case study," which "provides a road map of where we have been and where we need to go." The book will be released at a book launch at the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library, 7:30 p.m. on September 24, 2001. It will be sold through the BCTF Lesson Aid Service—LA SR 210, for \$17 (including postage.)

Equity of educational outcomes

Goal

The goal of the Inner-City School Project is to improve equity of educational outcomes for children living in poverty who are confronted with a critical mass of issues that challenge their learning.

Objectives

1. Increase reading, writing, and math scores as measured by authentic assessment instruments, so that every child is at or above grade level.
2. Increase access to material and human resources so that each child's learning needs are met.
3. Ensure that a safe, nurturing, caring, and respectful learning environment exists for every child.
4. Increase social, emotional, educational, and psychological support for inner-city students and families, particularly for those most at risk.
5. Provide quality recreational, fine arts, sports, cultural, and leadership activities for all inner-city children.

— Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association



Sheila Pither wins G.A. Fergusson Award

The 2001 BCTF Annual General Meeting honoured the outstanding contributions of Sheila Pither by awarding her the G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award. Sheila's work as an educator, activist, local president, mediator, chairperson of the Judicial Council, and member of the BCTF staff made her a familiar and deeply respected figure to many teachers across the province.

Never one to be around to accept the praise she so richly deserved, Sheila—now retired—was in Namibia training that country's teacher unionists when the award was presented.

— Don Briard

How to become a BCTF - endorsed candidate for the College of Teachers

The B.C. College of Teachers is the regulatory body of the teaching profession in B.C. The college has a focused mandate: teacher education, teacher certification, and member discipline.

Responsibility for governing the college rests with the 20-person council. Of the 20 council members, 15 are elected by the membership and five are appointed (two by cabinet, two by the minister of education, and one nominated by the deans of the faculties of education). The role of a council member is to make policy decisions, to make quasi-judicial decisions concerning individuals and institutions, to represent the college on various external committees, and to communicate with members.

Elections are held in each of the 15 geographic zones. Elections are held in even-numbered years in the even-numbered zones, and in odd-

numbered years in the odd-numbered zones.

This year's elections will be held in the following even-numbered zones, West Kootenay (2), Mainline Cariboo (4), Surrey (6), Vancouver (8), South Coast (10), North (12), and North Island (14). The term of office is two years, from August 1 to July 31.

The BCTF has established a policy that provides for the zonal selection of a BCTF-endorsed candidate in each zone where an election is being held. Only active BCTF members are eligible for BCTF endorsement as candidates in B.C. College of Teachers' elections. Each local has the right to select one nominee. This nominee must be endorsed by an executive, delegate assembly, or general meeting of the local. Each local nominee must undertake to abide by the endorsement process.

Once a local has nominated a candidate, the name of the candidate will be forwarded to

locals in the zone by the BCTF. Each local in the zone will conduct a vote to determine the zone's BCTF-endorsed candidate by secret ballot in accordance with BCTF procedures.

The BCTF will publicize, among members, the names of all BCTF-endorsed candidates. The BCTF provides funding to assist local nominees in seeking endorsement to become the BCTF-endorsed candidate in a college zone. The BCTF also provides funding to assist endorsed candidates in the College elections.

If you are interested in being considered as your local nominee for the BCTF-endorsed candidate in one of the even-numbered zones, please contact your local president by January 15, 2002.

If you have questions about the BCTF College election procedures, contact Mike Lombardi, BCTF staff (1-800-663-9163, mlombardi@bctf.ca).

— Mike Lombardi



PETER OWENS PHOTO

(L-R) Pam Joyce, Sooke, Neil Worboys, BCTF 1st vice-president, David Chudnovsky, BCTF president, Jinny Sims, BCTF 2nd vice-president, Debra Thame, Terrace, and Todd Williams, Princeton, spoke at a rally outside the Premier's constituency office.

ACTION PLAN from page 1

teachers. Todd Williams, a first-year teacher from Princeton, had a few questions for the premier:

"Mr. Campbell, do you think it is essential to have enough text books for all my students?" His voice quivered as he posed the next question: "Mr. Campbell, do you think it is essential that I be

...the Premier regularly used to take his own children out of school for two weeks prior to the Christmas break to take them to Maui.

able to feed and clothe my family without asking for handouts?"

"As a first-year chemistry teacher I made \$37,000 last year. I have a student loan of \$51,000. Yet a friend who graduated with the same qualifications in chemistry as I have made \$75,000 last year in the private sector," Williams said.

"Mr. Campbell it is essential that you keep teachers like me in the public education system. It's about time that you told the BCPSEA to get to the table and negotiate a fair collective agreement with teachers."

Many rally participants were moved to tears by Williams's heartfelt words. After he finished, Chudnovsky and members of the bargaining team delivered a basket of apples to Campbell's office, each one bearing a tiny flag with one of the bargaining objectives written on it.

Keep in touch! Members are urged to contact their staff reps or local presidents early in September to find out the date of their local general meetings.

For updates on events as they unfold this fall, please sign on to the BCTF e-alert, a new feature which will let you know about new information as it is posted to the Federation Web site. Just follow the links under "mailing lists" on the home page at www.bctf.ca to sign up.

Members are urged to contact their staff reps or local presidents early in September to find out the date of their local general meetings.

Nancy Knickerbocker is the BCTF's media relations officer.

The nurses' dispute: Lessons learned for teacher negotiations

by Al Cornes

With the introduction of essential services legislation, much of our attention has become focussed on how we should deal with it and what it means to our ability to successfully conclude a new collective agreement.

So, it is worthwhile looking at the nurses' dispute and their struggle for a new contract—a contract that was ultimately imposed upon them by the new Liberal government.

From the nurses' dispute there is both good news and bad news.

The good news is that nurses collectively and individually won tremendous public support for the work and wages of the nursing profession. Struggles for significant salary increases can be long and hard but at the height of the BCNU dispute over 61% of the public said the demand to increase wages to \$35 per hour was reasonable.

The other good news is, while the contract was ultimately imposed, the nurses through their collective job action and

The pre-conditions for effective change are trust, goodwill, and co-operation between government and healthcare workers.

political strategies were able to achieve a 23.5% increase over a three-year period. By early 2003, level one full-time nurses at the maximum step will be earning \$61,844 per year, up from the current level of \$49,799. The maximum step reflects the category placement of a vast majority of nurses in the province and does not include any overtime worked. While many nurses working at this wage level hold 4-year undergraduate degrees, attainment of this wage level does not require a university degree. Under their new contract, nurses require a total

of nine years of service to reach maximum.

By contrast an average B.C. teacher at category 4 maximum makes \$52,644 per year and would therefore require a \$9,200 raise to maintain parity with the level 1 nurse by early 2003. An increase of \$9,200 would require a teacher grid increase of 17.5% by mid-2003.

On the bad-news side, the contract was imposed through legislation. The government, with no notice to the nurses' representatives, simply moved to impose a new contract. The imposed contract included three concessions—the lengthening of the grid from six steps to nine, the weakening of seniority rights related to casual call-in, and the reduction of rights for part-time overtime pay. Debra MacPherson and other BCNU representatives met with Minister of Labour Graham Bruce to put one more offer forward in an attempt to reach a fair collective agreement; not one word was said by him or other government representatives. The next day, legislation was introduced to impose the employer's last offer.

What are the lessons of this dispute?

Lesson 1: Solidarity, political and job actions pay off, even in the face of legislation—teachers know this from our own struggles.

The nurses led the way with membership and public support. At the outset of negotiations, the Health Employers' Association of British Columbia (HEABC) had proposed nine major concessions with no money offer on the table. Shortly before the 95% strike vote, the employer tabled a three-year offer of 11% over three years.

By the time the nurses reached their 96% rejection vote, HEABC had removed many of the concession demands and tabled a salary offer of 23.5% over three years.

The workplace job action of refusing to work overtime was buttressed with a strong public relations campaign.

Nurses throughout the province publicly expressed support for the actions of their union in working to achieve a significant salary increase.

We must do the same. We must demonstrate to both employer and public that the gains we seek represent better learning conditions for students and fair working conditions for

teachers—you cannot have one without the other.

Lesson 2: Government must come to the realization that this type of arbitrary and ill-conceived legislation doesn't foster workplace co-operation and stability, nor will it ensure that the issues that led to the dispute are resolved or that disruption to services will end.

The government creation of employer bargaining agents such as HEABC and BCPSEA, that are distant and uncaring of the conditions in the workplace, has done nothing to solve the real problems in health and education. Indeed, these shadow employer/government agents have consistently advocated contract stripping, causing tension, conflict, and disruption.

Fair, free collective bargaining without outsider interference by either government or others is what has always been embraced as a human right by this country, and internationally, by the United Nations and the International Labour Organization. Collective bargaining is a system by which leaders and employers exchange ideas and solve problems, developing stable relationships through collaboratively establishing rules in a collective agreement.

An imposed collective agreement arbitrarily changes time rules and destroys time relationships, setting the stage for long-term acrimony and confusion.

Unfair laws serve to poison work environments and in some instances heighten militancy. The vicious circle is evident in nurses' strikes in Alberta. The fact that nurses' strikes are routinely declared illegal has not stopped four strikes from occurring in the last two decades. The imposition of fines (\$400,000 in 1988 for contempt of court injunction) has made little difference. In 2001, striking nurses, supported by the public, forced an embarrassed government to agree to the highest wages for nurses in Canada by providing a 22% increase over two years. (It was these same Alberta wages that the BCNU targeted for parity.)

Most recently, nurses in Nova Scotia secured a 17% wage increase after nurses struck in the face of return-to-work legislation passed by the legislature. The government caved in after nurses' solidarity forced them to not use the draconian legislation.

Lesson 3: No one in the public is served if the real goal of the relationship between government and nurses is to work co-operatively to make improvements to our healthcare system. The pre-conditions for effective change are trust, good-

will, and co-operation between government and healthcare workers.

Undoubtedly, these will be rare commodities in our healthcare system for some time.

Teachers, students, and parents understand the importance of working together for the success of the students in our schools.

These messages regarding arbitrary changes and interference with the collective bargaining rules must be sent to the new government. Teachers will achieve a fair collective agreement that meets the needs of teachers and students—but disruption is much more likely when government interferes and aids employers by stripping basic human rights.

Al Cornes is the BCTF's assistant executive director.

Case against essential service designation

by Jim Sinclair and Angela Schira

The right to freedom of association—the right to organize—is empty without the right to free collective bargaining and its counterpart, the right to strike. Unless workers have a collective ability to exert pressure on their employer through withdrawal of their labour, the legal right to organize is of little or no value.

These rights are protected under the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 98, which recognizes and affirms the right to strike. The ILO acknowledges that the right to strike may be qualified in the case of essential services, which it defines as those "where there is existence of a clear and imminent threat to the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population."

Public employees deliver a tremendous range of vital services, from garbage collection to hospital care, every day in every B.C. community. None are unimportant. All are vital, but not all are so critical to the health and well-being of British Columbians, that the fundamental rights of the workers delivering the service must be stripped away.

Education is one of those vital, but not essential services.

Although the new government has long campaigned to "make education an essential service," there has been obvious confusion among Liberal spokespeople about just what is intended.



PETER OWENS PHOTO

BCTF 1st Vice-President Neil Worboys holds a basket of apples each bearing a tiny flag with one of the BCTF bargaining objectives on it.

The Liberal party campaign platform, for example, vowed to “restore education as an essential service under the Labour Relations Code to ensure that no child’s right to an education is denied during strikes and lockouts.”

Before the election, the party’s education critic said strikes and picket lines would continue. “Answering the phone would not be considered essential, there would be some degree of reduced cleanliness...several classes might be put together and taught by one teacher.”

Then-opposition leader Gordon Campbell told the B.C. Teachers’ Federation the same month that the law would “protect workers’ right to strike while ensuring students are able to safely access school and classroom services throughout the collective bargaining process. Students being in school, learning from their teachers, is essential.”

Education Ministry Christy Clark took this thought a step further in an interview June 30, when she acknowledged that the government had not yet decided how to distinguish between essential and non-essential teachers.

“Non-essential teachers” will retain the right to strike. Others will be compelled to teach because “the magic that happens in a classroom between a teacher and a student is what education is all about, right?”

A teacher present under duress, a dirty school, a dead switchboard, a classroom designed for 25 holding 50 or 75 children—where is the magic in all of this?

The government’s confusion is understandable because there is no logical, moral, or legal basis to deny any teachers or school support for workers on the right to strike.

Nor is there any evidence that the existence of the right to strike has had a noticeable negative impact on student performance.

Since 1992, B.C. K-12 students have lost an average of only 27 minutes per student per year to teacher job action.

According to the provincial government’s own reporting, academic achievement in our province is high, a tribute to our children, our teachers, our families, and the public education system we have built. The public school system routinely graduates more students qualified for university entrance than the province’s universities can accommodate, despite steady increases in post-secondary spaces. The right to strike in education has not produced any setback for our children.

Exactly what is government seeking to fix?

As Paul Weiler has noted in his classic analysis, public perceptions about essential services flow from two judgments. This first is that the nature of the service is such that

“the public cannot do without it, at least without absorbing unacceptable harm.” Secondly, if the employees go on strike, there is no ready alternative to supply that need.

These concepts are reflected in the Labour Relations Code requirement for designation as essential “those facilities, productions, and services that the board considers necessary or essential to prevent immediate and serious danger to the health, safety, or welfare of residents in British Columbia.”

The labour movement has conceded the necessity of essential service designations in circumstances that truly meet the Labour Relations Code test. Police, fire, and ambulance services are clear examples of such services. They are provided exclusively by a single agency 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to guarantee basic protection to life and property.

Nurses, paramedical professionals, and health support workers fit, to varying degrees, within these boundaries. Health-care workers have accepted the essential service designation as a necessary compromise to achieve the legal right to strike, which both health employers and health workers realized was a pre-condition for effective collective bargaining.

What about doctors? It is noteworthy that the current government did not advocate legislative remedies, when it was in opposition, to end the prolonged withdrawal of service by northern doctors in the past year. This strike—for that is what it was—hobbled hospital and emergency services for weeks. Doctors did not provide essential services. Doctors themselves determined when they would provide service and how, although their work appears to fall squarely within the definition of essential service.

How do teachers and school support workers fit within this definition? Certainly there is no health or public-safety aspect to education. We don’t require children to attend school after they turn 16. Before that, their absence for almost any reason can be secured by a parent’s note.

School boards routinely add and delete certain programs, particularly music and art, for funding or administrative reasons. Severe snowstorms can

result in closures of several days.

The entire system closes for two months of the year in the summer and two or three additional weeks for Christmas and spring break. There is no public outcry or demand for alternative facilities.

This is very far from the nature of service provided by police and ambulance paramedics. It was precisely this type of distinction spelled out by Finance Minister Gary Collins in a recent interview regarding the Greater Vancouver transit dispute.

“We’re very mindful of the impact it’s having on a lot of people, but that’s the way the process works,” he said. “It is an inconvenience, it’s a huge inconvenience to some people, but it’s not life and limb. It’s not health and safety.”

Yet education is apparently so critical that the government proposes to eliminate the right to strike for the overwhelming majority of employees it expects to work “magic” in the classroom. (The government has, as yet, made no suggestion it will extend this policy to the post-secondary sector.)

There is no experience to justify this intervention, no moral basis for it and no evidence the government has proposed a workable alternative.

One need only consider the healthcare crisis in Nova Scotia, where elimination of bargaining rights has sparked mass resignations of health workers, to see the futility of legislative attempts to suppress the right to strike.

Those seeking precedents for declaring education an essential service will look in vain. Such action is unprecedented in Canada.

Why is the government so determined to proceed? In part, this is a response to the inconvenience experienced by parents in recent disputes. Of course, no one likes inconvenience, but if strikes were convenient for all concerned they would achieve little at the bargaining table. It would be convenient, and highly desirable from a social standpoint, to have public early childhood education for children in their pre-school years. That service does not exist.

We can only conclude that K-12 employers, who have never succeeded in negotiating a

collective agreement with their employees without third-party intervention, are seeking a decisive weapon to achieve their long-standing objectives for rollbacks in teacher and school support workers’ collective agreements.

What they could not achieve by free negotiation, they now hope to achieve through compulsion.

Arguably, strike action in the education sector puts more pressure on the striking workers and affected families—both parents and children—than it does on school employers. It is the strikers, after all, not school administrators, who forgo pay in pursuit of contract improvements or to defeat contract rollbacks.

School boards and administrators, by contrast, never miss a day’s pay and may even find it easier to balance their budgets.

Yet the prospect of a school strike focusses school employers on the bargaining table. Political pressure produces a climate for resolution that simple bargaining without the threat of job action cannot. Negotiation with no pressure for resolution—a toothless “right to strike” that limits job action to counsellors, for example—is a recipe for longer, more bitter disputes.

Elimination of the right to strike in education not only undermines free collective bargaining, it attacks the public education system.

A quality public education system must, as Clark has acknowledged, have respect for teachers as a core value. That respect must be reflected in appropriate pay and working conditions. It requires class sizes that are manageable, specialist services, and safe, well-equipped facilities. Those conditions can and must be reflected in freely negotiated collective agreements. The right to strike is a fundamental element of those free negotiations.

We urge the government to maintain free collective bargaining and the unrestricted right to strike in the education sector.

Jim Sinclair is president of the B.C. Federation of Labour. Angela Schira is secretary-treasurer.

Source: *Victoria Times Colonist*, July 23, 2001.



BCTF Bargaining team member Kelly Shields presents basket at Premier Campbell’s constituency office.

In the event of job action, you need an independent e-mail server

Members are encouraged to subscribe to an internet service provider other than school-district servers this fall to ensure access to BCTF information in the event of job action. If job action is initiated, school district servers will be neither reliable nor secure.

Bargaining information is updated regularly at www.bctf.ca and members will want to be able to stay informed.

Members are also encouraged to sign up on *bctf-e-alert* to be notified of new information posted to the web.

To sign up, go to www.bctf.ca click on Mailing lists and follow the directions.

The nurses’ campaign illustrated the importance of all members being informed and talking to friends, family, neighbours, and the media.

New advertising campaign

We have launched an advertising campaign to support our bargaining objectives. It consists of two 30-second TV commercials, four 10-second spots sponsoring closed captioning, banner ads on www.mybc.com, and a new web site, www.BCTeachersForBCKids.ca.

The first TV commercial began running on August 29 and is a series of testimonials by people interviewed on the street. They tell real stories about real teachers who made a difference in their lives. The ad informs the public that we are bargaining for smaller class-size limits in order to provide more individualized attention. There are three versions of this ad.

The second TV commercial began running on September 17 and it shows four real teachers interacting with students. It calls on the public to support teachers as they bargain for their first real salary increase in nine years.



The four closed captioning spots will highlight some of our bargaining objectives.

The banner ads on www.mybc.com will attempt to draw people to our new web site www.BCTeachersForBCKids.ca

where parents and the public will be informed about what is happening in bargaining and some of the issues facing teachers this fall.

To stay informed you are encouraged to sign up to *bctf-e-*

alert. You can sign up by going to www.bctf.ca, clicking on Mailing lists and following directions. If you sign up you will be informed every time something new is added to the BCTF web site

— Peter Owens.

Health and safety

Essential services legislation threatens health and safety

by Lynne Sinclair

Essential services in labour relations was introduced in some sectors µlike health care and police to ensure that people's health and safety was not in danger. The Liberal government has turned that on its head by imposing essential services on education. Ironically, designating education as an essential service puts teacher and student health and safety at risk.

Teachers will have to be vigilant this fall about their



health and safety because the new legislation threatens our working conditions. In the face of government interference, teachers' right to bargain essential working conditions is threatened. These conditions include class size, the provision of clean and safe workplaces, adequate time to do our work, and other provisions that must be in place to protect the health and safety of teachers and students. It was only when teachers won the right to strike in 1987 that any of these conditions were placed in our collective agreements where they could be enforced. Prior to that, the few provisions that did exist had no teeth. Contracts only addressed monetary items, not those that affected our working lives and our health.

History has proven that all-out strikes, taken when bargaining has broken down, quickly resolve disputes in education because of the pressure put on both parties. With limited job-action opportunities, disputes are likely to fester and relationships founder.

Research shows that stressful workplaces have more accidents. If teacher workloads remain at unacceptable levels, if teachers' rights are stripped and relationships sour, workplace injuries and illnesses will increase. If class size is not reduced, if preparation time is not increased, if staffing ratios are not established, teacher health and safety is at risk and the learning of students is threatened. If teachers are not respected and paid a fair salary, morale suffers and so does health and safety.

Don't fall into fall

The number one WCB claim by teachers in B.C. is caused by falling, either on the same level or from a height. Our members have been seriously injured in accidents caused by the employer's failure to ensure that our workplaces are healthy and safe. Our workplaces are busy, stressful, and tense. The pace of our working lives contributes to the increasing number of WCB claims for workplace injuries and illnesses (15% increase from

1995 to 1999). Peak time for injuries is the fall, just before Winter or Spring break, and near the end of the school year.

In one case, a teacher's chair collapsed, causing significant back, neck, and shoulder injuries; the chair had been reported as broken many months ago and was supposed to have been replaced. In another, a teacher fell on a very slippery school hallway, tearing the tendons of her knee and causing injuries that will require hip surgery. Teachers who have no access to ladders or who have no time to get a ladder, fall from desks or chairs as they attempt to hang learning materials or display lesson aids and student work. Cutting corners due to lack of time and trying to do too many things at once leads to injuries and illnesses.

Stripping rights creates more stress

While physical traumas are more easily dealt with in the healthcare system and by WCB wages and benefits, psychological traumas are just as devastating to teachers but are more difficult to address. The cumulative stress of excessive workloads, large class sizes, class composition, and lack of respect can cause or contribute to serious health concerns such as sleeplessness, depression, and even chronic illnesses such as arthritis, multiple sclerosis or cancer. The stripping of teacher bargaining rights will only add stress and threaten our health; it will not solve our problems.

Germs go back to school, too

Germ warfare will begin all over again this fall—flu, colds, coughs, chicken pox—you know the list. Remember that these are WCB claims and must be filed. We're stressed, our immune systems are affected by that stress, and we become more susceptible to those germs the students and other staff bring to school.

Where to get help

School health and safety committees must be in place. Our members on committees are trained and should be able to help. The BCTF has a health and safety training program that

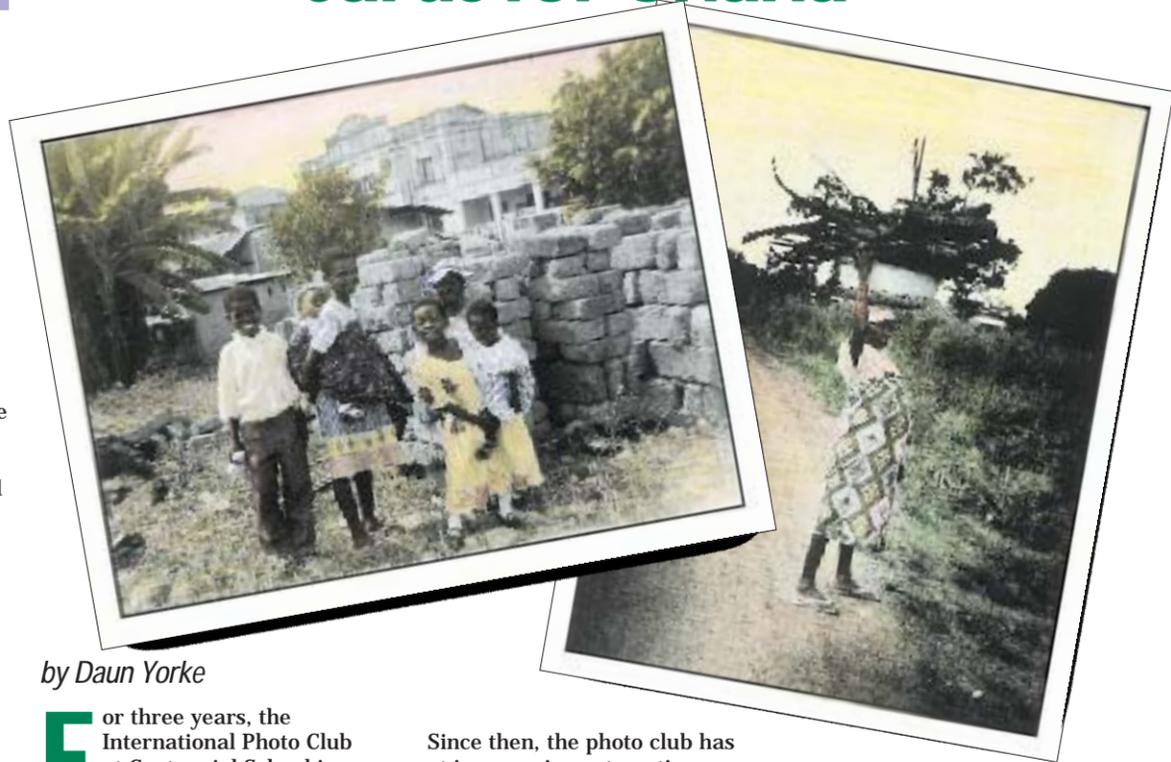


offers workshops to committee members. For further information, contact Peggy Wilson (pwilson@bctf.ca) or me (lsinclair@bctf.ca) at the BCTF.

If a claim is being filed, contact your local president for assistance. The Federation provides assistance on all claims, including advocacy for any claims-related appeals and a range of advice on either claims or prevention. For claims assistance, contact George Taylor (gtaylor@bctf.ca) in the Health and Safety Department at the BCTF.

Lynne Sinclair is a BCTF health and safety officer.

Cards for Ghana



by Daun Yorke

For three years, the International Photo Club at Centennial School in Coquitlam has been exchanging letters and photographs with peers in rural Ghana, West Africa. The project started with 30 black-and-white disposable cameras that were sent from Centennial to Odoben Secondary School.

The Ghanaian students photographed themselves, their families and their surroundings. When the Centennial photography students read the letters and developed the photographs of the rural village and the school in Ghana, they were impressed by the limited resources their peers had to work with.

Immediately, they started collecting used school supplies from students and staff at Centennial to send to the students in Ghana. In June the garbage bins are full of still usable school supplies. A 320 kg container of supplies was collected and shipped to Ghana from Coquitlam.

Since then, the photo club has sent inexpensive automatic cameras and many rolls of film to their peers at Odoben Secondary School and a neighbouring high school, Nyakrom Secondary School. The photo club now has a rich collection of photographs of rural life in Central Ghana. In Ghana, many photographs of suburban Canadian life hang in the hallways of the two schools and the students continue to write letters back and forth between the two countries.

Photographs from Ghana are displayed in the hallways of Centennial, at Legends Coffee House in Coquitlam, and at Winslow Centre, the district teaching centre.

The latest photo club project is publishing 6,000 photographic note cards. Three images by the Ghanaian high school students grace the photo note cards that are now being sold by Centennial students. All the proceeds from these beautiful cards will go to buy basic school

supplies for students at Odoben and Hyakrom schools.

Students from the Ghanaian schools are proud of the images that have been chosen for the note cards. The photo club fundraiser is connected directly to the on-going project between the schools. Each image, shot on an inexpensive camera, is beautifully composed and speaks volumes about life in rural Ghana.

The cards are packaged individually and are sold in the original b&w form (\$1 each) or a hand-coloured version (\$2). The cards are also being sold in packages of three b&w (\$3). Cards can be purchased at Centennial School in Coquitlam. Orders of \$5 or more can be placed by mail and sent to Ghana Cards, Centennial School, 570 Poirier Street, Coquitlam, BC V3J 6A8.

Daun Yorke teaches art at Centennial Secondary School, Coquitlam.

Killarney students make 1,400 paper cranes and \$1,500 to save Burns Bog

by Peter Chappell

On March 27, 2001, the Killarney Secondary School students' Environment Club presented an art piece they made by folding 1,400 paper cranes, plus a cheque for \$1,500, to the Burns Bog Conservation Society. The art piece, made in the shape of two sandhill cranes in flight, resembles the Burns Bog Conservation Society's logo. The students, who make money through their school-wide beverage-container recycling program, want to help save Burns Bog. In addition to donating \$1,500, their goal was to fold 1,000 paper cranes, based on the Japanese story that then their wish would come true. Eliza Olson, president of the Burns Bog Conservation Society, is very grateful. "This donation from Killarney students will definitely help our efforts to put Burns Bog into public

ownership. The bog is one of the world's most rare and threatened wetland ecosystems. Thank you, Killarney!"

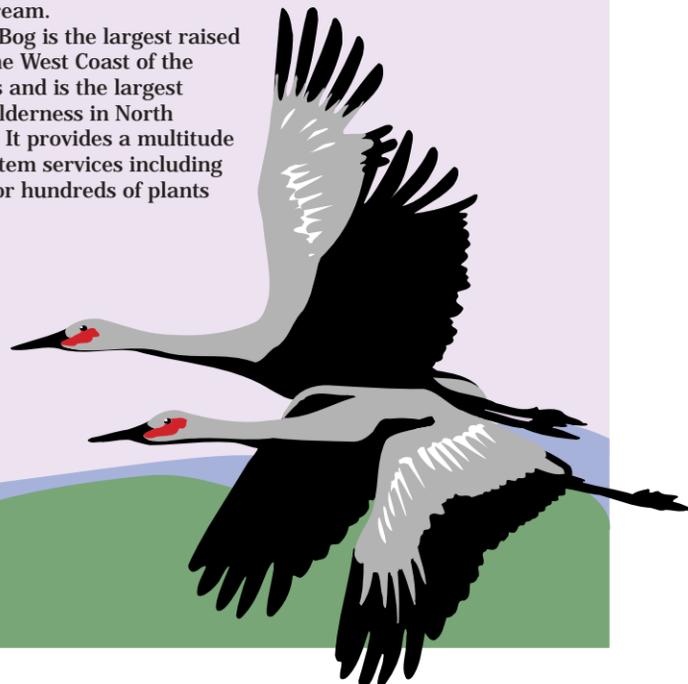
Every second Friday after school, the dedicated students of Killarney's Environment Club emptied and cleaned 30 recycling bins placed throughout the school. They sorted all the beverage containers for pick-up by a recycling company. The \$1,500 slated for Burns Bog represents 30,000 beverage containers removed from the waste stream.

Burns Bog is the largest raised bog on the West Coast of the Americas and is the largest urban wilderness in North America. It provides a multitude of ecosystem services including habitat for hundreds of plants

and animals, such as rare and endangered green-backed herons, peregrine falcons, and pacific water shrews, the great sandhill crane, a blue-listed species (vulnerable), uses Burns Bog as a nesting ground.

The Burns Bog Conservation Society is a non-profit society dedicated to the conservation of Burns Bog.

Peter Chappell teaches at Killarney Secondary School, Vancouver.



Technology and language learning: Moving toward integration

by Wendy Carr

Does technology help students learn a second language? Can it enhance our efforts as teachers to create authentic experiences in the target language? We already provide opportunities for students to learn about and practise the language, read texts, watch videos, role-play conversations and work on projects. We add experiences such as field trips, guest speakers, and interactions with buddy classes to give meaningful practice. There is, however, an online world where languages other than English are used every day to communicate and get things done. No text yet published competes with the immediacy of an online newscast or the currency of regularly updated Web sites. In a province where the majority of language teachers are generalists, online resources of text, sound, and visuals are particularly effective in providing a wide variety of real-world information. Integrating technology may involve some risktaking on our part as students boldly go where we may not yet have gone ourselves, and there are certainly issues that sometimes block our attempts; however, the benefits to teaching and learning merit the effort.

Teachers integrate technology

Teachers can access online resources from home, the library, or school to print out lessons, unit plans, student activity pages, quizzes, song lyrics, news articles, etc., for use in class. Some rich sites include *quizzweb.net*, *quia.com*, *portail.lettres.net*, and many others. If access to the school's lab is possible, other sites provide a wealth of online activity for students in the form of WebQuests, interactive grammar sites, and online communication/collaboration, e.g., *adomonde.qc.ca*, *lescale*.



Intermediate students doing online research.

net, *kidlink.org* and others. These teacher-approved sites may be shared with students in a lab setting or explored off-site. Have students visit a site, participate in an online activity and either e-mail the results to you or keep track of the experience on paper, e.g., a journal with a record of sites and tasks. Many of these sites show correlations to learning outcomes and provide useful evaluation rubrics. Specific examples are detailed below.

Students integrate technology

Students conduct online research at home, the library or the lab to support the units/themes covered in class. This research can be as simple as finding information in the target language, e.g., using *altavista.com* and its multilingual search options, or involve communicating with native speakers via a key pal site such as *momes.net* or *e-pals.com* (These contacts are made via teacher-to-teacher communication before students are paired.) In terms of addressing the prescribed learning outcomes around culture, technological links provide a most effective tool: contact with native speakers has always been difficult to achieve in classrooms and yet there is a world of people communicating online in

many languages 24 hours a day.

Technology is an option in projects and assignments

Students are given a technology option in how they present their learning. If a written page or report is expected, allow students the chance to present the same content via a non-paper format. If an oral report is assigned, allow students the option of incorporating their own speech into a computerized presentation, e.g., *Power Point* or *KidPix* slideshow. Encourage online research and/or communication to add content to a final product. You may wish to add bonus marks as an incentive, taking care that these are not excessive, e.g., an additional 5%, and that students who choose not to consult online resources are not penalized. Not all projects lend themselves to this type of integration, however, it can engage certain learners in a way that other methods do not. The key is to start small, offer options rather than whole class requirements and be open to learning with our students.

Wendy Carr teaches Core French and Technology in Coquitlam and second language methodology at UBC and SFU.

Part 2, "Integrated Projects for Second Language Learners, Grades 5 to 12," in the next issue.

What is the real purpose of standardized testing?

by Ray Shindell

Numerous articles about standards and assessments were published in professional journals during the latter months of 1999, in the year 2000, and in the first months of the year 2001. The articles expressed interest and concerns about the effects of standardized testing and high-stakes testing on educational curriculum and standards in schools today.

Most articles described the U.S. scene, but they also pertain to Canada. As W. Todd Rogers, of the University of Alberta, states, "We are witnessing in Canada today, as in other countries, a marked increase in the use of tests and assessment." (*The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, Winter 1999, p. 329)

Many professionals are concerned about how tests and large-scale assessments are being used. They have many questions as to the effects these reforms might have or are having on the education of the students. Rogers' fear is that "we still do not have a full understanding of the purposes and uses of these assessments and the contextual factors that need to be taken into account to better understand the performance of the students and the schools they attend." (p. 329)

British Columbia has not escaped the onslaught of the test-and-measure movement. Standardized tests have been a prominent part of assessment for some time. The B.C. Ministry of Education's accountability web page states the following purposes of the Provincial Learning Assessment Program:

- monitor student learning over time.
- inform professionals and the public on some of the strengths and weaknesses of the public school system.
- assist the ministry, school districts, and schools in decisions related to the development, review, modification, revision, and implementation of existing curricula and supporting instructional resource materials.

• assist the ministry in decisions concerning allocation of resources.

- identify areas of need and provide directions for change in both pre-service and in-service teacher education.
- provide directions for educational research.

• provide the province, school districts, and schools with information that can be used to maintain strengths and overcome weaknesses.

Since 1984, after a 12-year hiatus, the purpose of the Grade 12 examinations "is to ensure that Grade 12 students meet consistent provincial standards of achievement in a narrow range of academic subjects for the purpose of certification."

The examinations have two additional purposes:

- to ensure that graduating students from all schools in the province will be treated equitably when applying for admission to universities and other post-secondary institutes.
- to respond to strong public concerns for improved standards in education.

They have since added the following purposes:

- to ensure consistency in the development and application of examining standards throughout the public school system and funded independent schools.
- to provide limited assurance to the ministry that teachers are addressing many of the prescribed learning outcomes in their instruction.

The ministry admits that there may be some difficulty in ensuring that "standards are developed and applied in a consistent manner." It says, "since letter grade standards are set for each exam session, and are impacted by the composition of the student population (italics mine), the branch may never be able to demonstrate that standards are consistent over time or show that Grade 12 exams have improved public confidence in the school system."

Each year, B.C. uses the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) and some districts use the Canadian Achievement Tests (CAT) to give teachers, schools, school districts, and the province some measure of how students stack up to some perceived norm. If the tests were used solely to give interested parties some idea as to what level their students are performing, perhaps they are of some use and may help the teacher reflect on his/her curriculum presentation. When the scores of the tests appear in provincial and local newspapers, the intent of the testing comes under suspicion. What purpose does making the scores public have, other than implying rankings and overt competition among teachers, schools, and districts? The suspicion becomes evident when the Fraser Institute issues press releases ranking schools according to the results achieved on the B.C. Government Grade 12 exams.

Is B.C. immune to the criticisms presented by many published articles that condemn standardized testing? Does B.C. endorse a free and open public educational system, or is B.C. content with having an educational system that is driven by norm-referenced testing? The educational stakeholders of B.C. should ask whether they want educational standards to be based on the thinking of Edward Thorndike, 1874-1949: "Whatever exists, exists in some amount; to measure it is simply to know its varying amounts." Or would they rather base educational standards on the theory of Albert Einstein, 1879-1955: "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."

Norm-referenced tests only produce rankings, not what students really know or what they can demonstrate they know. They only measure which child knows more. If test scores must be published, then, in the words of the venerable W. James Popham (professor emeritus, Stanford University), put them in the proper section of the newspaper: *The Sports Page*.

Ray Shindell, a retired teacher, is an education doctoral student at University of Victoria.

Examples of tasks or projects	Activities for individuals or whole class	Example sites/software
• electronic greetings	• invite students to send you or each other electronic greetings in the target language	• <i>bluemountain.com</i> (Click on French, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese, German)
• e-mail accounts for sending messages & assignments	• establish a web-based e-mail account in the target language	• <i>hotmail.com</i> , <i>mail.yahoo.com</i> (Click on French, Spanish, Mandarin, Japanese, German)
• audio/video clips	• have students view or listen to a clip rather than read text for meaning	• <i>radio-canada.ca</i> <i>latinosonline.com</i>
• keypal connections	• start as an independent option, e.g., as extra challenge for one or several students (students provide journal or printout of online interaction)	• <i>momes.net</i> , <i>epals.com</i> <i>rescol.ca</i> (teacher-directed connections)
• internet research on a topic	• give bonus points for integrating technology into a project	• <i>altavista.com</i> (multilingual search options)
• multimedia or slideshow presentations	• allow for different modes of presentation (students may e-mail their projects to teachers at school or at home)	• <i>Kid Pix</i> , <i>Power Point</i> , <i>HyperStudio</i> (available Mac/Windows)
• participate in a WebQuest or online project	• students follow online instructions and links to solve a quest for information	• <i>edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest</i> <i>sd68.bc.ca/webquests</i>
• create a webpage or WebQuest	• students develop their own page/Quest	• <i>Netscape Composer</i> (download <i>netscape.com</i>)

Democracy, authority, a



Attending the Education Forum of the People's Summit of the Americas in Quebec City are (l-r): Greer Kaiser (Terrace), Aracely Moreno and Jane Goyes (National Union of Educators, Ecuador), Jinny Sims and Linda Shuto (BCTF Executive), and Julia MacRae (Surrey).

Tear gas for trade

by Larry Kuehn

We stood looking at the infamous fence, the "Wall of Shame," in Quebec City during the summit on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). One of the Mexican teachers with me told me it showed just how far "harmonization" has already taken place as a result of trade agreements. She said that a couple of years ago, when Bill Clinton had visited Mexico City, the police had placed a concrete barricade in front of the office of Section IX, the union that represents elementary teachers of Mexico City, to stop them from taking any protest action. Further, the army and the police were deployed to keep Clinton from seeing any protesters. Now Quebec City has similarities to Mexico City.

No tear gas was deployed that Thursday when we were at the wall. That didn't happen until demonstrations on Friday and Saturday when 4,709 canisters (the official figure) were lobbed. When we were there, a small crowd was just checking out what the fence was like, reading the various posters and pieces of handicrafts that had been attached to the chain links. I took a picture of my colleagues standing in front of a sign on the

fence that said in French "A police state: Is that how we want to live?"

We wandered down the street, watching the truckloads of plywood being used to cover up the front of stores. Some shops were already operating with just a small door in a plywood

What happens in one country increasingly affects other countries—and this will be even more so if a Free Trade Area of the Americas actually comes to pass on the current deadline of 2005.

façade to let in customers. We stopped to take a picture at McDonald's. The upper floor windows had already been covered, and giant flowers painted on them. The letters of the large McDonald's sign had been taken down, but an outline remained where each of the letters had been. Obviously they had heard that Jean Bove, the French opponent of corporate globalization, famous for trashing a McDonald's, had been let into the country.

Those preparations received little media coverage. Indeed, the many activities in the four days before the demonstrations were practically ignored by the press. And lots had taken place during that time. The People's Summit of the Americas had run for three days, with about 3,000 people taking part in various issue forums and then an all-day plenary with reports from each of the forums.

The Education Forum, co-organized by the Canadian Teachers' Federation and the CSQ (the new name for the union central that includes the teachers of Quebec), spent two days listening to presentations and making suggestions for strengthening a declaration about social and educational policies in the Americas. This is part of a process of building an alternative program to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

A Hemispheric Social Alliance was created from the first People's Summit of the Americas, held in Santiago, Chile, in 1998, and was charged with developing an alternative social program. A first version of a program was published after Santiago. Unfortunately, the education part of the program was developed without the education unions' being a part of the process, and the description of the purposes of education (training for the economy) could just as easily have come from the World Bank. For this reason, the organizers of the Education Forum placed a high priority on producing a statement about education that reflects social and cultural goals and the crucial role that public education plays in a democratic society.

The declaration is now a powerful statement in support of the democratic and broad social objectives of public education. Presented to the People's Summit plenary, it should provide the basis for a much better representation of education in the Hemispheric Social Alliance alternative program.

As usual with such meetings, what happens outside the formal sessions is often as important as—or more important—than the meetings themselves. The People's Summit was no exception.

The Education Forum of about 250 participants included a large number of teacher-union

leaders and others concerned about public education from Latin America and the Caribbean (including Cuba). This provided an opportunity for lots of links to be made that last long after the event itself.

Some of those links were made in the streets. Many of the Latin American education delegates marched with the banners that had a specific demand—in three languages—to "Keep education out of trade

When the march reached the point where it was to split in two directions, we were suddenly hit with tear gas—despite being a couple of kilometres from the wall.

agreements" and "Public education: Not for Sale!" These serve as multipurpose slogans—not just opposing education in both the FTAA and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), as well as rejecting the commercialization of education.

A number of meetings outside the forum also led to agreement on projects that will continue to build the links among civil society organizations internationally. Globalization won't go away. What happens in one country increasingly affects other countries—and this will be even more so if a Free Trade Area of the Americas actually comes to pass on the current deadline of 2005. The projects developed will help to build the ongoing connection among education organizations in the Americas.

One of these projects is the Civil Society Network for Public Education in the Americas (usually known by its Spanish acronym, Red-SEPA). This was started as an initiative of the B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and CoDevelopment Canada. It has developed a network of researchers working to understand the impact of economic integration on education, and it has co-ordinated international responses when activist teachers have been jailed and their organizations repressed. In a meeting of about 50 people from around the Americas, it agreed to hold a

hemispheric conference on women, education, and globalization next year.

Participants from the organizations in the Tri-National Coalition in Defense of Public Education (Mexico, Canada, U.S.) met to plan a sixth Tri-National conference to be held in 2002 somewhere in Canada. This group was started at the time that NAFTA was created, and has been a model for developing links among organizations in countries whose destinies are increasingly intertwined by trade agreements.

Two more projects on the impact of economic integration were initiated as well. The CSQ from Quebec, the BCTF, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation have agreed to work together with teacher unions in Central America and in the southern cone of South America on projects that will engage the unions in influencing education policies in the era of globalization. Other Canadian education organizations are also being invited to join this work.

Reminders of the urgency of such collective work internationally kept popping up during the week.

A person at the Education Forum from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) told me in a hallway discussion about a request the AFT had received from the office of the U.S. Trade Commissioner. The commission wanted to consult the AFT about what criteria should be set for including teaching as one of the designated occupations in NAFTA. The designation would make it easier for states in the U.S. to recruit Canadian teachers to make up for the teacher shortage in the U.S.

The power of private corporations in these trade regimes is indicated by that request. It did not come from governments of states that were short of teachers. Rather, it was an initiative of a private recruiting agency that wanted rules to be created that would make it easier to find teachers in Canada to import into the U.S.

The AFT rep said that they had told the Trade Commissioner that they were not interested in taking part in such a consultation. The rep said that the issue seemed to have died—but for how long?

And the night before the tear gas started, at the Canadian



and economic directions

Federation of Students forum on post-secondary education, I heard about police intimidation of the people who organized the Indigenous Forum. Tony Hall, a teacher of native studies at the University of Lethbridge, had been hassled on his campus by an RCMP officer who said he was a "national security investigator." One of Hall's students showed me pictures taken the day before when 14 Quebec provincial police showed up to hassle them at the two motel rooms where they were staying. He said that they were followed everywhere they went by police cars and were stopped at least once every day when travelling to People's Summit events. All the Latin American and B.C. and Alberta teachers merited, in contrast, were two police cars sitting outside our motels on the morning of the big march.

On that Saturday, I decided that I was going to stay with the largest section of the march, which was not going near the fence. I had already spent time at the fence—when it was being created. But mostly I had discovered why they use tear gas—it is effective. One of our colleagues, Suzie Mah, had carefully created an anti-gas baggie for each of us. It contained a few sheets of paper towel soaked in vinegar. When the march reached the point where it was to split in two directions, we were suddenly hit with tear gas—despite being a couple of kilometres from the wall. I

Never had I felt the sting of tear gas before. Clearly this is part of the new reality of corporate globalization and the challenge to those who benefit most from it—like those pushing the FTAA.

realized after only a couple of minutes that despite the baggie, I wasn't really prepared for it.

I hadn't paid much attention when the volunteer medics were giving the advice on how to protect yourself. I guess I was living in the past. The first demonstration I took part in was in 1962. I have been in scores of

demonstrations over the decades—civil rights, anti-Vietnam war, union rallies, student protests—and in several countries. Never had I felt the sting of tear gas before. Clearly this is part of the new reality of corporate globalization and the challenge to those who benefit most from it—like those pushing the FTAA. Next time, I will follow the example of my colleagues who stood in line at an army-surplus store in Quebec City that Saturday to buy gas masks. I will join the lineup to get my own gas mask—and maybe grab a bullet-proof vest to protect against rubber bullets.

Larry Kuehn is the director of the BCTF's Research and Technology Division.

Are the authorities spying on the BCTF?

Just before the BCTF annual summer conference, a fascinating series appeared in *The Vancouver Sun*. It explored the increasing criminalization of non-violent political dissent, and revealed the great extent to which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and later the Canadian Security Intelligence Service have spied upon labour, peace, and environmental activists throughout the decades.

One story, headlined "Here's who Canadian spies have been watching," focused on the many distinguished individuals and legitimate community groups that have been targets of official scrutiny. The list includes humanitarian Lotta Hitschmanova and Reverend Martin Luther King, and diverse groups from the Housewives Consumers' Association to the Rhinoceros Party.

In a category called "the new troublemakers," the report said: "Intelligence gathering operations leading up to the 1997 APEC summit in Vancouver identified a new breed of threat—people who advocated free speech and assembly but opposed government policies."

Certainly the leaders and staff of the B.C. Teachers' Federation were active in organizing the People's Summit, an alternative

gathering of educators, church, and union leaders from throughout the Asia Pacific region. Perhaps as a result of that effort, the BCTF came under scrutiny and was included in this group—along with the Anglican Church of Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress, Greenpeace, the Council of Canadians, and the Raging Grannies!

"It's a great club to be part of, don't you agree?" BCTF president David Chudnovsky asked the enthusiastic crowd at the opening plenary session of the summer conference.

Jim Sinclair quipped that he was concerned the B.C. Federation of Labour wasn't on the list. "There's the CLC, the BCTF. Where's the B.C. Fed? We've just got to work harder, I guess!"

Newly elected CTF President Doug Willard jokingly thanked the members of the BCTF for so quickly transforming him "from a teacher leader to a subversive!"

Joking aside, however, it's likely that the practice continues today and, in the wake of massive protests in Seattle and Quebec City, it may be escalating. One would never know for sure, based on official responses.

In an interview from Ottawa, CSIS spokesperson Chantal LaPalme said, "We would not investigate lawful advocacy, protest or dissent. CSIS is only there when there's reason to believe there'd be serious politically-motivated violence."

Sgt. Grant Learned of the B.C. RCMP said, "The business of protest and lawful dissent is of no interest to the RCMP." However, the force is duty-bound to investigate "when we receive information that there's going to be some attempt to foment the crowd or create some kind of anarchy or some form of criminal activity."

What we do know is that CSIS agents have been arriving unannounced upon the doorsteps of activists across the land. In Vancouver, Murray Dobbin, journalist and former BCTF staff member, was shocked to confront two CSIS agents at his door a week prior to the protests against the Free Trade Area of the Americas in Quebec City. Dobbin was among the local activists who were planning a peaceful hands-across-the-border event called the

March at the Arch to express support for the activists in Quebec.

"These characters flashed their badges and asked if they could come in. I said no, they couldn't," Dobbin said. "In more than 30 years as a journalist and an activist I have never advocated violence, so what are you doing here?"

They said they supported the right of citizens to express their views but they suspected some people were planning violence. "That's simply not true," Dobbin told them. In retrospect he believes that the visit was sparked by his involvement with the Council of Canadians, and was intended to intimidate him rather than to solicit information.

Dobbin is concerned that few Canadians are vocal in defense of the right to dissent. "It's quite alarming when instead of government becoming more open on major issues of citizen concern, we see a lot of planning for increased police activity," he said. "And there's so much silence from those who should be speaking out."

— Nancy Knickerbocker

Gap between rich and poor expands

The latest wealth study from Statistics Canada is convincing evidence that economic growth does not automatically help the poor. Even though total personal wealth in Canada grew by 11% to about \$2.5 trillion (net) in the last 15 years, the poorest 20% lost \$600. The richest 20% increased their net worth by 39% or about \$112,300.

This information is in a new Statistics Canada report, a "survey of financial security," released March 15, 2001. The study also shows that the poorer half of Canadians has only 6% of the personal wealth in the nation, while the richer half have 94%. That is virtually unchanged since 1984 in spite of the 11% increase in overall wealth.

This is the first wealth study of its kind since 1984. Although income is measured routinely when census data is collected, special studies must be designed to collect wealth information. This study collected information on assets like homes, other real estate, RRSPs, mutual funds,

stocks, bonds, businesses owned, etc.

Other findings of the study:

- The richest 10% of families had a median net worth of \$703,500. The poorest 10% were in debt by about \$2,100.

- The average student loan debt increased by over six times from 1984. Almost three times as many families have student loan debts. The median student loan debt rose from \$3,400 to \$7,300.

- The 10% of family units with the highest net worth held 53% of all personal wealth compared with 51% in 1984.

- Families that didn't own their home had a median net worth of only \$8,200 compared with families that owned with a mortgage (\$111,800) and without a mortgage (\$259,200).

While page after page of the study points to the conclusion that if you want to be rich, you should get a university education and become a professional, the study makes no attempt to figure out what laws are preventing the poorer half of family units and individuals (the ones with only 6% of the wealth) from owning homes and buying RRSPs, two of the most important assets for Canadians.

If we ever elected a government that really wanted to deal with the obscene wealth gap, it would have to change laws about welfare, minimum wage, housing affordability and speculation, student loans, interest rates, and RRSP rules that benefit the middle class and rich and don't help the poor at all.

While the study shows a huge and growing gap between the rich and the poor, the real gap is probably much larger because the study was biased in a number of ways. For example, it probably didn't include the richest families in Canada, like Ken Thomson who is worth about \$20 billion.

The study also excludes some of the very poorest people in Canada: people living on Aboriginal reserves, members of the Canadian Forces living in military camps, people in jail, and residents of hospitals and nursing homes.

To see a copy of the study, visit www.statcan.ca, or call End Legislated Poverty toll free 1-866-879-1209.

Source: Jean Swanson, *The Long Haul*, End Legislated Poverty Newspaper, April 2001.

JULIA MACRAE PHOTO



Bye bye Berniece



Berniece Stuart retired from the Federation in June. As staff waved goodbye, her husband Ron, picked her up on her last day.

After 31 years, I am retiring from the BCTF. I started out in the Professional Development Division as a clerk typist, and over the course of those 31 years, I meandered through various job incarnations to my current position as something that doesn't really have a title and is difficult to describe. My job has brought me into contact with a large group of people whom I consider myself extremely fortunate to have known.

I would love to name the many of you who have had an impact on my life, those of you I like and admire so much, those of you whose fine intellect I so envy, but, unfortunately, the editors won't give me an entire page.

Because many people have known for quite some time that I was going to retire, I have been the recipient of many comments such as "So Berniece, how many more days?" or "Your last AGM, eh, Berniece?" or "So Berniece, what are you going to do with the rest of your life?" However, one frequent comment that comes my way relates to the size of my feet. "Wow, Berniece, your replacement is sure going to have big shoes to fill." What's this fixation with my big feet? I've had big feet since I was in Grade 6. I'm a big person and presumably my large frame requires fairly large feet with which to support it. What I don't hear a lot of is "Wow, Berniece, someone's going to need a really big brain to replace you." There hasn't been much mention of my cerebral capacity being difficult to replicate, but my size 10s generate frequent comment. Mary, I'm not leaving any shoes behind for you to slap around in (or to squeeze into as the case may be)—you have to bring in your own shoes and fill them in your own way. And I have absolutely no illusions that you will have no difficulty doing just that.

I've always (wisely, I believe) been reluctant to give advice to those who are a lot smarter than I am. I believe that my exhorting any of you to do or strive or achieve or whatever, would sound pretentious. However, when asked to write this final article before drastically altering the course of my life, I decided that there is one bit of advice that I feel very qualified to give. If you have a choice, attend fewer meetings.

The novelist Anna Quindlen, addressing a graduating class, advised her audience to "get a life. A real life, not the manic pursuit of the next promotion, the bigger paycheque, the larger house. Do you think you'd care so very much about those things if you blew an aneurysm or found a lump in your breast? Get a life in which you notice the smell of salt water pushing itself on a breeze or the way a baby scowls with concentration when she tries to pick up a *Cheerio* with her thumb and first finger."

Not once did Ms. Quindlen exhort her audience to make sure to attend more meetings. A lot of people have asked me what my plans are for retirement. I'm going to strive to avoid meetings like the plague. I'm going to watch our new grandchild concentrate on those *Cheerios*. I'm going to take some of those interesting courses like the history of jazz or the Vancouver Symphony Companion. Maybe I'll write a screen play that will languish on some director's shelf for years. Maybe I'll learn to grow tomatoes that will actually ripen on the vine before the frost comes. But I won't spend a lot of time attending meetings.

I fleetingly considered signing off my career with the BCTF as "your humble servant," but I don't think many people would buy that. I've always had a bit of a problem with humility, and being anyone's servant was never high on my list of priorities, although I am at the beck and call of my cat. I'm signing off simply with a great big thank you to all of you for the many great memories I hold dear, some great educational experiences, and lots of great expectations for the future.

Berniece Stuart, administrative assistant, BCTF's Organization Support Division.



88? Don't wait!

Teachers who have reached the age of 64 or the factor 88, age plus contributory service with the teachers or municipal pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan: Long Term. If you have reached age 65 or factor 90, you are no longer eligible for long-term benefits and should withdraw. It is necessary for you to apply to withdraw.

Send a completed form (available from Income Security, local presidents, or online at www.bctf.ca/pensions/salary/LT-Withdrawal-Form.shtml) to the BCTF Income Security Dept.

BCCT vs TWU court case sparks debate

The B.C. College of Teachers lost its case when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on May 17, 2001 that Trinity Western University in Langley can graduate education students instead of sending them to SFU for their last year.

The BCCT did not approve of the TWU's mission statement: "to develop godly Christian leaders: positive, goal-oriented, university graduates with thoroughly Christian minds" much less its student conduct code that requires students "to refrain from practices that are contrary to biblical teaching including premarital sex, adultery, homosexual behaviour."

The Supreme Court majority said, "Absent concrete evidence that training teachers at TWU fosters discrimination in the public schools of B.C., the freedom of individuals to adhere to certain religious beliefs at TWU should be respected. The proper place to draw the line is generally between beliefs and conduct. The freedom to hold beliefs is broader than the freedom to act on them." The judges went on to say, "Acting on beliefs is a very different matter. If a teacher in a public school system engages in discriminatory conduct, that teacher can be subject to disciplinary proceedings before the BCCT."

Ian Hunter, professor emeritus at the University of Ontario law faculty, summed it up this way, "In essence, the Supreme Court has ruled that there is a right to believe what you want as long as you never communicate those beliefs or attempt to put them into practice."

A member who graduated from TWU phoned to say that he was bothered by the BCTF's support for the B.C. College of Teachers' position as stated in the May issue of *Staff Rep News*.

"We hold beliefs about sin and god, but we keep them private," he said.

—Maureen MacDonald

2001–02 Retirement planning seminars

All teachers age 40+ should plan to attend one of the retirement-planning seminars listed. There is no pre-registration, nor fee. Seminars are on Saturdays from 09:00 to 16:00. The agenda includes what retirement is, the Teachers' Pension Plan, legal issues, retirement experiences, pension calculations, and personal advice. Make sure to bring a calculator and your most recent pension statement. **Younger teachers are welcome.**

Date	Location
October 13, 2001	Campbell River, Coast Discovery Inn
October 27, 2001	Cranbrook, Heritage Inn
November 3, 2001	Terrace, The Terrace Inn
November 17, 2001	Surrey, Days Hotel
November 24, 2001	Nanaimo, Coast Bastion Inn
December 1, 2001	Richmond, Best Western Richmond Inn
December 8, 2001	North Vancouver, North Shore Cont. Ed.
January 19, 2002	Coquitlam, Westwood Plateau G&C Club
January 26, 2002	Vancouver, Plaza 500
February 2, 2002	Burnaby, Radisson Hotel Burnaby
February 9, 2002	Delta, Town and Country Inn
February 16, 2002	Abbotsford, The Inn at King's Crossing
February 23, 2002	Langley, IWA Canada
March 2, 2002	Prince George, Coast Inn of the North
March 9, 2002	Vernon, Prestige Inn/Avonlea Conf. Centre
April 6, 2002	Kamloops, U. College of the Cariboo
April 13, 2002	Penticton, Penticton Lakeside Resort
April 20, 2002	Fort St. John, Northern Grand Hotel
April 27, 2002	Williams Lake, Overlander Hotel
May 4, 2002	Victoria, Victoria Conference Centre

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A&E CANADIAN BIOGRAPHY OF THE YEAR ESSAY CONTEST Have your students write in 250 words or less who they think made the biggest impact on Canadian society in the year 2001. Essays will be judged on creativeness, persuasiveness and relevancy to topic. Open to students in Grades 5-12. Prizes incl. \$5,000 savings bond for students and \$1,000 for department of teacher. Deadline November 1, 2001. For info, log on to AandE.com

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UNLIMITED DISCOVERY at the Greater Vancouver Zoo! For a fun and fascinating learning experience take part in our educational programs. All of our programs are curriculum-based and suitable for students from K-12. Call to find out more and ask about our new, full-coloured educational program posters and the open house for teachers in October. 5048-264 St., Aldergrove, BC. Ph: 604-856-6825, www.greatervancouverzoo.com

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OCTOBER 18-19 RICHMOND. Health Science Curriculum for Secondary Schools (anatomy/physiology, injury prevention/rehabilitation, nutrition, exercise management, career preparation opportunities, articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions and more). Richmond Library and Cultural Centre. \$390 incl. manual. Contact Paula Curtis, 604-731-0907, prkmc Curtis@home.com

ULTIMATE OUTDOOR ADVENTURES LTD. Leaders in Outdoor Education. Workshops-Events-Team building. www.uoadventures.com 604-454-1414.

WANTED! Educators keen on empowering students to create a sustainable future. October 19, 2001. Educator's workshop at Sea to Sky Outdoor School, Keats Island in Howe Sound. To register contact Tim Turner at 604-740-8873 or sea2sky@sunshine.net

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE book for Grade 9 social studies Crossroads text. 150p. of copy-ready assignments, tests, answer keys. 250-392-4696.

OCTOBER

18 Richmond. Evening Pre-Conference of the B.C. Primary Teachers' Assn (BCPTA) Conference, Primary Leadership, Delta Pacific Resort and Conference Centre. \$40. Parents welcome. Contact Grace Sinnema 604-850-5526, f: 604-850-1817, bcptaconference@aol.com.

18-19 Victoria. B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Assn. (BCTLA) Conference, 2001—A Literary Odyssey, Victoria High School. Contact Judith Reid, c/o 923 Topaz Ave., Victoria, BC V8T 2M2, 250-360-4302, f: 250-360-4308, jreid@sd61.ca, www.bctf.bc.ca/psas/BCTLA/conf2001/application.html.

18-19 Vancouver. B.C. School Counsellors' Assn. (BCSCA) Conference, Changing Lives: One at a Time, Stanley Park Plaza Hotel. Contact Steve Jones, conference chair, 250-478-5501 local 114, msjones@home.com, bctf.ca/BCSCA/conference.html.

18-20 Vancouver. B.C. Co-operative Learning Assn. (BCCLA) Conference, Three-Day Johnson and Johnson Training facilitated by Chris Ward and Jim Craigen, Downtown BCIT. Contact Holly Stibbs, 604-464-8581, f: 604-464-7832, hstibbs@sd43.bc.ca.

18-20 Burnaby. I'Assn. Provinciale des Professeurs d'Immersion et du Programme Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (APPIC), L'intégration sous toutes ses formes, Executive Inn Hotel & Conference Centre. Contact Sophie Bergeron, 604-936-0491, sbergeron@sd43.ca.

18-20 Vancouver. B.C. Technology Education Assn. (BCTEA) Conference, Technological Innovation (New Ways To Do Old Stuff), David Thompson Secondary School. Contact Brian Yu, byu@canada.com, www.bctf.ca/bctea.

18-20 Parksville. Physical Education PSA (PEPSA) Conference for 2001, Happily Ever Active, Ballenas Secondary School. Contact Kevin McKee, kmckee@sd69.ca, or Glenn Young, gyoung@radiant.net, www.bcpeconference.com.

19 Harrison Hot Springs. First Nations Education Assn. (FNEA) Conference, Native Studies-Strengthening Our Place, Executive Hotel. Contact Jan Gladish 604-795-7295, jgladish@chill.org, or Erla Calahaisn, 604-713-8220, ecalahaisn@pointgrey.vsb.bc.ca.

19 North Vancouver. B.C. Dance Educators' Assn. (BCDEA) Conference 2001, Carson Graham Senior Secondary School. Contact Judy Herdridge, 604-541-8170, judy_g@telus.net.

19 Richmond. Assn. for Educators of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Children in B.C. (AEGTCCBC) Conference, Gifted Ed 2001, Creating School Services for Gifted Learners, Executive Inn. Contact David Halme, 250-748-1955, f: 250-748-5003, dhalme@home.com.

19 Richmond. B.C. Assn. of Teachers of Modern Languages (BCATML) Conference, Language Across the Hemispheres. Best Western Richmond Inn. Contact Elke Knight, 250-474-2663, f: 250-478-5501, duncan@bcl.com, or Dennis Hazelton, 604-945-8036, f: 604-468-0642, dhazelton@telus.net.

19 Richmond. Learning Assistance Teachers' Assn. (LATA) Conference, Literacy! Reading & Writing. Vancouver Airport Marriott Hotel. \$125 for BCTF members before Sept. 28; \$140 after. Contact Lynda Mawer, 8614 Foster Road, Vernon, BC V1H 1C9, f: 250-558-1065, lmawer@sd22.ca.

19 Surrey. B.C. Teachers of English Language Arts (BCTELA) Conference, A Brave New "Work Smarter" World: Effective Strategies That Also Reduce the Workload, North Surrey Secondary School. Contact Ilene Jo Greenberg, 604-596-7471, ilenejoandjoel@home.com, www.bctf.ca/BCTELA.

19 Vancouver. English as a Second Language Provincial Specialist Assn. (ESL PSA) Conference, Social Justice for the ESL Learner. Churchill Secondary School. Contact asetter@sfu.ca, mccarthy@telus.net, or shelmer@sfu.ca.

19 West Vancouver. B.C. Assn. of Mathematics Teachers (BCAMT) Conference, Transforming Mathematics—Mission Possible, West Vancouver Secondary School. Contact Garry Phillips, p/f: 604-261-7748, gphillip@helix.net.

19-20 Nanaimo. B.C. Social Studies Teachers' Assn. (BCSSTA) Conference, Making Waves: Teaching Controversial Issues, Nanaimo District Secondary. Contact Ellen Ellis, 250-740-2000, f: 250-740-2020, eellis@sd68.bc.ca, www.bctf.ca/bcssta

19-20 Richmond. B.C. Primary Teachers' Assn. (BCPTA) Conference, Primary Leadership, Delta Pacific Resort and Conference Centre. \$140 for members. Contact Grace Sinnema 604-850-5526, f: 604-850-1817, bcptaconference@aol.com.

19-20 Victoria. Assn. of B.C. Drama Educators (ABCDE) Conference, Drama Tricks and Treats, Frances Kelsey Secondary School, Mill Bay. Contact Roger Carr, 250-743-6916, h: 250-652-4174, f: 250-743-6915, rcarr@island.net.

19-20 Nanaimo. Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Assn. (THESA) Conference, Flavours of the Island, Dover Bay Secondary School. Contact Carol Girard, 250-722-2414, h: 250-754-6525, f: 250-722-3071, matdan@nanaimo.ark.com

19-20 Richmond. Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Assn. (PITA) Conference, Going Beyond the Limit. Cambie Secondary School. Carol Tirk, 250-442-2383, f: 250-442-5913, ctirk@hotmail.com, 1-877-733-7482

19-20 Surrey. Computer Using Educators of B.C. Conference (CUEBC) Horizons 2001, A Technology Odyssey, Sullivan Heights Secondary School and Tech BC. Preconference bonus October 18, Thursday night, at Tech BC. Contact Shelly Wilcox, wilcox_s@fc.sd36.ca, or Kevin Amboe, amboe_kfc.sd36.ca, www.Horizons2001.com.

19-21 Vancouver. Environmental Educators' PSA (EEPSA) Fall Conference, Environmental Education Indoors and Out, Aquarium and Stanley Park. Contact Nichole Marples, EEPSA Conference Chair, 604-533-6054, nmarples@tol.bc.ca.

20 Vancouver. Adult Educators (AEPSA) 2001: Educating Adults. Contact Marianne Yanes-Pawlowski, 604-535-0507, mariannejorge@telus.net.

JANUARY

24-25 Vancouver. B.C. Alternate Education Assn. dj_pauls@sd34.bc.ca.

FEBRUARY

14-16 Vancouver. B.C. Music Educators' Assn. (BCMEA) Conference stigungs@interchange.ubc.ca, www.bctf.ca/bcmea.

15 Kelowna. 3rd Annual Interior Mathematics Conference, cvanberg@sd23.ca.

15 Brackendale (Squamish). Howe Sound Teacher Librarians' Assn. and the Howe Sound TA. Contact Beth Miller, PD chair, or Della Halvorson at 604-892-3056 (HSTA office).

21-23 Surrey. B.C. Art Teachers' Assn. (BCATA) Conference. Contact Wendy Long, longwm@home.com.

PD Calendar web site
<http://pdonline.bctf.ca/conferences/PD-Calendar.html>

Additions or changes?
E-mail Debby Stagg, PSA services co-ordinator, PD Division, BCTF dstagg@bctf.ca

Health science curriculum for secondary schools

by Dennis Hoy

Preparing students for careers while giving them opportunities and information to make good decisions is one of the mandates for our CAPP and Career Preparation programs. Paula Curtis, a Richmond teacher has created a course that students and colleagues agree does just that.

The Health Science Career Preparation Program at H. J. Cambie Secondary School, in Richmond was recognized as a "best practices" model at the Health Care/Career Education Forum 2001. The forum attracted healthcare professionals, district career co-ordinators, secondary educators and career program facilitators, and deans and directors from a number of post-secondary institutions. The day focussed on new strategies that would enable educators and healthcare professionals to work together to address common issues and concerns. H. J. Cambie Secondary's Career Preparation Program was recognized as an exciting and innovative program for students wishing to pursue a career in medicine, health and wellness, or sports related occupations.

The health science program requires that students have additional course work in biology, chemistry, or physics. A Health Science 12 course gives students a comprehensive knowledge base for further study in health science. The specially developed course emphasizes anatomy/physiology, injury prevention and rehabilitation, nutrition, and exercise management. "The Health Science 12 course provides an excellent overview of human

anatomy and physiology and empowers students to seek out opportunities and develop responsibility in an area of interest in health care/athletics. The course challenges students and encourages participation in active learning as well as teaching (sharing and collaboration of knowledge and experience)," states Katrina Fong, a health science student (1997-98), who is completing her nursing program at Langara College.

Since its inception, five years ago, the H. J. Cambie Secondary's program has gained in popularity among students and other teaching professionals from various regions of the

The students' maturity, dedication, and eagerness to be involved has given them numerous opportunities to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-life experiences.

province. A number of secondary schools are implementing the program for the 2001-02 school year.

The time and effort of numerous businesses, community services, healthcare professionals, and post-secondary partnerships has greatly enriched the program. For instance, since 1995, students in the health science class have participated in a ride-along program through

the British Columbia Ambulance Service. In the spring of 1998, students received an additional opportunity to attain professional certification as "first responders" through the Canadian Red Cross (40-hour course). This year, students are applying what they have learned within the school. Under the supervision of the school's first-aid attendant, students are now responding to the first aid calls within the school and at school- and community-sponsored events.

Hugh Boyd and Hugh McRoberts secondary schools, in Richmond, are also involved in the ride-along program, first-responder certification, and school first-aid teams. Students from all three schools are enrolled as members in the City of Richmond's Emergency Program in the event of a large-scale disaster.

Working with citizens such as advanced life support paramedic Jeff Watts, of the British Columbia Ambulance Service, has brought real life to this course. Watts comments that "the Health Science Program at Cambie Secondary gives students a solid foundation upon which to build a career in the field of nursing, medicine, or physiotherapy, among others. This innovative course is a must for students that may choose a health sciences career in the new millennium."

From the beginning, Watts has played a key role in creating and organizing the ride-along program, instructing the students in their first responder certification course, as well as planting the idea and co-ordinating the school-based first aid teams. Other sponsors include Rogers; AT&T wireless,

which provided pagers to students; Richmond Savings, which helped purchase uniforms; and Scouts Canada which provided the structure and organization for the students. Students have been meeting on their own time to organize the scheduling, uniforms, equipment, protocol, and professional development. On a past professional development day for teachers, students from all three schools met for their own professional development.

Through this program, students have become more confident and informed about the many career choices within health science that are readily available to them.

Students from the Health Science Program have also volunteered with senior residents from Pinegrove Intermediate Care Home. "The visits provide seniors with friendship and support. Students are seen in a positive light while giving back to their community," says Kate Nordmann, volunteer co-ordinator at Pinegrove. The students' maturity, dedication, and eagerness to be involved has given them numerous opportunities to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-life experiences.

In addition to these two examples of successful community partnerships, the Health Science Program at H. J. Cambie Sec-

dary has also articulated with Douglas College's Health Sciences and Sports and Leisure departments and with Vancouver Community College's Practical Nursing Program. Students completing Health Science 12 will be given preferential enrolment into the health sciences program of their choice at Douglas College, where programs include General Nursing (three seats available), Psychiatric Nursing (three seats), Dispensing Optician (two seats), Dental Assisting (two seats), and Health Information Services (two seats). Joy Holmwood, dean of Health Sciences at Douglas College, endorses the program at H. J. Cambie Secondary as "...an important program to prepare students to enter the health sciences professional education programs. Content and learning experiences provided in the program help prepare students to understand the requirements they will face at the college level." Furthermore, students wishing to pursue course work in the Sports/Leisure Department, upon completing the Health Science Program at Cambie, receive credit at Douglas College for PHED 103.

These exciting opportunities have given students direction and focus in their senior years. Through this program, students have become more confident and informed about the many career choices within health science that are readily available to them.

Dennis Hoy teaches at H.J. Cambie Secondary School, Richmond.

For more information about the program, contact Paula Curtis at 604-668-6430.

Mass casualty incident drill

by Jeff Watts

A unique event involving young people and emergency professionals took place on the weekend of May 4-6, 2001. The site was Camp Brinkley, located near Munroe, WA. The purpose of the event was to stage a mass casualty incident drill (MCI).

While these drills are part of the normal training regime for emergency professionals, this particular drill was to be both an educational opportunity and a challenge to the young people attending. This group of motivated young people was composed of explorers from the Boy Scouts of America and Medical Venturers from Canada.

About half of the Medical Venturers that attended the event are also Richmond secondary school students. As part of their Grade 12 health sciences work experience course, these students have completed their First Responder



officers, and paramedics. Realism is a primary objective and as such, actors and makeup artists volunteered their time for a touch of authenticity. A "special operations command post" from the Seattle Police Department served as a dispatch centre and the teams of rescuers were dispatched using actual VHF hand-held radios.

As the rescuers arrived they were confronted with the noise, confusion, and mayhem that accompany this type of emergency response.

It was interesting to watch these "responders" approach, assess, and treat the victims. Keeping in mind that the actors and the wound makeup were on a professional level, the young people reacted with professionalism and compassion. As each patient was removed from the building, the necessary paperwork and procedures were done using the same forms that would be needed at the scene of a real disaster.

This "hand across the border" activity served to demonstrate that it does not matter which side of the line we look at, our youth is both interested in and motivated to explore career opportunities in the fields of health care, firefighting, and law enforcement.

Jeff Watts is an advanced life-support paramedic.



As part of their Grade 12 health sciences work experience course, students attending the Mass Casualty Incident Drill at Camp Brinkley, near Munroe, Washington were assigned roles as firefighters, police officers, and paramedics.