

Teacher

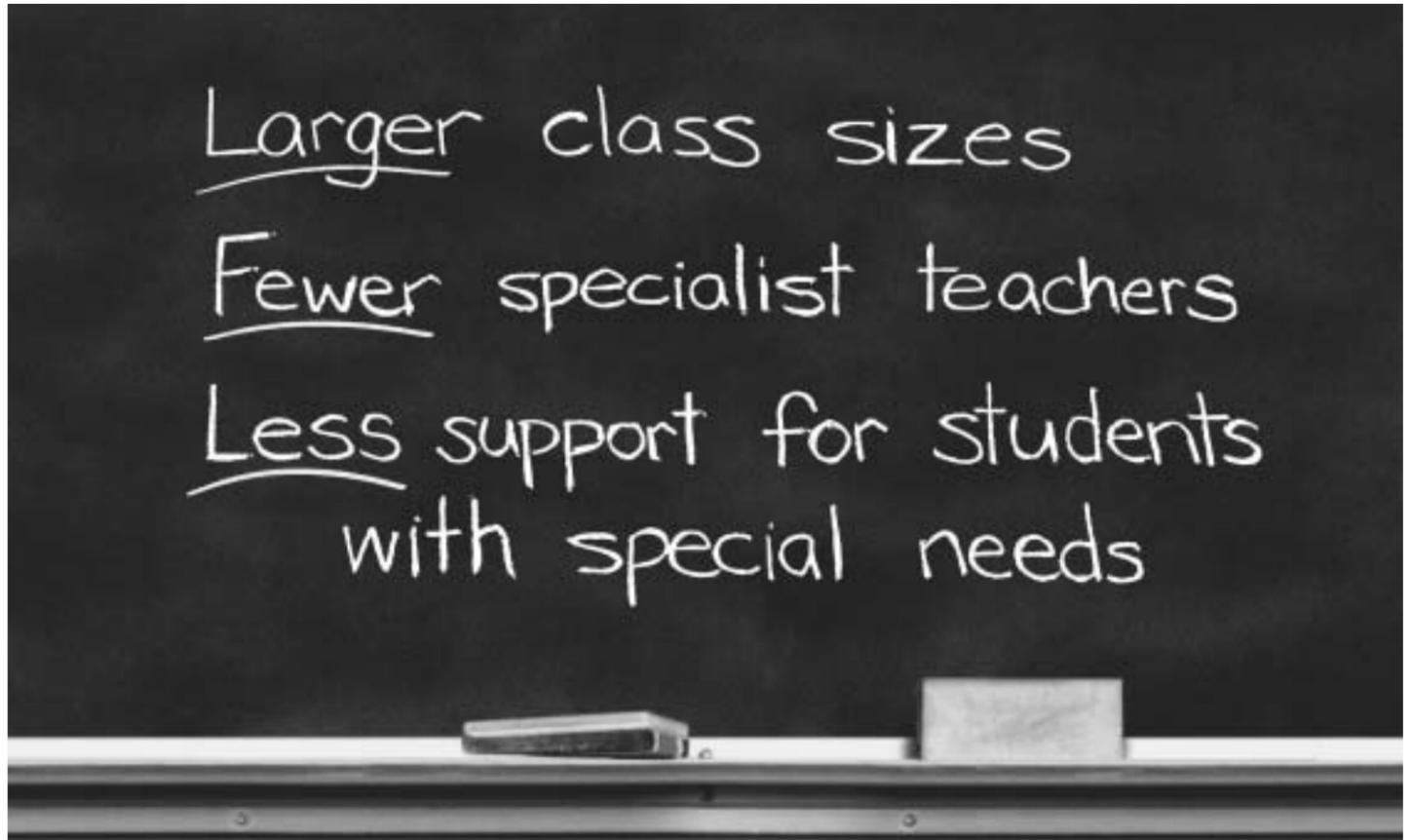
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Nobody voted for that!

by Nancy Knickerbocker

Whatever happens, there's no doubt that 2002 is going to be an historic year in the history of public education in British Columbia. As the new school term begins and Phase II of job action gets under way, thousands of teachers continue working to help achieve a negotiated collective agreement.

However, after months of talks, the B.C. Public School Employers' Association persists in its demands for concessions that would seriously erode the quality of education,

"...One of our primary investments has got to be in our teachers."

—Gordon Campbell

and has not budged an inch on salary or any other important issues.

Premier Gordon Campbell, Education Minister Christy Clark, and Finance Minister Gary Collins have all mused aloud in the media about imposing a legislated contract. Meanwhile, their friends in newsrooms around the province are paving the way with editorials urging government intervention. Given the sharp contrast between the Liberals' campaign promises and the current reality, it is no wonder that teachers' sense of betrayal is mounting. Before the election, Campbell told BCTF President David Chudnovsky:

"Education is our number one priority. It is vital that we give our children the best chance to succeed and that means we have to provide the best possible education system. One of our primary investments has got to be in our teachers."

Those words ring hollow as BCPSEA's offer of 1.3%, 0%, and 1% clearly fail to meet teachers' needs after nine years without a real raise.

Throughout the bargaining process, teachers have been flexible. The BCTF has modified its positions on salary and class-size limits, as well as agreeing to the employer's request for greater flexibility in managing class size.

"We will continue to be flexible, but the teachers of British Columbia will not sign a collective agreement that removes class-size limits and reduces services for students," Chudnovsky said.

Despite the inevitable uncertainties and tensions in the next few months, teachers can take heart in knowing that the majority of British Columbians—students, parents, and the general public—support our goals, he said.

The Federation's polling shows that 86% of British Columbians, with children in public school, are satisfied with the quality of education. They value their neighbourhood schools, and believe that classroom teachers are the most reliable source of information about public education.

"Teachers should feel confident in raising our issues in their communities because the

public really does understand that we are advocating for students as well as for ourselves," Chudnovsky said.

Almost half a million copies

"...the teachers of British Columbia will not sign a collective agreement that removes class-size limits and reduces services for students."

—David Chudnovsky

of the new brochure, "Our Children's Education is Threatened," have been distributed to locals for teachers to give out to contacts and community members.

In addition, thousands of parents have seen the 15-minute video entitled "What's at Stake for our Children," that outlines teachers' concerns about the impact of the concession demands on class size, support for students with special needs, and guarantees of non-enrolling teachers' services. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with more than 800 copies of the video now in circulation around the province.

Many retail outlets and other small businesses are happy to carry the new poster called "Our schools need support, not cuts," in their front windows. Even businesses that could be negatively affected by the job action have expressed their support. A representative of the Mount

Seymour Ski School recently told a BCTF staff member that even though fewer students will be participating in his program this month, he still supports the teachers because he knows how much effort and time they volunteer.

And when you stop to think about it, B.C. teachers contribute millions of unpaid hours every year. At one middle school in Chilliwack, the 19 teachers on staff calculated that together they worked a total of more than 13,000 volunteer hours per year. That amounts to about 80 hours of unpaid labour per month per member. Even the teachers themselves were surprised at the extent of it!

Add to that teachers' out-of-pocket spending on learning resources—an unrecognized annual subsidy of about \$45 million—and it demonstrates the depth of their commitment to meeting students' needs and enriching their learning.

Facing the threat of a legislated contract that strips away the rights of teachers and services to students, that goodwill may be at risk, Chudnovsky warned.

"If the government imposes a contract on teachers, anyone who thinks it will be business as usual in B.C. schools is deluding himself," he said.

"But whatever happens, we are determined to continue working to defend our schools from the inevitable cuts that will result from the funding freeze, and to provide the best possible public education for all our students."

Nancy Knickerbocker is the BCTF's media relations officer.

President's message



David Chudnovsky

As the first issue of *Teacher* magazine for 2002 goes to press, public education in British Columbia is at a crossroads. There is the path of negotiation, and the path of confrontation. Teachers have been trying to travel the path of negotiation. But we keep being pushed onto the opposite track.

The minister of labour imposes essential services legislation. The minister of finance calls our salary proposal "insane." The premier muses aloud about imposing a legislated contract. So does the minister of finance. So do the media. The minister of education speaks of 'war.'

Is it any wonder thousands of teachers are in the streets? On January 12, 2002 we marched 5,000 strong to Art Gallery Square in downtown Vancouver. "Negotiate, don't legislate," read one teacher's placard. "Show some respect," said another. Coming together, singing satirical songs written by our amazingly creative colleagues, hearing words of solidarity from friends across the labour movement, we felt uplifted and energized.

And that energy is growing across B.C. as more and more teachers are getting active in the campaign to defend our rights as unionists and as professionals. We're taking a strong stand for ourselves, our students, and for the principles of democratic public education. We're joining with other trade unionists, community groups, and citizens to defend education, healthcare, the social safety net, and justice.

As I write these words on January 16, 2002, rumours are swirling about government intervention. Our 71 local presidents have been called to a meeting to consider a new position to put to the employer. The quality of public education in B.C. continues to be put at risk by BCPSEA and government.

However the immediate dispute ends, our long-term responsibilities are clear. The members of the BCTF can be counted on to be teachers and passionate advocates for quality public education.

David

Teacher appreciated

My patient wife has read me the latest *Teacher*. What a blessing your crew and you are! *Teacher* contains a flood of important information on current B.C. education. I wish more people were aware of it; including the government, school boards, and administrators. Many of us go about with our heads in a cloud.

Tell your crew that they do a necessary and invaluable job and that many of us are proud of them. I sent a copy off to Britain and another to a relative in Washington state, who now says she would like to be a Canadian!

Only one nit-picking comment—please do not overdo initials in your articles. We old ones get confused. OBWUTT (old bat who used to teach)!

Alex Goostrey
Surrey

Need parity in Merritt

The letter from a "name withheld" TOC in the November issue of *Teacher* says it all! A trained professional, able and willing to work daily, fulfilling a difficult job, without benefits, holiday pay, seniority rights or sick leave, submitted this letter anonymously to prevent any retribution. It sounds all too familiar to Merritt TOCs except for one thing—we earn even less than the \$17,000 stated in the letter. We are the lowest paid TOCs in B.C. at \$114 per day plus \$3 in lieu of benefits, for a total of \$117 per day.

Now is the time to standardize working conditions for all TOCs in the province by:

- setting a fair pay rate.
- providing benefits and sick days.
- honouring our loyalty and dependability when hiring.

We are not asking for a raise. We are demanding parity because we know that the "fair treatment of teachers on call does much to ensure the maintenance of quality education" (*TOC: A BCTF Resource Booklet*, p.18).

Merritt TOCs
Nicola Valley Teachers' Union

Bargaining for TOCs

I found some of "Name Withhelds" comments disturbing. This unidentified person writes, "I am a professional teacher, not a housewife or babysitter." How arrogant! My wife, a housewife and full-time mom by choice, meets the demands of her very challenging job every day, with no remuneration. Being a "professional teacher" is not in any way a superior position to running a household; it just happens to be one that you get paid for.

"Name Withheld" goes on to say, "It is in the district's best interest to keep me on the TOC list—I work for less than \$17,000 a year." Whatever school district he/she works for has a limited number of continuing positions available for teachers, and cannot just create a position to put this person into. Therefore, the school district is not saving any money by having him/her on the TOC list. When this person does get a position, someone else will take his/her place on the TOC list. It will make absolutely no difference to the school district's overall finances.

I, like many other teachers, gratefully accepted the challenges of working as a TOC at the beginning of my teaching career, and I also accepted that I would not receive benefits and scale salary until I got a position in a school.

Craig Bresett
Langley

Teachers need a minister who understands

I'm astonished at the level of ignorance of our minister of education, Christy Clark, regarding her ministry. She continually talks about the lack of accountability of B.C.'s teachers, while exhibiting a lack of comprehension about the work we do and, consequently, why we are demanding what we are in this round of collective bargaining. I would like to help Ms. Clark overcome her ignorance and explain to her why the demands of our bargaining committee will help our schools and teachers:

1. In my first year of teaching (last year), after 8.5 years of uni-

versity, I performed three different teaching roles, worked 12 to 15 hours a day in my classroom, and grossed \$7,000 less than our daytime custodian.

2. When I finished those 12-hour days in my classroom, I went home to perform many more hours of teacher work, in the evenings and on weekends.

3. Of the approximate \$30,000 I made during my first year of teaching, I spent more than \$3,000 of it equipping my classroom.

4. Having switched schools and grades this year, I was forced to spend more than \$700 on teaching resources—before the end of October.

5. Because of this inadequate allocation of funds from Clark's ministry, B.C.'s teachers are forced to subsidize public education to the tune of 45 million dollars per year—\$1,000 per teacher, per year!

6. B.C. teachers need smaller class sizes and more support in the classroom to ensure that all our students are able to live up to their educational potential.

These are but a few of the reasons why we need our demands met at the bargaining table. I don't know how accountable Clark wants B.C. teachers to be, but if she doubts the validity of any of my comments here, I challenge her to come spend a week with me in my classroom so she can speak with some knowledge in her position of minister of education!

Tina Anderson
Richmond

Letter to Mr. Campbell and Ms. Clark

I would like to invite you to observe my class.

I have a class of 26 Grade 6 and 7 children. For 10 of the children, this is the third year with me. I have students with special needs, students with ESL needs, students who are bright and gifted. I adhere to the Montessori philosophy, having applied it for almost three decades. Montessori requires the use of didactic materials, some of which can be purchased, others to be developed.

Last year, 10 of my 11 Grade 7s applied for enrichment/incentive programs, and all were accepted.

Four children, three Grade 5s and one Grade 6, received medals for a national math contest. The results ranked us fourth among all the Canadian schools that participated.

I currently have educational assistance for my two low-incidence students, ESL support for four students, resource support for six, counselling for two, and First Nations support for one. I get support for my bright and gifted children through professional development workshops and knowing I can call on colleagues/experts in the district.

I have volunteered part of my lunchtime to work on reading with one child.

Come and observe these children. See what you are trying to erase.

Thelma Valle-Serrano
Richmond

Goodbye Taiga

Taiga Works Wilderness Equipment's winter catalogue pays tribute to B.C.'s "champion of free speech" Doug Collins. He is pictured wearing a Taiga parka as he sits on Santa's lap. The caption says, "Although many disagreed with his views, he has to be admired, however grudgingly, for his lion's courage in asserting and defending the rights of free opinion and free speech in these wimpy politically-correct times."

It is bad enough that this company honours a man who denied the Holocaust and was always critical of Canada's immigration policies. What raised my ire were the statements in *The Province* (December 5, 2001) by Karen Wu, Taiga's operations manager. "I've got so many phone calls from Jews threatening our business.

What's the matter? Are we in a communist country? Are Jews the Italian mafia?"

I am sending my Taiga jacket to Afghanistan and will never shop at Taiga again. How many other teachers in B.C. will stand up against such bigotry?

Val Hamilton
Vancouver

Correction

The number for the Nov/Dec. 2001 issue of *Teacher* was printed incorrectly. It should have read Volume 14, Number 3.

Teacher qualification service

Policy change

Changes in TQS policy related to the acceptability of courses and degrees in religious studies, divinity, and theology came into effect September 1, 2001.

The policy that may affect new and previous applicants to the Teacher Qualification Service is as follows:

Courses completed at a recognized university with content which is directly related to a subject taught or educational practice in B.C. public schools will be accepted for categorization purposes while courses which are not directly related

will be limited to 12 credits (e.g., religious studies, divinity, theology, professional programs other than in education).

Prior to this change in policy, most courses and degrees in religious studies, divinity, and theology did not contribute to a TQS category assignment.

Teachers who have previously been advised by TQS that some of their course work was not acceptable because of its religious content, may wish to request a review of their category to determine if the new policy affects their category.

Classification of TQS policy 5.D

Not all graduate degrees offered by recognized universities are acceptable for meeting the requirements of TQS category six (6). These degrees are accepted as having the status of an acceptable undergraduate degree and TQS policies regarding undergraduate degrees are applied. This practice is now clarified in *TQS Policy 5.D* which reads as follows:

"Where a masters degree is accepted as the equivalent of an undergraduate degree, TQS policies regarding undergrad-

uate degrees will be applied."

While there is not a significant group of teachers affected by this policy, TQS recommends that teachers who have been assigned TQS category five (5) and are considering completing a program to meet the requirements of TQS category six (6), contact an evaluator at TQS to receive advice regarding their particular requirements for upgrading to category six (6), especially if they currently hold a masters degree.

For more information, visit www.tqs.bc.ca or phone TQS after 12:00 p.m. at 604-736-5484, F: 604-736-6591.



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B.C. Federation of Labour convention



PETER OWENS PHOTO

The convention delegates held a rally at the cabinet offices, at Canada Place, to highlight opposition to the economic and social program of the current government, tax cuts for the wealthy, and the proposed layoff of public-service employees.

by David Chudnovsky

I want to report some of the highlights of the B.C. Federation of Labour's three-day annual convention, November 26-28, 2001. Neil, Jinny, and I dropped in for segments of the convention over the three days, and on Wednesday, Patricia Clough from the Executive Committee, and Norm Nichols from the Labour Affiliation Task Force, were also in attendance.

On Monday morning, in his opening comments to the convention, Jim Sinclair referred to our current campaign to achieve a collective agreement and our fight against limitations on our bargaining rights. When I was introduced to the convention from the visitors' gallery, the convention gave the B.C. Teachers' Federation a standing ovation.

On Tuesday, I, along with a number of staff, participated in a march from the convention centre, at the Bayshore Hotel, to the cabinet offices, at Canada Place where a rally was held. The event highlighted opposition to the economic and social program of the current government, tax cuts for the wealthy while laying off thousands of public-service employees, and reducing services to citizens most in need.

On Wednesday, the convention adopted an action plan to fight the regressive agenda of the provincial government. As well,

"Everyone in this room has been affected by teachers and benefited from their teaching."

the convention, in a unanimous standing vote, passed a resolution supporting us in our efforts to achieve a collective agreement. During the debate on the motion, Maureen Shaw, the president of the College Institute Educators' Association and a member of the B.C. Federation of Labour Executive Council, gave a moving speech in support of the resolution. The wording of the motion and excerpts from Maureen's speech follow.

B.C. Federation of Labour resolution on education and teachers:

WHEREAS during his first day in office, Premier Gordon Campbell rewarded deputy ministers with huge pay increases in the double digits, and

WHEREAS he further introduced provincial tax cuts which reward wealthy British Columbians at the expense of the less fortunate; and

WHEREAS the provincial Liberal government has passed legislation designating education as an essential service, limiting the right of teachers and education workers to strike and tilting the balance in favour of employers; and

WHEREAS Premier Campbell has threatened to impose a legislated agreement that would destroy teaching and learning conditions negotiated while paving the way for drastic cuts in our public education system; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Federation demand that Premier Campbell withdraw his threat to impose a legislated contract and allow teachers to freely negotiate a new collective agreement; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation demand that the provincial government commit adequate financial resources to ensure the maintenance of quality public education while providing a fair and reasonable wage increase for teachers; and BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the B.C. Federation of Labour support the efforts of the B.C. Teachers' Federation to achieve a new collective agreement that meets the needs of teachers and assures a quality education for students.

The following is an excerpt from a speech by Maureen Shaw:

"I rise in support of this resolution and in solidarity with our fellow educators in the BCTF. As educators from K to Ph.D., we are all concerned with the learning conditions of our students. We know that good working conditions for teachers are vital to ensure all our students can succeed, can progress, and can learn.

"Everyone in this room has been affected by teachers and benefited from their teaching. What you are now is due to their efforts. Many of you are parents. Think of the hours teachers put

in on behalf of their students, your children. Think about how difficult that job is and how devoted they are. Their jobs extend beyond school hours; they prepare classes, mark countless assignments, coach sports teams, supervise dances, arrange field trips, and the list goes on.

This government seems determined to drive teachers away from their profession—at a time when our children need education more than ever and need teachers more than ever.

"The rights they have won they have won to protect and promote a high quality public education system. Those rights are threatened. They are 45,000 strong. And strong they have been.

"But, this government seems so determined to deny them their rights, to erase good learning conditions, to deny them adequate compensation. This government seems determined to drive teachers away from their profession—at a time when our children need education more than ever and need teachers more than ever. We know we will be facing a recruitment and retention problem; we know the demographics are such that we won't have enough teachers very soon.

"We talked at this convention about youth unions and for a labour curriculum. This situation provides a teachable moment for all our students. Teach them that teachers' rights must be protected. Teach them that the labour movement will stand up to this government and teach your children well, what the Labour movement stands for.

I urge all delegates to vote unanimously and act unanimously in support of our brothers and sisters in the BCTF."

David Chudnovsky is the BCTF's president.

10 New BCTF lesson aids

1 LA 8616—How To Teach Art to Children, produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 108 p. ©2001, \$24.95. This colourful resource book is designed to increase student awareness of the different kinds of art. It lets them know that there is no wrong way to do art. The book includes background information, literature resources, and concise step-by-step directions for 96 art projects. Also included is art information for the teacher, literature references, ideas for creating a classroom art center, and a list of art terms. Note the book is produced in the U.S.A. and may contain some U.S. references. Grades 1-6

2 LA 2041—Globalization—Who Is In Charge of Our Future? by Ginette Dubé, 57 p. ©2000, Co-Development Canada Association, \$18.95. This unit discusses the complex issue of globalization in the classroom and helps young people understand and solve the problems growing out of globalization. Three lessons each include background information, glossary, information sheet for the teacher and student handouts. Secondary

3 LA 8456—Thinking Skills—Grades 3-4, produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 88 p. ©2000, \$19.95. Introduce your Grade 3 & 4 students to more complex thinking 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. All 88 pages are perforated for easy removal. Note that the book is published in the U.S.A. and contains some U.S.-based standards.

4 LA 9429—Thinking Skills—Grades 5-6, produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 88 p. ©2000, \$19.95. The challenges keep coming for your Grade 5 & 6 students, requiring new and more complex thinking—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. All 88 pages are perforated for easy removal. Note that the book is published in the U.S.A. and contains some U.S.-based standards and references.

5 LA 8020—Ten-Minute Activities, Grades 1-3, produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 192 p. ©2001, \$24.95. The 190 activities in this resource book are presented in four subject area sections: 60 language arts activities, 60 math activities, 25 social studies activities, 25 science activities and 20 indoor recess activities. The book outlines quick-learning activities that students will enjoy. Addresses many skills and concepts. Note that the book is published in the U.S.A. and contains some U.S.-based standards and references. Grades 1-3

6 LA 5110—Daily Living in Japanese by Sarah Kawamura and Sachiko Omoto Renovich, 83 p. ©2000, \$8.50. This illustrated resource book on daily living was designed to aid teachers in creating real-life based language classrooms. The resource follows the Japanese 5 to 12 Integrated Resource Package. It is geared toward senior level Japanese courses (11 and 12), but can be adapted to be used with lower grades. Based on the communicative approach, the activities and cumulative tasks reflect situations that students may encounter in daily life. The

tasks and activities encourage students to develop skills in language learning, and include language learning strategies such as using visual cues, recursive listening/reading, and note taking. Grades 5-12

7 LA 6807—By Design: Technology Exploration and Integration, produced by the Metropolitan Toronto School Board Teachers, 176 p. ©2000, \$41.95. This teaching resource applies problem-solving approaches to the design process in order to integrate technology education into all subject areas. Included are activities and strategies related to art, family studies, mathematics, science and social studies; how to use the problem-solving approach integral to the design process; over 40 teacher-tested activities for Grades 6-9; reproducible pages; safety quiz, safety contract, useful resources and teacher support materials.

8 F9297C Géographie du Canada by Sonja E. Schild 46 p. 2001, 24.99\$ Le livre Géographie du Canada est construit à partir d'une carte du Canada de Smart Toys pouvant servir à la reproduction. Long de 70 pages de feuilles d'activités, de cartes géographiques, de tests, plus un clé de réponses, une grille d'évaluation et une carte en couleur du Canada, ce livre se prête bien à l'enseignement des études sociales à l'école élémentaire, aux élèves de français langue seconde, aux élèves en difficulté, à la scolarisation à domicile, aux révisions et aux tests. Les feuilles peuvent être utilisées consécutivement ou au hasard à différents niveaux d'âge. La première moitié du livre Géographie du Canada enseigne aux élèves les grandes caractéristiques géographiques du Canada à l'aide de cartes, d'illustration et de graphisme. La seconde moitié du livre renforce les concepts appris et teste les élèves au moyen de mots croisés, d'illustration, jeux et devinettes pour rendre l'apprentissage amusant et intéressant. 3e à la 7e année.

9 LA 3215—Grease: A Documentary of the Nuxalt Nation and the Ooligan Oil Production on the Bella Coola River by Allen Elsey, 30-min. videocassette, ©2000, \$29.95. This recently remade video documentary narrated by Al Elsey in 1963 includes excellent quality film footage of the Nuxalt Nation Bella Coola people catching the "ooligan" (candle fish) on the Bella Coola River, aging and processing the fish into "oil" or grease. The old methods captured on the film are not used today. The video shows how the first nation's people prepare to harvest their year's supply of the ooligan, the process of storing the grease in cedar boxes and barbeque spring salmon Bella Coola style. Grades 4 and up

10 LA 9117—Ghost Canoe—A Novel Study by Joanie Proske, 134 p. ©1999, \$9.50. This is a novel study for the novel *Ghost Canoe* by Will Hobbs. It is an integrated unit that the author taught in a thematic approach over several weeks. It addresses all the reading, language arts, social studies, art and first nations education during that period. The unit includes chapter questions and activities, a bibliography and relevant answer keys. Grades 4-8

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.bc.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.

LOOKING BACK

70 years ago

The Federation is frequently asked if it is legal for a School Board to reduce salaries before a complete annual salary of ten equal instalments has been paid. That is, assuming that a teacher's salary was \$1,000 per annum, or \$100 for each of the ten teaching months, is it legal for a Board to reduce this salary to say \$900 per annum or \$90 per month after only four of the ten teaching months have passed? The Federation is of the most emphatic opinion that such a procedure is not legal under the School Act.

(BC Teacher, January 1932)

50 years ago

Throughout B.C. this month, weekly papers are carrying lead stories on teachers' salary negotiations. The reaction of the public to these stories depends, at least in part, upon the thought and planning that went into the setting of your sights months ago. Will the

average man's reaction be, "Oh teachers, what do they want this time?" ...or, "I know what the teachers are doing and I'm on their side?"

And the public will nod their heads in sympathy about the teachers' low salaries and it is all too unfortunate. But sympathy is about all we will get. But if the public realizes that the educational program is losing superior teachers due to low salaries, there will be fast action because the children are involved.

(BC Teacher, January 1952)

30 years ago

Our major problem is the public's lack of trust in the schools. People have lost their faith in what the schools are doing, and that loss of faith is manifesting itself in a variety of ways, the most obvious of which is the cry for cutbacks in and controls on the cost of education.

(BC Teacher, February 1972)

10 years ago

In June 1988, the B.C. Principals, and Vice-Principals, Association filed a petition in B.C. Supreme Court for an order "that the BCTF be wound up" with an alternative claim that the BCTF provide "compensation" to administrators on the grounds that "the affairs of the BCTF are and have been conducted in a manner oppressive and unfairly prejudicial" to them.

BCTF President Ken Novakowski expressed the federation's position in this way to the 1990 AGM: "We will do everything in our power to ensure that not a penny of the resources this Federation has built up to protect and serve working teachers will be turned over to an organization that represents educational managers."

(Teacher Newsmagazine, January 1992)

Chris Bocking
Keating Elementary School
Saanich

Yours for the asking

B.C. Transplant Society school program

The B.C. Transplant Society (BCTS) developed a school education program to educate our youth about the option of organ and tissue donation and the need to improve understanding about the success of organ transplantation. The presentations to schools are made by fully trained volunteers.

One Surrey teacher wrote: "The representation was effective and informative. The volunteers kept the attention of a class of 16- and 17-year-olds for 70 minutes. No small feat. Many teenagers believe themselves to be immortal, so being a donor or a recipient has never been considered. Thank you... it is an important message."

Since April 2000, eight school districts have been contacted, and all have agreed to the program. The BCTS is working to expand its volunteer base to ensure that all districts are afforded this option.

The focus is on Grade 11 and 12 students. The presentation, approximately 40 minutes long, consists of an 18-minute video, a recipient's story, and a donor family's story. General information about the process is provided and a question and answer period follow.

To schedule a presentation in your school, contact Sally Greenwood at 1-800-663-6189,

or e-mail Sally_Greenwood@bcts.hnet.bc.ca.

Gay Straight Alliances Handbook

Gay and Lesbian Educators of B.C. (GALE-BC) have just produced an exciting new secondary- and middle-school resource to help counteract homophobia in school. *Creating and Supporting a Gay Straight Alliance* is designed to help teachers and students foster a more positive and supportive school climate for all. This 22-page handbook will help with the establishment of Gay Straight Alliance clubs in schools. It includes sections on why schools need GSA clubs, steps for starting GSAs, GSA activity ideas, GSA student-leader advice, sponsor-teacher tips, as well as resources (print, video, and web based). GSA clubs have sprung up in secondary schools in B.C. over the past two years, as a result of the BCTF and GALE-BC working together in partnership with students and teachers. In April, the BCTF sponsored a GSA conference for metro-region sponsor teachers and student leaders. There are 900 GSA clubs in schools in the U.S.A. and about 15 in B.C. The BCTF also provides a free workshop for teachers on Starting GSAs in Schools. Contact the Professional Development Division for details.

To order a copy of this new resource, contact GALE-BC at galebc.org, or e-mail gale_bc@canada.com. The cost of each is \$4, including postage. Cheques should be payable to GALE-BC. The mailing address is GALE-BC, Box 93678, Nelson Park P.O., Vancouver, BC, V6E 4L7. BCTF Lesson Aids Service will also be stocking this resource soon. Ask for it in your secondary school as it was sent to all PD Reps, local presidents, and the district-social-justice contacts in mid-November.

Build, learn, teach renewable energy

You and your students can explore the science of renewable energy by visiting www.re-energy.ca to see how to construct working models of wind turbines that harness real energy from the sun, wind, water, and biomass. You can ignite a flame from manure by building a biogas generator, generate wind power using a reused water bottle, and bake a batch of cookies with a solar oven you build yourself.

Download construction plans, lesson plans, backgrounders, and links to many exciting resources and organizations. An excellent resource for Grades 7-12 science teachers.

More internet tools
www.climatechangesolutions.com
www.re-energy.ca
www.ecoaction.ca

Source: Pembina Institute, www.pembina.org.

What's the price?

by Garry Litke

We have all heard the negative voices crying out about teachers' salary demands:

"This is a bad time to be asking for a salary increase," they say. "The public will lose respect for teachers if these demands are made now."

The superintendent of West Vancouver, Doug Player, appears to agree with the sentiment that teachers' demands are ill-advised. He stated recently that teachers should not compare their wage demands with the nurses' settlement. He described the workload of a nurse he knows, insinuating that she deserves more money because she works harder than teachers do.

Thank goodness he didn't start comparing us with many professional athletes and well-known actors, because that would really confuse the issue of how value is determined.

Recently I purchased a used SUV (can't afford a new one) and in the process observed that a used Toyota 4-Runner costs considerably more than a Ford Explorer of similar style and reliability. Objectively the price should be similar, but it isn't.

"The market determines their value," the Toyota salesman told me. "People believe 4-Runners are worth more—so they are."

Like the Toyota 4-Runner, actors, athletes and the nurses, teachers in B.C. must learn that they will get only what they demand. There is no benefactor who will reward them amply when the time is right.

Our American colleagues in education are proof of that.

For example, in Rochester N.Y., teachers are among the highest paid on the continent, earning up to \$84,701 U.S. Their collective agreement contains 61 sections. They have a history of strong union action. From the strength of their collective has come a mature and progressive relationship with the employer. They are partners in education planning and policy making.

Currently, Rochester teachers and their employer are negotiating an early retirement incentive policy as a means of planning for the impending teacher shortage. They reason that creating vacancies now gives the employer the opportunity to hire teachers who are available now, but who may not be available in five years when the shortage crunch hits and teachers are being courted by every jurisdiction in the world. The board and the union together are planning the rejuvenation of staff while they have some control, instead of waiting for the crisis to propel them into panic. There is mutual respect and collaboration between the parties.

Contrast that with other states, where employers and the

public hold teachers in very low esteem. Teaching there is not seen as a profession because it is not valued and rewarded as a profession.

There the teachers and their spokespersons are "gentler," not ruffling feathers and accepting lower salaries without much protest. The public sees teachers being paid little, and so perceives them as being worth little.

This subjective evaluation eventually becomes more objective.

When low salaries fail to attract the best candidates to teaching, the quality of instruction declines, and so does public opinion. Low public opinion depresses subsequent salary offers, and on it goes.

This downward spiral has, in some states, damaged public education and a generation or more of young people. Some states have finally recognized the problem and are addressing the situation with huge infusions of money, but others are financially unable to arrest the decline.

Gordon Campbell is pulling the drain plug that will create a similar spiral in British Columbia. His announced funding freeze in the face of collective bargaining is destructive to the process, the people, and the education system itself.

He won't improve public education by forcing low salaries on teachers.

Public opinion won't improve unless teachers are allowed to do the best job possible for children, and that means attracting quality people with decent salaries.

We won't get respect by capitulating, seductive as that argument might be.

Respect from the public begins with self-respect, and that is built only through the recognition of true value, including fair compensation for our work.

We cannot wait for a "better" time for our salary demands. It doesn't exist. We have already waited for 10 years and will not wait any longer. If we don't act now, we will lose younger teachers who will be forced to earn a living elsewhere, and we will lose the older teachers who take early retirement and an indexed pension.

The effect of such an exodus in the face of a teacher shortage will make quality delivery of programs more difficult, and the public will blame us.

We can't let that happen.

We must demand respect now and take action to achieve fair value for the important work we do. That's what professionals do. That's what unions do. That's what we are doing.

Garry Litke is an assistant director of the BCTF's Bargaining Division.

Delta hotels boycott

All Delta hotels in Canada are under boycott by the Assembly of First Nations. The boycott is based on the actions of the hotel chain relative to the Sun Peaks Resort development near Kamloops. The national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Matthew Coon Come, called for the boycott because the assembly believes the hotel chain is behind the attempts by Sun Peaks Resort Corporation to have the members of the Secwepmc Nation arrested for

setting up camp on their traditional territory. "The chain has put its financial interests ahead of the recognition of the Aboriginal rights of First Nations who own that land. The Delgamuuk'w decision of the Supreme Court of Canada has clearly stated the Aboriginal title still exists in British Columbia and that the economic and legal right to the land still belongs to First Nations. The private interests behind this project are acting as if we don't exist and their interests are the only ones

worth protecting," stated Coon Come.

The BCTF has informed the Delta Hotel chain that we will not be using its facilities until the Assembly of First Nations has removed the boycott.

As of January 1, 2002, the Delta Pacific has been taken over by the Ramada chain. The union in place in the facility will remain. Existing bookings of the Federation are with the Ramada facility.

— Peter Owens

Notice of AGM 2002

As required by the Society Act, the following formal notice of the 2002 Annual General Meeting is made to all BCTF members pursuant to By-law 8.1 by publication in this edition of *Teacher*.

The 86th Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation will be held in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, beginning on

Saturday evening, March 16, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. and continuing to Tuesday, March 19, 2002.



TOC call-out systems

by Darryl Smolik

Call-out systems affect the daily lives of teachers on call. Two call-out systems operate in the province: random automated call-out (computer initiated), or personal call-out (initiated by teacher, secretary, or principal). Each system has its advantages and drawbacks, either offering or denying teachers on call the opportunity to work.

The first system, the random automated call-out, is computer operated and is often a preferable system when a teacher on call is hired onto a school district's TOC list. Random selection provides a variety of work situations for all TOCs. Work experience is gained by

teaching different subjects, to different grades, in different schools, and for different teachers. Because that system is computer operated, it may be manipulated or monitored for statistical information or other purposes. It is basically a fair system because there is little or no room for favouritism.

Some systems allow for personal requests (a teacher or a principal may specifically request a certain teacher on call). The practice is questionable. When a teacher bypasses the random function of the automated call-out system and personally requests a particular TOC, he/she affects other teachers' right to work. He/she is, in fact, acting as the employer. The practice denies

new, existing, or inexperienced teachers the right to work.

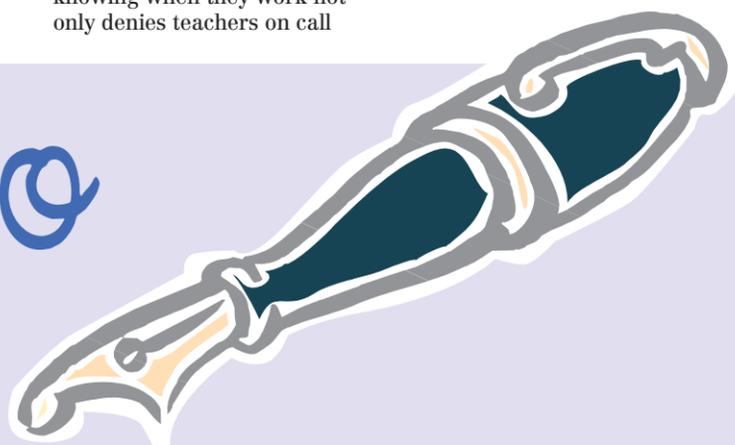
On the other hand, when specific teaching qualifications apply, does the random system allow for the "best" person to be called? Students may respond better to a TOC with whom they are familiar. This is what many teachers prefer, especially those who have a "difficult" class where familiarity is a significant factor to a successful and productive day for their students. The second system, the personal call-out system, works well in such a situation. However, personal call-out can also be unfair and inequitable. In order to be called, are new TOCs expected to "get acquainted" with the staff of different schools, to familiarize and/or

advertise themselves to the teachers, administrators, and office staff?

Teachers on call are professionals—a unique body of teachers who fulfill an important job. They often have as much education and experience as contract teachers—sometimes more. Their skills in both behaviour and classroom management are well known. As well, they teach a wide variety of subjects to a variety of grade levels in a variety of situations. What they teach, whom they teach, and where they teach enrich their professional experience. However, when they teach depends upon the call-out system. The insecurity of not knowing when they work not only denies teachers on call

personal and professional esteem but also limits their pay (and pension contributions) as well as their insurable hours for Employment Insurance claims. Fairness in the call-out system determines their career and personal success. Waiting for the phone to ring, paying for call-forwarding, or carrying a cell phone, TOCs arm themselves with as many tools as possible to get a call for work. This is part and parcel of being TOCs who manage to arrive to schools on time, ready for their day. The call-out systems, whether automated or personal, seem to be finding TOCs to fill a vacancy.

Darryl Smolik is a teacher on call, Nakusp School District.



An open letter to Christy Clark, minister of education

Dear Minister,

As you pass the halfway point of your first year as minister of education, the learning curve steepens as the B.C. Liberals' "new era" in education clashes with the reality of our public schools.

Your fresh start in 2001, replete with frequent announcements of dramatic changes while garnering inordinate media attention, seems to have received little scrutiny.

As an observer of the educational scene over the past three decades, I would like to offer some comments and advice.

I commend your rejection of the Fraser Institute's flawed system of ranking secondary schools and its foray into similar rankings for elementary schools.

I commend your examination of the goals of the Grade 12 Dogwood Certificate in light of our changing economy.

Unfortunately, my commendations end there, and my concerns grow as the "new era" stumbles into uncharted territory.

Essential Services Act

A vague piece of legislation passed in mid-summer of 2001. Your government barely gave wings to that legislation, unprecedented in the rest of Canada, when Premier Campbell, in early November, threatened to recall the legislature and impose a settlement. Wiser heads in government should have informed you and the minister of labour, (who was unable to discuss the projected effects of his own bill) that with the passing of that legislation, you guaranteed turmoil in schools for at least a year. Paul Willcock, in his insightful analysis in the *Vancouver Sun*, characterized the bill as "another mistake" by your

government.

Anti-teacher bias

Most teachers have correctly interpreted your essential services legislation as an ideological cudgel with which to beat them into submission. Your government may have gained some initial support for the bill, but believe me, with the confrontational path you have chosen, you risk poisoning relationships with teachers as long as you are in office.

If you doubt this assertion, consider the insulting impact of Finance Minister Gary Collins's dismissal of teachers' contractual demand as "insane" or the fatuous distinction you made between school as "an adult workplace" versus that of "a child-centred learning" location. Implicit in your remarks is the belief that teachers in their negotiations are strictly out for themselves.

Get real. The history of genuine education reform in this province over the past three decades is tied to hard-fought contractual gains by teachers. Of course it is too much to expect school boards and the ministry to acknowledge that fact.

Three-year freeze on school board budgets

Your government's three-year freeze is now widely regarded as an about-face from your party's electoral platform. As Gordon Comeau, BCSTA president, pointed out, this means cuts in real terms as education costs continue to rise. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that a steady budget with higher fixed costs means only one thing: fewer services. (Already 20 school construction/upgrading projects have been postponed or cancelled.) Coming

on the heels of a decade of caps and cuts by the NDP, the freeze will have our public schools on the ropes by 2005.

School choice

Your dual mantra of flexibility and accountability must be examined. Few would argue against providing wider choices in public schools but with the steady drumbeat, and some would say simplistic approach, on this issue since assuming office, you have generated totally unrealistic parental expectations. You have also placed school boards in an invidious position inasmuch as you expect these changes are to be implemented within the context of a three-year budget freeze. Flexibility without funding is fiction.

Do you seriously think cash-strapped school boards will be able to expand choices under those circumstances?

School board accountability contracts

A Liberal boondoggle if ever there was one.

Asking school boards in the name of "accountability" to give back to your ministry *the same information you already have* (i.e., Foundation Skills Assessment results for Grades 4, 7, and 10, and Grade 12 provincial exam results) marks this as a make-work project for superintendents of schools.

On top of that, in the draft document sent to school boards, you even offer to provide boards with information they don't have (i.e., percent of Grade 12 students making transition to work) so they can send the same information back to you!

You also ask about the level of parent and student satisfaction, noting that school board surveys may be required to determine

this. Conspicuously absent is the question about employee, particularly teacher, satisfaction. I wonder why.

As you are aware, currently every school in B.C. participates in a six-year formal, mandatory, accreditation cycle—coupled with an annual, follow-up, school-improvement plan submitted to boards and the ministry.

To underline the extent of the massive duplication and overlap in your new so-called "accountability contracts," let me point out that 90% of the information requested is readily available in Victoria through the ministry's own regulatory requirements and formal accreditation programs. (Oh, the irony! Your government has appointed a special deregulation minister to eliminate red tape by one-third over a three-year period.

Of course, with the information already available to you, the information could easily be collated within the ministry using a custom-made data-management plan.

But if that happened, then you could hardly claim publicly that you are holding school boards to account, could you?

Unaddressed issues

Apart from the surface compliance you may achieve on issues such as flexibility, choice, and accountability, there are many serious and substantive issues to be addressed by you that directly affect the quality of instructional programs in our schools:

- The sharp decline in professional-development programs (the heart of any school-improvement plan) in many school districts.

- The ongoing shortage of basic textbooks, supplies, and materials.

- The systematic erosion of mainstreaming students with special needs through lack of in-school identification and support.

- The increased dependence of schools on fundraising by parents (one estimate places that at close to \$40 million per year) and teachers' out-of-pocket expenses (estimated at \$45 million per year).

- The effect of the provincially imposed ESL cap on thousands of ESL secondary school students.

- The threat posed by the shredding (through 30% to 50% cuts) of the "social-equity envelope" under the jurisdiction of the troubled Ministry of Children and Family Development. That could devastate 100 community schools and 300 food programs across B.C.

Minister Clark, genuine school improvement and education reform are achieved through respect, co-operation, and negotiation, not through coercion, insults, and political grandstanding.

Heed the advice of Elizabeth Witmer (currently a leading candidate for the office of Premier of Ontario) to her colleagues when she cautions after six years of Harris "reforms" that "a new school (read a "new era") with dissatisfied teachers will never allow us to achieve excellence in education."

If you continue on your current confrontational course, the Liberal "new era reform" slogan will unquestionably be recognized as an oxymoron in the history of education in B.C.

Yours sincerely,

Noel Herron.
Retired Vancouver teacher and administrator.

Research

Funding frozen but BCTF education-finance web pages growing

As the B.C. government freezes education funding and plans to change other aspects of school finance, education finance can no longer be seen as a relatively esoteric and dry subject. The BCTF has created a set of education finance pages on its web site to keep members and the public updated on the latest events and to provide background information on the process.

Visit the education-finance web page at www.bctf.ca/education/EdFinance/ and follow the links to see what the government says about the freeze, learn about the three branches of finance (funding, budgeting, and accounting), brush up on BCTF policies, read BCTF briefs and news releases, and find out more about specific areas such as learning resources, targeted funding, and

school-based budgeting/site-based management.

You can also interact with BCTF's education finance experts. We're developing a frequently asked questions page (FAQ), so we invite you to direct your questions and comments to: educationfinance@bctf.ca for consideration.

The pages also include links to hot Ministry of Education items such as the Accounting Manual, the Budget Instruction Manual, the revenue and expenditure tables, and the K-12 data-collection forms and instructions. We hope that having all these publications accessible from one spot will help those who deal with finance questions regularly or occasionally have the information at their fingertips.

—Amy Schaefer, aschaefer@bctf.ca, educationfinance@bctf.ca

B.C. home to greatest wealth gap in Canada

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives analysis of wealth distribution in Canada by region shows that deep inequalities in the distribution of wealth exist across Canada, but especially in B.C.

B.C. is home to both the highest average wealth in Canada and the largest gap between the richest and poorest households.

B.C. is home to both the highest average wealth in Canada and the largest gap between the richest and poorest households. The wealthiest 10% of family units held 54.6% of the province's personal wealth at last count (compared with 53% nationally), and the top 50% held 95.7% (compared with 94.4% nationally). The bottom 50% of British Columbians hold only 4.3% of personal wealth. Average wealth for the richest 10% is almost \$1.4 million; the poorest 10% hold average net debt of \$8,126, worse than in any other region except the Atlantic. The gap between richest and poorest in B.C. is significantly higher than in any other region.

"These numbers debunk the myth that B.C. has been a tough place to be rich," says Steve Kerstetter, a research associate with the CCPA and a former director of the National Council of Welfare. "Clearly, the wealthiest in B.C. are doing very well. And it's not just a small number of poor people who are being left behind. These numbers underline the tenuous financial position of a surprisingly large portion of the population."

Kerstetter says he is concerned with the direction taken by the current provincial government. "One of the major challenges facing B.C. is how to deal with the problem of inequality. Tax cuts that primarily benefit high-income earners, cuts to government spending, and a so-called training wage are policies that contribute to greater inequality. Before going any further, the government needs to re-evaluate its policy direction in light of these numbers."

The analysis is available on the centre's web site: www.policyalternatives.ca.

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Amazement and education at the October PD Day

by Kathryn Askew

I spent October 19, 2001, in Port McNeil, on Vancouver Island, with a group of amazing people. Teachers: beginning, middle, and veteran; male and female; primary, intermediate, and secondary.

People who love their profession, love kids, love the excitement of finding new ways to motivate themselves and the kids they work with.

People who know how to listen respectfully and then blow the rest of us away with their ideas for math and science and language arts and self-esteem and for reaching the shy and the lonely and the non-verbal.

People whose knowledge about the work they do simply amazed me.

- I learned about Dawn Reithaug's spelling and math boards. I'll use them on Monday to enrich what my Grade 6s are doing with bacteria, viruses, and diseases in general.

- I learned how to draw a student's profile with the brain empty so the kids could print or draw in "What's on My Mind" for brainstorming about a topic or reviewing what they have learned.

- I gathered some neat web sites: time4teachers.com, aplusmath.com, dictionary.com, score.k12.ca.us, schooldiscovery.com, nationalgeographic.com, [mappachine](http://mappachine.com). Thanks to Mary Waite, at Cheslakees!

- I heard about Steck Vaughn's "Mastering Math" for use with enrichment and remedial math.

- I learned how to make Babylonian food items from barley grain and sesame seeds, Grade 4 skeletons from toilet paper rolls and brass brads, and Egyptian mummies from grocery-store chickens—just in time for Hallowe'en. Thanks to Doug Laird, at Eagleview.

- My colleagues suggested ways to make my 3-D bacteria

and viruses more interesting: use the ends of egg cartons; roll up crushed newspaper, wrap it in duct tape, loop it along my papier mâché ballon-shaped bacteria; get pipe cleaners at the dollar store; buy cheap pom-poms.

- I learned how to use A.A.

A thousand thank yous to the BCTF activists who demanded professional days in 1972 so we could share our work with one another throughout the school year.

Milne's "King John" as a winter concert choral speech number.

- I learned I could have kids write an autobiographical poem using the following structure:

- first name: four adjectives that describe me
- relationship phrase: such as son of Lewis

- finish the phrase: lover of (peanut butter) for example

- Who feels: three adverbs
- Who fears: three nouns
- Who would like to see: three phrases

- Resident of: community
- First name, last name

- I learned to build a structure



for displaying an artifact (like a diorama):

- Take an 8x11 piece of construction paper.

- Draw a line to divide the paper into two parts: 8x8 and 3x8.

- Draw two lines diagonally across the 8x8 square to make four triangular sections.

- Cut into the middle of the square along one of the lines that begins at the junction with the 3x8 rectangle.

- Fold on the diagonal lines, from the centre to the outside edge.

- Once the line is cut, you can overlap the side triangle on top of the triangle that is still attached to the 3x8 rectangle.

You end up with a pyramid (a tetrahedron) that is missing one face, and a rectangle that is sticking out in front of that face or that can be folded down in front of the pyramid to sit on a shelf.

You could glue four of them together to make a four-sided pyramid, with one part of the project displayed in each section.

How isolating our job can be. How much we need to talk to one another about our work. A thousand thank yous to the BCTF activists who demanded professional days in 1972 so we could share our work with one another throughout the school year.

I still have the image of the forests and streets and grassy landscapes that are British Columbia on Friday night, October 19, 2001: amazing and colourful lights going on in teachers' minds like fireflies, like Christmas or Hanukkah or Diwali lights—shedding light into their own brains.

What a gift we have given ourselves.

Kathryn Askew teaches at Tsolum Elementary School, Courtenay.

IWA message of solidarity

My name is Doug Routley, IWA plant chairperson. Many of you know me. In fact, some of you taught me and probably know me too well. I represent the custodians, bus drivers, grounds people, and trades people working here in School District 79 (Cowichan Valley).

I was asked to come here today, on behalf of my membership, to deliver a message of solidarity and support. That is easy. We support you. As the past has proven, we will be there to support your action in whatever way we can. IWA support workers have and always will support you. We, too, are entering negotiations, and we, too, are struggling to improve our schools. We share more than contractual dilemmas.

We share an employer, a government, that has abandoned its responsibility to be a beacon of fairness in labour relations. Shedding their role as leaders, they have hired professional antilabour specialists. They are hired for one purpose. Not to arrive at a healthy

agreement, for they have no need to live with the outcome. These hired thugs are charged with delivering a carcass, the carcass of your profession, and indeed, the carcass of free and equally accessible public education.

Now, faced with a looming teacher shortage and the expensive realities of their own supply-and-demand philosophy, they are attempting to hobble your association through essential-service designation. They want to dodge the axe of demand and turn back the clock. This cannot be allowed to stand!

Many teachers, admirably, would prefer to close the door and teach—to prevent the distraction of politics and labour from fogging their immediate commitment to excellence. That is a part of your strength, until we reach a point where the assault on your profession becomes so great that the future of these kids, along with that of teachers, is placed firmly in the crosshairs of the privateers who now run this province—free-market privatization pirates who are attempting to sink this

vessel of opportunity to all those who lack favour!

Reject them! Reject their dictates! Use your strike vote, as empty as they attempt to make it, as a protest—a protest against their thuggery and a defense of a wounded public system! Let's defend the future of your profession in British Columbia!

They say that if you must pick enemies, at least pick lazy ones. Our provincial government missed that point when they chose to take on nurses and teachers.

As IWA chairperson, as husband, brother, son, son-in-law, and grandson of teachers, as father of two fantastic students of fantastic teachers, I implore you to give your executive a mandate to bargain! I beg you to defend an honourable and noble profession! I ask you, more humbly, to protect the futures of my two beautiful daughters and the futures of all the children of British Columbia.

Source: Doug Routley, IWA plant chairperson spoke at a meeting of the CDTA, September 2001.

HOW DO YOU TEACH THIS?

by Pat Clarke

Last year at this time, I was teaching two classes of History 12. This September, I'm in a non-teaching job but wishing I could spend some time with those students I was teaching last year. I'd like a chance to work with them to build some understanding of the astonishing and horrific events of September 11. There are few times in a teacher's career when such a teachable moment is so starkly presented.

Given the gravity of the situation, the indelible effect this event will have on youth for their whole lives, it is a formidable challenge to make their lifelong recollection one that leads to understanding and wisdom rather than remain a fog of confusion, fear, and ignorance. In other words, I would say to myself, this is a big moment, Teacher; don't blow it.

It is easy for a teacher simply to be part of the confusion. If I see my role as a reporter, simply passing on the news or making it available, I'm probably not helping much. That role is one a teacher could easily adopt for fear of losing objectivity or running the risks inherent in revealing how you feel. But passing on the news as a "neutral" medium can just add to the cacophony. There is no shortage of information. The difficulty is in making sense of it or separating the sense from the nonsense.

One of the disconcerting aspects of the media response to September 11 has been their tendency to de-contextualize. The story is simply repeated and repeated as event and response. Attempts to delve into why the event occurred or consider a range of appropriate responses are assiduously avoided especially in U.S. media or in Canada in editorials of the *National Post*. Popular or mass media seem to have a singularly rudimentary response formula: "de-contextualization + simplification = sales." Being a teacher in this ocean of shallowness obviously presents challenges, especially if you see your primary role as "contextualizing and complicating."

But "pedagogic activism" can be perilous. This is an occasion when teachers, especially history teachers, really have to examine their role. There is a long-held conviction that teachers should be part of a national effort to build patriotism, national unity, and selflessness. Social studies and history curricula in Canada and in most other so-called modern democracies have always had a significant element of political socialization in their content. Teachers who see their role as activists (we are more about developing critical perspectives than engaging in political socialization and passing on conventional thinking) can find themselves in difficult circumstances when they invoke critical thinking on issues like terrorism and patriotism. This is especially true in times like these when evil seems

apparent, and debating the issues is seen only as vacillation and tacit acceptance of the deed.

As a history teacher, I have had a touchstone that has inclined me toward teaching a critical perspective and away from political socialization. Some years ago, I read a story of a teacher in 1914 who took on her role as a patriot and "socializer" to exhort the 17- and 18-year-olds she was teaching to commit to king and country and volunteer for the army. Five years later, after almost half of them had been killed or maimed, she was living out a self-inflicted lifelong curse: "I'll never be able to forgive myself." I would feel no better if I had been a teacher in 1939 who only taught the necessity of appeasement. Looking at teaching through that historical lens illuminates the complexity of the job.

This is an occasion when teachers, especially history teachers, really have to examine their role.

So in the midst of the current political maelstrom brought on by the events of September 11, how does a teacher rise to the considerable challenges suggested here? Much of what we customarily do as social studies teachers is inappropriate. Relating the news is a half measure; taking on the socializing tradition of the social studies is thoughtless. At the same time, the "risks" in encouraging critical thinking have rarely been more evident. Jingoism and patriotism do not lie comfortably with critical inquiry. I empathize with the teachers in 1914 who were such enthusiastic patriots. Did they have much choice? Do we now?

There is a space for teaching in between turning on CNN and lock-step socialization. In that space is a concept that learning is really about perspectives, learning them, analyzing them, evaluating them. In terms of the issues of the day, to be more concrete, this means understanding an approach to teaching about September 11 based on determining the "big questions" and helping students develop the knowledge and establish the criteria they need to answer the questions. This approach takes them beyond CNN and makes the teacher a facilitator, not a socializer. That process builds a context for understanding the event and effectively "complicates" the discussion. In other words, it gives less space to patriotism and bravado.

So how would I teach this? What are those "big questions," and how does a teacher get students to "criteria for judgment"? Learning about history can have a particular value here. One of the central questions, for example, has to do with the "connectedness" of history. This is that basic understanding so often missed by contemporary media: events do

not happen in a vacuum. So one big question could be, "Considering what you know about the outcomes of World War I, could we develop a web of events that link those outcomes with the attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon?"

Another key question would address a second important element of historical understanding: the matter of perspective. Why and how do different perspectives evolve? The challenge for a teacher is to craft an exercise that will break through the ethnocentrism of simplistic analysis. In the case at hand, a question that focusses students' attention on an Arabic interpretation of a watershed event that occurred in the Middle East, such as the effect of the Balfour Declaration or the U.N. resolution on the formation of Israel, could lead students to a more complex analysis of the issues. The intention is not to present that perspective as a definitive analysis but as a point of view. It is just as important that students understand the circumstances from the perspective of those who supported the declaration and subsequent U.N. resolution. What they will have done, what has unfortunately not been an especially prominent feature of history curricula, is give a balanced consideration to both perspectives.

The contextualizing of the history and the presentation of the complexity of perspectives on the events give students a foundation for making judgments or for working out reasoned responses to difficult questions. My inclination is to have students focus not on the events of 09-11-01 as much as on the general conflict in the region.

So one question might be: "Considering what you now know about the 20th century history of the Middle East, what would you say are the most significant causes of conflict in that region?"

A second question could be: "The events of 09-11-01 are related to the history of the region in the following ways:"

Finally, and perhaps most important, students should try to develop an agenda for peace and coincidentally for counter-acting terrorism:

"Knowing what you now know about the situation in the region, what do you think are five significant actions that would establish peace and remove incentives for terrorism?"

It is easy for teachers to get trapped when they are dealing with such complex and controversial issues as these. The reality, however, is that our traditional approaches have not served our students or us very well. The events of September 11, 2001 should remind us that we do live in a dangerous age that demands that teachers be facilitators of understanding, not just purveyors of a narrow patriotism and the folly that accompanies it.

Pat Clarke is the director of the BCTF's Professional Development Division.

Why business wants privatized education

by Rod Albert

You can almost see them rubbing their hands with glee, bouncing up and down like Scrooge McDuck in his vault. On October 10, 2001, a cross-section of for-profit education providers attended the 5th Canadian Education Industry Summit in Toronto. This is what they heard:

- According to Merrill Lynch, education opportunity globally is approaching \$3 trillion annually —\$60 billion in the U.S. alone.

- Fifty-five million students attend schools in North America.

- Even with the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), education is one of the least liberalized services and has not been opened up to real trade yet. Education is open to GATS only if a country is prepared to put it on the table. Most countries fear a loss of cultural control and have not risked opening that Pandora's box.

- Since 1989, Canada's export trade in education has remained at about \$500 million annually. The main source of revenue in educational trade is from foreign students who attend Canadian schools.

- Private universities are growing in the United States.

- Prior to September 11, education was the major issue for the Bush administration.

- E-learning has not been the "money-pony" market forecasters thought it would be two years ago because students overwhelmingly prefer "bricks-and-mortar" education.

- In 2000, total education industry revenues topped \$100 billion in the U.S., and 8%

growth over 1999. Main revenue sources were childcare, with \$22.6 billion, instructor-led training, with \$17.3 billion, and post secondary, with \$9.3 billion.

- In the K-12 market, charter school revenues continue to grow rapidly, increasing by 49% in 2000 to reach \$610 million. As strongly as charter schools have performed, most firms have yet to turn a profit. It is postulated that financial success in this market will ultimately depend upon the ability of charter schools to demonstrate that they can improve academic performance relative to their public-school counterparts.

- It is expected that the \$5 billion testing and assessment market will grow by 10 to 15% annually over the next three years as performance-based evaluations become more prevalent.

- The childcare industry was described as a cottage industry with only 7% of childcare centres in the U.S. operated by national chains.

Conclusion: There is still "much market to conquer."

With neo-conservative friends like Premier Harris and Treasurer Flaherty, one can see why private business and corporations providing educational services such as teacher testing expect to receive even more government dollars, which would otherwise go directly to public schools!

Rod Albert is an executive assistant with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Reprinted from *Update*, newsletter of the OSSTF, Nov. 6, 2001.

Mes premiers pas

by Daniel Bélanger

Le trois septembre 2000. Fébrile et appréhensif, j'entre dans la salle de classe. Je suis seul ; personne n'est encore arrivé. Mon niveau d'inquiétude augmente à la venue de chaque nouveau visage. Petit à petit, des conversations meublent le silence qui m'avait d'abord accueilli. Soudain, les éclats de voix et les chuchotements font place de nouveau au silence. L'enseignante fait son entrée. D'un coup d'œil furtif, elle nous dévisage, la cohorte de 18 futurs spécialistes en immersion française.

Un an plus tard, je suis assis non pas au pupitre de l'élève mais à celui du professeur. Pour le moment, je suis seul dans une classe qui se remplira peu à peu de 20 marmots grouillants d'énergie. Je me sens à la fois anxieux et impatient de les rencontrer et peu expérimenté. Tout de même, je me considère compétent et confiant dans mes moyens, sachant que mon apprentissage se poursuit. En dépit de ces émotions divergentes, je suis enthousiaste, plein d'énergie et prêt à relever ce défi.

Ce défi d'enseigner, il est de taille. Établir les routines, gérer efficacement la classe, rencontrer les exigences pédagogiques des ERI, préparer et enseigner plusieurs matières, corriger les travaux, communiquer avec les parents, participer aux nombreux comités ... Bref, une liste longue et exigeante !

Pour un nouvel enseignant, le temps est un facteur de stress : 24 heures dans une journée, je me répète, mais les 10 à 12 heures que je consacre à mon nouveau boulot sont souvent insuffisantes pour accomplir toutes les tâches quotidiennes. La priorité première est sans doute la préparation des leçons. Même si le plan annuel est bien établi, c'est au jour le jour qu'il faut planifier et adapter le matériel pédagogique à son style d'enseignement et aux styles d'apprentissage de ses élèves.

Heureusement, mes collègues d'école sont toujours disponibles pour m'aider avec un conseil sur la discipline, une idée pour un projet d'art ou en me passant quelques feuilles de travail. En plus de cette aide directe dans mon école, je peux aussi compter sur l'appui d'amis enseignants qui n'hésitent pas à partager leur expérience et leurs ressources. Malgré tout ce soutien, j'investis toujours un minimum de 55 heures de travail par semaine.

Enseigner est plus qu'un emploi ; c'est un engagement professionnel et personnel qui requiert beaucoup d'énergie. Je dois m'assurer que mes nuits de sommeil soient réparatrices sinon l'épuisement me guette. Je sais que j'y arrive car, chaque matin, je me rends à l'école heureux de parcourir un bout de chemin avec des élèves souriants.

Daniel Bélanger, Enseignant à l'école Trafalgar, Vancouver, Immersion française, 2-3e année

Daniel is a beginning teacher who describes his first four months in his new career.

Children are not always wise online

by Catherine Swift

The Media Awareness Network (MNet) has known for a long time that Canadian kids are among the biggest users of media, particularly the Internet. Last year, MNet conducted a survey of 5,600 students aged 9 to 17 in schools across the country, and in June it released findings that focussed on the gap between parents' perceptions of their kids' online activities and what young people say they are actually doing online.

On October 24, 2001, MNet released a second phase of findings from *Young Canadians in a Wired World: The Students' View*, which examined the extent to which Canadian youth are putting themselves at risk as they explore the Internet, often with little or no supervision.

This latest analysis focusses on specific risky activity—exploring private and adult-only chat rooms, meeting Internet acquaintances in person, viewing sexually explicit and hateful material, and sharing personal information.

The findings reveal the extent to which kids have claimed the Internet as their own world, separate from their parents' reach and knowledge. They may be technically savvy, but are they safe, wise, and responsible Internet users? Not always.

Nearly six in ten Canadian kids use chat rooms, and twice as many secondary students as elementary students enjoy chatting online. The survey identified two high-risk chat behaviours: going into private chat areas to engage in one-on-one conversations, and visiting chat rooms that are designated for adults 18 years and over. Of the 56% of kids who use chat rooms, one-third visit adult chat areas that often contain sexually explicit conversations. The likelihood of this happening increases with age, but MNet sees a special problem with younger children, who often lack the necessary judgment to safeguard themselves. Anne Taylor, co-director of MNet explains: "During focus group research, we asked 12- and 13-year-old girls if they'd give their



personal information to someone in a chat room. They replied that they would but only if they trusted that person. When we probed how long it might take to develop that trust, answers ranged anywhere from 15 minutes to two weeks!"

Eighty-five percent of the children and youth who go into adult chat rooms and private areas of chat reveal that they

Almost half of students at the secondary level say someone has made unwanted sexual comments to them...

are at home but unsupervised when they use the Internet. Eighty-two percent of this group say they have no household rule relating to this practice (39% of the overall sample say they do have a rule about talking to strangers in chat rooms).

A key potential risk is kids' meeting Internet friends in

person. One-quarter of all the young Internet users surveyed have been asked by someone they've met online to get together face to face. Approximately 15% (or 839 respondents of the total sample of nearly 6,000) indicated that they'd taken that next step and actually gone to meet an Internet acquaintance. Of those 800-odd students, 129 went by themselves to meet their Internet friend. Only 6% asked a parent or another adult to accompany them.

MNet acknowledges that these in-person meetings cover a wide range of scenarios and that some of the meetings were well supervised and positive. However, 100 of the young people characterized their meeting as a "bad experience." In response to an open-ended question, kids described the "bad experiences" in their own words, ranging from "didn't like the person" to person was "fat," "ugly," "stupid," or "mean." Some of the more serious responses, which came from 18 young people, included "person wanted/or

made sexual contact" "person used vulgar/sexual language" and "person was violent." MNet hopes to broaden this initial research by further study into these troubling and potentially dangerous behaviours.

The survey probed the extent

Almost one-quarter of the youth surveyed indicated they would give out both their name and address to win a prize in an online contest.

to which children and young people are exposed to pornography. Almost a quarter of students have received pornography from someone they have met online, and more than half have received pornographic junk mail. The vast majority (78%) of recipients did not tell their parents.

While a quarter of young people say they look online for pornography, 53% say they ended up on a porn site by accident. Most say they got to the site by doing a search for something else, or typing in the wrong address. Others got to the site by clicking on a link given to them in a chat room or sent by e-mail. Only 24% told a teacher or parent about it. The kids' replies indicate that they rely on their friends or their own ingenuity, rather than adults, when dealing with sexually explicit material.

Almost half of students at the secondary level say someone has made unwanted sexual comments to them on the Internet. Girls are more likely than boys to have received such comments.

Over a quarter of respondents of all ages report encountering hateful comments online and 16% of young Internet users say they have posted comments themselves that were hateful toward a person or group of people.

The survey also gave clear evidence that Canadian children and youth don't understand the importance of safeguarding

their personal information. Almost one-quarter of the youth surveyed indicated they would give out both their name and address to win a prize in an online contest. Most said they have their own e-mail account, the majority of which are free web-based accounts. When registering for free accounts, 86% of youth indicated their gender, 68% provided their real name, 29% their address, and 20% their phone number.

"We are concerned about the ways that Canadian children and youth are putting themselves at risk," says Jan D'Arcy, co-director of MNet. "At the same time, we're heartened by the fact that parental involvement, supervision, and rules around the Internet appear to have an impact on how kids conduct themselves online."

The findings gleaned from the survey will play an integral role in shaping public policy on safe, wise, and responsible Internet use in Canada. The data will also enhance the development of MNet resources such as the national Web Awareness Canada program and further work with active and committed partners in the public library, education, and community sectors.

Catherine Swift is an independent consultant, Ottawa.

Funding for this study was provided by the Government of Canada and data collection and analysis were conducted by Environics Research Group. For more information on the surveys cited in this article go to www.media-awareness.ca/eng/webaware/netsurvey/index.htm. To contact MNet write to info@media-awareness.ca

The Media Awareness Network (MNet) is a not-for-profit education organization whose mandate is to support and encourage media and information literacy in Canadian homes, schools, and communities. MNet hosts a large web site, www.media-awareness.ca, and licenses professional development workshops for teachers to raise awareness about Internet issues that are emerging as children and young people go online.

MNet is sponsored by Bell Canada, Rogers@Home, CanWest Global, BCE, CTV, CHUM Television, A & E Television Networks, AOL Canada, and the Government of Canada.

Here at our school

We're your baby's sitter—we're Daddy or Mommy dear
We'll tie the shoes and wipe a nose runny
Here at our school
Here at our school

We'll feed you lunch, then 1-2-3, a-b-c
We'll calm your temper—relax son, talk to me
Here at our school
Here at our school

We'll meet your psychologist—administer your medicine
Placate your mother's friend, Auntie Kate, Uncle Tim
Here at our school
Here at our school

'Cause here at our school, it's just another day
400 minds are learning to fly
And take on the world, a day at a time
But I've got a mortgage, I guess that's a crime

If we didn't fight then I guess there'd be 50 kids
Lined up in rows responding to the master's whip
Here at our school
Here at our school

Does dear Ms. Clark know what the bottom line should
really be
A tide of black ink will guarantee misery
Here at our school
Here at our school

'Cause here at our middle school, it's just another day
800 minds are learning to fly
And take on the world, a day at a time
But I've got some bills, I guess that's a crime

You think we spend lunch in the lounge happily
Sipping our flavoured tea, dabbling in equities
Here at our school
Here at our school

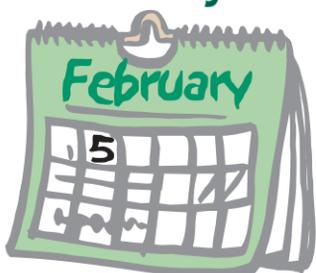
Billy died yesterday, Tommy's mom is terminal
Jane's expecting, Mary's on the floor again
Shaking in time we move through the line at the bell

But here at our high school, it's just another day
1,200 minds are learning to fly
And take on the world, a day at a time
I've got kids of my own, I guess that's a crime



Ed Timmermans, Saanich, at the Special Representative Assembly, January 8, 2002. Visit www.bctf.ca/itsabouttime/rallies/ to see and hear Ed singing "Here at Our School" and Mike Hayes, president of Saanich Teachers' Association, singing "Campbell's Soup."

Circle this date February 5



Globalization

Bill Moyers Reports: Trading Democracy, will air on PBS stations at 10:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 5, 2002.

The hour-long program examines the secret tribunals that are changing our laws—thanks to NAFTA. The in-depth look at the MTBE case in California (where the U.S. is being sued for \$970 million, because California removed a carcinogen from gasoline), Metalclad (the case where Mexico had to pay \$16 million to a company that never had a permit to re-open a toxic waste dump, but won because that cost them potential profits), and the Loewen case (the Canadian funeral company that lost a civil case for \$125 million in Mississippi and now is suing the U.S. government for \$750 million.)

Circle the date and plan to get your friends to watch.

Candy bar cash

Ontario schools are so badly underfunded that one desperate board has been reduced to begging students for candy-bar cash to pay for essentials like teachers, education assistants, and school maintenance, NDP leader Howard Hampton revealed in the legislature.



“How low have the Conservatives sunk when working parents have to spend money they’ve raised for school supplies and field trips just to keep schools running? That’s completely unacceptable,” Hampton said.

Hampton released a memo from the Bluewater District School Board that says, “If any schools wish to contribute some of school fundraising money to help offset the board’s \$1.1 million deficit, please forward a cheque.” Boards asking students for candy-bar money is a sad indicator of the Conservative government’s inadequate investment in public education,” Hampton said.

— ONDP/CALM



Disney “sweatshop retailer of the year”

Disney nosed out Wal-Mart in this year’s race for the “Sweatshop Retailer of the Year Award.”

Winners of the Sweaties were selected by thousands of consumers around the world, who cast their votes online. Disney was the number-one choice for the main award, Wal-Mart, last year’s recipient, was number two and Nike and Reitman’s, three and four.

Wal-Mart was given this year’s “Smoke-Screen Award” as the company hiding the most from its customers.

On a more positive note, Liz Claiborne received the “Transparency Award” for the company that is learning that honesty is the best policy, accepting independent monitoring and disclosing critical reports.

Disney’s selection came after a report documented sweatshop abuses in 12 Disney supply factories in China. According to the report by a Hong Kong NGO, young men and women making Disney clothes, toys, and accessories are forced to work up to 16 hours a day, six or seven days a week, for wages as low as \$90 a month.

The awards are an annual feature of the “No Sweat” campaign sponsored by the Maquila Solidarity Network, Oxfam Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress, Students Against Sweatshops Canada, and the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees.

— CCPA Monitor/CALM

Are you looking for a teacher exchange?

Teachers are lifelong learners. And there is no greater experience in learning than living the culture, language, and customs of another country. The learning is enhanced even more by the opportunity to teach in another system—to share the best of what teaching is, and to adopt the best practices discovered there.

For many years British Columbia teachers have been taking advantage of a teacher exchange program.

In the year 2000, the Ministry of Education divested itself of the teacher exchange program. After research and enquiry, it mandated the Canadian Education Exchange Foundation to assume responsibility for and continue that valuable program.

The Canadian Education Exchange Foundation (CEEF), a registered non-profit foundation, facilitates international and interprovincial exchanges for elementary and secondary school educators as well as students. CEEF fosters global perspectives by providing opportunities for teachers to broaden and strengthen their professional development and cultural awareness through exchange. Exchanges increase

vision, nurture respect, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity, create world partnerships one person at a time for the benefit of all, and provide the opportunity to go beyond the scope of the school to learn about the wider world in which we live. Never has it been so important to practise, mentor, and model those beliefs.

A teacher exchange is for one year. This involves trading teaching positions and accommodation. Teachers continue to be employed and paid by their own boards and retain all seniority and benefits. The foundation also facilitates school partner programs for groups of students and three-month exchanges for individual students.

CEEF believes that the experience will revitalize you and your teaching. Participants seem to agree.

“I had a marvellous year abroad on my exchange. You were right about the feeling lows and the wonderful highs. I will cherish the year for the rest of my life. The friends we made will be friends for life,” writes Mary Bryson after a year in England.

“There is no better professional development than experiencing a new culture. In our case, Shannon and I had a double exchange in Perth, Australia. We long to get back to the beautiful weather, the beautiful sandy beaches, and the many friends we have back in Perth. Shannon still corresponds with many of her friends, and I too exchange letters with some of my ex-students. Going on an exchange will change your life as you become a risk taker and experience a whole new way of life.” These are the words of Jack Gair, past president of the B.C. Exchange Teachers’ Association.

Teachers with five years teaching experience, the approval of their principal, and the endorsement of their school board are eligible for exchange. The initial matching process can be complicated. In some cases, it is done here, and in some cases, in the partner jurisdiction. Teaching assignment, accompanying family, and accommodation needs and preferences are taken into account.

Deadlines for application have some flexibility, but in all cases, earlier is better.

Applicants preferring Northern Hemisphere destinations should submit their forms by December 31. Those desiring the Southern Hemisphere should have their forms in by January 31. Most exchanges are negotiated and finalized between January and June.

Once a potential match has been found, formal proposals with the partner’s file are sent for approval to the district office, then to the principal, and then to the applicant for the final say. E-mail has been a blessing in helping partners establish contact to work out all the logistical details of their myriad questions once the match is finalized. It has also allowed teacher applicants to do some searching on their own to locate a good possible match and thus increase their chances of success. It is becoming more common that applications are received with a notation that a potential partner has been identified by the candidate in a specific jurisdiction.



Destinations

CEEF has teacher exchange agreements with Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England), and the United States. Interprovincial exchanges (except Quebec) can also be arranged.

Source: For more information, contact Carol Wilkins, exchange officer, Canadian Education Exchange Foundation, 250 Bayview Drive, Barrie, ON L4N 4Y8, 705-739-7596, f: 705-739-7764, cwilk@ceef.ca, www.ceef.ca

Support for bargaining



(L-R) BCTF President David Chudnovsky, CUPE President Barry O'Neill, and BCNU President Debra McPherson inform the media that we have filed a joint complaint with the International Labour Organization, (ILO). The complaint was launched against the actions of the provincial government for imposing the nurses' settlement and for removing the collective bargaining rights of teachers and other employees in education. The ILO is a branch of the United Nations.



Milan Boljuncic, a social studies teacher and coach, explains to the media that he is withdrawing his voluntary services because school boards are insisting on removing class-size limits and reducing services for students. You can view the media conference and hear the coaches and sponsor teachers at www.workingtvc.com/bctfphase2.html.

Research

Exodus of teachers from English schools: A lesson for B.C.?

Massive numbers of teachers in England are quitting teaching, according to the top story in the U.K., *Times Educational Supplement* (TES) of November 2, 2001. The report, by Jon Slater and Karen Thornton, states that:

- Many teachers are leaving the profession early, rather than staying and being eligible for a pension. More than 26,000 teachers quit without pensions in the year 2000, an increase of 37% since 1997.
- Almost one in six teachers is resigning each year; resignation rates are up 4% since 1999 to 15.8%.
- Teachers of all ages are leaving schools because of dissatisfaction with the environment in which they are expected to work.

The TES article refers to a Liverpool University study by Professor Alan Smithers and Dr. Pamela Robinson, sponsored by the National Union of Teachers, which states that teachers are quitting because of workload pressures, too many government initiatives, stress, and student behaviour.

- Teachers under 30 are most likely to quit.
- More than 30% of those completing teacher training programs do not join the profession; 12% drop out of teacher training courses, and 18% leave teaching within three years. Only 62% of those who entered final-year teacher training started work as teachers the following year.

Professor Alan Smithers, one of the Liverpool University study authors, has called for a national inquiry on recruitment and retention, and he states: "It looks as if many (teachers) have got ground down by the

If teaching becomes too stressful and unmanageable, then teachers will quit the profession.

changes in the profession. One of the arguments on better salary was that people had gone into teaching as a vocation, and it has become a much more industrial process where they (teachers) were judged by output. If the criteria and targets of industry were going to be applied to them (teachers), they were looking for a commensurate salary."

It is increasingly obvious that teacher workload and stress are major influences on the recruitment and retention of teachers. The key message from England is clear: If teaching becomes too stressful and unmanageable, then teachers will quit the profession. What appears most alarming from the English data is that younger teachers are most seriously affected.

Many of the causes of stress decimating the English teaching profession have also been identified in three recent BCTF Research Reports as being common in the B.C. education system, as well as the more

serious effect of stress on women and younger teachers. There is still time to learn from the experiences of the English system and from analysis of the international literature on teacher workload and stress. These must be reduced in B.C. if recruitment and retention are not to become major problems here. The capacity to reduce teacher workload and stress rests with government and with employers, but neither appears to be focussed on, or even interested in, those issues at this time.

Judging by the English experience, by the time they do focus and show interest, it may be too late.

Source: Slater, Jon and Karen Thornton, "Labour fails to stem exodus of teachers," TES, November 2, 2001. Available online at www.tes.co.uk.

Additional information:

The Smithers/Robinson report entitled "Coping with teacher shortages" is on the National Union of Teachers web site: www.data.teachers.org.uk/nut/pdfs/shortages.pdf. (The file will take some time to download.)

The three BCTF research reports referred to above:

1. Teacher workload and stress: An international perspective on

The capacity to reduce teacher workload and stress rests with government and with employers, but neither appears to be focussed on, or even interested in, those issues at this time.

human costs and systemic failure, Charlie Naylor, September 2001, available on the BCTF web site: www.bctf.ca/ResearchReports/2001wlc01

2. "I love teaching English, but...." A study of the workload of English teachers in B.C. secondary grades, Charlie Naylor and John Malcolmson, September 2001, available on the BCTF web site: www.bctf.ca/ResearchReports/2001wlc02

3. What do British Columbia teachers consider to be the most significant aspects of workload and stress in their work? Analysis of qualitative data from the BCTF 'Worklife of Teachers' Series, 1: Workload and Stress. Charlie Naylor, October, 2001, available on the BCTF web site: www.bctf.ca/ResearchReports/2001wlc03

Phantom summer vacation plagues teachers

They need it, but they don't usually take it. While teachers are entitled to a nine-week summer vacation, few of them actually take that much time off. In a new study based on data from our workload issues and stress survey conducted in the spring of 2001, BCTF Research found that more than one-third of B.C. teachers take three weeks of holidays or less. Women, younger teachers, and those with less than 10 years of experience are most likely to experience truncated holidays.

Most teachers have an intense workload and long working hours during the school year, but summer offers them little respite. More than one in five teachers (22%) teach or do other paid work during part of the summer, often to make up for the relatively low salaries garnered by B.C. teachers. Many teachers also go back to school themselves: one in six (16.3%) study during the summer.

Most teachers use at least part of their summer break to prepare for the upcoming school year. Fully 80% of full-time teachers spend at least one week of their summer time off that way. New teachers are hit especially hard: they are more than twice as likely as teachers who have 20 to 24 years of experience to spend three to four weeks of summer vacation preparing for the school year.

There are strong relationships between the amount of time taken off in the summer and certain negative health effects.

While more than 85% of all teachers reported fatigue as a result of their work, almost all of those who took no summer holidays (95%) experienced that effect. Among those who took their full entitlement of nine weeks of holidays, the proportion experiencing fatigue during the school year was 77%.

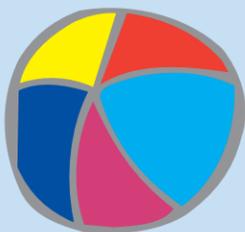
Those who took no holidays also experienced less time with family or friends and less time for personal interests as a result of work. Just over a third of teachers reported health problems resulting from work (37%), but those who took only minimal holidays were half again as likely to experience health problems as those who took seven to nine weeks.

Evidence is mounting that prolonged stress, especially when caused by isolation and a sense of lack of control, can result in wear and tear on the body, with potential consequences such as heart disease, weakened immunity, diabetes, and cancer. Given the current high-stress working and learning conditions experienced by B.C. teachers, it is in the best interest of educators, students, and the education system for teachers to have a sustained period of rest and recuperation.

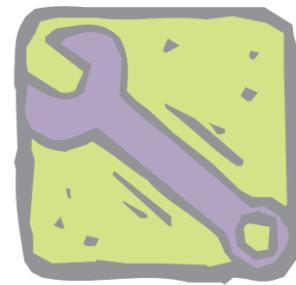
Source: "How I spent my summer vacation": Time-use data from the Spring 2001 BCTF Worklife of Teachers Workload issues and stress survey by Anne C. (Anny) Schaefer is available from Anne Field or on the BCTF web site at www.bctf.ca/ResearchReports/2001wlc04

For more on the BCTF's worklife of teachers research, see our web site at www.bctf.ca/education/worklife/

This item will be saved on the BCTF's web site in a list archive, www.bctf.ca/research/list/archive/



— Charlie Naylor, cnaylor@bctf.ca
— Anny Schaefer, aschaefer@bctf.ca
BCTF Research Department



If mechanics had to work like teachers...

If mechanics had to work like teachers:

- They would work on 30 different cars every hour-simultaneously.
- They would have to maintain, usually on their own time, meticulous records on each car so they could pick any single car out of the 200 or so they were currently fixing and immediately start working on it.
- They would have to write their own repair manual for each vehicle—manuals are seldom included!
- They would have to go to long meetings with certain car owners and the manager of the garage to see if extra mechanics were available for vehicles they couldn't fix on their own.
- If extra mechanics were not available, they would have to try to rebuild whole engines while working on those 29 other cars.
- If cars' owners wanted to talk about repairs, the discussion would have to be on their

mechanics' lunch break or after work.

- When they went home, they would haul a truck full of engines, distributors, and other parts that had to be cleaned, checked, repaired, and recorded before the next day's work.

- Finally when they took their long vacation, they would spend many sunny days reading the newest repair manuals, worrying about those cars that never made it out of the garage.

If you still want to sign up, all it takes is five years of university and a willingness to work on call and part time for a few years until you get a full-time job.

Source: *Richmond Review*, Kevin Harkness, Richmond.

Teachers give 140%

After one school board decided to dock teachers' pay for Phase I and before it had the wisdom to reverse its actions, other school boards were asked their position on docking teachers' pay. The chair of the Abbotsford school board, John Smith, said the board rejected the idea resoundingly, feeling it would be a slap in the face to district teachers. "I know they care a lot about kids. They were doing 140% and now they're doing only 135%, so we'll hit them? No." Bulkley Valley reversed its decision to dock teachers' pay shortly before the holidays.



Imagine

The phone wakes me up. It's my lawyer. We talk for half an hour. Worried, I ask her what this is costing. "Oh," she replies, "these conferences are part of my job. I can't charge for them."

Puzzled, I head downtown, stopping at my gas station. The mechanic runs out with a package of tools and a page of instructions. "These are for you to take home and fix that problem with your spark plugs. Bring your car in tomorrow, and I'll check it for you free of charge."

I arrive at the underground parking lot in the downtown office tower. I've always felt nervous here, but today business executives, wearing safety vests, are on patrol supervising the public before opening hours. Upstairs in the hallways, secretaries have organized bridge games and craft activities for customers in the waiting rooms, and the receptionists are selling hot dogs to raise funds for new computers.

In disbelief, I make my way to my dentist's office, to be met by a group of happy children from

the hygienist's Fluoride Club. "Of course," I remember. "She does this every Wednesday, on her afternoon off and next weekend she's taking the whole club on an overnight trip to the Dental Science Hall of Fame."

Later, at the hairdressers, two customers with "problem" hair arrive without appointments. There is no assistant to help the stylist, but he fits them in anyway. It's amazing to watch him manage to give all his clients the attention they need. I comment on the shelves stocked with products the stylist has provided with his own money. "I can't do this job properly without them," he sighs.

On the way home, I stop to pick up my sister at the end of her shift at the supermarket, but I have to wait while she hands out flyers to customers and ensures that they all get safely to their cars with their groceries.

I suddenly remember that it's Meet the Teller Night at the bank, and I still have my spark plugs to fix and maybe try to reach my lawyer at her home.

Source: *VESTA News*, Margaret McMaster, Vancouver.

Educational landscape in Ontario



by Ann Wilson-Richter

I have been asked to paint a picture of the teaching conditions in Ontario. The landscape started out sunny yellow and ended up with lots of blues and greys under the Harris regime.

Being asked to talk about Ontario's education system is like being asked to describe the aftermath of a train wreck. It's not a pretty picture.

I have had 12 years of teaching experience in Ontario in various programs and levels, with a concentration on Grade 6, 7, 8, and 9. I received my teaching degree at Queens and taught one year in Toronto. I then did a master's degree in public administration and policy and was offered a job as a policy analyst at the Ministry of Education in Toronto. I turned it down, saying I wanted to return to the trenches of teaching.

Little did I know that the trenches reference was very appropriate. Ten years later, teachers faced the daily barrage of media criticism portraying the teachers as greedy, self-serving, and inefficient. Mike Harris began his relentless attack on teachers in TV ads with "reforms" that cut into the heart of education.

Let's look at that landscape.

It was a land of diminishing resources and increased expectations. One principal began the year stating there was no budget for professional development. Gone were the days of inspiring workshops that charged our batteries so we could face the classroom with fresh new ideas.

Teaching assistant jobs were slashed, and remedial speech classes eliminated. Integrating children with special needs into the class became the priority, without adequate people resources to make such a change feasible. Material

resources shrank drastically as well.

When I changed schools and inquired where I could find atlases for the children, the teachers looked at me as if I were asking for the world. No pun intended! Three classes shared one set of atlases. Use of textbooks was discouraged... integrated curriculum was the way... individual teachers were expected to develop units using the new approach.

I enjoyed my first five years of teaching in Ontario, but the last five were extremely stressing. Confusion reigned in the ministry. We had the transition years, the common curriculum, the common sense revolution, student-centred learning, and the integrated theme approach, all within five years. I would avidly read the ministry guidelines in order to be up on the most recent trends. But the trends changed, and new buzz words were employed. Where was the coherent plan for the future? How was this a newer, better product?

The class I last taught in Ontario had:

- 31 students split Grade 5/6
- 3 gifted
- 1 child from Kosovo, with no English
- 5 learning disabled
- 3 severe behavioural
- 1 violent child with a thick file who had already assaulted a previous teacher
- No TA.

This reads like a bad list of The 12 Days of Christmas. My sense of humour and morale were definitely declining.

Ontario—land of rising numbers

In one late French-immersion class, numbers were climbing to 38/39. I asked the superintendent about the cutoff or class-size limit. The cursive reply: "There is no limit." The class-size issue hit close to home

when my four-year-old daughter came home from Kindergarten and said to me, "Mommy, my hand gets tired because it's up so long." Her class size was well over 21. As you well know, the joyful spark of a young child can be quickly extinguished in large primary classes.

Our Plan 2000 to evacuate Ontario was initiated. This time it was personal.

Ontario—land of many duties

In middle schools, you would be assigned duty four out of five days. Many of them were lunch duties. Some teachers had classes all day with no breaks. Such an intense schedule takes its toll. Exhausted, I came down with double pneumonia.

Arriving in B.C., on my first day of work at a Burnaby school, I could not believe that there were hired lunch supervisors. We B.C. teachers could lose this!

In 1997, we went on a full strike that lasted two weeks. It was Hallowe'en, I carried a skeleton that represented the future of education. People in cars honked and shouted obscenities at the picket line. Mike Harris appeared on TV to denounce how unreasonable the teachers were. After all, he was simply asking teachers to spend more time in the classroom. The public thought "how could that be so bad?" His real agenda was to cut teachers, slash resources, and save money. To keep the public on side, he reimbursed parents for daycare expenses incurred during the strike.

Ontario—land of the library tech

In 1998, I met the library technician, who informed me she did not read to children, would not work with children. There was to be no team planning. The technicians were not teachers or librarians and

could not be left alone in the library with children. I felt sick.

Later that year, the violent child trashed the library and destroyed many science projects that were there unsupervised. Many students were heartbroken to see their work destroyed. Ontario teachers could compare such a ransacking to what the Harris government was doing to education.

I have two young children. I did not want to see them in such a disintegrating system, so we implemented our Plan 2000 to move. Staff was demoralized and undervalued. Teaching was no longer a joy under such negative criticism and massive cuts.

The Ontario teachers are now facing teacher evaluation. They are expected to complete 15 courses in five years. Some are receiving menacing letters stating that they could lose their licences if they do not comply.

A colleague this week told me that a principal who is set to retire in June is being seconded to the board to be superintendent of special services. Her

mandate is to cut an additional \$11 million from the special services budget. Then she can walk away into the sunset while the children after her are left devastated without critical services and support. What will become of that generation?

We teachers must educate the public as to what is at stake. It is not about salaries. It is about protecting essential services for our students. We can fight the media oversimplification of the issue.

In the summer of 2000, we sold our house in Ottawa and drove across Canada with our young family. It was a new adventure.

I miss my friends and colleagues, but I did it for a better future. I wrote my resignation letter to the Ottawa-Carleton Board outlining my deep disappointment in student learning conditions and telling them I might consider coming back if the fog ever lifts. I have had no reply.

Ann Wilson-Richter is a teacher on call in Burnaby.



Valdine Ciwko, Ann Wilson-Richter, and Martin Sunderland are new teachers to B.C. who experienced the deterioration of public education under the Harris government in Ontario. They shared their concerns regarding the directions of the new B.C. government with members of BCTF advisory committees who met on December 8, 2001. You can hear their presentation at <http://workingtv.com/bctfontarioteachers.html>

PETER OWENS PHOTO

Damn lies told with statistics

by Dean Chatterson

At the Advisory Committee of Local Presidents (ACLP) meeting, we received a copy of a letter Finance Minister Gary Collins recently wrote to David Chudnovsky defending tax cuts.

Collins attached a chart that showed the percentage tax savings for various income groups. Although the chart showed only slight differences

in the tax reductions of 25.6% for those earning \$200,000 and 28% for someone earning only \$20,000, the statistics have been cleverly manipulated to make it appear that there was some equity in the cuts.

Here are some more revealing comparisons not listed in the chart:

- Total two-year tax saving for someone earning \$20,000 = \$346

- Total two-year tax saving for someone earning \$200,000 = \$12,337

This means the wealthy person whose income is 10 times more than the person at poverty level received a tax "gift" more than 35 times greater than the poor person. Thanks a lot, Premier Campbell!

The tax saving as a percentage of income for the

\$20,000 earner amounted to only 0.9% over two years, while the savings as a percentage of income for the \$200,000 earner were three-and-one-half times as much, at 3.1%!

Is it any wonder that the wealthy voted Liberal? Perhaps it is also not surprising that many low-income folks believed the campaign promises that there would be more money in their pockets.

Now let me see... four visits to a physiotherapist at say \$40, an eye exam at \$60, increased prescription fees, ICBC rates up, ...how long will it take to realize the real costs of tax cuts when the costs of user fees and reduced services hit home?

Dean Chatterson is president of Kimberley Teachers' Association.

BCTF Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2001

President's comments

The accompanying financial statements, for the year ended June 30, 2001, have been prepared in accordance with the by-laws of the Federation and the provisions of the Society Act. They reflect the stewardship of the Executive Committee over the resources of the Federation and the committee's accountability to the membership for the effective management of those resources.

The General Operating Fund (GOF) expenditures exceeded revenue (a deficit) by \$227,000, which represented a slight improvement to the \$338,000 deficit budget approved by the Representative Assembly. At their January 2002 meeting, the Executive Committee will be considering the Finance Committee 2002-03 total fee recommendation of 1.38% (same as 2001-02) but with increased allocations of .015% to the GOF and .01% to the Provincial Bargaining Fund (PBF) with the Collective Bargaining Defence Fund (CBDF) and Contingency Fund allocations reduced by .015% and .01% respectively.

The CBDF balance increased from \$17.8 million at June 30, 2000 to \$21.3 million at June 30, 2001 due to lower expenditures incurred compared to prior years. For 2001-02 significant expenditures for bargaining mobilization will reduce the fund balance.

The PBF deficit was \$854,000 for the 2000-01 year decreasing the fund balance from \$845,000 at June 30, 2000 to a negative balance of \$9,000 at June 30, 2001. The Representative Assembly approved a PBF 2001-02 deficit budget of \$1.1 million, which will further increase the negative fund balance. The intent of the PBF fee allocation is to streamline or equalize provincial bargaining costs over a number of years corresponding to the bargaining contract cycle.

The operations of the Salary Indemnity Fund reflect a deficit of \$12.0 million for the 2000-01 year compared to a surplus of \$12.5 million for the 1999-2000 year. The decrease in operating results was due to higher claim expenses and lower investment income compared to the previous year. The fund balance has now decreased from \$76.1 million to \$64.1 million at June 30, 2001. The 2001 AGM approved a fee of 1.20% for 2001-02, which was a reduction from the 2000-01 fee of 1.30%. At their January 2002 meeting, the Executive Committee will be considering the Income Security Committee 2002-03 fee recommendation of 1.20%.

David Chudnovsky

Management Responsibility for Financial Statements

The accompanying financial statements and all other information contained in this annual report are the responsibility of the management of the Federation. The financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and have been approved by the Executive Committee.

Preparation of financial information is an integral part of the ongoing operation of the Federation. A system of internal accounting controls is maintained to ensure that transactions are accurately recorded on a timely basis, are properly approved and result in reliable financial statements.

The Finance and Audit Committee reviews the financial statements and recommends them to the Executive Committee for its approval. In addition, the Finance and Audit Committee meets with the officers of the Federation and the external auditors, and reports to the Executive Committee.

The financial statements have been examined by the Federation's auditors who are engaged by the Executive Committee on recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee and whose appointment was ratified at the Annual General Meeting. The auditors have free access to the Finance and Audit Committee, without management present, to discuss the results of their audit work and their opinion on the adequacy of internal accounting controls and the quality of financial reporting.

Ken Novakowski
Executive Director

Rob McLaren, C.A.
Treasurer

Auditors' Report

To the Members of
British Columbia Teachers' Federation

We have audited the statement of financial position of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation as at June 30, 2001, the statement of operations, the statement of cash flows, and the statements of revenue, expenses, and fund balance of the general operating fund, collective bargaining defence fund, and the contingency fund for the year then ended.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the Federation's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Federation as at June 30, 2001, and the results of its operations and the changes in its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the British Columbia Societies Act, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Chartered Accountants
October 26, 2001

STATEMENT 1 Financial Position as at June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 4,073	\$ 2,946
Marketable securities (Note 3)	13,934	13,002
	18,007	15,948
Membership fees and other receivables	3,266	3,492
Inventories and prepaid expenses	251	197
	21,524	19,637
DUE FROM		
Salary Indemnity Fund	617	491
CAPITAL ASSETS (Notes 5 & 6)	17,706	17,533
	\$ 39,847	\$ 37,661
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 1,540	\$ 1,952
Due to Provincial Specialist Associations	1,036	994
	2,576	2,946
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
General Operating Fund (including investment in capital assets) (Statement 4)	14,795	15,022
RESTRICTED FUNDS:		
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund (Statement 5)	21,312	17,790
Contingency Fund (Statement 6)	1,147	1,016
Provincial Bargaining Fund (Note 7)	(9)	845
William R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund (Note 8)	17	36
Ed May Memorial Social Responsibility Fund (Note 9)	7	4
Other Funds	2	2
	37,271	34,715
	\$ 39,847	\$ 37,661

Approved by the Executive Committee

David Chudnovsky

Neil Wilson

STATEMENT 2
Statement of Operations for the year ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
REVENUE		
Membership fees	\$ 26,346	\$ 25,122
Net investment income	1,013	1,206
	<u>27,359</u>	<u>26,328</u>
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Management	2,368	2,294
Organization support	4,793	4,805
Finance & administrative services	2,095	2,504
Research & technology	1,777	1,616
Professional development	3,850	3,695
Bargaining	2,412	2,190
Grants to locals	4,652	4,472
Bargaining mobilization	299	—
Support to locals	224	200
Third party dispute	24	5,278
Contingency fund	408	474
Provincial bargaining	1,427	356
Miscellaneous	474	512
	<u>24,803</u>	<u>28,396</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ 2,556</u>	<u>\$ (2,068)</u>

STATEMENT 3
Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ 2,556	\$ (2,068)
Item not affecting cash — depreciation	897	661
	<u>3,453</u>	<u>(1,407)</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital items		
Memberships fees and other receivables	226	(416)
Inventories and prepaid expenses	(54)	99
Due from Salary Indemnity Fund	(126)	(437)
Accounts payable	(412)	409
Deferred rent revenue	—	(88)
Due to Provincial Specialist Associations	42	(86)
	<u>(324)</u>	<u>(519)</u>
	3,129	(1,926)
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of capital assets	(1,070)	(9,390)
CHANGE in cash and marketable securities	2,059	(11,316)
CASH and marketable securities, beginning of year	15,948	27,264
CASH and marketable securities, end of year	<u>\$ 18,007</u>	<u>\$ 15,948</u>

STATEMENT 4
General Operating Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance
for the year ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
REVENUE		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 22,077	\$ 21,050
DIVISIONAL OPERATING EXPENSES		
Management	2,368	2,294
Organization Support	4,793	4,805
Finance and Administrative Services	2,095	2,504
Research and Technology	1,777	1,616
Professional Development	3,850	3,695
Bargaining	2,412	2,190
	<u>17,295</u>	<u>17,104</u>
Grants to Locals	4,652	4,472
	<u>21,947</u>	<u>21,576</u>
Net interest expense	357	48
	<u>22,304</u>	<u>21,624</u>
DEFICIENCY of revenue over expenses	(227)	(574)
Fund Balance, beginning of year	15,022	15,596
FUND BALANCE, end of year	<u>\$ 14,795</u>	<u>\$ 15,022</u>

STATEMENT 5
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance
for the year ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
REVENUE		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 2,767	\$ 2,457
Net investment income	1,308	1,184
	<u>4,075</u>	<u>3,641</u>
EXPENSES		
Bargaining mobilization	299	—
Support to locals	224	200
Third party dispute	24	5,278
Job action grants	1	14
Miscellaneous	5	—
	<u>553</u>	<u>5,492</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) of revenue over expenses	3,522	(1,851)
Fund Balance, beginning of year	17,790	19,641
FUND BALANCE, end of year	<u>\$ 21,312</u>	<u>\$ 17,790</u>

STATEMENT 6
Contingency Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balance
for the year ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
REVENUE		
Allocation of membership fees (Note 4)	\$ 477	\$ 455
Net investment income	62	70
	<u>539</u>	<u>525</u>
EXPENSES		
Accreditation	128	—
Legal costs over GOF budget	90	360
Labour campaign 2000	50	—
Surrey book ban defence	40	—
Provincial election	35	—
Yukon TA support grant	25	—
Pension joint trust vote	15	—
EI Solidarity fund grant	10	—
Bulkley Valley TA grant	7	—
Special grants	4	27
Peace Arch rally	3	—
Ontario teacher support	1	40
NWTTA support grant	—	25
Grant to Mozambique	—	15
Access 2000 campaign grant	—	5
Bargaining structure review	—	2
	<u>408</u>	<u>474</u>
EXCESS of revenue over expenses	131	51
Fund Balance, beginning of year	1,016	965
FUND BALANCE, end of year	<u>\$ 1,147</u>	<u>\$ 1,016</u>

Notes to Financial Statements Year Ended June 30, 2001

1. BACKGROUND AND BASIS OF COMBINATION

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation (the BCTF or the Federation) is incorporated as a society pursuant to the Society Act of British Columbia, and is a trade union pursuant to the Labour Relations Code of B.C. and the Public Education Labour Relations Act. The Federation is exempt from income tax.

The financial statements of the Federation include the results of the six funds described below.

General Operating Fund: The purpose of the fund is to meet the goals of the Federation through program expenditures planned in advance and approved by the Representative Assembly. This fund also holds the investment in capital assets.

Collective Bargaining Defence Fund: The purpose of the fund is to pay costs directly related to strikes, lockouts, the honouring of picket lines in third-party disputes, and contract enforcement in accordance with policies and procedures approved by the Representative Assembly.

Contingency Fund: The purpose of the fund is to meet, without delay, special or emergent expenses that could not reasonably have been anticipated and to promote the cause of public education by providing the financial means to respond effectively to any crisis in education. Expenditures from the Contingency Fund are made in accordance with policies and procedures approved by the Representative Assembly.

Provincial Bargaining Fund: The purpose of the fund is to pay costs related to provincial contract negotiations. Expenditures from the fund are planned in advance and approved by the Representative Assembly.

William R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund: The purpose of the fund is to improve public education in developing countries.

Ed May Memorial Social Responsibility Fund: The purpose of the fund is to promote socially responsible teaching practices.

The Salary Indemnity Fund is reported to the membership in a separate set of financial statements and is not included in these financial statements. The purpose of the Salary Indemnity Fund is to meet the obligations of the Salary Indemnity Plan which provides income benefits to members disabled from employment as a result of illness or accident. The total fee allocated to the Salary Indemnity Fund was 1.30% of gross salary for the 2000-2001 membership year. Any fund deficiency is the responsibility of the Federation. The financial statements of the Salary Indemnity Fund should be read concurrently with these financial statements.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Significant accounting policies used in the preparation of the financial statements are summarized below. These policies are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the recommendations of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

a. Fund Accounting

The Federation follows the restricted fund method of accounting for membership fees whereby fees are allocated to each fund on the basis approved annually at the Annual General Meeting.

b. Revenue Recognition

Membership fees are recognized as revenue of the appropriate restricted fund as received or receivable.

Investment income from the Federation's investments is recognized as revenue as earned and is allocated to the appropriate restricted fund based on the investments held for the fund.

c. Marketable Securities

Marketable securities are originally recorded at cost. If there is an other than temporary decline in value, these investments are written down to provide for the loss.

d. Inventories

Inventories of lesson aid materials are valued at cost or net realizable value, whichever is the lower.

e. Capital Assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Depreciation is calculated on the straight-line method based on anticipated useful lives:

Building	30 years
Renovations	9 to 10 years
Tenant improvements	10 years
Furniture & equipment	3 to 15 years
Computer hardware & software	3 to 10 years

f. Employee Future Benefits

The Federation maintains a defined benefit registered pension plan for all support staff of the Federation including casual and temporary employees and any administrative and excluded staff who are not eligible to join the Teachers' Pension Plan.

The pension expense and plan funding requirements are determined tri-annually by independent consulting actuaries. The cost of pension benefits earned is determined using the projected benefit method pro-rated on service and is charged to expense as services are rendered. Adjustments arising from plan amendments, changes in assumptions, experience gains and losses, and the net pension assets are amortized on a straight-line basis over the estimated average remaining service lives of the employees.

In addition, the Federation provides non-pension benefits to qualifying retirees consisting of supplementary health insurance benefits. The cost of post-retirement benefits other than pensions is recognized on an accrual basis over the working lives of employees. The expense reported in the current year, based on tri-annual independent actuarial assessment, is an allocation of estimated future benefits under these plans related to the service of employees in the current year. Future obligations for these benefits are funded when they occur.

3. MARKETABLE SECURITIES

The market value of marketable securities at June 30, 2001 was \$13,990,735 compared to a carrying value of \$13,933,770 (June 30, 2000 market value—\$13,139,950; carrying value—\$13,002,270).

4. MEMBERSHIP FEE

The membership fee for the year ended June 30, 2001 was 1.38% of the gross salary of each member.

The following summarizes the fee allocations:	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
General Operating Fund	1.180%	1.180%
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund	0.145	0.135
Contingency Fund	0.025	0.025
Provincial Bargaining Fund	<u>0.030</u>	<u>0.040</u>
	<u>1.380%</u>	<u>1.380%</u>

The General Operating Fund allocates 1.86% of its fee revenue to the William R. Long Memorial International Solidarity Fund. In addition, the fund allocates \$1 per member per year to the Ed May Memorial Social Responsibility Fund.

5. CAPITAL ASSETS

	<u>Original Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Depreciation</u>	<u>2001 Net Book Value</u>	<u>2000 Net Book Value</u>
			(in thousands)	
Land	\$ 4,430	\$ —	\$ 4,430	\$ 4,430
Building	<u>12,736</u>	<u>(1,875)</u>	<u>10,861</u>	<u>11,336</u>
	17,166	(1,875)	15,291	15,766
Renovations	630	(223)	407	114
Tenant improvements	491	(49)	442	—
Furniture and equipment	1,020	(590)	430	464
Computer hardware & software	<u>1,476</u>	<u>(340)</u>	<u>1,136</u>	<u>1,189</u>
	<u>\$20,783</u>	<u>\$(3,077)</u>	<u>\$17,706</u>	<u>\$17,533</u>

6. NET ASSETS INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS

Net assets invested in capital assets are funded as follows:

	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
	(in thousands)	
General Operating Fund	\$ 9,651	\$ 9,133
Collective Bargaining Defence Fund	<u>8,055</u>	<u>8,400</u>
	<u>\$17,706</u>	<u>\$17,533</u>

In 2000, the Representative Assembly authorized a loan of \$8,400,000 from the Collective Bargaining Defence Fund to the General Operating Fund to finance the purchase of the remaining interest in the Federation's building. For presentation purposes, the inter-fund loan payable and receivable are eliminated in the combined statement of financial position.

The loan bears interest at an effective annual rate of 6.09% and is repayable at \$59,818.13 monthly. The current term is renewable on December 31, 2005. Loan interest for the year 2000-2001 was \$484,890.

7. PROVINCIAL BARGAINING FUND

	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
	(in thousands)	
Fund balance, beginning of year	\$ 845	\$ 473
Fee allocation (Note 4)	573	728
Expenditures	<u>(1,427)</u>	<u>(356)</u>
Fund balance, end of year	<u>\$ (9)</u>	<u>\$ 845</u>

8. WILLIAM R. LONG MEMORIAL INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FUND

	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
	(in thousands)	
Fund balance, beginning of year	\$ 36	\$ 96
Fee allocation (Note 4)	418	399
Expenditures	<u>(437)</u>	<u>(459)</u>
Fund balance, end of year	<u>\$ 17</u>	<u>\$ 36</u>

9. ED MAY MEMORIAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FUND

	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
	(in thousands)	
Fund balance, beginning of year	\$ 4	\$ 10
Fee allocation (Note 4)	34	33
Expenditures	<u>(31)</u>	<u>(39)</u>
Fund balance, end of year	<u>\$ 7</u>	<u>\$ 4</u>

10. EMPLOYEE FUTURE BENEFITS

The Federation adopted the new Canadian accounting standards for employee future benefits effective July 1, 2000 applied prospectively without restatement. These new standards require accrual accounting for all retirement and post-employment benefits and the use of current market rates to estimate the present value of the pension liability. Prior to July 1, 2000, the funding for pension benefits and non-pension post-retirement benefits was charged to earnings when paid.

The following tables pertain to the Federation's employee future benefit plans, and provide fair value of plan assets, benefit obligations, and funded status for the year ended June 30, 2000:

	<u>Pension</u>	<u>Non-pension</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fair value of plan assets	\$21,746,000	\$ —	\$21,746,000
Accrued benefit obligations	<u>14,142,000</u>	<u>4,383,000</u>	<u>18,525,000</u>
Funded status—plan surplus (deficit)	<u>\$ 7,604,000</u>	<u>\$(4,383,000)</u>	<u>\$ 3,221,000</u>

The net expense for the Federation's future employee benefit plans is as follows:

	<u>Pension</u>	<u>Non-pension</u>	<u>Total</u>
Plan expense (recovery)	<u>\$ (980,000)</u>	<u>\$ 1,205,000</u>	<u>\$ 225,000</u>

The actuarial determinations were based on the following assumptions during the year:

Discount rate	7.0%
Expected long-term rate of return on plan assets	7.0%
Rate of compensation increase	3.5%

The assumed health-care cost trend rate at June 30, 2001 was 10%, decreasing to 5% after five years.

11. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The fair value of the Federation's marketable securities is their market value as disclosed in Note 3. The fair value of the Federation's other assets and liabilities that meet the definition of a financial instrument approximate their carrying value. These items include cash, membership fees and other receivables, due from Salary Indemnity Fund, accounts payable and due to Provincial Specialists' Associations.

Salary Indemnity Fund

Auditors' Report

To the Members of
British Columbia
Teachers' Federation

We have audited the statement of financial position of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation Salary Indemnity Fund as at June 30, 2001, the statements of revenue, expenses and fund balance and changes in cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Federation's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Fund as at June 30, 2001, and the results of its operations and changes in its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the B.C. Societies Act, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Chartered Accountants
October 26, 2001

STATEMENT 1 Salary Indemnity Fund Financial Position as at June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
ASSETS		
Accounts receivable	\$ 2,859	\$ 3,056
Investments (Note 3)	191,002	185,163
Capital assets (Note 4)	715	337
	<u>\$194,576</u>	<u>\$188,556</u>
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE		
Bank indebtedness (Note 5)	\$ 1,532	\$ 355
Accounts payable	415	493
Due to General Operating Fund	617	491
Provision for claims (Note 6)	127,903	111,067
	130,467	112,406
FUND BALANCE	<u>64,109</u>	<u>76,150</u>
	<u>\$194,576</u>	<u>\$188,556</u>

Approved by the Executive Committee

David Chudrowsky
Neil Webber

STATEMENT 2 Salary Indemnity Fund Statement of Revenue, Expenses, and Fund Balance for the Year Ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
REVENUE		
Membership fees (Note 1)	\$24,257	\$24,983
Teachers' share of employment insurance premium reductions	1,776	1,717
Investment income	12,898	21,471
	<u>38,931</u>	<u>48,171</u>
EXPENSES		
Short term claims paid	9,128	8,241
Pension contributions paid	—	340
Long term claims paid	20,239	17,400
	<u>29,367</u>	<u>25,981</u>
Increase in actuarial valuation of provision for claims (Note 6)	16,836	6,253
Total claim and pension expenses	46,203	32,234
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over claim and pension expenses	(7,272)	15,937
Administrative expenses	4,210	2,920
Investment management and trust company fees (Note 7)	559	500
	<u>4,769</u>	<u>3,420</u>
(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS of revenue over expenses	<u>(12,041)</u>	<u>12,517</u>
FUND BALANCE, beginning of year	76,150	63,633
FUND BALANCE, end of year	<u>\$64,109</u>	<u>\$76,150</u>

STATEMENT 3 Salary Indemnity Fund Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended June 30

	2001	2000
	(in thousands)	
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses	\$(12,041)	\$12,517
Items not affecting cash		
Increase in actuarial valuation of provision for claims	16,836	6,253
Depreciation	33	13
	<u>4,828</u>	<u>18,783</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital items		
Accounts receivable	197	(92)
Accounts payable	(78)	122
Due to General Operating Fund	126	437
	<u>245</u>	<u>467</u>
	\$ 5,073	\$19,250
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of capital assets	(411)	(228)
Increase in investment portfolio	(5,839)	(20,930)
	<u>(6,250)</u>	<u>(21,158)</u>
Change in bank indebtedness	<u>(1,177)</u>	<u>(1,908)</u>
Bank Indebtedness, beginning of year	<u>(355)</u>	<u>1,553</u>
Bank Indebtedness, end of year	<u>\$ (1,532)</u>	<u>\$ (355)</u>

Notes to Financial Statements Year Ended June 30, 2001

1. BACKGROUND AND FEES

The purpose of the Salary Indemnity Fund is to meet the obligations of the Salary Indemnity Plan which provides income benefits to members disabled from employment as a result of illness or accident.

The membership fee for the year ending June 30, 2001 was 1.3% (2000—1.4%) of the gross salary of each member. For the year ending June 30, 2002, the 2001 Annual General Meeting approved a fee of 1.2% of the gross salary of each member.

The financial position of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation is reported to the membership in a separate set of financial statements and is not included in these financial statements. The financial statements of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation should be read concurrently with these financial statements.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Significant accounting policies used in the preparation of the financial statements are summarized below. These policies are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the recommendations of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

a. Fund Accounting: The Salary Indemnity Fund follows the restricted fund method of accounting for membership fees.

b. Revenue Recognition: Restricted membership fees related to the Fund are recognized as revenue of the Fund in the year they are earned.

Investment income on the Fund's net resources is recognized as revenue in the year it is earned.

c. Investments: Investments are originally recorded at cost since they are held as long-term investments. In the event of a permanent decline in market value, the investments are written down to reflect the decline in market value. The resulting balance is known as the carrying value. The carrying value is not increased to reflect any subsequent increase in market value.

d. Capital Assets: Capital assets are recorded at cost. Depreciation is calculated on the straight-line method based

on anticipated useful lives:

Furniture and equipment	5 to 15 years
Computer hardware and software	3 to 10 years
Renovations	10 years

3. INVESTMENTS

The market value of long-term investments as at June 30, 2001 was \$201,325,747 compared to a carrying value of \$191,001,787. (June 30, 2000 market value—\$209,726,177; carrying value—\$185,162,849).

4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	Original Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	2001 Net Book Value	2000 Net Book Value
	(in thousands)			
Furniture & equipment	\$ 67	\$ (34)	\$ 33	\$ 18
Computer hardware & software	579	(23)	556	319
Renovations	137	(11)	126	0
	<u>\$783</u>	<u>\$ (68)</u>	<u>\$715</u>	<u>\$337</u>

Depreciation expense for the year ended June 30, 2001 was \$33,000 (2000—\$13,000)

5. BANK INDEBTEDNESS

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation maintains consolidated banking arrangements with its financial institution for overdraft and interest calculation purposes. At June 30, 2001 the combined bank account balance was positive.

6. CLAIM EXPENSES AND PROVISION FOR CLAIMS

The estimate of accrued liabilities and provision for claims is based upon an actuarial valuation as of June 30, 2001 performed in accordance with standards established by the Canadian Institute of Actuaries using data supplied by management of the Plan. This valuation uses standard claims tables modified to reflect Plan experience. In subsequent periods the accrued liabilities and provision for claims are adjusted based upon actual Plan experience. These adjustments can be significant. The estimate of

accrued liabilities and provision for claims for the individual segments of the plan are set out below:

	June 30 2001	June 30 2000
	(in thousands)	
Short term claims	\$ 3,888	\$ 3,283
Long term claims	124,015	107,784
Total provisions for claims	<u>\$127,903</u>	<u>\$111,067</u>
As a result of the current period's actuarial review, adjustments were required for claim benefits and pension contributions attributable to prior periods. These adjustments are included in the operations of the current period.		
	<u>June 30 2001</u>	<u>June 30 2000</u>
	(in thousands)	
Increase (decrease) related to current period	\$ (3,149)	\$ 15,525
Increase (decrease) related to prior periods	19,985	(9,272)
Total change in provision for claims	16,836	6,253
Opening provision for claims	111,067	104,814
Closing provision for claims	<u>\$127,903</u>	<u>\$111,067</u>

7. INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AND TRUST COMPANY FEES

The investments of the Salary Indemnity Fund are managed by independent investment management firms in accordance with investment policies and restrictions as established by the Federation and the Trustees' Act (B.C.) and are lodged for safekeeping with a trust company.

8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The fair value of the Fund's investments is their market value as disclosed in Note 3. The fair value of the Fund's other assets and liabilities that meet the definition of a financial instrument approximate their carrying value. These items include accounts receivable, bank indebtedness, accounts payable, due to General Operating Fund and provision for claims.

Teachers' Pension Plan news

Purchase of service simplification

The Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees has approved pension plan rule changes to be effective April 1, 2002. The changes will simplify the following: purchase of a leave of absence (LOA), purchase of less than half-time service for which no contributions were made, and reinstatement of a refund.

LOA—general

Calculating the cost of purchasing a LOA has been simplified. As of April 1, 2002, the cost of purchasing a LOA will be: *your current full-time equivalent monthly salary x the combined employee and employer pension contribution rate x the number of months of LOA being purchased.*

A change will also be in effect regarding the maximum limit on purchases of LOAs. For leaves ending before December 31, 1991, there will be no limit on the maximum number of months that can be purchased. For leaves ending after January 1, 1992, the maximum purchase will be 50 months of leave.

Example: If a teacher with a current full-time-equivalent (FTE) monthly salary of \$6,000 (\$60,000 annual salary) were to purchase a 10-month LOA for the school year 1982-83 it would cost $\$6,000 \times 17.13\% \times 10 \text{ months}$. The cost would be \$10,278. This is significantly less than the current cost of purchasing older leaves. A teacher retiring on an unreduced pension would recover the cost of purchasing the LOA in eight to ten years after going on pension.

Note: All previous LOAs must be purchased within five years of April 1, 2002 (March 1, 2007) or the date of termination of employment, whichever is earlier; in the future the time limit for purchasing LOAs will be five years from completion of the LOA or termination of employment, whichever is earlier.

Application forms will be available from the employer, the Pension Corporation, or BCTF Income Security.

LOA—maternity/pregnancy and parental

The cost of purchasing a maternity/pregnancy or parental LOA completed prior to March 14, 1981, will be the same as that of a general LOA. There will be no maximum on the number of months of leave that can be purchased prior to that date.

With respect to maternity/pregnancy LOAs after March 14, 1981, and parental LOAs after March 22, 1991, the cost of purchasing the leave will be calculated as follows: *current full time equivalent monthly salary x employee pension contribution rate x the number of months of LOA being purchased.* As the employer is then billed for the employer's regular pension contribution, this type of purchase is always cost effective. If a member is purchasing maternity/pregnancy or pregnancy leaves completed after December 31, 1991, the maximum that one can purchase is three years of leave.

Example: If a teacher with a current FTE monthly salary of \$5,800 (\$58,000 annual salary) were to purchase an eighteen-week (4.5 month) maternity/parental LOA taken in 1985, the calculation of the cost would be: $\$5,800 \times 7\% \times 4.5 \text{ months}$. The cost would be \$1,827. The employer will then be billed for \$2,644.

The maternity/pregnancy and parental LOA purchased at the employee pension contribution rate will be subject to limits established by the Employment Standards Act.

Note: All previous LOAs must be purchased within five years of April 1, 2002 (March 1, 2007) or the date of termination of employment, whichever is earlier; in the future the time limit for purchasing LOAs will be five years from completion of the LOA or termination of employment, whichever is earlier.

Reinstatement of a refund

As of April 1, 2002, the rules will allow for the first refund to be reinstated at a lower interest rate. The previous rules limiting the break in service to three years and requiring a return to work of two years have been rescinded; more members will

therefore be eligible to reinstate at the lower interest rate. The cost of reinstatement will be calculated as the actual amount taken as a refund plus interest at "6% or the refund rate." Reinstatements of refunds eligible for these interest rates are nearly always cost effective. The second and subsequent reinstatements will be calculated at a higher rate of interest; that is, at the fund-earned rate of interest. All reinstatements must be applied for by April 1, 2007 or at termination of employment, whichever is earlier.

General information

Currently, the Pension Corporation has a backlog of requests for purchasing LOAs. With respect to applications to purchase LOAs completed in 2001, an application received by the Pension Corporation before February 28, 2002, will be processed by April 1, 2002, and will be calculated using the current costing method: double the member's pension contribution based on the FTE monthly salary prior to the leave plus interest. For LOAs that were completed prior to 2001 and in the case of the application's being part of the current backlog, the cost will be calculated by the method set out in *LOA—general*, above. In these cases the salary will be capped as of the date of the application. An application received by the Pension Corporation in 1999, for example, will be calculated using the 1999 FTE salary. Under the new calculation method, interest is not added to the cost.

More information

The foregoing is a summary of the new pension plan rules. In the case of a conflict of interpretation between this summary and the pension plan rules, the rules will prevail. Further information and application forms will be available in the new year from the Pension Corporation, P.O. Box 9465, Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC, V8W 9V8, toll free 1-800-665-6670 or 604-660-4088, from your employer, or from BCTF Income Security, toll free 1-800-663-9163, 604-871-1921.

Reciprocal transfer agreement with other teacher pension plans

The Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees has approved an Interprovincial Reciprocal Transfer Agreement that includes all provinces except Newfoundland and Labrador. This will be of special interest to teachers who have contributed to the Ontario, Prince Edward Island, or the new (post-1980) Saskatchewan plans. If the contributions have not been withdrawn from the plans, they may now be transferred to the B.C. Teachers' Pension Plan. All interprovincial transfers, except for those from Alberta, may now take place at any time prior to retirement. Generally, if it is

beneficial to transfer the pension service from another province to B.C., the transfer should be done as soon as possible. Members who had service in Alberta and who left Alberta before February 1995 will still be able to transfer that service only at retirement. Members who transferred from Alberta after February 1995 will be able to effect the transfer immediately.

The board has directed that the new agreement be effective as of January 1, 2002. Setting up the administrative procedures will likely take several months, however. You

should take that into consideration before making a request for transfer. Of course, if you are retiring before then and wish to effect a transfer, you should make the request immediately.



Teacher Pension Plan member partner (BCTF) trustees

John Bogunovic, teacher, Sardis Secondary School, Chilliwack

Dale Lauber, staff, BCTF Income Security Division

Gerry Tiede, administrative officer, Janice Churchill Elementary School, Surrey

Bruce Watson, teacher and BCTF staff person, retired

Linda Watson, teacher, Brooksbank Elementary School, North Vancouver

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
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

Interim valuation of the Teachers' Pension Fund

On October 23, 2001, the Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees received a report on the interim valuation of the pension fund. As required under the terms of the Joint Trust Agreement, the interim valuation as of December 31, 2000, was an extrapolation of the December 1999 valuation.

	(in \$ millions)	
	2000	1999
Assets at December 31		
Basic Account, actuarial value	\$ 8,338	\$ 7,471
Actuarial present value of:		
- future member contributions	1,432	1,394
- future employer contributions	2,468	2,165
Total assets	\$12,238	\$11,030
Liabilities		
- future pensions promised	12,022	11,484
Surplus (unfunded liability)	\$ 216	\$ (454)

This interim valuation indicates that the financial health of the basic account of the pension fund has improved. This also confirms that the first financial goal of the Joint Trust Agreement, to eliminate the unfunded liability, has been achieved. The next full valuation will be done as of December 31, 2002, and any surplus or unfunded liability will be addressed as set out in the Joint Trust Agreement.

- Dale Lauber



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.

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FEBRUARY

8 Burnaby. A History 12 conference, Let's Get the Facts: The Dream vs the Reality of Teaching History 12, Schou Education Centre, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. \$95 before December 20; \$115 thereafter. Contact Deirdre Moore, 604-664-8568, f: 604-664-8320, dmoore@cariboo.sd41.bc.ca.

8-10 Vancouver. British Columbia Psychological Association Annual Conference: Creativity and Innovation, Westin Bayshore Hotel. Contact 604-944-2652 or bcpa2002.conference@attcanada.ca, www.psychologists.bc.ca.

9 New Westminster. B.C. Association of Physics Teachers (BCAPT) Winter Meeting, Douglas College. Presentations and sharing sessions between university, college, and high school teachers. Contact kirkeyj@douglas.bcca, www.langara.bc.ca/bcapt.

14-15 Surrey Speech-Language Conference, Auditory and Language Processing Disorders: Assessment and Intervention, with Gail J. Richard, Ph.D. CCC-SLP, Surrey School District Conference Centre. Contact Carol Westdal, 604 507-5731, Arlene Sturm, sturm_a@fc.sd36.bc.ca, <http://slpconference.sd36.bc.ca>.

14-16 Vancouver. B.C. Music Educators' Association (BCMEA) Conference, Affirmation 2002, Magee Secondary School. Featuring workshops, sessions, miniconcerts, displays, honour ensembles, and evening concerts in the new Magee Theatre, and keynoters Tim Lautzenheiser and Maestro Bramwell Tovey. Contact Pete Stigings, c/o 6360 Maple Street, Vancouver, BC V6P 5G8, 604-261-6891, f: 604-261-6718, stigings@interchange.ubc.ca, www.bctf.ca/bcmea.

15 Kelowna. Third Annual Interior Mathematics Conference, B.C. Association of Mathematics Teachers (BCAMT) Contact Chris Van Bergey, 250-766-2734 318, f: 250-766-0271, cvanberg@sd23.ca.

15 Brackendale (Squamish). Take It to Heart: For the Love of Literacy, presented by the Howe Sound Teacher Librarians' Association and the Howe Sound Teachers' Association. Keynoter Susan Close, Brackendale Secondary School. Contact Beth Miller, PD chair, or Della Halvorson at 604-892-3056 (HSTA office) or Colin Chafer, president HSTLA 604-892-5261.

15 Comox. SD 71 PD, Thinking, Thoughtful Students, with Keynoter Roland Case, TC2 Presenters, Neil Smith (Active Citizenship), and Colleen Politano and Joy Paquin (Brain-Based Learning with Class), Mark Isfeld Secondary School. \$50 (includes lunch). Contact Jan Won, 250-338-8093, won@vanier.sd71.bc.ca or won_vanier@as400.sd71.bc.ca.

20-22 Vancouver. Safe Schools, Safe Communities: Putting the Pieces Together, hosted by B.C.'s Interministry Committee on Youth Violence and Crime, Sheraton Wall Centre. Call 604-660-7233 or 1-866-775-3066, or visit www.safeschools.gov.bc.ca.

21-23 Surrey. B.C. Art Teachers' Association (BCATA) Conference, 2002: Diversity by Design/Mud to Microchips, Enver Creek Secondary School. Contact Wendy Long, longwm@home.com.

21-23 Vancouver. TEAL 2002, Teachers of English as an Additional Language, 34th Annual Conference, Professionalizing the Profession, Global Village English Centers Vancouver and Vancouver Central Library, 888 Cambie Street. Contact Allison McBride, TEAL office, 604-736-6330, www.bctea.org.

22-23 New Westminster. Tuning In, empowering individuals and families to create safe and caring communities, co-sponsored by APABC (Adlerian Psychology Association of British Columbia) and New Westminster School District, Glenbrook Middle School. To register only contact the New Westminster Night School Office, 604-517-6345 M-Th 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Fri 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Contact 604-874-4614, info@adler.bc.ca, www.adler.bc.ca.

MARCH

1 Surrey. Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf/HH Conference, Post-Secondary and Beyond, sponsored by the district hearing teachers of the Surrey School District, at The Conference Centre, 9260-140th Street. \$25. Contact Maureen Kling or Rayna Brown, 604-596-9325.

14-15 Vancouver. Special Education Association (SEA) Conference, Cross-currents, a conference for regular and special education teachers, teacher assistants, and parents, Westin Bayshore. Keynoter Jane Healy on the impact of media and culture on brain development. Contact Madeline Pohlmann, 604-855-9039, f: 604-885-9193, mpohlmann@sd46.ca.

APRIL

4-5 Vancouver. B.C. Business Education Association (BCBEA) Conference, Beyond Tomorrow with Business Education, Delta Pinnacle Hotel and off-site labs at Eric Hamber Secondary School and Pitman Business College. Discussions, hands-on workshops, and presentations by industry leaders. Contact Peter Noah, s: 604-713-8278, sf: 604-713-8277, h: 604-541-1025, peter_noah@yahoo.com.

11-12 Kelowna. Learning Assistance Teachers' Association (LATA) Spring 2002 Conference, Written Expression and Classroom Assessment, a conference for all elementary teachers, The Grand Okanagan Resort. Choose either the primary or the intermediate all-day workshops with Megan Sloan and Anne Klein. The morning sessions will focus on written expression and the afternoon on classroom assessment. Contact Janice Neden, f: 250-377-860, jmnedden@shaw.ca.

12-13 Victoria. B.C. Science Teachers' Association Conference, Catalyst 2002, Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Peter Freeman, peterf@sd52.bc.ca, www.bctf.ca/BCScTA.

MAY

4 Prince George. B.C. Association of Physics Teachers (BCAPT) Spring Meeting, UNBC. Presentations and sharing sessions between university, college, and high school teachers. Contact don@kwantlen.bc.ca, www.langara.bc.ca/bcapt.

6-8 Kelowna. BC4, B.C. Computer Curriculum Consortium, annual conference, in conjunction with the B.C. Educators for Distributed Learning, Okanagan University College. Contact Murray McDonald, mmcdonald@sd23.bc.ca, www.bc4.bc.ca.

8-9 North Vancouver. B.C. Fast Forward Educational Media Showcase for educators who use video and CD-ROM, an opportunity to preview the newest productions from 30 different companies. All grade levels and curriculum areas are covered. Content changes annually. One day \$80; two days \$100 before March 6. Group rates available for 10 or more. Contact Susan Weber, Langara College, 604-323-5533, sweber@langara.bc.ca, www.langara.bc.ca/ffwd.

17-18 Prince George. B.C. Rural Teachers' Association (BCRTA) Conference, Rural Schools: We Value Our Place, University of Northern B.C. Keynoter Tom Tiller, of the University of Tromso, Norway, on the healthy interdependence of communities and schools. Contact Gail Moseley, Box 153, 70 Mile House, BC V0K 2K0, 250-456-7528, sf: 250-395-5198, moseley@bcinternet.net.

October PSA Day 2002-03: October 25, 2002

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

Additions or changes to the PD Calendar? E-mail Debby Stagg: dstagg@bctf.ca

Testing undermines education in Korea

by Adam Woelders
and Emily Moes

Four months ago, we got married, took a short honeymoon, came home, packed and headed to South Korea within two weeks. We shared the dream of traveling and teaching. We were hired through the Korean government and assigned to the Board of Education in the southern island province of Jeju-do. We work as English instructors in several different schools as well as conduct teaching methodology and conversation workshops for local teachers.

We both looked upon the new Liberal government as a breath of fresh air for the education system in British Columbia. From our perspective as new teachers, there appeared to be a lot of current practices in schools that needed some alteration or change. The use of increased standardized testing, greater accountability through school rankings, and even charter schools did not seem like bad ideas for the welfare of students.

Our perspective on education has radically changed since coming here. Korea has virtually no natural resources, so education pulled this country from the devastation of the Korean War to industrialization and prosperity in the last two decades. In this Confucian-influenced society, a child's education is considered to be the single most important goal of Korean society.

Yet at some point, a problem emerged. Koreans are flocking to Australia, America, Britain, and Canada. The reason? For many, it is to ensure that their children avoid the Korean public education system, unaffectionately known by some students as "exam hell." We have seen and experienced here that increased testing does not make teachers more accountable or give students more choices. It has the opposite effect. The entire education system, year after year of schooling, is geared entirely to the tests. Principals and administrators are concerned only with how their schools fare

competitively against others. The test results are only used to publicly determine which are the best students and then to categorize them.

The students achieving the best scores are sent to specialized charter schools for an education in technology, science, or other pursuits. The poorer test achievers are sent to industrial schools. The career and lifestyle choices for both high achievers and low achievers are limited early in their life. During a recent conversation workshop, one teacher told us: "I wish I

The entire education system, year after year of schooling, is geared entirely to the tests.

could go back to my first year of middle school and study harder for a test. I scored low on one test and couldn't go to the high school or university I wanted to." School prestige and rankings have become so important here that she was too embarrassed to tell us what schools she ended up attending.

Industrial schools here have become completely ghetto-ized, whereby students, teachers, and parents alike regard such schools as temporary depots for poor students who have no hope of post-secondary education. Such schools have few materials and equipment; meanwhile more prestigious schools receive private-sector funding and can afford large screen televisions, video projectors and a disproportionate amount of multimedia equipment. Emily teaches English at a science high school that has class sizes of 20 students, and a total student population of 70. The school is three years old and has a multimedia lab that contains many more computers than students. Across town, I teach at an industrial high school that trains students for careers in the hospitality industry. Classes in a dilapidated building, have at least 45 students and multi-media equipment is scarce. Some of these

students study English diligently in the hopes of going to another country to attend university. "I cannot have a good job or education here because I go to this school. Studying English can help me," said one student. The injustice is compounded by the reality that these students are taught a watered-down curriculum but required to write the same government tests.

Because of the importance of tests at all levels of the school system, an incredible amount of unnecessary and unproductive pressure falls on the shoulders of students and teachers.

Teachers feel such a personal sense of responsibility for their student's scores that they never take a day off, no matter how sick, nor will their principal allow them to. The irony is that even with this sense of responsibility, teachers do not know names of many of or much about their students. Teachers cannot help but be more concerned with their reputation among administrators than they are with their students. When asked what should change in Korea, one teacher said, "teacher's need more time to talk with students." Emily's co-teacher, a Korean with more than 20 years experience, was amazed at how much Emily learned about her students in one class simply because she taught a lesson where students took a break from examinable material and were encouraged to "share their dreams." One problem is that teachers are routinely tested, observed, and graded by local administrators and school-board inspectors. Their performance affects many aspects of their careers including salary, promotions, and where they are placed to work. It is not uncommon for teachers to rehearse the same lesson several times in anticipation of an inspection. One elementary school teacher told us that, "many teachers are so worried about their scores that they forget about their students. It's very stressful," she said.

Students themselves lead mundane lives once they reach high school, relegated to a

routine of little sleep and constant studying. Little time is available for extra-curricular activities. In this highly competitive system, there is no special education, and few placements are available for students with learning disabilities or handicaps.

Given these shortcomings in the public system, many parents resent the government spending tax dollars on education. Instead many parents are now opting to spend small fortunes sending their children to tutors and private institutes once their regular school day is over. It is not uncommon to find students who study or attend classes from early morning to midnight.

Creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and problem solving are reluctantly marginalized by teacher-directed lessons focused on textbook-based memorization and factual knowledge—testable stuff. The result is thousands of students who never challenge the status quo, nor imagine creative solutions to existing social and economic problems. We wandered into a pizza restaurant one night in Seoul and met a man who had worked for Samsung, Korea's largest tech company, for seven years. He explained that since

The career and lifestyle choices for both high achievers and low achievers are limited early in their life.

King Sejong invented Hangeul (the Korean writing system) in the 1500s, nothing produced in Korea has been innovative. Most Korean products are copied from foreign manufacturers, many Hyundai cars for example, need Japanese engines. "This," the former Samsung employee said, "I blame on the education system here."

The economic impact is further exacerbated by attitudes toward an individual's academic record. Last week the *Korea Herald* reported that among the students surveyed at Korea

National University, one of Korea's three most elite colleges, over half of them said they wished they were born in another country. The students cited the education system as among the top three problems in Korea. A recent article in the Asian edition of *Time Magazine* reported that most Korean companies hire exclusively from the prestigious high schools and universities, with little regard for a person's qualifications or skills. No wonder Korea's economy is falling behind its Asian competitors.

Our supervisor here in Jeju, Lee Young-sook, has experienced many frustrating years as a teacher and administrator relentlessly fighting for change. But she admits, "Nothing can ever change until we change our competitive attitude and thinking that testing is so important." Her daughter is studying English in preparation for possibly studying abroad when she is old enough for high school. In working with her and many other teachers here, we have come to see that many of the proposed ideas for change in our own system do not work in practice because they do not serve students nor give them increased choice, sense of value, or lifestyle. We have also come to appreciate our system of education and the teachers working within it for their commitment to the welfare of students above all other concerns.

Overall, our brief experience has made us much more aware of what teachers in B.C. have fought for on behalf of students in the past, and it has made us determined to return to B.C. with the desire to protect what we now have. Our hope is that our current government will honour their commitment to public education and seek to do what is right for students, not what looks good to the taxpayers or the private sector. As we have seen in Korea, such a strategy has had a dramatically negative effect on this society and economy.

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Adam Woelders and Emily Moes, B.C. trained teachers, working in Korean classrooms. They found a disturbing emphasis on testing students in the Korean education system. Students are seen sleeping at their desks after spending many late evenings cramming for tests.