

Teacher

Features

Where did this legislation come from?	4
TOCs get 0-0-0	4
Teachers adopt plan of action	5
Messages of support	6
Metro teachers rally January 12, 2002	6
Day of protest January 28, 2002	8
Campbell put on notice about college censure	12
School choice	12
AGM Agenda	13
Special resolutions to the 2002 AGM	13
AGM candidate statements	14
Letter to parent council from a teacher	16
B.C. Federation of Labour support	20

Columns

President's message	2
Readers write	2
Top 10 lesson aids	3
Looking back	3
Health & Safety	12
Retirement seminars	17
Classified	19
PD calendar	19

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Liberal's gut learning conditions



Monday, January 28, 2002, more than 38,000 teachers attended marches and rallies in 40 communities around the province. In Victoria, 7,500 people rallied in front of the Legislature.

by Ray Worley

On January 25, 2002, "Black Friday," Minister of Labour Graham Bruce, aided and abetted by Minister of Education Christy Clark, introduced Bills 27 and 28, designed to impose terms and conditions of employment on teachers and strip all class-size, staffing, and workload provisions from the provincial and local agreements. Most of the provisions guaranteeing support for students with special needs have also been eliminated.

Despite Clark's repeated protestations that the bills impose a *balanced* deal, it was immediately evident that the employer's positions had been adopted in full, and even exceeded. Amalgamations of contracts and school-calendar changes were not sought at the bargaining table. The percentage of the salary offer was enacted, along with the major concessions the employer had been demanding. The education minister mentioned several times that trustees, superintendents, and administrators all supported the imposed legislation and the stripping of provisions. That was no surprise, given the attacks by their organizations on teachers' collective agreements. Their enthusiastic support puts the lie to assertions of balance or compromise.

Some commentators have claimed the government merely undid the terms of the agree-

ment legislated by the previous government establishing provincial class-size limits for K-3 and non-enrolling ratios. The legislation goes much further, stripping articles negotiated in three rounds of local bargaining since 1987, and, in some cases, provisions obtained long before. New sections of the *School Act*

An editorial in The Globe and Mail described the acts of Campbell's government as "legislative vandalism."

prevent future negotiations on class size and composition, staffing, and workload.

An editorial in *The Globe and Mail* described the acts of Campbell's government as "legislative vandalism." That description fits the forced amalgamation of 10 local contracts in amalgamated districts. Even BCPSEA had not identified the separate agreements as problems. The labour minister justified the vandalism by claiming that Clark had heard complaints from districts about multiple agreements. Effective July 1, 2002, 10 locals lose the agreements that represented the achievements of decades of bargaining and job action.

The imposed legislation provides for a salary increase of 7.5% over three years. The labour minister, after repeatedly assuring the legislature that every teacher would receive the increase, eventually conceded that daily rates for some teachers on call would not increase (17 districts), and he finally came clean and admitted that TOCs in some amalgamated districts would suffer pay cuts of up to 50%. The government refused to implement the employer's offer of \$190 as a daily rate for TOCs.

Salary cuts of up to \$5,000 for teachers in some districts would also result from amalgamating the grids. The minister claimed that would not happen, but he refused to amend Bill 27 to clarify the intent. He stated he would "write a letter" to that effect. Small comfort in view of the Campbell government's record on other commitments, even those in writing.

There will be no limit on the size of any single Grade 4-12 class.

All current limits on class size and composition are to be removed from teachers' collective agreements. They are to be replaced by *School Act* limits of 22 for Kindergarten, 24 for Grades 1-3, and district averages of 30 for all other grades. The numbers for K-3

are higher by two than the current maximums for those grades. There is no consideration for split or multigrade classes. There will be no limit on the size of any single Grade

There will be no limits on the number of students with special needs who can be included in a class.

4-12 class. The limits on courses such as English, humanities, laboratory classes, and industrial education will be deleted. There will be no limits on the number of students with special needs who can be included in a class. There are to be no reductions in class size to assist with integration.

The consequences of those measures will be seen in September when the "sky's the limit" for class sizes in Grades 4-12. The minister of education even thinks that *flexibility* will apply to the legal maximums established for K-3 classes. There is no provision for that in the legislation. Her intent is unknown. It is, however, clear that the numbers in the act are firm and legally enforceable. Teachers will not want to break the law by accepting more than the legal maximums for K-3.

Ratios for non-enrolling teachers will also disappear.

See LIBERALS page 3

President's message



David Chudnovsky

There are a lot of things I'll remember about our day of protest on January 28: The huge crowd of 14,000 teachers and supporters at the Coliseum, in Vancouver. The seemingly endless group who tried so hard to avoid stepping on the lawn at the Legislature in Victoria but finally couldn't resist because there wasn't enough room. The report we got, part way through the day, that 253 of our 257 members in Dawson Creek had attended a rally in -31° weather. The courage of tens of thousands of BCTF members who ignored government threats and intimidation to join their colleagues and neighbours in a dramatic show of support for public education.

One memory stands out from the rest. In Vancouver, BCTF Executive Member Barb Parrott (one of the co-chairs of the rally) asked those in attendance how many had participated in the pension protest of 1971. More hands went up than I would have expected. How many were out in the Solidarity action of 1983? Lots of hands. How many participated in the June 1 general strike in 1987? A huge cheer and hands waving throughout the arena.

Then Barb hesitated a moment. "And how many of you are attending your first political protest?" A sea of hands. A deafening roar. Thousands and thousands of our wonderful young colleagues announced their presence. New teachers coming of age, and we old-timers welcoming them with enthusiasm and love to a struggle that has only just begun.

We are justly furious with Gordon Campbell for his betrayal of the children of this province. But for one thing, however, he deserves our profound thanks. He has single-handedly created a new generation of leaders in our BCTF. Thanks, Mr. Campbell.

Governments come and go. But the British Columbia Teachers' Federation has been advocating for teachers, for students, for public education, and for justice for more than 80 years. One thing Premier Campbell can be sure of is that 80 years from now, when his government is no more than an historical footnote, the BCTF will still be here doing the same vital job.

David

Good luck in your struggle

It is with dismay that I am witnessing the gutting of the teachers' collective agreement by the liars in Victoria.

I have been retired from the profession for 17 years now but I remember our struggles to reduce class size, improve library services, improve teacher assistance in the classrooms, and shorten the salary grid and improve salaries and benefits.

It is with pride that I watched the teacher rallies across the province on January 28. I would have been at the Pacific Coliseum if I had not been on dialysis that morning.

The struggle for quality public education must go on. When I was teaching in Coquitlam, I participated in extra-curricular activities such as soccer, softball, basketball, and track and field. If I were teaching now, I would do my job in PE period but not beyond that.

The ultimate solution is to vote the liars out at the earliest opportunity. It is too bad that so much has to be sacrificed in the meantime.

Good luck in your endeavours.

John Higman
Maple Ridge

Thanks to BCTF

I have just read the Jan./Feb. 2002 issue of *Teacher*. As always, it was informative and interesting from cover to cover. In light of the recent legislation and subsequent teacher protest, thank you, BCTF, for all that you do! I am very proud to be a B.C. teacher and a member of the BCTF!

Janet L. Oakes
Richmond

Plight of Falun Gong practitioners

The persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China has been going on for two-and-a-half years. For those of us who grew up in a Western country like Canada, it's very difficult to understand why the Chinese government is brutally persecuting Falun Gong practitioners.

Before July 20, 1999, Falun Gong was praised by this Chinese government for increasing the general health of its citizens and thus reducing the burden on the healthcare system. However, the number of people practising, between 70 and 100 million, now exceed that of Communist Party membership.

The government is spending billions of dollars on propaganda to demonize Falun Gong. The two-and-a-half-year-old persecution has seen over 350 tortured to death, according to international human rights statistics, although sources inside China say the number is more likely 1,600. More than 100,000 have been sentenced to prisons, labour camps, and mental hospitals, to face torture and death. Hundreds of men, women, and chil-

dren have been killed in police custody by orders from Jiang Zemin to "use whatever measures necessary to exterminate Falun Gong." He has broken his own constitution and all the international human rights treaties he has ever signed.

Killing innocent people is not only utterly devoid of conscience. It is a persecution against the basic right of existence of human beings. It is a persecution of the right to believe. We need to stand up to help the Falun Gong practitioners in China and protect the justice and basic moral values in human society. As teachers, we should listen carefully to the words of Martin Luther King, who said, "A place without justice is a threat to all places with justice." For more information, visit faluninfo.net, or call Sophia Bronwen at 604-732-4126.

Sophia Bronwen
Vancouver

Liberal agenda—privatize

Let me be the first B.C. teacher to unilaterally declare myself to be on strike in support of the B.C. Teachers' Federation.

After 55 years as a student, a teacher, and now a retired volunteer educator, I am more worried now about the future of public education in B.C. than ever. My enrichment group will no longer meet until the teachers have resolved their dispute, and I'm prepared to join them on the picket lines to show my support for their position.

During the last half century, many governments and ministers of education have come and gone. Each one found education a good area to garner headlines about reforms. However, change has always been very cautious, because, in the final analysis, decisions on a day-to-day basis are made by the teacher and his or her class. I see changes coming that threaten to destroy the effectiveness of this natural filter. *We must be very careful about the changes buried in the hidden curriculum of this new government.*

What is this hidden agenda of the Campbell government? Just as socialized car insurance and socialized medicine will be said to be improved by permitting and encouraging competition with the private sector, so we will see a similar trend in education. We will soon see the private/public competition that now is evident in the U.K., parts of the U.S.A., New Zealand, and Australia. The fact that these areas are not benefitting from such changes will not deter this government. They are stubborn and convinced they have a mandate.

In greater Melbourne, Australia, the bleak playgrounds, dirty buildings, and large classes of children with special needs in the public system contrast sharply with the manicured grounds, libraries, gymnasiums, and high academic standards at schools financed with parent tuitions.

Where would you send your child?

As one wealthy woman from Perth, Australia, put it after saying her grandchildren were doing well at school, "...those other children are not going to amount to anything anyway, Jim."

I hope that a truly well-educated and well-informed electorate will halt this erosion of democracy before it can progress further, but I am not so unrealistic as to believe that that will happen without a lot of work.

Jim Lauck
Surrey

Two sides to Sun Peaks dispute

I was interested to read your statement (*Teacher*, Jan./Feb. 2002) regarding the boycott of Delta Hotels by the BCTF. There seems to be a complete acceptance of the statements of the Assembly of First Nations, despite the fact that they only state that they "believe" the hotel chain is behind attempts by Sun Peaks Resort to have the members of the Secwepmc Nation arrested for setting up camp on their traditional territory.

As one who has read every news statement made by any and all of the parties in the dispute, I have been impressed with the restraint in language and behaviour of the management and staff of both Sun Peaks and the Delta Hotel. In all aspects of this dispute, Sun Peaks and Delta hotels have both obeyed and used the laws of our land to deal with a very real problem in their midst.

Only one of several First Nations bands in the area is having any problems with the ongoing development at Sun Peaks. Some First Nations members of the band opposed to the development have repeatedly broken laws and defied court orders in the dispute.

Although your statement in *Teacher* does not indicate that you did, I trust that you too did some research on the conflict rather than blindly throw the support of the BCTF behind one party in the dispute. Reactions from the heart could leave us with egg on our faces.

Glenn Dreger
Kamloops

TOCs should have our support

I would like to react to Mr. Craig Bresett's letter (*Teacher*, Jan./Feb. 2002).

I was pleased to read Bresett's first paragraph. I agree that there are roles people play in society that are insufficiently valued, especially the ones people don't get paid for and the ones for which people doing the same job get paid less... Their only recognition is through our expressed appreciation. I am so glad we have them around!

I read the second paragraph with the same intellectual delight. It made sense to me that a teacher is not kept a TOC because

there is no other teaching position. I hope that school districts control the number of TOCs they hire. But it came to me that there could be a reason for a school board to offer positions to "outsiders." It is difficult to find replacements for specialist teachers. If all the positions for specified areas are filled in a given school district and, for example, an extra teacher/librarian or a teacher specialist in woodwork or in French immersion accepts the position of being a TOC who would happily teach library or woodworks on occasions, wouldn't it be tempting to offer a position in that specific field to a newcomer (in school districts where TOCs don't get seniority) so that looking for a new TOC in that field would be avoided? I call that good management. Too bad for the TOC who is not capable or is unwilling to go get experience "up north."

What is more crucial to me is the recognition TOCs should receive, but don't. Do I read from Bresett that the role of a TOC is not as important—is subordinate to that of a "teacher"? It seems as if being a TOC is trouble that new teachers might have to go through before they can be "teachers." TOCs should get our support, our recognition, and our time. They are our colleagues! Why should they accept "the challenges, not receiving benefits, and not receiving a scale salary"?

I am a specialist teacher, and being a TOC for a couple of years has helped me be a better teacher, a more versatile one. I am really grateful for that period. Without that experience, I wouldn't feel as confident at what I do now. In fact, I don't teach what I was trained for! I simply wish I could have earned more money and been able to afford what other teachers were able to afford then.

Vicky Grenier
Mission

School board to sue government

At a board meeting last night, the Kootenay Columbia school trustees voted unanimously (all nine of them) to begin legal proceedings against the provincial government for failing to adequately fund the "legislated collective agreement" (their words). They also passed a motion requesting that other boards join them in their action.

Perhaps flexibility and autonomy are not all they are cracked up to be. It is difficult not to be cynical as the BCPSEA partners start shedding themselves of blame for the upcoming cuts, but at least the board seems finally to understand what we have been hammering at them for the past ten months. Better late than never.

— Bill Gorkoff, president
Kootenay Columbia Teachers' Union



Teacher

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14



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LOOKING BACK

70 years ago

It is not too much to say that the very fundamentals of our system are being vigorously challenged and attacked by powerful groups and interests whose only thought is to bring about drastic reductions in educational expenditures without the slightest regard to the efficiency of the system, and without giving any consideration to the inalienable rights of the children and youth of the present generation.

By adopting sane, practical, and progressive policies, British Columbia has developed a system of education second to none on the North American continent, as is evidenced by surveys recently made. These policies have not resulted in, nor from, extravagances, and it can readily be proved that from even the business man's point of view, the advances made have all resulted in obtaining better value for money spent. (The B.C. Teacher, March 1932)

50 years ago

For a considerable period there has been an increasing tendency toward the establishment of large and larger schools and, side by side with that tendency, there has been a resultant unrest affecting many of our best teachers. By experience they have come to the conclusion that the large school has certain irremediable disadvantages. One of these is the impersonal character of the big school.

(The B.C. Teacher, March 1952)

30 years ago

The school paper: bane or blessing? The student newspaper need not be a destructive outlet for would-be revolutionaries or, on the other hand, a mouthpiece for the principal. It can be a real asset to a school—if it is properly handled. As a first premise it is wise to admit that the appearance of any paper on campus cannot be prevented;

attempts to forbid circulation of outside papers usually fail and in the process simply provide status and notoriety for those papers.

(The B.C. Teacher, March 1972)

10 years ago

Why affiliate? Affiliating empowers us, as Canadian citizens, as teachers, as workers. Through affiliation with Canada's largest labour central, we can advance the economic, professional, and social goals we teachers have for education and for the broader society. Organized labour shares our perspectives regarding the purpose and goals of the public school system: to give all students an education that will prepare them to be full and participating members of a democratic society.

(Teacher Newsmagazine February/March 1992)

Chris Bocking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich

LIBERALS from page 1

Districts will no longer be required to provide minimum levels of, or indeed any, librarians, counsellors, learning assistance teachers, special needs teachers, or ESL teachers. Related language that provides for base staffing in Vancouver and caseload limits for specialist teachers in Surrey is also eliminated. Teachers already

Teachers will not want to break the law by accepting more than the legal maximums for K-3.

know from experience what the impact of such cuts can be. In the mid-1990s, the Victoria district eliminated all teacher librarians in elementary schools. Librarians were reinstated only as a result of the last collective agreement.

Bill 28, in a section entitled "Extended day and year-round schooling" alters the approval procedures for variations to the standard provincial calendar. Previously the agreement of parents and employees was required before a board made an alteration to the standard calendar. Now only consultation need occur. The distinction was highlighted by the discrepancy between the explanatory note for the bill and the words of the act. The explanatory note said parental approval is necessary. The minister of education had to rise in the legislature and admit that the note was wrong. Parental approval has indeed been removed, along with teacher and support-staff approval. Where a local calendar has been adopted, sections of a collective agreement may be set aside unilaterally by the board. Provisions dealing with hours of the day, days of the week, or months of the year could be void if they conflict with the decisions of the board on an extended day or altered calendar. The minister cited common lunch hours for teachers as a problem to be overcome in that way.

The minister's enthusiasm for the change appears to be moti-

vated by budget considerations. She was eloquent about the potential for cost-saving in new school construction if days are extended or the school calendar altered. Opposition members quizzed her about the prospect of split shifts for teachers. Clark said, in error, there are no current protections against such a practice. Many agreements do contain such protections. They could be extinguished by that section of Bill 28.

Finally Bill 28 gives the minister of labour power to appoint a commission to inquire into collective bargaining between teachers and their employers. The terms of reference for the commission hint at further restrictions on bargaining. The commission must consider stable industrial relations, reducing the potential for disruption, expeditious settlement of disputes, effective and efficient structures, and any other factor.

Although the imposed legislation came into effect as soon as Bill 27 was proclaimed (late on Sunday, January 27, 2002), certain sections of the bill, and the companion Bill 28, did not become effective at the same time. Salary is retroactive to July 1, 2001. All teachers placed on grid will therefore be

Until the end of this school year, all of the existing class-size limits, non-enrolling ratios, school-calendar provisions and contracts in amalgamated districts remain in place.

eligible for back pay to that date, and their pay cheques should have reflected the increase immediately. TOCs on daily rates not tied to the grid will, unfortunately, receive no increase.

The amalgamation of contracts, the new class-size numbers, the elimination of non-enrolling ratios, and the new

school calendar provisions do not take effect until July 1, 2002. Until the end of this school year, all of the existing class-size limits, non-enrolling ratios, school-calendar provisions, and contracts in amalgamated districts remain in place.

The practical work of removing articles from provincial and local agreements is to be performed by a "stripping arbitrator" appointed by the labour minister. The arbitrator will decide which sections of the agreements must be deleted. There will be no appeal from those decisions—a most unusual restriction. The arbitrator must complete work by May 11, 2002, or earlier or later if the cabinet so decides.

The government refused to implement the employer's offer of \$190 as a daily rate for TOCs.

Teachers immediately realized how devastating the effects will be on students next school year as class sizes increase, there are fewer non-enrolling teachers available, and support is reduced for students with special needs.

Teachers will not forget or forgive this assault on the learning conditions of their students and their own working conditions. On January 28, 2002, at rallies throughout the province, over 38,000 teachers expressed their outrage at these anti-education acts. These demonstrations began the campaign to defend public education, hold accountable those responsible for this legislative vandalism, and reverse the impacts of their legislation.

Ray Worley is an assistant director of the BCTF's Bargaining Division.

January 28, 2002, 7,500 people rallied in front of the Legislature in Victoria.

Top 10 BCTF lesson aids

1 LA 8569 ScienceWorks for Kids Series: Grades K-1. Produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 80 p. each book ©1998. Six resource books provide teachers with up to 12 concepts in each book, connecting science to real life. Includes step-by-step lessons and ready-to-go resources. Activities in each book help students practice skills in observation, analysis, communication, making comparisons, prediction, critical thinking, and recording. Note that the books are published in the USA and contain some US-based standards and references. Grades K-1. All are \$15.95:

LA 8569A Learning about Animals
LA 8569B Learning about Plants
LA 8569C Learning about My Body
LA 8569D Learning about Weather
LA 8569E Learning about the Earth
LA 8569F Learning to be a Scientist

2 LA 4099A Physics One by Gordon Gore 384 p. ©2001. This edition is an alternative to LA 4099 Physics 11. The content is similar with the addition of three electricity chapters. The chapter on the nuclear atom has been deleted. Grade 11 \$16.95

3 LA8617 ArtWorks for Kids. Produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 162 p. ©2001. Contains 68 projects that introduce children to a variety of art media and techniques—painting, weaving, clay, printing, using recyclable materials, and using materials from nature. Full-colour samples with clear step-by-step directions and a glossary of terms. The book is produced in the USA and may contain some US references. Grades 1-6 \$24.95

4 LA EE308 Watershed Connections: An Introductory Guidebook by Graham Shulley with Kari Jones and Jenn Hoffman 94 p. ©2001. The Sierra Club of B.C. Divided into five modules defined by a particular focus area, and contains between two and four activities, and provides information for both the teacher and the student. The five module topics are: Watershed Works!, Watersheds and Culture, Going Global, Watershed Worries and Watershed Stewardship. This resource book is for use in B.C. First Nations 12, Career and Personal Planning 10, 11 and 12, Communications 11 and 12, Earth Sciences 11, English Language Arts 8, English 11, Geography 12, Resource Sciences 11 and 12, Science 8, Science and Technology 11 and Social Studies 8, 9, 10 and 11, 12. \$23.95

5 LA 9854 Golf by Wilf Wedmann, Jennifer Fenton, Bryna Kopelow, Craig Cornell 53 p. ©2000. This manual includes an introduction to golf, equipment and facilities, safety and etiquette, four "teaching the basics" lesson plans, golf games supplement, glossary, game objectives, BC golf courses and clubs directory, golf personal skills challenge, personal goals achievement cards, skills challenge record card and skill crests order form. Ages 8-13 \$15

6 LA 9855 Disk Sports by Wilf Wedmann, Jennifer Fenton, Bryna Kopelow, Craig Cornell 52 p. ©2000. This manual includes teaching the basics, curriculum connections, introduction to disc sports, history of ultimate, equipment and facilities, safety and etiquette, four "teaching the basics" lesson plans, disc sports drills and games, ultimate glossary and game, disc sports contacts and courses, disc sports personal skills challenge, personal goals achievement cards, skills challenge record card and skill crests order form. Ages 8-13 \$15

7 LA 8615 Ukrainian Easter Egg Pysanka Beginners' Designs by Joan Nakonechny 5 p. ©2000. Illustrated five-page guide on how to make a Ukrainian Easter egg pysanka. Grades 1-7 \$3.50

8 LA 9118 War of the Eagles—Novel Study by Beverly Sparks 78 p. ©2001. This novel study for the Eric Walters novel War of the Eagles includes pre-reading activities, chapter questions, questions on the plot and characters, themes in the novel, novel projects, bibliography, and answer key and resource information on the author and the Japanese in Cumberland, including internment. Grades 6-8 \$6.50

9 LA 2126 The Teacher's Complete and Easy Guide to the Internet, Second Edition. Ann Heide and Linda Stilborne 336 p. and CD-Rom ©2000. This illustrated book is a comprehensive Internet reference for teachers. Includes a CD Rom. K-12 \$41.95

10 LA ESL109 Extend a Welcoming Hand—A Resource Book for Teachers of Young ESL Learners. Published by the Vancouver School Board, 54 p. rev. ©2001. Encourages and supports early primary teachers as they welcome 2nd language learners into their classrooms. Contains practical ideas for creating a welcoming school climate and for teaching language and concepts. Includes a list of children's books and teacher resources. Recommended by the Ministry of Education. K-2. \$8

Check out the website for the B.C. Association of Learning Materials and Educational Representatives at www.bcalmer.ca/ for a source for contacts for many curriculum resources and information.

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.



Where did this legislation come from?

Two groups have consistently argued that teachers should not have the right to negotiate working conditions for teachers and learning conditions for students. According to the two groups, truly professional teachers negotiate only for salary and benefits.

One of the groups is the B.C. Principals' and Vice-principals' Association (BCPVPA), and the other is a group that began as the Teachers For Association.

TFA began in 1987, when the Social Credit government had teachers decide whether to form unions or associations. The TFA was unsuccessful in convincing teachers to adopt the association model and launched about a dozen court cases against the BCTF after approximately 99%

of teachers signed up with the union. In all the court cases, TFA was unsuccessful. The former head of TFA, Mickey Patryluk, is now the president of the B.C. Liberal Party. Over time, the group morphed into the Teachers For Excellence, and then the Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education. In all its incarnations the group has consistently promoted the market model and opposed bargaining rights for teachers.

The BCPVPA made presentations to the provincial government in September 1991 requesting limitations on teachers' rights to negotiate working and learning conditions. The BCPVPA has also pushed its agenda through the B.C. Public School

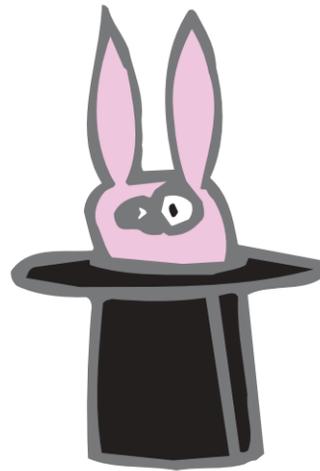
Employers' Association, the bargaining agent for schools boards. The bargaining objectives adopted by BCPSEA in 1995 for the first round of provincial negotiations reflected the objectives of the BCPVPA. The objectives haven't changed.

On February 4, 2002, Minister of Education Christy Clark confirmed that the provincial government will fund the salary increase for teachers only for the 2001-02 school year. The government has told school boards that it is providing the flexibility they requested. Class-size limits are out of the collective agreement, there is no requirement to have specialist teachers, and there are no guarantees of service levels for students with special needs.

In the following article, Pat

Clarke points out that you have to be careful about what you wish for, because sometimes you get it.

— Peter Owens



AOs asked for it



by Pat Clarke

On January 25, 2002, I can imagine there were high fives, popping champagne corks, and all around merriment in the offices of the B.C. School Trustees Association, the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals'

...teachers wanted an effective say and a way to ensure some stability in working and learning conditions.

Association and, of course, the master artists of perfidy, the B.C. Public School Employers' Association. They had successfully concluded a campaign to restore management control of teachers' working conditions. They had good reason for paroxysms of ecstasy. How often do you go into a negotiation and get everything you went in with? Only when it is not a negotiation at all. Only when you are on the winning end of an Orwellian set up.

In this case, the Ministry of Truth, otherwise known as the B.C. Liberal Party, appropriated the term *flexibility*, from the lexicon of their kin on the global

right. *Flexibility* joins *restraint* and *accountability* and other easily euphemized words that are transformed into slogans and then used as blunt instruments. The British Columbia Ministry of Truth had the extraordinary advantage of having several platoons of true believers ready, able, and enthusiastically willing to do the dirty work required to forge the slogans into the blunt instruments.

Probably the most Orc-like participants in the B.C. Liberal obliteration of employee rights, in terms of their unswerving and maniacal pursuit of the dubious Ring of Management Power, had to be the Principals' and Vice Principals' Association. Like a brigade of Orcs, they don't seem overly concerned about the mess they make getting to where they want to go, nor do they seem to have given much thought to any negative consequences of having secured the ring.

But the BCPVPA has been on this quest for a long time. More than 25 years ago, the inner councils of that association decided that "The Ring" would define them. Like any aggregation of antagonists once they have made such a decision, the only counsel they consider is their own. That is especially unfortunate because somewhere between the present and when their quest began, in the late

1970s, the implications and consequences of achieving what they so passionately sought became considerably more problematic.

If the BCPVPA had heard some other voices, it may have occurred to them that just maybe the Ring had, as it is inclined to do, transformed. When the quest began in earnest, management issues in schools were defined primarily around the concept of collegial decision making. At the time, the BCTF was arguing that

...the BCPVPA, on the other hand, held that the responsibilities of school management precluded mutual decision-making beyond anything more than consultation.

teachers, administrators, and elected trustees should be able to agree to the conditions under which teachers would work and students would learn. In short, teachers wanted an effective say and a way to ensure some stability in working and learning conditions. School administrators, through the BCPVPA, on the other hand, held that the responsibilities of school management precluded mutual decision-making beyond anything more than consultation.

The BCPVPA quest has been fuelled by a single-minded and now disastrously simplistic

obsession dating back to the 1970s. It is represented by a one-line battle hymn: "We run the schools; teachers teach." But the wizards controlling the Ring haven't told their eager-to-please little brigade of Orcs that the quest has a different purpose now. *Flexibility* is not just about school administrators' having more clout. It is a true Orwellian euphemism. It is about down sizing. It is about making a public service less effective. It is about making public education more attractive to private, for profit, operators. It is about turning an open and equitable public school system into a playground for the privileged.

School administrators will have no more opportunity for leadership than the manager of a Nike factory in Indonesia.

On January 25, 2002, the BCPVPA no doubt believed that the long quest was over. Schools were once again under the guiding hand of administrative prerogative, and the halcyon days when a school was an administrator's fiefdom had finally returned. It is a tragically time-warped vision. School administrators will have no more opportunity for *leadership* than the manager of a Nike factory in Indonesia. In 2002, they are mere functionaries in an ideological crusade where their role is to deliver the bad news and then watch as their treasured ring of management control devolves into meaninglessness.

Those are the most serious consequences of the BCPVPA's march of folly. There are others. Their complicity, unwitting or not, with a nasty, ideological, and reckless government has cost them an incalculable amount of credibility and trust with the very people who must trust them the most, the teachers they have to work with.

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

TOCs get 0-0-0!

Logic and reason have nothing to do with the thought behind the government's decision to withhold a salary increase for teachers on call. "We're teachers too!" is the typical reaction of many of the 6,000 TOCs in B.C. who are the lowest paid teachers in the province. With a stroke of the pen this government has all but erased any gains TOCs have made over the last few years. Low salaries and lack of job security is the reality for most teachers on call.

According to a BCTF research survey in the spring of 1999, in 1997-98, TOCs "earned an average of just over \$11,000—about one-fifth of the average teacher's salary." Daily rates for TOCs are still in jeopardy. Once the lawyers sort through the extremely complicated legalese of Bill 27, it is conceivable that TOC salaries will be frozen or red-circled, and 0-0-0 will be a reality.

Bill 27 imposes upon teachers an agreement that will mean lower salaries and reduced rights for many.

The need for better pay and more work has forced many TOCs to be on more than one TOC list. (Statistics show that 19% of TOCs were on two lists, and 5% were on three or more lists.) In amalgamated districts, Bill 27 completely wipes out collective agreements. Bill 27 imposes upon teachers an agreement that will mean *lower salaries and reduced rights* for many.

TOCs in this province have needed to redirect their energy, education, and experience to work in areas other than education. (In 1997-98, 12% of the TOCs surveyed had other employment.) Many have chosen to leave the profession entirely. Certainly Bill 27 will further that move. B.C. classroom and itinerant teachers know all too well the consequences of TOC shortages. Sick days and professional development will inevitably be decreased and/or denied when there are no TOCs to replace teachers.

For the most vulnerable and lowest paid members of the BCTF, there appears to be no increase whatsoever for three

Bill 27 reminds this hard-working group of specialized teachers that the government really does not care.

years. And to add insult to injury, the legislation reinforces the isolation of TOCs from their profession. It reinforces the belief that TOCs are *not recognized* for their education and experience, do *not deserve* a pay increase, and are *not as good* as "real teachers." Bill 27 reminds this hard-working group of specialized teachers that the government really does not care.

— a teacher on call



President David Chudnovsky met with media following the RA to explain the action plan.

Teachers adopt plan of action at Rep Assembly

As a result of the Liberal government's unilateral imposition of the terms and conditions of teachers' employment, it will not be "business as usual" in British Columbia schools.

On February 1 and 2, 2002 the BCTF Representative Assembly met and unanimously agreed upon a plan to continue supporting students' learning, while resisting government cuts. "Facing a government that is prepared to sacrifice quality education to pay for tax cuts to the rich, teachers are determined to preserve services to students and to inform citizens whenever the cuts hurt kids," said BCTF President David Chudnovsky.

More than 200 local presidents and teacher representatives from throughout the province debated a wide range of options to express the outrage of members at the legislated contract stripping. Many of the veteran teacher activists expressed their sorrow that the legacy of improvements they had fought for, and even walked picket lines for, had been wiped out with the stroke of a pen.

The debate was passionate but always professional, and at the end of the day teachers were united around the longer-term response plan. It outlines a number of activities that teachers will do, and a few that they will not.

The assembly voted that the BCTF, its locals, and members will:

- organize meetings for parents at schools throughout the province to discuss the impact on learning conditions of Bills 27 and 28.

- report to parents on the impact of changes to learning opportunities that occur as a result of the imposed contract and the impact of the funding freeze in education.
- conduct an immediate province-wide review of student learning conditions and make a major report to the public in October 2002.

- publish report cards at the district and provincial level to evaluate the government's education policies.

- hold Premier Campbell and Education Minister Clark to account for their education policies at every one of their public appearances.

- participate in the B.C. Federation of Labour Day of Protest on February 23, 2002 in Victoria and other communities throughout the province.

- call upon the B.C. Federation of Labour to hold regional and provincial days of protest against the legislation

and the cutbacks.

- affiliate with the B.C. Federation of Labour as soon as possible.

- call on individual teachers to write to the minister of education asking for her resignation;

- inform teachers across Canada of the violation of collective agreements and of the anti-education policies of the provincial government.

The assembly voted that teachers will not:

- spend personal funds on school materials.

- participate in fundraising.

- provide coverage for a teacher who is absent (except for a teacher on call hired specifically for that purpose unless ordered to do so).

- supervise or mark Foundation Skills Assessment or district standardized tests.

- do struck work, such as first-term report cards.

- Nancy Knickerbocker

Partner reactions

BCSSA

The B.C. School Superintendents' Association is relieved that a collective agreement is now in place. "The association strongly supports the decision to review the collective bargaining structure. We are in agreement that in the educational sector, this process is flawed and not functional," (BCSSA President Don Goodridge)

"We also wish to make it perfectly clear that the BCSSA values, honours, and respects the commitment and dedication professional educators make to their students, schools, and communities.

"As well, we welcome the opportunity for autonomy and flexibility in public education decision-making. Rigid class-size limits and formulas designating the types and numbers of specialist teachers force decisions that are not always in the best interest of students.

"It is now our responsibility to work with our communities to ensure that this increased flexibility improves the quality of education."

- January 28, 2002

BCSTA

B.C. school boards welcome the return of local autonomy and management flexibility resulting from today's legislated settlement of the teachers' contract.

"While we would have certainly preferred an agreement settled at the negotiating table, this legislation does the

public a service by recognizing that locally elected school boards, not unions, are legally accountable for the use of public money to improve student achievement in our schools." (BCSTA President Gordon Comeau)

"This legislation is an important step to enable school boards to spend the public's money in ways judged locally to be the best for students and schools. How schools are managed should not and cannot be dictated by union contracts. At election time, the voters will judge how well school boards do their job."

British Columbia is a large and diverse province. Since the last teachers' contract, drawn up by the union with government and imposed by legislation three years ago, school boards have pointed out that rigid class-size limits and formulas designating the types and numbers of specialist teachers force staffing decisions that are not always in the best interest of students. Students do not arrive at schools in convenient batches of 25 with statistically balanced needs. The solutions have included long commutes for some students, split classes for others, and no ability to adjust teacher resources to meet student needs.

"School boards have been characterized as being opposed to small class sizes and specialist support for students. Nothing could be further from the truth," Comeau said. "The issue is not whether we want these things, but how we accomplish them at the local level.

"While it comes as no surprise that the provincial union continues to be opposed to school boards having autonomy and flexibility, I have faith that school board trustees and employees will continue their work, as always, with a spirit of co-operation and with commitment to B.C.'s students."

- January 25, 2002

BCPVPA

"The legislation definitely focuses on the needs of children. I think that most teachers after a period of time, will realize it's not bad legislation. I think a good learning environment will come back, but the next weeks, months will be challenging," (BCPVPA President Stu Dale)

- January 27, 2002

"Stu Dale has long lamented that his members are handcuffed by collective agreements, he said that the changes would allow schools to better meet district needs, beginning in the next school year." (Vancouver Sun)

- January 26, 2002

BCCPAC

"For parents this a great relief that...job action might be over and schools can get back to the business of education. I welcome the plan for increased flexibility, parents have opposed rigid class size limits in the contract." (BCCPAC President, Reggi Balabanov)

- Vancouver Sun, Jan. 26, 2002)

"However Reggi Balabanov, said BCCPAC believes the class size elements in the legislation make common sense and address parents' concerns that there wasn't enough flexibility in previous class size limits for primary grades.

This looks like kids will be the most important thing in each decision.

We're happy to have more flexibility."

- Times Colonist, Jan. 26, 2002

- Mike Lombardi

Greetings, Minister

by Moira Mackenzie

The moment she began her speech, the shouting out and heckling began. In the gymnasium of King George Secondary School on January 31, 2002, Education Minister Christy Clark addressed a meeting of parents and concerned members of the public, speaking about the government's plans in education and the recent passage of Bills 27 and 28. Yes, some in the crowd applauded the minister, but they were mainly the other Liberal MLAs in attendance, their supporters sitting with them, and some of the BCCPAC and DPAC reps. Generally, the mood

can't be based on formulas decided at the bargaining table.

- BCCPAC, among others, asked for the legislation. Parents, superintendents, and administrative officers care about kids. Schools need to be learning places before work places.

- School boards will have the local autonomy to make choices and address special needs in the system. They care about kids and won't let things get worse.

The lack of specificity was even more evident as questions for the minister were read aloud by the organizers. It was clear that the parents in attendance had done their homework; they had many tough questions dealing with issues such as mistrust of the government, the teacher shortage and teacher morale, threats to services for students with special needs, removal of class-size limits, cutting of inner-city school funding, and so on. They weren't getting answers! Evasive and lacking depth and specifics, the minister's responses were met with jeers, laughter, and pointed remarks about the past, present, and future actions of her government. No, the government agenda was not being embraced in King George Secondary School gymnasium that night.

There can be no mistake about the rejection of the government agenda for education in any other public meeting that the minister of education addresses in this province,

...the education minister will be out and about, marketing the Liberal agenda for public education...

either. To the parents' meeting on January 31, 2002, Christy Clark expressed her commitment to travel the province speaking to parents about issues in education. While a government commitment may not be worth that much in B.C. today, the education minister will be out and about, marketing the Liberal agenda for public education; we need to make sure that she receives a welcome worthy of all that she and her government have done and plan to do to the public education system in our province.

Moira Mackenzie is an assistant director of the BCTF's Professional Development Division.



Messages of support for B.C. teachers

Teachers around the world are outraged at the Liberal government's treatment of collective agreements and workers' rights. Below are excerpts from some of the messages of support:

Ontario

Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association: "Last week was indeed a black one for teachers who have consistently shown their willingness to compromise on all contract issues, except those that touch on the welfare of students. OECTA members share your disgust at this misuse of legislative power. We are with you in spirit as you protest these arbitrary actions. We are with you as you hold the line. Let us know what we can do to help."

— Cathy McVean, president

Alberta

"Please convey to your executive, staff, and members the unqualified support of Alberta's 32,000 teachers. We understand that your efforts to protect your working conditions are also efforts to enhance the conditions in which students learn. In a short while, thousands of Alberta teachers will be called upon to emulate the courage and resolve that your members are demonstrating today. As teachers, we know that strength in the face of an arbitrary and arrogant government derives from solidarity, and that the bonds of solidarity in our profession reach across two provinces."

— Alberta Teachers' Association

CTF

"The 240,000 teachers of Canada raise their voices in support of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation members in their struggle to secure a fair collective agreement," says Doug Willard, president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. CTF also placed full-page ads in major B.C. newspapers that urge the government of British Columbia to renounce legislation and return to the bargaining table. "Collective bargaining is a problem-solving process. Stay with it! Contracts by government decrees have no place in a democratic society."

— CTF President Doug Willard also attended BCTF rallies in Vancouver and Victoria

Support from the World Education Forum

Porto Alegre, Brazil
February 2, 2002

"Be it resolved that the delegates attending the World Education Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil go on record in support of the teachers of British Columbia, Canada, in their fight for full and free collective bargaining rights;

"Be it also resolved that delegates present call on the government of Gordon Campbell to stop its attacks on the rights of teachers and other workers;

"Further be it resolved that the delegates present make every effort upon returning to their home countries to send letters of support to the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and letters condemning the actions of the government of B.C."

More than 50,000 social activists attended the World Social Forum, including more than 1,000 delegates at the Education Forum, who unanimously adopted the preceding resolution.

Jan Eastman, a BCTF staff member and former president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, said in a telephone interview from Porto Alegre that it was heartening to hear the many expressions of solidarity with B.C. teachers.

"It's truly amazing. This city is so friendly," she said. "More than 50,000 people marched through the streets and you barely saw any police presence at all. You felt totally safe. It was nothing like Quebec City, or even Vancouver during APEC."

Mexican teachers write to Campbell

We have been informed and we are appalled by your decision to call today for a special session of the legislature for the approval of conditions on teachers that have not been accepted in the negotiating table by the thousands of teachers belonging to the British Columbia Teachers' Federation. Teachers have the right (recognized in many countries) to participate directly and decisively in the decisions and matters pertaining to their work. As professionals who know first hand the conditions in which children and youngsters can learn and live better, [we know] this labour right is a safeguard against decisions that are not educationally sound. When political, financial, or administrative reasons hinder the right of students to a better public education, it is the teachers' professional duty to defend them. To impose by the force of the law what your own teachers will not accept [at] the table means not only an aggressive disregard for the professional advice of people whose lives have been devoted to teaching, but also a noticeable step back from the civilized democratic and labour traditions by which Canada is well known around the world.

As representatives of national teachers and university faculty unions belonging to the Tri-national Coalition in Defence of Public Education, Mexican Section, we respectfully ask you to withdraw your legal initiative and to do whatever is in your hands to bring about a quick solution to this conflict favourable to the best interest of students and teachers. Meanwhile we declare ourselves in full solidarity with teachers of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, and very soon, on an agreed date, we will be also showing our support at the Canadian Embassy in the City of Mexico.

David Villarruel, Sindicato de la Universidad A. Metropolitana (UAM)

Maria Eugenia López, Sección IX, Sindicato Nacional (SNTE)

Juan Carlos Serra, Sindicato Universidad de Chapingo (STAUACH)

Pedro Hernández, Sindicato Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).

Maria de la Luz Arriaga, Coalicion Trinacional en Defensa de la Educacion Publica

Hugo Aboites, Professor.

Metro teachers rally

The wind at our backs

by Jessye Labaj

On a Saturday morning, most people do their weekend chores, attend their children's games, watch the mountains glow in the sunrise, or just sleep the early hours away. This past Saturday, as I cycled down Granville toward Canada Place, clusters of people were flocking in the same direction. I stopped at a red light beside some pedestrians when a man asked if I was cold. I replied that I am from Ontario and dare not complain. "You are lucky to have the wind at your back," he said. Wind at my back! I wondered if the teachers would have the wind at their backs?

As it turned out, we were walking into a wind as cold as the Liberal government. As teachers face cuts, clawbacks, and contract stripping, I ponder the state of education a year from now. I arrived at Canada Place to see a huge crowd of Metro Vancouver teachers listening to live music and using the colour-coded song sheets to sing along. Between the songs, stories were told. One West Vancouver teacher remembered what it had been like before teachers had a union. Another recalled what her work had been like before elementary teachers had prep time. One of my first mentors told me about her Grade 2 class with 21 students. She said the tone of the class is great for learning, and she and the students are relaxed. I admitted that I was a

little jealous as I have middle school classes with 30 and more in each class, but I am happy for her and her students that the learning environment is so nurturing.

Approaching the art gallery, I looked back at the sea of people and signs surging forward. There were signs from the BCNU, CUPE, and CAW side by side with teacher signs saying "Who will do the required minimum five years of university for a decade-old wage?" Good question! Who would? Maybe I should be a physiotherapist instead and treat the chronic backaches that teachers will have from the downloaded pressure. If the Campbell government decides to scrap class-size language, a lot of beginning teachers like me will be back on the hunt for jobs. Perhaps I could open a private school and persuade Campbell's rich friends to enrol their children. I could hire some of the 1,200 teachers who were displaced when the K-3 class-size and non-enrolling language expired.

We arrived at the gallery to hear Jim Sinclair, of the B.C. Federation of Labour, and Debra McPherson, from the nurses' union. Teachers sang and cheered for the speakers, especially when the sun emerged from behind the clouds as David Chudnovsky was speaking. The sun was shining just for teachers that morning—the thousands of teachers and teacher supporters gathered there to defend public education.

Jessye Labaj teaches at Ridgeview Elementary School, West Vancouver.

Trustee ties education cuts to global agenda

by Adrienne Montani

Thank you to all of you for coming out to stand up for public education. It's a privilege to stand in solidarity with so many advocates for children and youth.

So why are we out here? Why do we care so much about education? Because it really matters. Because the stakes are high—for our children and for our society.

These high stakes in public education are recognized by advocates, governments, academics, and yes, by market-

Do we want to live in a society that treats the education of its children as a commodity to be sold to the highest bidder, or the slickest marketing campaign?

ing firms and the private sector interests they represent.

For example, we have some very good policy language in B.C. The mandate for the public school system to create "educated citizens" who can contribute to a democratic, just, and productive society is eloquently outlined as a fundamental responsibility of government. Many acknowledge the crucial role of the public education system in equalizing opportunities for all children and youth.

We also have much accumulated knowledge about good educational practice, about child and youth development, and about the greater benefits of early investments in prevention and support over the later remedial or crisis response.

We even have International Monetary Fund studies that confirm that economic returns from public investment in education are high. And we have the international affirmation of the importance of children's and youths' rights to an education, enshrined in the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, a commitment document that every country in the world, except the United States and Somalia, has signed.

So what kind of society or government ignores all the evidence and learning and decides to shoot itself in the foot by penny-pinching on the education of its children?

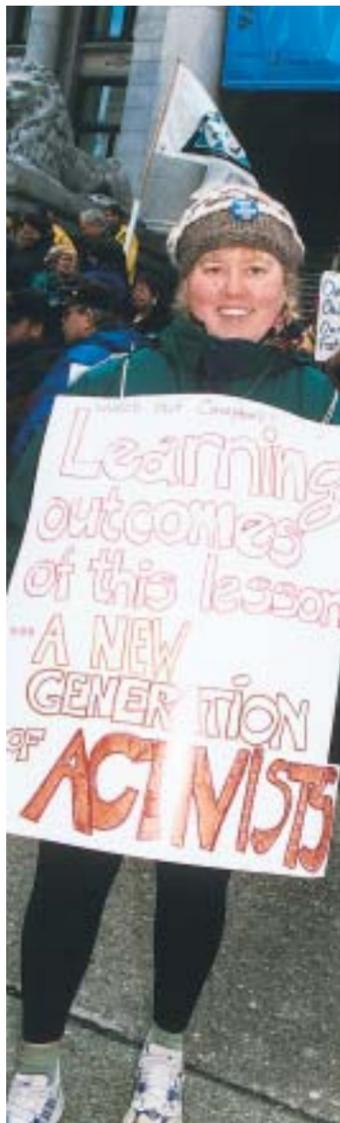
Our current provincial government made a public policy decision to deliberately reduce government revenue through tax cuts—which primarily benefit the wealthiest among us. The argument that goes with it suggests we all will reap long-term benefits in economic growth, despite the short-term "belt-tightening." Having done this, the government now tells us there's just not enough money for education and other public or social services, that education budgets will have to be frozen for three years at current levels.



West Vancouver teacher Jessye Labaj walked her bike in the Metro teachers' march and rally in support of class-size limits, specific ratios for specialist teachers, and support for students with special needs.

PETER OWENS PHOTO

ly Saturday, January 12, 2002



Surrey teacher Julia Macrae's sign indicated that the Liberals have accomplished something positive with their cuts.

We know that children learn more from what we do, not from what we say. So think of that decision in terms of what it teaches our children. As a parent, if I gave a big chunk of the family budget to some wealthy neighbours and then told my children I couldn't afford decent food or clothing for them, they would rightly conclude that their health and well-being are less important to me than the wealthy neighbours, regardless of what arguments I might make about this being a good long-term investment.

Smart societies invest generously in their children and youth.

The message to students in our schools is the same. This decision says to them, Your right to, and need for, a quality education is less important than tax cuts for wealthy individuals and corporations. Your needs will be sacrificed now (and we're sorry you're only young once...) in order to make B.C. an attractive investment environment for people who think they shouldn't have to contribute much to the collective social fabric through taxation, for people who value personal or corporate profit over community well-being.

The decision to freeze the budget for public education for three years—which we know means that school boards will have to make more cuts to programs and services—and the threatened cuts to the \$43

million dollars in social-equity funding currently held by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, which pays for community schools, hot lunches, inner-city programs, etc.—teaches us something about the value accorded to our children and youth and to the health and well-being of our communities

Those who say we cannot afford a good public education system in this wealthy province and country are revealing the bankruptcy, not of the public treasury, but of their values.

by the decision makers. No amount of rhetoric about education being a top priority can mask the harmful impact of these decisions. If children's and youths' educational rights were truly valued, different decisions would be made.

It is our job as citizens, as community, as advocates for our children to oppose this devaluation and to educate others about the urgency of this task. Everyone should understand that the stakes are high.

The stakes are particularly high for the most vulnerable of our students: those with developmental challenges and disabilities, Aboriginal students, students living in poverty, students who came here as refugees, and others—many of whom are already struggling to find the supports they need in our schools. Targeted education dollars for Aboriginal and students with special needs have not been adequate, but they have made a difference. What advantage is there for these students in de-targeting these dollars? Will greater flexibility translate into more support for them or less? We should not gamble on the answer.

Underfunding is already forcing excruciating and inherently unfair choices on all levels of the education system—on trustees, on administrators, on parents, on teachers, and on support staff. Which student gets put on the wait list for assessment or services? Which student doesn't get the attention he/she needs in a classroom? Which option is the least destructive for students with special needs: under-resourced integration in a regular classroom or placement in a special or separate program? Which school doesn't get the earthquake safety upgrade it needs? Do we buy math texts or books for the school library?

In this context, the new talk of choice seems rather cruel. Yet we are told there aren't enough choices in our schools and we must rush to create a greater "marketplace" of "choice" schools. But this new rhetoric of choice comes with an agenda that values competition, not community building, and we all know which families and students are most likely to win in a consumers' race and which are

January 12, 2002, 5,000 Metro teachers marched to a rally at the Art Gallery in Vancouver.

most likely to lose.

So we are being asked to magnify the inequalities that already exist by creating greater choice for those who are already most advantaged and to direct scarce resources from neighbourhood, comprehensive schools where choices and support for the disadvantaged are already inadequate. This is not speculation. This is the legacy of "New Era" style choice programs in other countries that have been pursuing this agenda for a while. Even the World Bank acknowledges this results in increasing inequality.

Cumulatively, we have the red herring of the need for choice schools layered on fiscal decisions that deliberately undermine the quality of education the public system is able to offer. We have the relentless imposition of the language of the marketplace in the discourse of education: parents are "consumers" teachers and students are to be valued for their measurable "outcomes" or "outputs" or their "continuous improvement"—not for their less tangible teaching and learning successes. Schools and teachers are told they must become more accountable by incessantly testing their students and using the results as marketing material. The institution of public education itself is vilified by the likes of the Fraser Institute as a one-size-fits-all "monopoly" that must be ended.

And right on the heels of this manufactured crisis and turmoil, the consistent attempt to shake the public's confidence in public education (with a lot of help from the corporate media), and the actual undermining of the system through underfunding, comes the message, Private

is better. Let the private sector work its magic of efficiency, consumer choice, and competition leading to excellence!

Forget social justice and reducing inequality. Forget public responsibility for ensuring equal opportunity for all children. Too bad if some parents aren't good enough consumers or competitors. Forget the values of community building, co-operation, and including the most vulnerable. Forget what we know and have learned about what is good for children and for a healthy society. Just repeat "Public is bad; private is good" over and over again, until enough people believe it.

Is a conspiracy at work? Yes! Read the web sites of the marketing people who are salivating to get their products (educational and anything else) into the education "market," in front of those captive and impressionable young people.

...a quality education is less important than tax cuts for wealthy individuals and corporations.

Not all people who are caught up in the "New Era" language are conspirators. Many parents, students, and educators have legitimate and urgent complaints about the current system. Some of them are unaware of the privatizing agenda behind the neo-liberal language. They are frustrated and want changes. It's hard to know who is speaking the truth when promises are made and solutions are proposed.

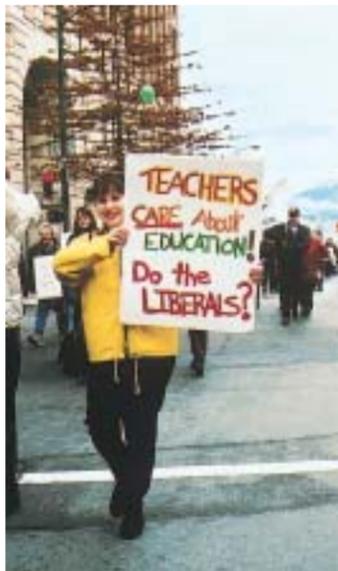
And so I go back to values and remembering what we know and what we have committed to. Do we want to live in a society that treats the education of its children as a commodity to be sold to the highest bidder, or the slickest marketing campaign? I'm clear on the answer: No! That would violate our responsibility to nurture our children and engage them in building a cohesive, caring society. We must stop looking to the worst examples, where privatization and commodification of education have been imposed, and look instead to the countries, for example in Europe, that have strongly supported public education systems from pre-school through post secondary.

Smart societies invest generously in their children and youth. Just societies uphold the rights of their children and youth—most of whom cannot vote yet. Caring societies make sure all children and youth are included, especially those least able to compete.

I want to live in a just, caring society that acts on its knowledge of what is good for children and, ultimately, what is good for us all. Public education is one of those social goods that we must protect—because it is essential to protecting our freedoms and our future. The stakes are high, and we all have a role to play in educating ourselves, our peers, our government, and the public.

Those who say we cannot afford a good public education system in this wealthy province and country are revealing the bankruptcy, not of the public treasury, but of their values.

Adrienne Montani, a Vancouver school trustee, spoke at a rally on January 12, 2002 at the Vancouver Art Gallery.



First the adventure, then the rally

by Jim Iker

I received a call on Monday, January 28, 2002, at 7:15 from one of my members telling me that a truck with an excavator on it, in a clandestine operation to breach highway and load restrictions, had knocked off some of the support beams of the bridge in Houston, the bridge on our route to Smithers, where we

We had 250 to 300 people at our rally. We braved -25° weather in a march up and down the main street with our placards and chants, ending at the offices of our MLA, who I'm sure will be the first to be recalled.

were going to join the Bulkley Valley teachers for our rally. When I heard that, I thought that the Liberals were at it again, putting another obstacle in the way of the Burns Lake Teachers' Association. Deleting our contract was not enough. Anyway detours were put in place up and along some logging roads. But a couple of trucks slipped off the road, blocking that access and creating delays. We had two buses going, and our bus was able to bypass the traffic and go through town to pick up some Houston teachers. We made a short detour on a one-way logging road; of course we were going the wrong way and we met an overloaded logging truck. The driver was kind enough to back up and give us just enough room to drive past. It was tense. With that

shortcut, we were able to get around the bridge, onto the highway, and into Smithers on time for the rally at noon. Ours was a three-hour journey. Some of our members on the other bus and in cars were not so fortunate. They avoided the one-way road but ended up on a 40 km stretch of icy bush road and arrived five minutes after the rally had concluded. They did get to place their placards at the doorstep of our MLA. It shows the determination of our members.

The Burns Lake teachers joined the Bulkley Valley teachers in an inspiring rally in Smithers. We were joined by members and reps from CUPE, BCGEU, BCNU, HEU, Recall Dennis MacKay Campaign, and other community members. We had 250 to 300 people at our rally. We braved -25° weather in a march up and down the main street with our placards

It was a great day despite the weather and the long journey on some undesirable roads.

and chants, ending at the offices of our MLA, who I'm sure will be the first to be recalled. At the offices, we heard speeches from me, Dennis Courtliff, Dan Blake, and reps from local and regional CUPE, BCGEU, BCNU, and the Green Party. We also had a signup for the recall of Dennis MacKay. Of course, we left our placards. It was a great day despite the weather and the long journey on some undesirable roads.

Jim Iker is president of the Burns Lake Teachers' Association.

Day of protest

Fernie and Cranbrook	400 members, and union supporters marched to MLA's office and then school board office
Kimberley	100% turnout—marched through downtown for leaflet distribution, on to Platzel bandstand for public speeches; joined by other union workers
Windermere	175 at a noon rally downtown area by board office, park outside MLA's office
Nelson	330 members met at Best Western and marched to MLA's office
Arrow Lakes	100% teachers participated in study session and marched to board office
Boundary	rallied in Grand Forks, joined by other union members
Princeton District	assembled at Legion, and marched to Court House
Golden	marched to school board's satellite office
Castlegar	rallied at school board office
Vernon	525 met at Schubert Centre, funeral march to MLA's office
Kelowna	1,100 had study session, letter writing
Revelstoke	spirited rally with over 90% participation. Joined by other labour groups
Queen Charlotte City	100 attended rally at school board office. Thanks to McPhail and Kwan... faxed letters to MLA
Prince Rupert	400 protesters, music and ceremonial coffin—rallied at Fisherman's Hall and marched to MLA office
Smithers and Burns Lake	250 rallied on 2nd and Main and marched to MLA's office
Fraser Lake	rallied at the Legion Hall
Ft. St. James	rallied at Musicmakers' Hall
Prince George	1,000 rallied at Civic Centre, marched to court house for speeches
Valemont	march to government agent's office, presented message of concerns to the mayor
MacBride	marched with coffin down Main Street. Four out of five of the schools joined in
Victoria	7,500 assembled at legislature building
Penticton	rallied at Trade and Convention Centre, public rally held at Gyro Park
100 Mile House, Williams Lake, Tatta	400 members and other unions marched to MLA's office
Quesnel	300 marched from Civic Square Curling Arena through town to MLA's office
Merritt	rallied public library, presented petition to MLA's office
Kootenay Columbia	rallied at school board office
Armstrong	116 members for a study session, speeches, CUPE workers joined to show support
Vernon	525 members met at Schubert Centre and had funeral march to MLA's office
Central Okanagan	1,100 members held study session, letter writing, and march
Cariboo-Chilcotin	400 members and other union workers marched to MLA's office in Williams Lake
Quesnel	300 members marched from Civic Centre through town to MLA's office, speeches, refreshments
Merritt	rallied at public library, presented petition to MLA's office
Chilliwack, and Fraser Cascade	900 members bussed to MLA's office
Abbotsford	1,300 members rallied, Agricultural Rec Centre
Langley	Metro rally
Surrey	3,500 members rallied at Cloverdale Fairgrounds
Delta	Metro rally
Richmond	Metro rally
Vancouver	14,000 members rallied at the Pacific Coliseum, PNE Grounds
New Westminster	Metro rally
Burnaby	Metro rally
Maple Ridge	650 members met at Baptist Church, 222nd & Lougheed Highway, then marched to MLA's office
Squamish	250 rallied on Cleveland Avenue
Coquitlam	Metro rally
MacKenzie	90 marched to the MLA's office, then rally with speeches
North Vancouver	Metro rally
West Vancouver	Metro rally
Sunshine Coast	300 teachers and 200 CUPE, BCGEU, CKP, HEU, IWA, retired teachers and other community groups. Marched with coffin to MLA's office
Howe Sound	250 teachers with children, parents, union supporters, marched and rallied, and sent faxes to MLAs
Central Coast	100% teachers not at work. District-wide mail-out flyer produced and two letters per member to various MLAs, premier, etc.
Queen Charlotte	100 members gave thanks to Joy McPhail and Jenny Kwan, faxed individual letters to MLA
Prince Rupert District	250 and 400 protesters rallied at Fishermen's Hall and marched to MLA's office, music and ceremonial coffin
Bulkley Valley and Burns Lake	250 - 300 members rallied at 2nd & Main, then marched to MLA's office. Burns Lake joined Bulkley Valley in a rally in Smithers, joined by members and reps from CUPE, BCGEU, BCNU, HEU
Nechako	90% participation. Fraser Lake rally, Fort St. James march, and Vanderhoof march to MLA office
Prince George	1,000 members rallied at Civic Centre, then marched to Court House for speeches
Peace River South	100% turnout, rallied at Elk's Hall
Peace River North	over 300 people at the rally
Victoria - Island locals	7,500 members marched to Legislature Buildings
Okanagan Skaha	rallied at Trade & Convention Centre in Penticton, and Gyro Park
Nanaimo	Victoria rally
Mount Arrowsmith	Victoria rally
Alberni District	70 teachers to Victoria, 60 at a rally with speeches and songs in Alberni
Comox	those not in Victoria, marched to MLA and school board office
Campbell River	Victoria rally
Kamloops Thompson	1,000 assembled at old Sears building, Thompson Park Mall, marched down 5th Avenue, rally at courthouse
Kitimat	200 rallied
Fort Nelson	75 rallied at school board office
Vancouver Island North & West	over 120 teachers from communities across Vancouver Island North gathered in Port McNeil
Creston Valley	great turnout! Teachers joined by retired teachers, union members and public for a rally
Stikine	100% participation by teachers. Wrote letters to MLAs and superintendent
Terrace District	250 rallied at MLA's office
Salmon Arm	200 rallied at Shuswap Theatre, silent march to MLA's office and school board
Upper Skeena	70 teachers and other supporters marched and rallied
Nisga'a	100% attendance at rally and march
Association des enseignants francophones	joined rallies throughout the province

What's new on the web?

Campaign rallies

BCTF members are participating in marches and rallies around the province to protest the actions of the Liberal government and to support public education. Many creative teachers have written campaign songs and have sent photos from the rallies, which we've posted on our web site. Working TV is providing webcasts of many of the events. Photos, webcasts, and song lyrics are all available on our campaign rallies page, www.bctf.ca/itsabouttime/rallies/.

Education finance

A comprehensive, adequate, and accountable education finance system is the cornerstone of a viable public education system. Bookmark our new education finance page, www.bctf.ca/education/EdFinance/ for the most recent information on education funding in the province.

The Imposition

The legislation that Gordon Campbell's Liberals imposed January 25, 2002, on 45,000 B.C. teachers has eliminated the very provisions that ensure quality education for children. Our Imposition page,

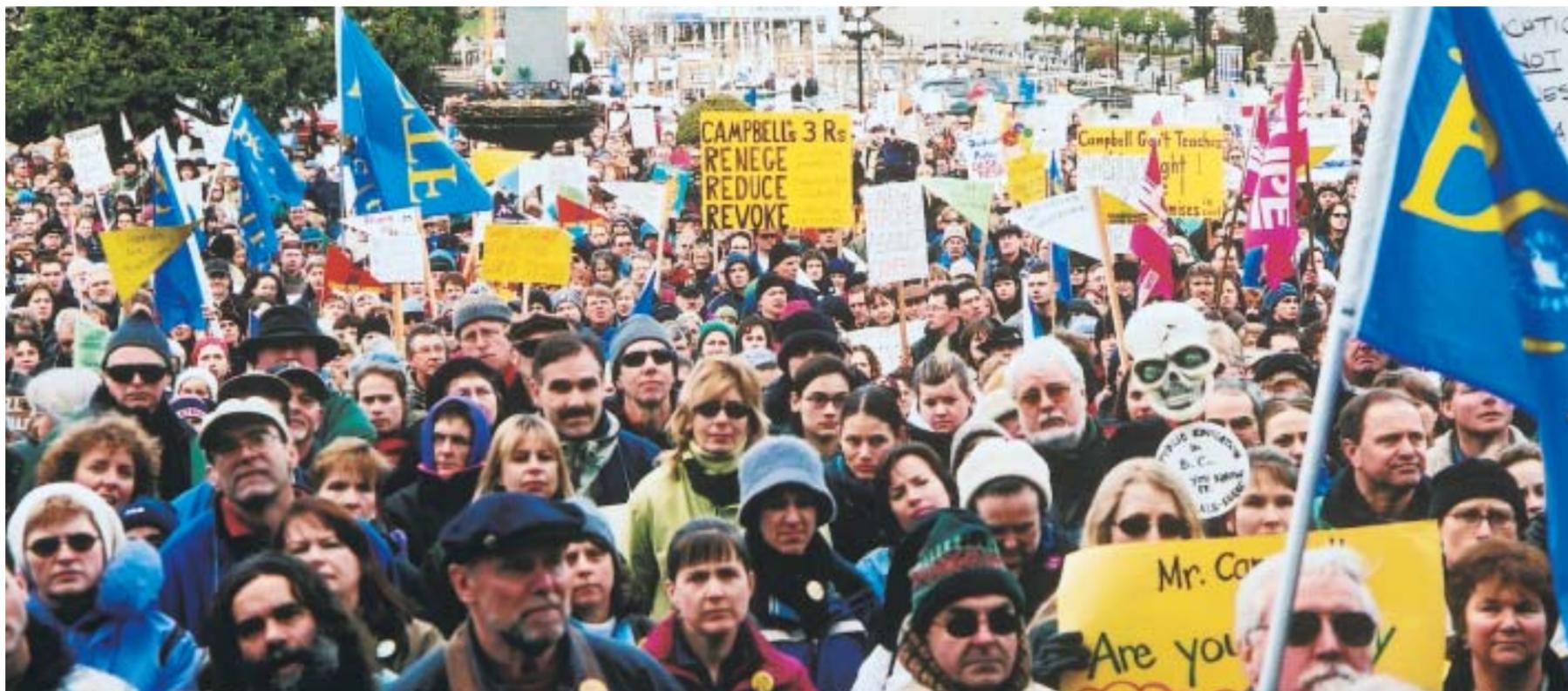


www.bctf.ca/bargain/agreements/imposition/ includes a summary of the legislation and links to organizations that are building the movement to oppose the government's direction.

Worklife of B.C. teachers

What are teachers' working lives like? Our worklife of British Columbia teachers' page, www.bctf.ca/education/worklife/ has the results from a major BCTF study of British Columbia teachers' experiences of working and learning conditions in and out of the classroom. "How I spent my summer vacation" is our most recent report.

— Diana Broome



7,500 RALLY IN VICTORIA

by Debra Swain

I realized as I approached Centennial Square, in the heart of Victoria, that it was going to be a special day. By 11:30 a.m. a crowd had already gathered. BCTF staff were busy setting up tables for sign making and leaflet distribution. The sound system was ready to go. The square was abuzz.

The sun shone on us the entire day. It reflected the mood of many of the teachers at the rally. We would not let the events of the weekend dampen our spirits.

As the square continued to fill with teachers, I realized this was a first for me. I have heard about the teachers' rally for pensions in the 1970s and the Solidarity rally in 1983. I was excited to be a part of this rally. I met many teachers, both young and not so young, who expressed the same emotion. It was important to feel the company of so many other teachers after listening to the news out of the legislature over the weekend. It was important to make our voices heard in opposition to the government's actions.

The rally gave us all an opportunity to speak out against the legislation that was pushed through in an unprecedented fashion over the weekend, legislation that will seriously affect our ability to provide

We need to work to change the legislation that has stripped our collective agreements of clauses we fought so hard to have included.

quality, equitable education for the students of British Columbia, legislation that stripped the ratios for learning assistance teachers, counsellors, ESL teachers, and teacher-librarians. When I tried to think about a school that does not include those teachers, I could not imagine how it would function. Many of the signs carried by teachers reflected

these thoughts. The slogan We didn't vote for that! was on many signs.

I spoke with many of our beginning teachers. They are facing careers with large classes and diminished support for students in those classes. Many of them have large student loans to repay. They will receive 7.5% over the next three years. They will have to teach for 12 years before they reach the top of the salary grid. Added to that is the general disrespect for teachers that the government showed in legislating a teachers' contract. I only hope the new teachers stay in the profession to work for better times.

TOCs fared even worse. They face three years with no salary increase. For our colleagues who earn the least, that is a blow. They face the same large classes and lack of support for

students as the rest of us. They will also be facing life at or below the poverty line. Excluding TOCs from the meager salary increase other teachers received is cruel.

Meeting and talking with teachers of all ages made the time speed by. At 1:00 p.m., the speeches started. People spoke eloquently about the need to remain united in the face of adversity, the need to work together to oppose the government's decision to legislate a settlement, the need to protest the blatant disregard for the collective-bargaining process.

We left Centennial Square for a march down Government Street to the Legislature. The crowd was huge. Leading the march was a group carrying a coffin, and Karen Harris, GVTA president, pushing a funeral

wreath. A number of teachers were dressed in black, mourning the loss of so many important aspects of our teaching life. A skeleton on stilts, dressed in a black tuxedo, walked with the funeral procession.

From my spot at the rear, I could not see the marchers at the front. The crowd filled the street for as far as I could see. I noticed the faces of the people we passed. They seemed to be supporting us with smiles and waves. I started to feel more optimistic about the support we have from the public.

As we approached the Legislature, I was amazed. I have been at many rallies here, but none as large as this one. BCTF flags were waving throughout the crowd. The steps of the Legislature were full, the front drive was full, and the

crowd filled the sidewalk and lawns. Once again, I felt proud to be a part of this group of teachers making their statement together.

Jinny Sims was the MC for the speeches. As the temperature dropped, the spirits of the crowd were kept warm by the messages the speakers gave. We heard anger directed at the government and its actions in legislating a settlement. We heard outrage at the removal of elements from the collective agreements that teachers had fought for over the years. And over and over, we heard the message that we are not alone.

This government is not just targeting teachers; it is targeting many other workers.

This government is not just targeting teachers; it is targeting many other workers. As Brian Bradley, a TOC from Victoria reminded us, this is not just a day of protest; it is the first day of protest.

At the end of the speeches, teachers left with a clear direction. We need to continue to oppose this government and its actions that limit the ability of teachers and others to negotiate fair collective agreements. We need to work to change the legislation that has stripped our collective agreements of clauses we fought so hard to have included. We need to lobby parents, grandparents, politicians, trustees, school district administrators, and others to work with us to change the legislation. And we must not give up.

I ended the day feeling grateful for all the teachers who had given up a day's pay, who had put their careers on the line to protect public education. The solidarity they showed was important particularly as we had heard Gordon Campbell say that only the union leadership was upset with the legislation. We showed him he was wrong.

Debra Swain is a teacher at Burnside Community School and a member of the Teacher Newsmagazine Advisory Board.



(Upper left) Victoria TOC Brian Bradley explains what the Liberal cuts to education mean to beginning teachers. (Bottom) David Chudnovsky responds to media.

PETER OWENS PHOTOS

January 28, 2002: A

Victoria: 7,500



PETER OWENS PHOTOS

*"...both [sub-locals] marched in -32° weather, bearing coffins with slogans condemning the government."
- McBride/Valemount*

Vancouver: 14,000

*"Wow, I never expected the solidarity—the anger. They should have seen our members today!"
- Armstrong*

ALEXANDRA PETERS PHOTOS



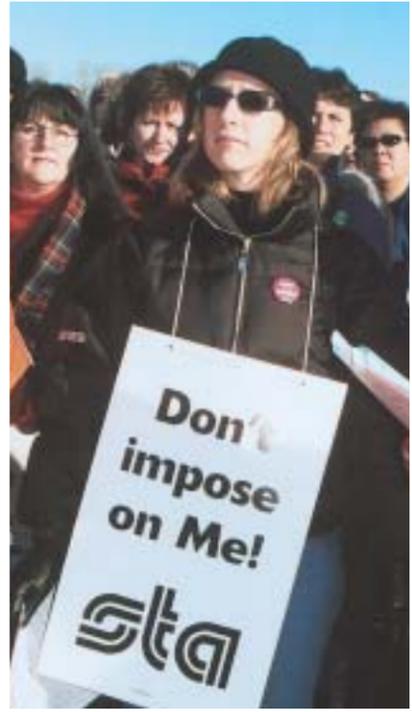
*"...900 teachers protested on the streets. Chilliwack has never seen a rally like it!"
- Chilliwack*

*"Well over 1,000 teachers held a moment of silence for 'The B.C. that was.' ...Over \$500 in soup and other groceries collected for the local food bank."
- Central Okanagan*

*"...teachers, three and four abreast stretched over four city blocks—it was an awesome sight."
- Cranbrook and Fernie*

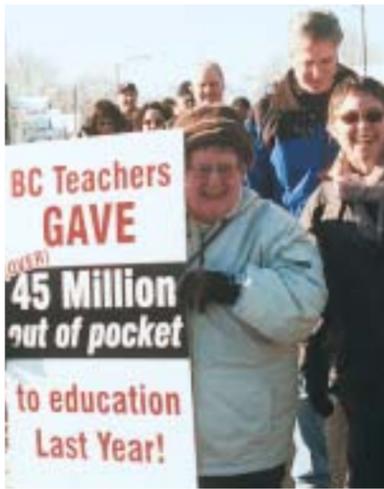


Surrey: 3,500



*"...over 250 teachers and other supporters briefly blocked Highway 99 on their march to the park ...school trustee Constance Rulka spoke to a hushed crowd. Spirits were very high."
- Howe Sound*

*"This is an uphill battle, but today we felt there just might be wheels on the wagon!"
- Vernon*



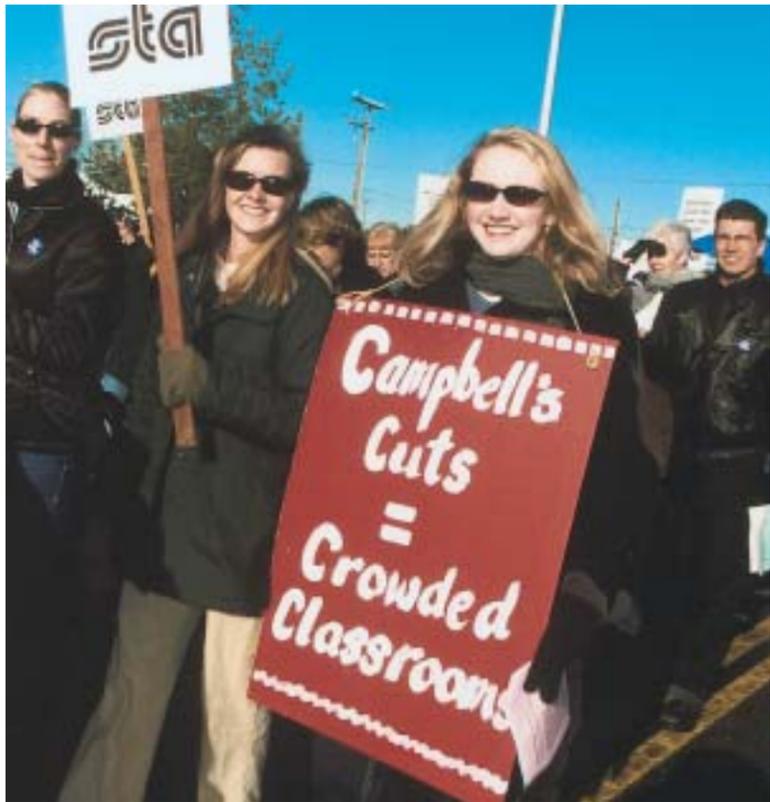
*"Our members travelled for 100 miles with banners and marched in the villages and communities with blaring horns, all in -18° weather!"
- Nisga'a*

A day of protest

MORE THAN
38,000 TEACHERS
RALLIED IN 40
COMMUNITIES

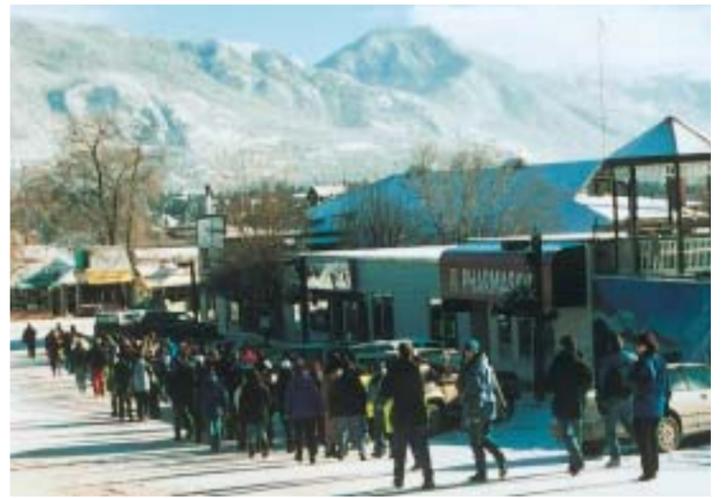
500

Windermere: 175



KAREN KILBRIDE PHOTOS

"...headline in local paper reads: 'Teachers swarm courthouse in protest—dozens brace the bitter cold in response to Campbell's end to labour dispute.' ...Princeton needed this day because like other locals, they have lost their collective agreements and our members are devastated."
— Princeton



CHRIS MCKIE PHOTOS



"Close to 100% of members showed up buoyant and determined to oppose legislation that will likely see Kimberly teachers face a salary reduction. This is an unprecedented level of solidarity in our local."
— Kimberley

"...three separate rallies in three communities and -37° weather be damned! For a cold day in hell, this was a pretty good day."
— Nechako

"...we set out 400 chairs, which were all filled and 200 to 250 more people standing."
— Maple Ridge

"...over 300 teachers at the rally."
— Peace River North



JEANETTE BONER PHOTOS

Prince George: 1,000



Campbell put on notice about college censure

The Canadian Association of University Teachers wrote to Premier Gordon Campbell in the wake of advising B.C. college presidents and board chairs of the possibility of censure should they use legislation to impose larger classes on faculty and students.

In its letter to Premier Campbell, the CAUT described Bill 28, the Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act, as a "pernicious attack on faculty, on the quality of education in the college system, and on the long-term relationship between faculty and college administrations."

Maureen Shaw, president of the 7,000 member College Institute Educators' Association of B.C., whose members' work will be affected, said that Premier Campbell has been put on notice that not only does Bill 28 have the potential to sour working relations for years, it also can irreparably damage the quality of education offered by B.C.'s colleges and institutes.

"CAUT's consideration of censure is just one of the many potential negative impacts this contract-gutting legislation could have on our institutions," said Shaw. "As both CIEA and the CAUT have told government, there will be intense competition across Canada and North America to find faculty to replace colleagues who have retired. Institutions that use this legislation and disrespect negotiated contracts may find it very difficult to compete in the job market."

On Monday, January 27, 2002, the CAUT wrote to BC college, university college, institute and agency presidents warning about the possibility of censure. Censure is a warning to faculty not to take positions at an institution, and discourages participation in any events or conferences hosted by the institution.

For more information, contact Roseanne Moran, CIEA Communications Representative or Maureen Shaw, President at 604-873-8988 or 604-788-4564.

School choice—Diverse opportunities for learning already exist

by Larry Kuehn

A recurrent theme from the minister of education and the government is the promotion of school choice. The implication is that there are few choices for students in the public schools of B.C. But that is not the case.

... "there are 2,782 different courses, beyond core courses, offered at the secondary level in B.C. public schools."

In the mid-1990s, the BCTF commissioned reports on 16 programs that were options for both elementary and secondary students. The report was not an inventory, but a sampling. Many, many more programs exist.

The choices can be seen as diverse opportunities for learning that reflect the diverse population in our public schools. They have been supported by teachers. In fact, many have been initiated by public school teachers as well as taught by them.

The B.C. School Trustees Association has identified the reality of already existing choice. The editor of the BCSTA's *Education Leader* said that "In researching the choice issue, I'm left with the impression we already have so much choice, we're blind to it." She identified that "there are 2,782 different courses, beyond core courses, offered at the secondary level in B.C. public schools."

Lynn Bosserri, a University of Calgary researcher on school choice, told the BCSTA publication that choice is self-limited: "Parents who choose tend to be middle- to upper-income and

well-educated."

Jane Gaskell, a UBC professor heading a study on school choice, told *Education Leader* that although the rationale often given for school choice is that achievement will be improved, such has not turned out to be the case. This, she says, is "because parents often do not choose schools on the basis of achievement, and schools often do not concentrate on improving their results in order to attract students." Spending on public relations, not education, is often the approach used to attract students, Gaskell says.

While the political claim that achievement will increase because of competition among programs turns out not to be the case, the public school system should offer diverse programs to reflect the diversity among students. Highlighting the existing choices that have been adopted for educational, not ideological reasons, is worthwhile.

Getting the message out about existing choices might include:

- updating the work done previously by the BCTF in telling

Highlighting the existing choices that have been adopted for educational, not ideological reasons, is worthwhile.

stories of a wide range of successful programs.

- setting up a database and asking members to provide information about the diversity in programs in their schools to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

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

Liberal policy has people dying for compassion

The B.C. Liberal government has capped the number of allowable treatments to those most in need of medical services. Such is the case of Sheila Baxter and her fiancé, Hardy. Hardy, 68, has Parkinson's disease and diabetes; he lives in a nursing home. Sheila, a disabled senior, provides Hardy with daily emotional support and is also dealing with cuts to her Pharmacare coverage. Prior to Gordon Campbell's cuts to health care, Hardy received the medical treatment he needed for a \$10 user fee per session. As a result of the health cuts, the couple, not unlike many other British Columbians, is in a crisis situation.

Their crisis demonstrates the Liberal government's focus on short-term savings at the expense of poor people's lives.

As of January 1, 2002, Hardy is eligible for only 10 treatments per year. The 10 treatments apply to any visit to a physiotherapist, podiatrist, chiropractor, naturopath, or massage therapist. Since Hardy is a diabetic and needs a podiatrist to cut his toenails for him once every six weeks, the podiatrist visits cost him 9 of his 10 allowable treatments. Now Hardy has only a single visit left for all other treatments this year.

The question for Sheila and Hardy is, Do you decide whether you should risk losing a leg because you're diabetic, or being so stiff because of Parkinson's disease that you can't get out of bed and will end up in extended care? Before Hardy started physiotherapy, he was



bent nearly in half and unable to walk. Having had frequent physiotherapy treatments, Hardy is now able to stand straight and even take a walk outside the nursing home.

Sheila's health is also compromised as she needs a motorized scooter for mobility and requires prescription drugs to control high blood pressure and other ailments. As of January 1, 2002, Sheila must pay \$10 per prescription, a cost she says she cannot afford. Sheila says, "If I don't take these blood pressure pills, then I'll get a stroke and then I'll be in a hospital."

If the cuts persist, Sheila knows that before long, Hardy will stiffen up like a board, because he will no longer receive the frequent physiotherapy treatment he needs. Sheila says, "This is horrible; these patients don't often get outside the door. The physiotherapist even had people walking outside, so they were not bedridden."

Not only will the cap on treatments take away from Hardy's quality of life, but also it may soon cost him his room in the nursing home.

When Hardy gets so stiff that he is unable to make it out of his wheelchair and into his bed, he will be transferred to an extended-care facility, where he will require around-the-clock treatment, a far more costly alternative.

Sheila and Hardy's situation is not isolated. Their crisis demonstrates the Liberal government's focus on short-term savings at the expense of poor people's

When people are forced to forgo preventative medicine, their care ends up costing the healthcare system more—in future hospitalizations and constant patient care.

lives. These short-sighted savings will cost Medicare much more money in the future, because poor people cannot afford the medical treatment they require. When people are forced to forgo preventative medicine, their care ends up costing the healthcare system more—in future hospitalizations and constant patient care. End Legislated Poverty demands a return of preventative medical treatments before more lives are lost and our health care costs spiral out of control.

Sheila Baxter can be reached for further comment at 604-681-6056. ELP representative, Nikki Maier, can be reached at 604-879-1209.

Health and safety

More teacher victories at the WCB

The Federation's support for injured teachers paid off big-time for two teachers recently. In one case, a tech education teacher was lifting and carrying oxygen and acetylene welding cylinders up some stairs and onto a welding machine. While doing so, he sustained an injury that was later diagnosed as an indirect hernia. The WCB adjudicator denied the claim on the grounds that no firm diagnosis (at the time) had been provided and the teacher did not file a claim or report an injury for 16 weeks and did not seek medical attention until 4 weeks after the incident. A typical teacher, he continued to work and provide the best services he could to his students, in spite of pain and stress. The WCB officer said she could not accept the claim because there had been no report of injury at the time of the incident, and she refused to change her ruling even after witnesses came forward. BCTF Health and Safety Officer George Taylor represented the teacher and won an appeal on his behalf that will result in the restoration of 70 sick days to the teacher

and payment of all healthcare benefits. One lesson learned here is the importance of reporting injuries immediately, no matter how minor they seem at the time.

In another case, a science teacher filed a claim for psychological trauma caused by working with a student who has Tourette's syndrome. The teacher suffered from headaches, abdominal chest spasms and cramps, irritability, sleeplessness, and fearfulness, among other symptoms. The persistent, unpredictable, and loud outbursts of the student constantly startled the teacher, leading to significant psychological trauma and physical symptoms. A psychiatrist diagnosed the teacher with post-traumatic stress disorder that was not caused by a single traumatic event but a persistent, aggravating event, which caused an accumulation of stress and fearfulness. The claims adjudicator denied the claim on the basis that the teacher's psychological condition and other physical symptoms were caused by the normal stress and strain of his work activities.

The Federation supported an appeal, and the employer argued the "normal stress" theory, but the appeal panel ruled that the outbursts of the student were traumas in the true sense. The panel preferred the evidence of the teacher over that of the employer. The panel was persuaded that the outbursts of the student with Tourette's was not a normal characteristic of the teacher's job.

The panel upheld the appeal, and the teacher's sick leave and healthcare costs were awarded. A cheque for approximately \$43,000 will be sent to the school board by the WCB.

These two cases illustrate the value of filing WCB claims and pursuing them. Money is saved for school districts, sick leave is restored to teachers, and therefore money is saved by the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan. In addition, the outcome of these cases will result in school boards' understanding the importance of prevention and the provision of support to teachers regarding physical strain or the integration of students with special needs.

—Lynne Sinclair, George Taylor

86th Annual General Meeting Agenda

Saturday, March 16 FIRST SESSION

7:00 p.m.
Welcome
Preliminaries
a. Adoption of chairpersons, scrutineers, tellers, Resolutions Committee
b. Adoption of agenda
c. Adoption of 2001 AGM Minutes
d. Stewardship Report on 2001 AGM
President's Report
Executive Committee
Leadership Report

8:30 p.m. – Timed Item
Greetings from outside groups

Continuation of Previous Items

9:30 p.m. – Timed Item
Election Statements from
Candidates for Table Officer
Positions
Call for Nominations

10:00 p.m. Adjourn

Sunday, March 17 SECOND SESSION

9:00 a.m.
Leadership Report

11:30 a.m.
Governance Review Report

12:30 p.m. – Lunch

THIRD SESSION

2:00 p.m.
Constitution and By-laws
Organization of the BCTF
AGM

Unfinished Business

4:00 p.m.
Report of the Executive Director,
Ken Novakowski

4:30 p.m.
Election Statements from
Candidates for
Member-at-Large Positions

Call for Nominations

Monday, March 18 FOURTH SESSION

9:00 a.m.
Bargaining
Public Affairs
Political Action
Labour Affairs

Unfinished Business

12:00 p.m.
College of Teachers' Report

12:30 p.m. – Lunch

FIFTH SESSION

2:00 p.m.
Doug Willard, President, Canadian
Teachers' Federation
Teachers on Call
Health and Welfare and
Safety of Teachers
Technology
Social Justice

Unfinished Business

5:25 p.m.
Final Call for Nomina

5:30 p.m. Adjourn

Tuesday, March 19 SIXTH SESSION

9:00 a.m.
Elections

Education Policy
Teacher Education
Teacher Competence
Education Finance

11:00 a.m.
Teacher Pensions

Unfinished Business

12:15 p.m.
Questions on Committee Reports

12:15 p.m. – Lunch

SEVENTH SESSION

2:00 p.m.
Finance
Report of the Financial Statements

Unfinished Business

Late Resolutions

New Resolutions

5:15 p.m.
Closing courtesy motion

5:30 p.m. Adjourn

Please note: Evening sessions will be scheduled if required.

Special Resolutions to the 2002 AGM

Recommendation 1

That By-Law 7.1 be replaced with the following:

There shall be a Judicial Council, which shall, except as provided in By-law 7.8, have the jurisdiction to consider and deal with complaints against members in respect of allegations that the member has:

- breached the Code of Ethics, or
- engaged in conduct harmful or prejudicial to the interests of the Federation.

Recommendation 2

By-Law 7.4 be replaced with the following:

The Screening Panel may dismiss a complaint or determine the process by which a complaint may be resolved in accordance with Federation Policy and Procedure.

Recommendation 3

That By-Law 7.5 be replaced with the following:

Where a complaint is referred to a Hearing Panel, and after the panel has considered the matter in accordance with

its rules and procedures, the panel shall be empowered to:

- dismiss the complaint; or
- where the member who is the subject of the complaint has been found in breach of the Code of Ethics or to have engaged in conduct harmful or prejudicial to the Federation's interests impose fines, levies, and other remedial or disciplinary measures commensurate with the gravity of the breach found by the Hearing Panel and in accordance with the Federation Policies and Procedures.

Recommendation 4

That By-Law 7.8 be replaced with the following:

Except as provided in By-law 7.1, and in accordance with the local's Constitution and By-laws, the executive committee of a local shall have the jurisdiction to consider a complaint that a member of that local has breached the local's constitution, By-laws or procedures or has acted in a manner harmful and prejudicial to the interests of the local, provided that the

same alleged breach has not been pursued at the provincial level. The executive committee of the local shall consider the complaint in accordance with the principles of natural justice and the duty of fairness, and after such consideration it may:

- dismiss the complaint, or
- where such a breach by the member who is the subject of the complaint is found:
 - determine appropriate publication of the finding of the breach.
 - impose a fine on the member.
 - suspend the right of the member to hold office in the local and/or to receive specified benefits of membership in the local for a period not exceeding two years, or impose a combination of the foregoing penalties, commensurate with the gravity of the breach found by the executive committee of the local and/or other penalties that are permitted pursuant to the local's constitution and By-laws but not inconsistent with By-law 7.

Recommendation 5

That By-Law 7.9 be replaced with the following:

A member found in breach pursuant to By-law 7.8 by the executive committee of a local shall, within 30 days of being notified of the decision, have the right to appeal to an Appeal Panel of the Judicial Council by notifying the chairperson of the Judicial Council and the president of the local in writing of such appeal. The Appeal Panel shall consider the appeal in the same manner as if it were an appeal from a Hearing Panel pursuant to By-law 7.6.

Recommendation 6

That By-Law 7.10 be replaced with the following:

A fine and/or levy imposed by the executive committee of a local or the Judicial Council pursuant to this By-law shall be a debt due to the local or the Federation as the case may be, and may be collected with costs of the suit in the name of the Federation or the local, as the

case may be, in any court of competent jurisdiction.

Recommendation 7

That By-law 8.2 be amended to change 2002 Annual General Meeting to 2003 Annual General Meeting.

Recommendation 22

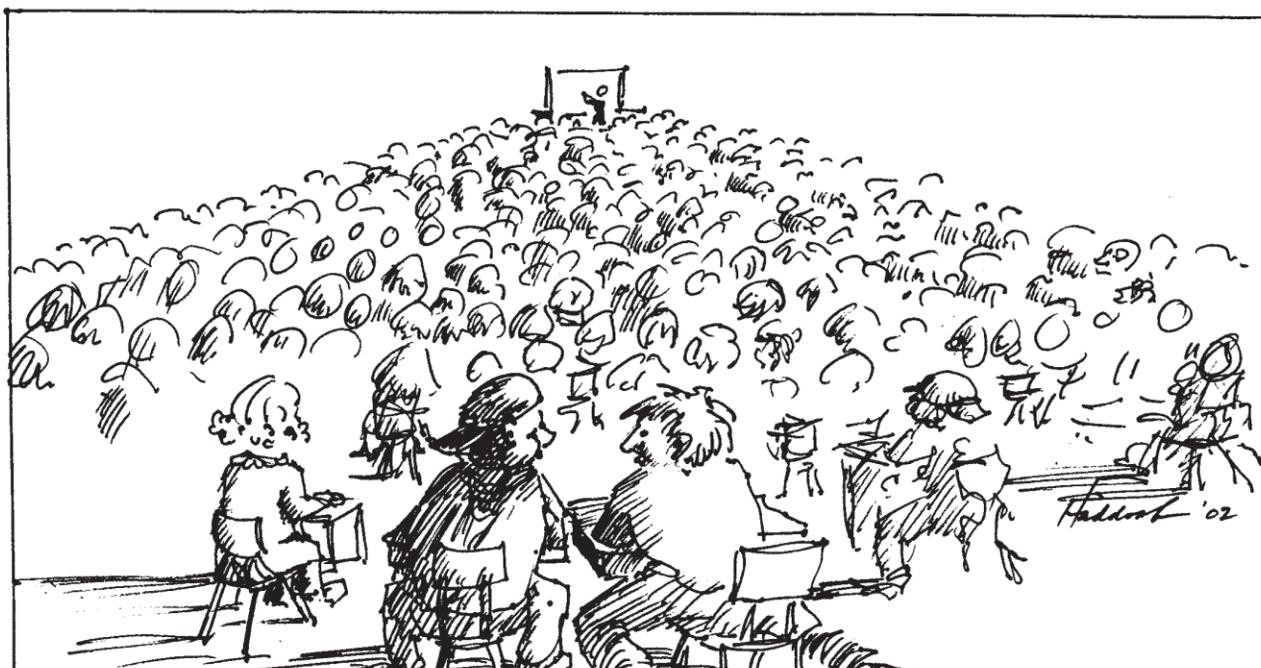
That Salary Indemnity Plan Regulation 18.2 be amended by adding "or as set out in a collective agreement with the Federation." following the word benefits at the end of Regulation 18.2.

Resolution 101—Burnaby Teachers' Association

That By-law 6.1 be amended by adding, "The Representative Assembly may amend, alter, delete, or replace existing Representative Assembly or Executive Committee policy or procedure statements." after the second sentence.

Resolution 102—Nicola Valley Teachers' Union

That the B.C. Teachers' Federation change its name to the B.C. Teachers' Union.



Do you think this is what they mean when they say, "Get a Liberal education."?

For President



Alice Rees

We now face the greatest threat to public education and our role in it, in our lifetime. The Liberals are on a mission to under fund public schools, destroy the collective voice of teachers and then, in the midst of the diminished capacity...sell us off to the highest bidder.

The Federation's task is clear. It must be positioned to firmly support the decisions teachers make in challenging this agenda. How can this be done? I believe that the BCTF executive's challenge is to establish sustainable and effective counter measures to the

government agenda. It must be creative, visible, and accessible to the membership. It must build upon traditional support and seek out non-traditional allies. Yet, it must also address a fiscal crisis, which will grow as the demographics of our membership move into a period of change. We must rationalize services and reinvigorate our networks as we pursue our quest. I will bring to the presidency strategic vision, a commitment to non-partisanship and 20 years of activism rooted in Professional Development, Social

Justice, and Bargaining.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF Executive (4 yrs.); Prov. Governance Review Ctte. (2 yrs.); CTF delegate (3 yrs.); Finance Ctte. (2 yrs.); Bargaining Structures Review; Staffing Review/Class Size Ctte. (1 yr.); Provincial Negotiation Team (2 yr.); Interim Ctte. on Provincial Bargaining (1 yr.); Task Force on Roles and Responsibilities (2 yrs); Teacher Ed Ctte. (4 yrs.); BCTF appointee to the BCCT External Review of Ed Programs (1 yr.); Staff secondment (0.5 yr.); Ed Policy Associate; Project

Teach; P.D. Associate for Year 2000. *Local:* COTA Executive (11 yrs.); President (6 yrs.); Vice President (3 yrs.); Local Bargaining Ctte. and Team member (6 yrs.); Social Justice Ctte.; Grievance Ctte.; Staff Rep (15 yrs.); PD Rep; Joint Ed Change Ctte.; Mentorship Ctte.; Pre-Service Beginning Teacher Ctte. (11 yrs.); *Teaching:* 27 years, Classroom, LA teacher, DL teacher. *Education:* B.Ed.; M.Ed.



Neil Worboys

This coming year is a critical time in our Federation. The government's callous attacks on public education have destroyed an honorable bargaining system. Its ruthless contract imposition has thrust our fight for public education to the forefront. We must show leadership through careful planning, resolute hearts, and unified actions that protect the rights of our members. Our plan must continue to involve and inform members at the school, local, and provincial level in order to develop ownership by all of us.

As we mourn the loss of hard-fought rights, we must support and encourage each other to continue our protests, to speak out, and to publicly insist that the needs of children be protected.

In addition, our strategy must broaden to involve others who share our concerns—parents, community groups, and members of other unions will forge alliances with us in our defense of public education when they understand the outcomes of frozen budgets, larger class sizes, and fewer services for special needs students.

With their support, I hope that together we can restore B.C.'s public education system to the level our students deserve.

A strong team player, I offer you experience, commitment, and proven leadership. I ask for your support.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF 1st Vice-President (2 yr.); BCTF Executive Member-at-Large (4); Provincial Negotiating team member; CTF Director (1); BCTF Bargaining Division Staff (4.5); North Coast Agreements/ Bargaining Co-ordinator (8); Provincial Agreements/

Bargaining Ctte. (8); Provincial Bargaining Ctte. Chair (4); AGM Delegate (24); Summer Conference Participant and Workshop Presenter (12); Bargaining Council Rep. for Local #80 (Kitimat); Alternate Bargaining Committee Member (Zone 19); LR or Alternate (9). *Local:* President (6); Bargaining Chair and Member (24); Staff Rep. (8); Grievance Ctte. (14); Personnel Ctte. Chair (8), Local Advocacy Committee (2); Interim Council member (5); Negotiator Interim Council (1). *Teaching:* 33 yrs. Secondary and Elementary. B.Sc. & Teacher Training (UBC)

For First Vice-President



Jinny Sims

We have faced unprecedented attacks on public education and our collective agreements. We held our first provincial strike vote. We withstood Campbell's essential services legislation. Teachers rallied in communities across this province. We are proud of standing up for our students and ourselves. Still, many challenges remain. Our task is more than protecting collective agreements. This government seems determined to destroy public education. We cannot and will not lose the quality public education system that

teachers and communities have built over decades.

Community outreach is a priority and a permanent feature of our work. We will work with parents, community groups, and labour to meet the needs of students, teachers and public education.

I am pleased to have been part of a strong leadership team who continuously informed and involved members, and made clear, principled decisions based on that input. We must remain strong, unified, and determined to defeat the attacks on our profession and

our social fabric.

Together we have developed a strategic plan to resist the government's anti-public education agenda. All members through locals and networks have played a significant role and must continue the work. Together we will win.

I commit my passion, energy, experience and proven leadership to continue advocating for teachers and students as your 1st VP.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF 2nd Vice-president (2 yr.); BCTF Executive member-at-large (1); CTF alternate (2); CTF delegate (2); Ministry for Children & Families (2); Coalition for

Public Education (2); Rehab Expansion (2); CUPE Liaison (1); Social Justice (2); PDAC (2), PSA/PSAC (2); Health & Safety (2); Income Security (2); Summer conference workshop presenter & facilitator; Advisory council of local presidents; intensive pension plan training; Bargaining training; AGM delegate (11); LR (5); Bargaining council rep (2). *Local:* Nanaimo DTA (12); President (3); 1st Vice-president (2); Bargaining cte. & team (7); Negotiating team (2 rounds); Grievance cte. (6); S/W member and chair (3); ProD cte. (2); Program Against Racism (2); Staff rep (10); Staff committee chair (5); member (15); Malaspina College partnership cte. (2); EAP advisory board (4); District resource allocation cte. (3); Co-ordinator for multicultural inner-city students (3); ESL advisory board; Facilitator for conflict resolution; Nanaimo Labour Council; Counsellors, Social Studies, and English PSAs. *Teaching:* 24 yrs., English, social studies, counsellor, social studies dept. head (3). *Education:* B.Ed, Uvic & Manchester, UK.

For Second Vice-President



Irene Lanzinger

This is a critical time for teachers and public education in British Columbia. We are justifiably angry at the outrageous attack by the Liberal government on our collective agreement and bargaining rights. We are united in our resolve to fight against legislation that will undermine public education and our ability to meet the needs of students.

The leaders of the BCTF must channel the anger of teachers into a positive force for change. We must preserve and build the unity we currently enjoy. We must

encourage and develop the new generation of leaders drawn in by the struggle to defend the rights of teachers and children. We must convince parents and the public that the BCTF is the most committed and credible voice for public education in this province.

We must continue the important work we do in areas such as professional development and social justice. The BCTF has a role to play in the larger struggle to create a more just, socially responsible global society.

The teachers of this province

need strong, articulate leaders who plan carefully and strategically both in the short and long term. I offer my complete commitment to the difficult work ahead of us.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Co-chief Negotiator Bargaining Team (2000-02), Advisory council of local presidents (3 yrs.), AGM delegate (8); Summer conference (6); Job action planning cte.; LR (1), (alternate) (5). *Local:* President (3); Vice-president (2); Member-at-large (2); Staff rep (2); Bargaining Ctte. (2); Status of Women (2). *Teaching:* Secondary (8 yrs.); Elementary (4). *Education:* B.Sc. (UBC), Teacher Training (UBC), M.Sc (SFU)

For Member at Large



Linda Burkholder

I am an independent and a democrat. I believe in democracy and I advocate for democracy. I believe in the importance of every member, therefore, I support strong locals. The members are the union. Only if every member truly does have a voice can the BCTF continue to represent teachers and be an advocate for them.

As a bargainer for many years, I believe in freely negotiated collective agreements. As a local president, I know the importance of perspective, patience, and creative problem solving. In these

interesting times, where our collective agreements have been stripped and our democratic rights trod underfoot, I think we may have to look at things from a different perspective.

Although I come from a small, northern local, I also believe we are a provincial union. While the needs of every local must be met whenever possible, we must also do everything we can to recognize and meet the needs of every teacher in the province. We must view everything from both perspectives.

The BCTF is a democratic

organization. I will work with you all to keep it that way. The BCTF exists to serve its teachers. I will always represent and serve the teachers of B.C. to the best of my ability.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* AGM delegate (13 yrs.); Participant at many Bargaining Conferences, Leadership Conferences and Summer Conferences. *Local:* PRSTA president (2.5 yrs.); Vice-president (5 yrs.); Bargaining chairperson and local chief negotiator (7 yrs.); member of Bargaining Team (12 yrs.). *Teaching:* Secondary classroom teacher (4 yrs.); elementary teacher-librarian and prep teacher (24 yrs.). *Education:* B.Sc.Ed. University of Texas at Austin, 1971; and ongoing.



John Chisamore

As an incumbent member of the BCTF Executive Committee and a long time teacher activist from the East Kootenays, I am putting my name forward again this year as a candidate for Member-at-Large.

This year has been a difficult year for teachers as we struggled to achieve a Collective Agreement at the bargaining table with our employer—only to have a Contract imposed by the government to settle the "dispute." The "imposition" affects the quality of education in B.C. drastically. What did teachers want? Better

working conditions for teachers, improved learning conditions for students and a respectable salary increase.

What did teachers get? Inferior working conditions for teachers, reduced learning conditions for students, and an unacceptable salary increase.

We must hold the government accountable for their actions. We need a long term strategy to undo the damage done to our education system. The executive must continue to listen to the membership while developing a

plan to improve our Public Education system.

At the 2002 AGM I seek your support to work on an Executive Committee that will be receptive to membership concerns, and be proactive in defending our important role in public education.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF EC Member-at-Large (1 yr.); LR (14 yrs.); AGM delegate (20 yrs.); Bargaining Council/Bargaining Committee, 1 round; Income Security Committee (6 yrs.); ACLP (4 yrs.); *Zone:* East Kootenay President (4 yrs.); East

Kootenay Vice President (3 yrs.); East Kootenay Sec-Treas (3 yrs.); Kootenay Zone Chairperson (1 yr.); *Local:* President (10 yrs.) (1981-82, 1983-85, 1995-2002); Bargaining Committee (17 yrs.); Negotiating Team, 3 rounds; Grievance Committee (14 yrs.); Information Technology Steering Committee (6 yrs.); *Teaching:* Physics/ Science/Computer Science/Math (21 yrs.) BC. Science/Math (2 yrs.) ON. *Education:* B.Sc., B.Ed.

For Member at Large



David Halme

Right here, right now, I am prepared to defend the quality and the structure of public education. Our actions as a Union depend on a strong Federation that offers both a defense of teachers' working conditions but also a defense of services offered to ensure the personal professional growth of every teacher. The future plans of the BCTF have to guarantee members quality service and sensible political direction with some sense of fiscal responsibility. I have demonstrated the ability to have a vision, develop a plan and

work in a persistent manner to achieve goals. Through dedicated work for more than 20 years, on the Provincial Specialist Association Council and the Professional Development Advisory Committee my participation in committee work has produced improvements in the opportunities and structures for personal growth of teachers throughout B.C. My voice has been a representative of teachers at almost every level of Federation business. My voice has always represented the collective advice of teachers

locally and provincially on issues of concern. My voice on the Federation Executive will work to guarantee the services that BCTF members expect from our Union. EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* PSAC (20 yrs.); PSACE (18); Gifted Ed PSA Exec (22); PDAC (10); PDAC South Van Island Zone Co-ord. (4); AGM delegate (10+ yrs.); ACLP (2); Adhoc Bargaining Committee Rep (3). *Local:* Lake Cowichan Teachers' Assoc. President (3); Vice President (10); Bargaining Chair

(1); Pro D Chair (15); Social Justice (2); LR (5); Various district curriculum committees. Ministry: Chemistry 11/12 Revision, Sp. Ed Resource Development, BCTF Rep Equiv. Working Group (3). *Teaching:* 30 years Gr. 3 to 12 Sc, Math, Gifted. (almost every curriculum area) *Education:* BSc (Notre Dame, Nelson), MEd (Gonzaga)



Murray Helmer

The events of the last few months have united and galvanized our membership to a degree not seen in our recent history. This unity is due in large part to the Federation's return to our core value and the members' common denominator: the well-being of the students in the classroom. In our resolve to restore educational provisions, we must maximize member involvement and this goal can be achieved by remaining true to these values. In the coming months and years, we may well face a tumultuous road of legislative interference and the

importance of membership solidarity in meeting these challenges cannot be overstated. Given the magnitude of the task that lies before us, we must recognize that the recruitment of advocates for our cause is imperative. Community outreach to solicit the support of parents, labour, and other organizations for our actions will be vital to the success of our initiatives. While all members should be seen as strong advocates for public education, our leaders will share an even greater responsibility. With your support, I will

continue to bring fresh and diverse perspectives to the Executive's decision-making processes and will be an ardent supporter of the directions ultimately chosen. EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Executive Committee Member-At-Large (1 yr.), AGM Delegate (6 yrs.), BCTF TOC Advisory Committee (4 yrs.), Social Justice Review Steering Committee, First Nations Education Steering Committee, BCTF Education Finance Workgroup. *Local:* President (Cariboo-Chilcotin) (7 yrs.), Vice President (1 yr.), Bargaining

Chair (2 yrs.), Communications Chair (1 yr.), CCTA Executive (11 yrs.), Union Rep (3 yrs.). *Teaching:* Intermediate level.



Jim Iker

We are the BCTF. Our strength and passion comes from every single one of us in the work we do each day in the classroom, in the Local and in the Federation. As a Member at Large I can put my 24 years of teaching, local leadership and provincial experience to work encouraging processes and structures that promote greater growth in member involvement, unity, and continued strong leadership at the provincial level. We need to stand strong and united within our BCTF and its locals to face down a government

that seeks to destroy public education, health care and our social system. We need to work with our allies in labour and the community to change government's destructive path. The continuation of and support for locals is more important than ever in our fight to protect public education, students' learning conditions and teachers' working conditions. Strong locals build a stronger BCTF. Members in the 10 locals who have had their collective agreements declared void need to know that they have our continued

support as they struggle to preserve their salary, benefits and working conditions. I look forward to talking with you at the AGM about all the issues. EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Bargaining Mobilization Committee Chair (1 yr.); Provincial Bargaining Team member (1st 2 rounds of Provincial Bargaining; GR/LR (12); AGM delegate (14); Local Presidents' Advisory Committee (2), Chair (1); BCTF Interim Bargaining Structures Committee; Legislative Advisory Committee/team; Staff

Rep Training; Summer Conference Participant (20). *Local:* President (10); Bargaining Chair (2); Chief Negotiator, Local Bargaining (all 3 rounds); Bargaining Committee WLC Chair (2); Staff rep. District Health & Safety Committee Rep (4); EAP District Committee (10). *Teaching:* 19 years (full and part time); K/2/3/4/6/7 Learning Assistance, Counselling, Special Ed; *Education:* BA McMaster; B. Ed. Dalhousie; Various Counselling Courses, U Vic.



Troy Marshall

Our focus must be the defense of our Federation and the public education system. As a professional union we must develop a balance between trade unionism and professional unionism to achieve our goals. The union activism needs to be combined with the professional sense of what is best for the child; the core of a teacher's soul. The BCTF must accommodate the drive of the union activist to effect change, with teachers whose wishes may be the same, but their means of action different. It is these teachers whose support for

the Union is less visible, but whose love and devotion to the profession are unquestionable. It is these teachers who are meeting with parents, going to meetings, doing the "work" and who have a direct effect on what happens in schools. It is through these teachers that we are often judged and often praised. We need to create a union activist in every teacher's heart, and an ambassador for public education in every classroom. We need to call upon the resources, programs, and expertise of the various arms of the

Federation and create new avenues for them to speak to all teachers. If elected, I put my energy into building a sustainable plan and ensuring its implementation. EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Social Justice Zonal Contact (2); Staff Rep Trainer (2); Local Representative (LR); Parent Workshop Facilitator; Bargaining Communicator; Health and Safety Zonal Rep; AGM Delegate (2); Executive Ctte. Member-at-Large candidate; Federation Leadership Institute (2); Summer Conference (2); ACLP

delegate (2). *Local:* CTA Executive Ctte. (5); First Vice-President (2); Staff Rep (2); Chair of Joint District Health and Safety Ctte. (2); Bargaining Team (2); Chair of Bargaining Ctte., Grievance Officer (2); Social Justice Ctte. (2); Education Policy and Planning Ctte. (3); Finance and Facilities Ctte. *Teaching:* Middle School teacher of Math, Science, and Technology Education (5)



Patrick Parkes

Schools perform political socialization, and are easily controlled politically. Schools in British Columbia articulate the agenda of U.S. imperialism, as suits the needs of Canadian governments that serve as management committees for the affairs of (mainly U.S.) corporations. To remedy this, teachers must take measures to expand their concerns beyond what seems to be immediate self-interest. I suggest the following eight strategies: 1. Given the current situation for not-for-profit education and social

welfare in B.C., co-operation with other social interest groups to create autonomous economies beyond the reach of the current capital regime and wage slavery. 2. Collectivization of schools. 3. Conversion of school parking lots into vegetable gardens. 4. Elimination of corporate sponsorship for schools. 5. Insistence upon minimum Canadian content (90%) for textbooks. 6. Creation of teacher exchange programs with a variety of countries—not just English-

speaking countries in the U.S. sphere of cultural influence. 7. Performance of school Remembrance Day ceremonies that educate students and teachers about the horrors of war and Canada's support for (mainly U.S.) aggression that has killed millions of people worldwide. 8. In all schools, the construction of teaching cafeterias that serve wholesome and delicious food. If you wish to discuss these matters with me, please e-mail patrik@moscowmail.com.

EXPERIENCE: Volunteer work with multicultural and human rights groups in Vancouver.



Kathryn Sihota

Never in the history of this incredible federation has it been as important to stand strong and united. We are entering into a time period in our history that may look bleak and discouraging to say the least. However, the only people who can ensure that this government's draconian legislation does not drag teachers into its depths are teachers! We have fought long and hard to attain the rights we have (had) and we will need to work tirelessly to get them back. Although it may feel futile at the moment, we are 45,000 strong and

we are armed with experience, tenacity and endurance. We've done it before and we can do it again! The most important aspect of this battle will be an Executive Committee that will listen carefully to the members it serves and ensure that those voices are heeded. It is essential that we stand together against outside forces and we will only do that with the greatest amount of input and advice from our members. Executive members who listen carefully and weigh all aspects of

every issue are crucial to the success of our mission. It would be an honour for me to join other dedicated activists to ensure that these goals are attained and that our BCTF continues to be the unwavering, democratic federation it is known to be.

EXPERIENCE: *Local:* Local president (4 yrs.); Bargaining chair (2 yrs.); Local representative (4 yrs.); Status of Women chair (3 yrs.); Staff Rep (8 yrs.); Secretary (5 yrs.); Vice President (2 yrs.); AGM Delegate (8 yrs.); BCTF Summer Conference (4 yrs.) *Teaching:* 17 years teaching experience in 2 locals, K-12.

Letter to parent advisory councils from a teacher

by Chris Bocking

I have been teaching at the elementary level in Saanich for 16 years. I have always been an active supporter of extra-curricular sports and activities, coaching indoor soccer, swimming, cross-country, and track and field. I have started chess clubs and even a Grade 5 band at one point.

Your president is wrong when she says that the BCPSEA proposals will result only in a reallocation of resources, not a reduction.

For the past few months, I have listened, with increasing frustration and anger, to your president repeat the BCPSEA line. Please listen to a real teacher, one who is in the "classroom" doing what he can for education.

When we are discussing these issues at union meetings, the items that get the most interest from teachers concern class size and support for needy students. Oh, we deserve a salary increase, and we should get one, but we know that if BCPSEA has its way, especially with the draconian concessions it is seeking, the students in our classes will suffer. They will suffer. Is that not clear?

Class-size language must be in our collective agreements.

Only teachers have, over the years, pushed for smaller class sizes. Administrators have never fought for them, and government certainly has not been interested.

We are speaking up for the children in our classes, and we feel intensely betrayed and upset that the provincial body that purports to speak for parents is not also speaking up for children. Your president is wrong when she says that the BCPSEA proposals will result only in a reallocation of resources, not a reduction.



We can't afford that kind of dangerous naiveté.

Unless we have strict limits in our collective agreement, we will have larger class sizes and lower district ratios for learning assistance teachers, counsellors, and teacher-librarians.

Our objectives are the same. We should be on the same side.

Teachers are angry. I can assure you that schools will most definitely not return to "normal" if legislation is passed that forces us to accept the regressive policies that BCPSEA would like to see in place. Please do the right thing and support the teachers in this dispute. Our objectives are the same. We should be on the same side.

Chris Bocking teaches at Keating Elementary School, Saanich.

The more things change...

by Peter Ruginis

I have been retired from teaching music in the public school system for about five years. I taught for 36 years and was considered by some "a master teacher." In all that time, not a whole lot has changed.

Early in my career, I began teaching in a new school district. At that time, I had five years experience, a bachelors' degree, was nearing completion of my masters' degree, and had completed two years of military service, with some 18 months in the war zone in Korea. During a summer break, in order to supplement my income, I got a job at Chrysler, and guess what? My beginning wage, with no experience, was more than I made as a teacher, not a whole lot more, mind you, but more. On top of that, Chrysler's medical plan was better.

I was discussing the latest and probably not the last crisis in education with a teaching friend who has a degree and 20 years experience. She bemoaned the fact that her husband, with a

secondary school diploma, working in the private sector, makes approximately what she makes. Some 40 years later, the more things change, the more they stay the same!

The people at Chrysler earn their money, and so does every working person out there. Everyone should make a decent wage and not have to go begging. If "our children are our greatest asset," then teachers should be paid accordingly. If "patients are our main concern," then nurses, doctors, and caregivers should be paid accordingly. Cut back on Pharmacare, and non-patients become patients again.

The bid for the winter Olympics will be paid for in large part with public funds. Look around at the many old, decrepit schools and portables that our kids attend.

Most students support B.C. teachers' actions because they see first hand what teachers do. As a teacher, I spent countless hours above and beyond the call of duty with extra-curricular activities. When I retired from

Surrey, I left behind an inventory of approximately \$60,000 in musical instruments and equipment, an inventory I accumulated for use by students whose parents could not afford to rent from traditional sources. I did it for the kids! I know many other teachers do the same. At that time, I thought—No, you (the public) can't possibly afford to pay me for the extra-curricular work that I did. But now, when I think of Tiger Woods getting \$2 million for just showing up for a golf tournament, I wonder.

If teaching is an essential service, what happens to parents/guardians who pull their kids out of school in the middle of the year for a vacation? Essential service or babysitting? Makes one wonder, doesn't it?

Teachers, take heart. It's not as bad as it used to be. Look what the politicians did to two of the greatest teachers who ever lived: Christ and Socrates.

Peter Ruginis is a retired music teacher, living in Langley.

A response to the balanced budget fixation

by Cheryl Fiske

I do not know you, but I am guessing that you were not raised by a single parent.

Perhaps if you were raised by a single mother who worked as hard as mine did, you would understand the difference between balancing a budget and destroying human spirit. If you were raised by a single mom, you would know that sometimes the books never balance. Sometimes you borrow from your phone bill so your child can take piano lessons.

Sometimes you max out your credit card because your child needs penicillin or lunch or a new pair of shoes. Sometimes you rotate the bills you pay from month to month to keep your child in diapers and groceries and other essentials. Sometimes you need to work two jobs to make ends meet because you still only make 60% of what a man makes, and you go to school at night so you can make things better for your family. You borrow money to

pay the tuition. If you were raised by such a parent, you might understand that balancing a budget is not simple accounting.

To balance a budget at all costs, especially when your budgeting strategies attack the weakest of society and put the elderly, the mentally challenged, and struggling families at risk, is unethical and inhumane. The cutbacks that the Liberals have implemented have hurt teachers, nurses, and the entire future of organized labour in this province, but even more despicable are the results:

- the danger my aged grandparents now face every time they have to get in and out of the shower because they are no longer eligible for home support.

- the extra stress felt by my mother who, after working two jobs, now must ensure that her parents are properly fed and bathed, their laundry done, their doctor appointments made, and all other daily tasks tended to.

- the frustration felt by parents because they no longer have support for their ADD/ADHD/FAS/schizophrenic/autistic/oppositional defiant child.

- the despair felt by women on social assistance who now must find work and costly childcare by the time their children are three years old or lose their welfare cheque.

- the teen parents attending secondary schools in this province who now may lose their funding for the very daycare that allows them to complete their education and become productive, contributing members of our society.

These cuts go beyond "balanced budget accounting"—slicing into the very fabric of our nation. Am I a socialist? Damn right. But, I am not whining—I am screaming in protest and defiance of this government and what it is doing to the people I love and the society I cherish.

Cheryl Fiske is a TOC in Central Okanagan.

Come on in—The water's fine

by Moira Mackenzie

Community support for public education is escalating. "Are you a teacher? You have my respect! Just keep telling it like it is!"

The day after our province-wide protest, when I was in a restaurant, an elderly gentleman having coffee overheard my conversation with the server, leapt up from his table, and raced over to say those words to me. He said he wasn't a teacher and wasn't connected to teachers in any way, but just needed to let me know that he agreed with our message and supported us in our struggle with the government.

I am not alone in seeing a sudden switch in public opinion; many colleagues are telling stories of spontaneous actions of support for teachers and our efforts to defend public education.

In my staff role as community-outreach contact, I can certainly testify to the fact that an increasing number of parents and concerned members of the public are making contact with the BCTF, asking for information and for ideas about what they can do to help. The number of calls and e-mails has gone up since the passage of Bills 27 and 28 and our Day of Protest. Support is building, and we now need to encourage every teacher to play a role in community mobilization, whether it is formally helping to organize forums and actions or informally talking up the issues with parents, friends, relatives, and neighbours.

At times in the fall, it was difficult to get the message out to the public. The focus, in large part, was on our bargaining

proposals, and sometimes we felt our voices were alone. But, now, as the government assault broadens to hit more and more people in B.C., there is a definite affiliation with what teachers have to say. The noise from communities in B.C. is growing louder, and we now have many echoes when we talk about the danger of this government's agenda. By drawing parallels with what is happening in healthcare, another area where the government promise of protection is wearing awfully thin, we can talk about the issues of programs and service cuts, instability, privatization, inequality of access, and dwindling resources. We can talk about the dangers of driving professionals away from the province when we are facing a looming shortage. We can speak of the importance of defending a quality public education system for all versus allowing a two-tiered education system with have and have-not students, schools, districts, or regions in our province.

People all around B.C. are coming together to defend their communities, with public education being a key component in their vision of a strong, healthy community. The tide is turning, and we need to be sure that we teachers, with our talent for communicating and organizing, play a key role in building the wave of opposition to the government's agenda. We know from polling that teachers are the most credible source of information about schools. Come on in; the water's fine.

Moira Mackenzie is an assistant director in the BCTF's Professional Development Division.

Une langue seconde : un outil indispensable pour notre siècle

L'automne dernier, à l'occasion des séances tenues sous l'égide du comité permanent de l'Éducation de la Colombie-Britannique, l'APPIPC, la BCLCA, la BCATML et le CPF ont présenté des mémoires dans lesquels ils revendiquaient l'importance d'offrir des programmes d'apprentissage de langue seconde à tous les élèves de la province. Que ce soit pour des raisons professionnelles, personnelles ou sociales, la connaissance d'une autre langue ne peut qu'enrichir la vie d'une personne. Certes, pouvoir s'exprimer avec confiance dans une autre langue ouvre la porte à un dialogue plus articulé et réfléchi avec son interlocuteur. Mais, de plus, l'apprentissage d'une autre langue et le contact avec sa culture contribue à développer une ouverture d'esprit et une tolérance culturelle, qualités qui ne peuvent qu'abonner l'entente et la collaboration que l'on souhaite promouvoir entre les divers peuples de notre planète.

Les organismes présentateurs ont, en outre, revendiqué l'implantation d'un programme de langue seconde obligatoire de la maternelle à la 12e, démontrant ainsi l'importance d'entreprendre un apprentissage linguistique en bas âge et de le poursuivre pendant plusieurs années. Ils ont recommandé fortement un appui provincial continu aux ententes fédérales-provinciales, la mise en place de bourses de perfectionnement pour le

personnel enseignant de français de base ainsi que l'embauche de moniteurs de langues.

Tous conscients de la pénurie d'enseignants qui se pointe à l'horizon, les organismes ont plaidé pour une augmentation du nombre de stagiaires dans les programmes de formation des maîtres et pour une campagne de publicité conjointe pour attirer les jeunes vers cette carrière. Sans concertation et action entre les partenaires en éducation, la pénurie d'enseignants en français langue première et seconde menacera l'accès aux programmes de langue et leur qualité.

Connaître plus d'une langue, c'est se pourvoir d'un passeport pour la vie. Aider nos jeunes à obtenir ce passeport est une responsabilité que nous, enseignants dans les programmes de langues, assumons avec conviction. Faut-il, toutefois, que toutes les conditions de succès soient en place!

- Paule Desgroseilliers

Synopsis

A number of PSAs and educational partners presented briefs to the Standing committee on Education in the fall emphasizing the need for compulsory second language training from Grades 1 to 12 and for proactive action with regards the anticipated teacher shortage in French first and second language education.

2001-02 Retirement planning seminars

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

Date	Location
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
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May 4, 2002	Victoria, Victoria Conference Centre

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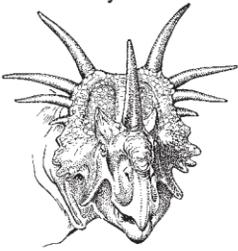
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PD CALENDAR

MARCH

1-2 Quesnel. Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association (THESA) Spring Conference, Discover Gold in the North Cariboo, Quesnel Secondary School. Contact Lynne Wright, h: 250-249-5755, s: 250-992-7007, f: 250-992-88476, wright@sd28.bc.ca.

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.

6 Vancouver. Living with Our Differences: Managing Conflict in a Culture of Violence, with Dr. Charles Ringma (Regent) and Sgt. Matt Logan (RCMP), Regent College, UBC. Contact Karen Wuest, 604-224-3245, 1-800-663-8664, conferences@regent-college.edu, www.regent-college.edu.

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: 250-578-7263, jmnedden@shaw.ca.

14-16 Victoria. Focus 2002: Believe in the Healing, Standing on Higher Ground: Soaring with Eagles, Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Barbara Smith, 250-598-1039, f: 250-598-2368, barbarasmith@focusconferences.com, www.focusconferences.com.

19-20 Cranbrook. Association of B.C. Drama Educators (ABCDE) Miniconference, choice of two of six workshops Friday; secondary curriculum Saturday. \$25 plus ABCDE membership. Contact Rod Osioy, 250-426-5241, f: 250-426-6673, studi-o@shaw.ca.

27 Richmond. BCPTA Spring Mini-Conference, Brain-Based Learning and How it Applies in the Classroom with Joy Paquin and Colleen Politano. Attendees must be or become BCPTA members. Fee: BCPTA members \$40 (To become a member add \$42/Student or TOC add \$21) Contact: Marianne McTavish, tel/fax 604-922-7267, memctavish@hotmail.com

MAY

4 Vancouver. Investigating Our Practices: Fifth Annual Conference on Teacher Research/ Researching Teaching Teachers, UBC. Contact: Gaalen Erickson, p: 604-822-2867, gaalen_erickson@ubc.ca, Tony Clarke, 604-822-2003, anthony.clarke@ubc.ca, or Judy Paley, 604-822-2733, judy.paley@ubc.ca, www.ocpe.educ.ubc.ca/wcs/c_investprac.html.

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.

10-11 Garibaldi Highlands. First part (Alpha) of B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education (PAGE) Conference, Let Peace Begin with Me: The Alpha and the Omega, Lions Easter Seals Camp Squamish Retreat. Contact Beatta Hittrich, 604-433-9765, Daniel Shiu, 604-588-4318, Cindy Barrett, 604-536-2131, Pummy Kaur, 604-536-8711.

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

24-26 Garibaldi Highlands. Second part (Omega) of B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education (PAGE) Conference, Let Peace Begin with Me: The Alpha and the Omega, Lions Easter Seals Camp Squamish Retreat. Contact Beatta Hittrich, 604-433-9765, Daniel Shiu, 604-588-4318, Cindy Barrett, 604-536-2131, Pummy Kaur, 604-536-8711.

24-26 Oliver. B.C. Technology Education Association (BCTEA) Technology Education Conference 2002, Technology Education—Making Positive Impressions, Southern Okanagan Secondary School. Contact Lindsay Langill, langillman@yahoo.com, Harold Lang, 250-498-4931, www.bctf.ca/BCTEA.

24-26 Vancouver. Canadian IRA (International Reading Association) Regional Literacy Conference, Hyatt Regency Hotel. Contact Shirley Choo, 1784 Pepperidge Court, Burnaby, BC V5A 1V9, 604-420-7967, f: 604-903-3651.

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

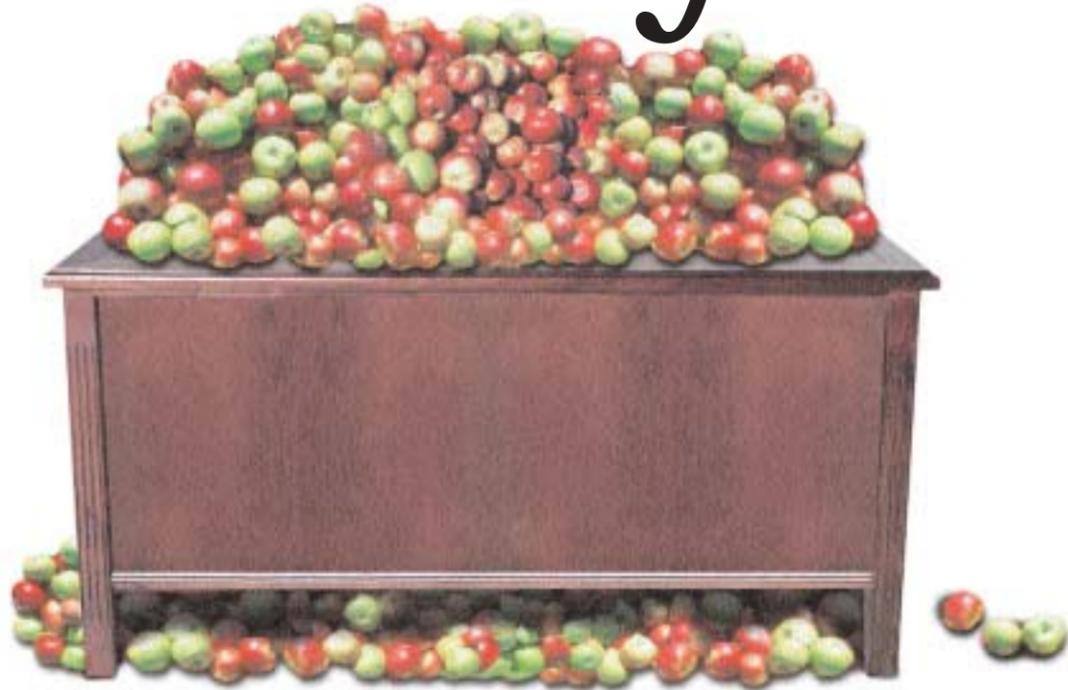
The BCTF's PD Calendar web site includes these links:

- Alberta Teachers' Association www.teachers.ab.ca/conference/index.html
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- ASCD-Conferences, www.ascd.org/
- Justice Institute Training, www.jibc.ca
- National School Conference Institute, www.nscinet.com
- National Staff Development Council NSDC-Conferences www.nsd.org/conference/
- Phi Delta Kappan (PDK) International Conferences www.pdkintl.org/profdev/cphome.htm
- Solution-Focused Counselling workshops by Nancy McConkey www.solutiontalk.ab.ca
- T.W. Branun & Associates www.twblearn.com/conferences.html
- UVic Continuing Studies in Education www.uvcs.uvic.ca/csiel

October PSA day 2002-03
October 25, 2002

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

We would like to say Thank you



Teachers for standing up for our kids

We are working people. Many of us are also parents. And we are strong supporters of quality public education.

We want B.C.'s teachers to know that they have our full support and heartfelt thanks for the strong stand they are taking to protect our children's education from government cuts.

The teachers are right.

School Boards and the Government are wrong to insist on cuts that will mean larger classes and fewer services for our children.

We stand with the teachers.

We're with you all the way.

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Canadian Labour Congress
CAW Canada
CUPE BC

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College Institute Educators' Association
Communication, Energy & Paperworkers Union
Graphic Communications International Union
Health Sciences Association of B.C.
Hospital Employees' Union (CUPE)
Hotel, Restaurant & Culinary Employees & Bartender's Union, Local 40

Industrial Wood & Allied Workers of Canada
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
International Longshore & Warehouse Union Canada
Marine Workers and Boilermakers Industrial Union, Local 1
Public Service Alliance of Canada Service Employees International Union, Local 244

Telecommunications Workers Union
The Office & Professional Employees' International Union, Local 378
The Victoria-Vancouver Island Newspaper Guild, Local 30223
United Steelworkers, District 3
United Transportation Union
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