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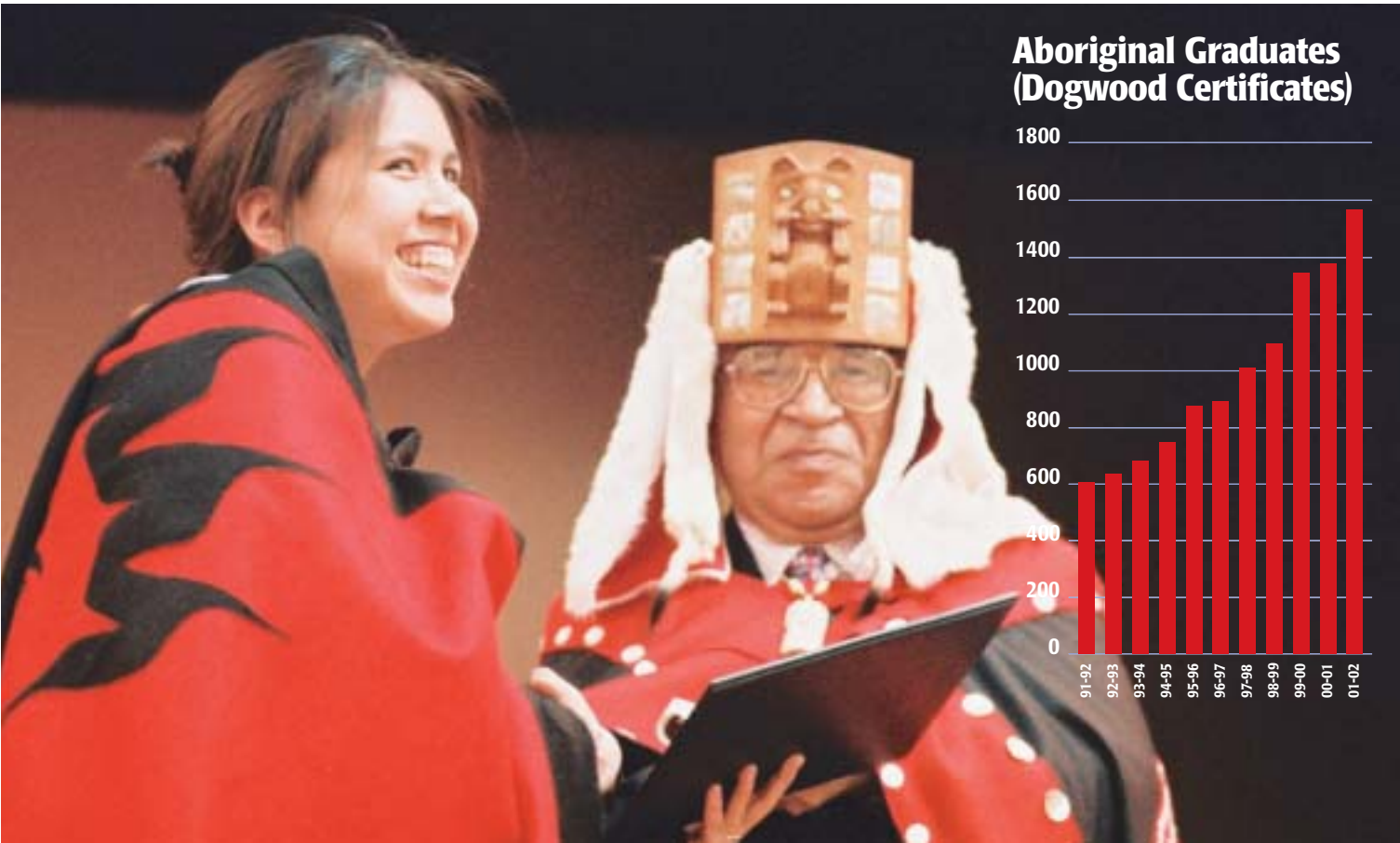
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# Teacher

## Co-operation, not ranking, improves learning



Pride of achievement is reflected in the face of Charity Peal as she receives her BA diploma from Jacob McKay, chair of the Wilp Wilxo'oskuhl Nisga'a. Now a teacher at Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School, Charity is part of the growing trend of Aboriginal students who are successfully graduating from high school and pursuing post-secondary education.

by Pat Clarke

The BCTF recently received a friendly invitation from the Fraser Institute to attend the unveiling of their latest inquiry on the state of the province's schools. This one is entitled "Report Card on Aboriginal Education in British Columbia." The invitation states that "on every indicator of academic performance at both elementary and secondary levels the results are the same—Aboriginal student performance at even the highest ranked schools is barely average." It goes on to claim there is, however, considerable variation in the levels of academic success enjoyed by Aboriginal students, and this indicates that there are schools where these students do achieve well. All we have to do is find out what they do in these successful programs or schools and replicate it.

The approach the FI is using is quite familiar to B.C. teachers. It is the research equivalent of the big-lie strategy in public relations—repeat often enough, and belief begins to set in. The FI has for many years perpetrated the notion that data obtained from test scores, either the FSA at the elementary school level or Grade 12 exams in secondary schools, can give us a reliable indication of how schools are doing. They will be doing the same in their "report card" on Aboriginal education. That is,

doing a province-wide comparison of Aboriginal education entirely focussed on student achievement on paper and pencil tests. As a means of making judgments about the adequacy of school programs in general, this Victorian-era bromide for obtaining better results is simplistic and dangerous. For Aboriginal education, it is downright nasty and potentially disastrous.

As always, the FI ignores the context. We know very well that the leading indicators of success for students, such as the socio-

We have seen the number of Aboriginal students who obtain Dogwood certificates almost double in five years.

economic circumstances they come from, are the primary determinants of how well they will do in school. For Aboriginal students, the consideration of these leading indicators is essential in planning for their success. The problem is that the reliance on results provided by test scores as a primary source of information diverts attention from root causes and focusses only on measurable outcomes. We know that an obsession with counting tends to focus our attention only on what is counted. For students who come

to school with a complex array of issues from poverty to cultural dislocation, factory-model approaches to learning are too often exactly the wrong thing to do. A lock-step devotion to testing for example, is a good way to keep Aboriginal students away from schools, not in them.

After many years of neglect and false starts, we have only recently started to turn the tide in Aboriginal education. We have seen the number of Aboriginal students who obtain Dogwood certificates almost double in five years. There are still far too many who are not succeeding in school, but the FI's claim that the school system is failing, is a convenient overstatement that ignores some significant progress. That progress has begun mainly because we are paying more attention to the learning context for Aboriginal students. We are slowly making public schools more welcoming for Aboriginal students. We know that building a public school system that works for Aboriginal children requires an enormous and co-operative community effort. We know it requires resources dedicated to meeting the particular needs of these children, and programs that are sensitive to cultural and social circumstances. The BCTF has been trying to assist that development through our work with Aboriginal educators, a workshop program, and resource development

specifically for Aboriginal teachers and learners.

Making judgments about how well Aboriginal students are doing, based on standardized test results, doesn't help. It does the opposite. A large-scale standardized testing program is nothing more than an expensive goose chase that drains resources from what we know

We know that building a public school system that works for Aboriginal children requires an enormous and co-operative community effort.

really helps students succeed—smaller classes, relevant learning resources, learning assistance, and timely counselling. These are all features of a public school system that is devoted to success for every child. But the Fraser Institute evidently doesn't have that as a priority. Once again, their mission is to undermine public confidence in public services and open the door to their friends and fellow travellers in the private sector looking to make a buck.

Pat Clarke is the director of the BCTF's Professional and Social Issues Division.



## President's message



Neil Worboys

Since our last edition, B.C. teachers have moved forward together, welcoming important change in government policy on the college issue and marking a victory in the Supreme Court on contract stripping.

It was December 10, 2003—International Human Rights Day, appropriately enough—when Christy Clark announced that she would restore democratic governance to the B.C. College of Teachers. Outstanding!

On January 22, 2004, former arbitrator Eric Rice's over-zealous stripping of our collective agreement was overturned. Supreme Court Justice Duncan Shaw ruled: "In light of the fundamental nature of the errors of law, the determination of the arbitrator must be quashed." Bravo!

However, at press time the College of Political Appointees remains in office and the B.C. Liberals have not yet decided whether to appeal Shaw's ruling or appoint yet another arbitrator, the fifth. These are significant decisions facing the new Minister of Education, Tom Christensen.

I look forward to working with Christensen on these and many other issues. To his credit, he made a point of calling both the teachers' and trustees' organizations on his first day in office. He has already met with Prince George teachers. I was heartened to learn that he voted against his own government's legislation to impose the two-year time limit on welfare benefits.

As someone who has taken political action on a firm principle, I expect Christensen will understand teachers' principled action to defend our public education system.

The true measure of the new minister will be new policies, not just a new face on the education scene. What remains constant, no matter who sits in the minister's office, is the commitment of teachers province-wide to advocating on behalf of our students. We will continue building upon our strengths, and striving to improve learning conditions for our students and working conditions for our members.

*Neil*

## Homecoming

This year Revelstoke will mark 100 years of secondary school education with a special celebration for all past students, teachers, administration, and non-teaching staff: Homecoming—July 23, 24, & 25, 2004.

The homecoming committee is trying to locate/notify as many retired/former teachers as we possibly can to help us celebrate.

Write Revelstoke Homecoming 2004, Box 690, Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0, or fax 250-837-7164, Attention: Brenda, or e-mail [rev\\_homecoming@sdl19.bc.ca](mailto:rev_homecoming@sdl19.bc.ca).

## Homeschooling has dark side

On your readers write page (Nov./Dec. 2003, *Teacher*), Linda Clement painted my letter on homeschooling as "half-baked and uninformed opinion" before expounding on the virtues of removing children from schools. Craig Bresett wrote in further repudiation that "[homeschooled] children are not subjected to anything that is detrimental to their development." I concede that homeschooling works well for some kids in some situations, in addition to the new imperative of saving money for school authorities. Yet the two young boys I described in my letter who build houses all day long with their father, including the house next door to mine, are clearly victims, as are so many children excluded from the expertise, social interaction, and breadth of activity of a school. In a recent discussion with Graeme Moore, a long-time child advocate and member of the provincial government's Employment Standards Branch, I learned of the Lower Mainland children whose parents keep them at home to help sew and trim threads for their low-paying employers in the garment industry. I contended in my letter that homeschooling permits abuse and exploitation of some children. I think Clement and Bresett do a disservice to them by ridiculing inquiry into the dark side of homeschooling.

Jim McMurtry  
Surrey

## We should be sharing not exporting

Before B.C. school boards start opening up private, for-profit schools overseas, we'd better ask ourselves some hard questions.

What about the contradiction in values between our commitment to a free public education system for our children and encouraging and profiting from an elite system that few can afford in another country? What will the attitude of the majority of the people in those countries be to our incursions into their cultures? What is the relevance, to say nothing of the educational integrity, of teaching the B.C. curriculum in English, geography, law, etc., to students in countries with thousands of years of history and civilization of their own to

learn from? Have proper risk assessments of such business ventures been done, and are school boards prepared to deal with potential losses?

Certainly we should do everything we can to build respectful and equitable relationships with communities, educators, schools, and students in the Pacific Rim. That could include collaborating on curriculum development, teacher training, twin school projects, cross-cultural educational research, and many other initiatives that build real partnership rather than replicate colonial relationships.

School boards do no one a favour when they respond to underfunding by radically altering their mandate from that of providing a service to our community, to that of selling a commodity on the international market.

Adrienne Montani  
Vancouver school trustee

## Ethical fundraising

No doubt about it, neoliberalism is affecting our schools, especially when it comes to funding. Coke and Pepsi and other junk-food professionals have targeted our underfunded schools as a perfect niche for their product. And given what is at stake, few wish to engage in dialogue on the paradoxical situation that schools find themselves in: How can we encourage sports and health while promoting unhealthy eating habits?

At Kitsilano Secondary School, a group of teachers have decided to generate revenue without compromising ourselves. We sell fair-trade coffee. Same game, fairer rules. We have come up with a simple system that does not put a burden on teachers' time, but offers high return to cover the costs of extra-curricular programs.

Our supplier, Café Etico, is affiliated with CoDevelopment Canada, a partner of the BCTF. Codev works with Central American organizations to promote human dignity, justice, and democracy. Every pound of beans that Café Etico sells is then invested in health and education. More important, it gives people the dignity and pride that was for so long taken away from them by unscrupulous landlords.

Anyone interested in promoting ethical fundraising in their school can contact me for more information [raoul\\_1948@yahoo.ca](mailto:raoul_1948@yahoo.ca).

Yvon Raoul  
Vancouver

## Teacher running for nomination

"It is better to light a candle than to curse the dark." — Emerson. I am seeking the NDP nomination in a Surrey riding for this spring's federal election, instead of cursing the state of our education under the current government.

I live mainly by Gandhian principles. I was educated in India, England, U.S.A., Canada, and Australia. I have taught K-12 and

adults in four countries, and been socially active in even more. I was asked to leave Australia because I was "...inciting self-esteem in the Aborigines..." I have received awards and nomination for my educational and social-justice work. Currently I am president of the B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education (PAGE PSA), and am an international speaker as director of the non-profit Global Wellness Center.

It is now time for me to take my passion for justice, and life experience, into a larger arena and use it to positively affect education, healthcare, and other social services—all the services that make Canada uniquely desirable. The values that we in the BCTF hold so dear are also dear to all our affiliates in the B.C. Federation of Labour and to the NDP. We want to preserve the best of Canada and cultivate the new that is good for the people of Canada. I have the courage of five mother tigers, and tremendous moral stamina to use any powers granted me to reinstate priority to that which is dear to us as teachers, as parents, as workers, and as citizens of my chosen country.

After all, if I can raise three children on my own for 18 years, since seven months pregnant with the third, teach, study, and be an activist, then surely helping to serve an entire country will be a piece of cake for me. I need your support to get to there. I won't let you down.

Pummy Kaur  
Surrey

## Check options before retiring

I'd like to let our members know the importance of investigating short- or long-term sick benefits.

I had a heart-valve operation in April 1984 that required blood transfusions. I returned to teaching in September of that year, but after two weeks on the job, I found it very stressful and went on short-term disability for the rest of the 1984-85 term. I completed the full term 1985-86 but found it very tiring and since I was approaching 55 years of age, I assumed it might be my age and retired in June of that term. I had completed 23 years of service. It is also very important to research all of the implications of retirement before you make a decision. The school district was offering an early-retirement incentive, so I decided to retire.

I found out in the early 1990s that I had contracted Hepatitis C from the blood transfusion that was given to me during the heart operation. Today we know that one of the effects of this disease is feeling tired all the time. That was the reason I gave up teaching in 1986. It was not my age but the effects of the disease that made me retire. I should have elected to go on long-term disability instead of formally retiring from the profession. But who knew then what the disease could do? The federal government denies knowing that the blood was tainted and did

not start testing for the virus until 1986.

So instead of 33 years of service, I retired at 23 years of service. What a difference it makes in my pension. Last month, my pension netted me \$50 after medical and Retired Teachers' Association dues were deducted. My monthly teachers' pension is \$200.

The purpose of this letter is to let our members know how important it is to make the right choices when you are sick. With the information I know now about this disease, my choices would have been quite different. The government gave me this disease, which is incurable, through its handling of blood products. My worst days are ahead of me with no compensation.

Doreen Stalker  
Smithers

## Public education in B.C. and the world?

Who are Gordon Campbell's B.C. Liberals trying to kid with next month's "international" conference on education in Victoria carrying the pretentious title *Public Education in B.C. and the World*?

Certainly not the parents, teachers, support staff, principals and trustees across this province who see the following events unfolding in their varied school communities:

- the massive overloading and acceleration of B.C.'s curricula without accompanying support.
- the chronic underfunding of our public schools with more devastating cuts to come in a matter of weeks.
- the shutting down of 92 schools in 42 school districts;
- the ongoing and increasing fundraising activities by parents to provide basic textbooks, supplies, and resources.
- the impending shredding of the education/social services safety net for thousands of B.C.'s most vulnerable children forcing some school boards to run lotteries to feed hungry kids.

We invite the world to showcase, what Victoria pompously calls, "innovation with an international leading-edge research focus" but will we give them the straight goods on what is really happening in B.C. schools? Don't bet on it.

Noel Herron  
School Trustee

## Retired teachers

Four members from Nisga'a Teachers' Union retired in 2003 and their names did not appear in the Nov./Dec. 2003 issue of *Teacher*. They are:

Peter Cross  
Dawn Germyn  
Ravi Gill  
Jackie Santa

## General Provincial Election

May 17, 2005



# Teacher

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## College elections should be held now

**T**he B.C. Teachers' Federation Representative Assembly January 23-24, 2004, decided to intensify resistance to Bill 51, the Liberals' takeover of the College of Teachers.

The representatives expressed outrage at Education Minister Christy Clark's refusal to meet with the BCTF to resolve the dispute and at her political appointees' aggressive pursuit of massive changes to the college by-laws.

On December 10, 2003, Clark said that she was prepared to restore democratic governance to the college council. The BCTF acknowledged her change of heart with thanks.

*"Democracy delayed is not democracy at all."*

However, since then, the minister made it clear that she would keep her political appointees in place until they completed her changes.

"Democracy delayed is not democracy at all," noted Neil Worboys.

In what teachers see as a deliberately provocative move, the appointed councillors gave notice of motion to make sweeping amendments to college by-laws. They did so on the very day the Representative Assembly was to vote on when to remit the approximately \$2 million held in the BCTF Democratic College Fund on behalf of the thousands of teachers who boycotted their annual fee in protest.

"We were shocked to see this appointed college give notice of

motion to change about 200 pages of by-laws," Worboys said.

*"We were shocked to see this appointed college give notice of motion to change about 200 pages of by-laws."*

As a consequence of the appointed council's aggressive pursuit of the minister's goals, the BCTF Representative Assembly passed the following motions:

1. That the government act on the commitment the minister made in the December 10, 2003, open cabinet meeting and dismiss the politically appointed council and hold elections for a democratic college.
2. That teachers vote on remitting the funds now in the Democratic College Fund to the College of Teachers when:
  - a democratically elected council is in place;
  - there is a guarantee that by-law changes made by the political appointees not come into effect until ratified by the democratically elected council; and
  - the requirement to report on college members is amended to be similar to those pertaining to other professional bodies.

The new minister of education has agreed to meet with representatives of the BCTF to discuss our concerns about the college and other problems faced by teachers and students.

## Who's who on interim council

**T**he transitional council, with all 19 members hand-picked by former Education Minister

Christy Clark, is a college of political appointees—not a college of professionals.

Ten are management appointees (principals, post-secondary administrators, superintendents or retired superintendents), three are parents, two are small business people, one is a lifelong NPA/Liberal politician, and two are teachers.

**Catherine Abraham:** North Vancouver parent

**Betty Boulton:** Retired assistant superintendent from Coquitlam

**Louise Burgart:** Retired superintendent from Penticton

**Stu Dale:** Retired principal from Kelowna and former president of the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association. The BCPVA has opposed the right of teachers to negotiate learning conditions.

**Deborah DeRose:** Principal

**Tim Dunford:** Saanich parent

**Barré Eyre:** Retired principal from Fort St. John

**Pirpal Gill:** Retired Saskatchewan teacher

**Mike Grant:** Malaspina University College, dean of education

**Tarry Grieve:** Retired superintendent, chair of the council who failed to get elected when he ran for college council.

**Alex Holm:** Retired assistant superintendent and member of Helen Raham's Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education. SAE was formed following the failure of Teachers for Association. TFA and SAE have opposed teachers having the right to negotiate learning conditions.

**Monty Jang:** Chinese Cultural Centre volunteer

**Phillip Milligan:** Delta teacher-librarian

**Judy Morgan:** Retired superintendent from Smithers

**Dwight Moodie:** Former private Christian school principal

**Mary Jo O'Keefe:** Chair of Vernon School Board

**George Puil:** Retired teacher and long-time Vancouver NPA city councillor. He was defeated in civic elections of November 2002, six months prior to being appointed by Christy Clark.

**Carl Ratsoy:** Victoria teacher

**Brenda Turner:** Castlegar parent

*Also appointed to the College Council was Bev Hosker, a Prince George parent. Ms. Hosker died in a tragic automobile accident en route to the council's summer meeting at Whistler.*

## Education for sustainable communities



**E**ducation isn't just what we learn. It's how we learn, where we learn, and from whom we learn.

Increasingly in B.C., First Nations children are learning in the context of their history and culture and, not surprisingly, they're doing better in school.

Between 1991 and 2000, the number of B.C. Aboriginal students completing high school more than doubled. Some of that is due to population growth, but it's also related to two key trends.

First, as they work to build sustainable communities, First Nations are taking control of their children's education. Second, with their input, the broader public system is becoming more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal students—supported by partnerships such as the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), which brings together the federal and B.C. governments with First Nations parents and communities.

As you'll see, these efforts are doing more than keeping language and culture alive. They're opening doors to new opportunities for children, families, communities, and the province as a whole.

To find out more about FNESC and its work in creating opportunity for First Nations involvement in education, visit [www.fnesc.bc.ca](http://www.fnesc.bc.ca).



(top) Darrien Edwards, of Penelakut Tribe, attends Kuper Island Elementary School, near Chemasius. (above) Teacher Joan Jones and her students at the school.

## LOOKING BACK

### 70 years ago

This is an age of slogans. A catch phrase is presumably more effective than logic. One of the most popular of such slogans is "Balance the Budget." Obviously the principle of balancing the budget, or living within our income, is simple and fundamentally sound, but as is the case with many such principles, its practical application is not necessarily either simple or fundamentally sound.

In the City of Vancouver the budget was balanced only because the teachers agreed to teach without salary during the month of December. The point is that the teachers balanced the budget by giving up their undoubted rights under their salary agreements.

January 1934, *The BC Teacher*

### 50 years ago

Merit rating! Pay the teachers by the excellence of their work. Let's pay the best what they are worth. We want

to give the teachers a monetary incentive to improvement.

Mr. Cooper examined research reports from nine school systems and discovered that merit ratings: undermine teacher morale, attack teacher integrity, stifle teacher initiative, encourage partisanship and politics within the school, increase the insecurity of teaching, divide teachers, relegate teachers to becoming items of debits or credits on principals' registers, and are designed to balance school budgets by granting fewer and smaller increments.

February 1954, *The BC Teacher*

### 30 years ago

Can you imagine a school day beginning and ending with teachers and students doing nothing except sitting with eyes closed for 15-20 minutes? It may sound fanciful and impractical, but if a simple system of meditation were adopted by the schools, the results would be

anything but impractical. The Science of Creative Intelligence is the theoretical aspect of the technique of Transcendental Meditation (TM). Both SCI and TM have, I believe, much to contribute to our educational systems.

January 1974, *The BC Teacher*

### 10 years ago

The face of the employer on the other side of our teacher bargaining table is changing. Government passed Bill 78—the *Public Sector Employers' Act*—in July 1993 to ensure that not school boards, but the provincial cabinet itself, has the main say in teacher collective agreements. Bill 78 limits even more the autonomy of the local school boards we face. It also opens the way for boards or government to establish provincial or regional employer structures.

January/February 1994, *Teacher*

Chris Bocking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich.



## Stripping arbitrator's ruling quashed

**O**n January 22, 2004, the B.C. Supreme Court held that Stripping Arbitrator Eric Rice made such fundamental errors of law on issues important to the education system that his August 2002 decision must be quashed.

"In light of the fundamental nature of the errors of law, the Determination of the arbitrator must be quashed," the Court concluded.

The stripping arbitrator appointed by the B.C. Liberal government took a much too aggressive approach to removing provisions from our collective agreement and did not properly interpret or apply the law.

This decision effectively means that some of what was deleted by the arbitrator is in fact preserved.

*The act in question was written to facilitate the government's underfunding and erosion of services to students...*

Teachers are justly proud of the efforts we have made over the years to protect learning conditions through collective bargaining, lobbying, and the courts.

"This is excellent news for

students, parents, and teachers," said Neil Worboys, president of the BCTF. "The act in question was written to

*The evidence of the damage to public education caused by the B.C. Liberal policies is overwhelming...*

facilitate the government's underfunding and erosion of services to students, and we are delighted that its implementation has been overturned."

The BCTF will be analyzing the judgment in greater detail before deciding on a course of action.

The government now must decide whether it will go back, attempt to appoint another arbitrator, and try to strip those protections for students again.

Students, parents, and members of the public are now much more aware of the consequences of removing learning conditions from our collective agreement, than they were in 2002. The evidence of the damage to public education caused by the B.C. Liberal policies is overwhelming: 92 neighbourhood schools closed, larger classes, fewer specialist teachers, less support for students with special needs.

— Peter Owens

## Class-size arbitration result

**W**ith the government's January 2002 imposition of a contract on teachers and school boards, class-size and class-composition provisions were stripped from the collective agreement. At the same time, the legislation enshrined in Section 76.1 of the *School Act* district averages for class sizes in Grades K-12 and absolute maximums for primary classes (K: 22, Grades 1-3: 24).

BCTF filed a provincial grievance in 2002 to remedy situations where school districts were violating either the absolute maximums or the district averages. The British Columbia Public School Employers' Association, acting on behalf of school boards, raised a preliminary objection to the grievance, insisting that the matter was not arbitrable. The basis for the objection was that all grievances must arise from matters that form part of the collective agreement. Because class-size provisions are now found only in the *School Act*, the BCTF can no longer have recourse to the grievance arbitration procedure to address violations.

Arbitrator Don Munroe heard argument on the preliminary objection in December 2003. On January 13, 2004, he issued his award, which found in favour of the employer, held that BCTF's grievance is not arbitrable, and dismissed it.

In his reasoning, Munroe said that he would have jurisdiction to decide on the merits of the BCTF grievance only if he could find that the provisions of the *School Act* governing class size were incorporated either expressly or inferentially into the collective agreement. When he considered the intent of the January 2002 legislation, he found that he could not.

*"In sum, the Legislative Assembly caused class size provisions to be stripped from existing teachers' collective agreements and directed that such provisions not again be included in teachers' collective agreements."* (p.18)

Munroe characterized this legislative initiative as a "substantial intrusion by the Legislative Assembly in free collective bargaining in the public education sector." For teachers and students, the intrusion was not merely "substantial"; it was unwarranted, unwelcome, and unhelpful.

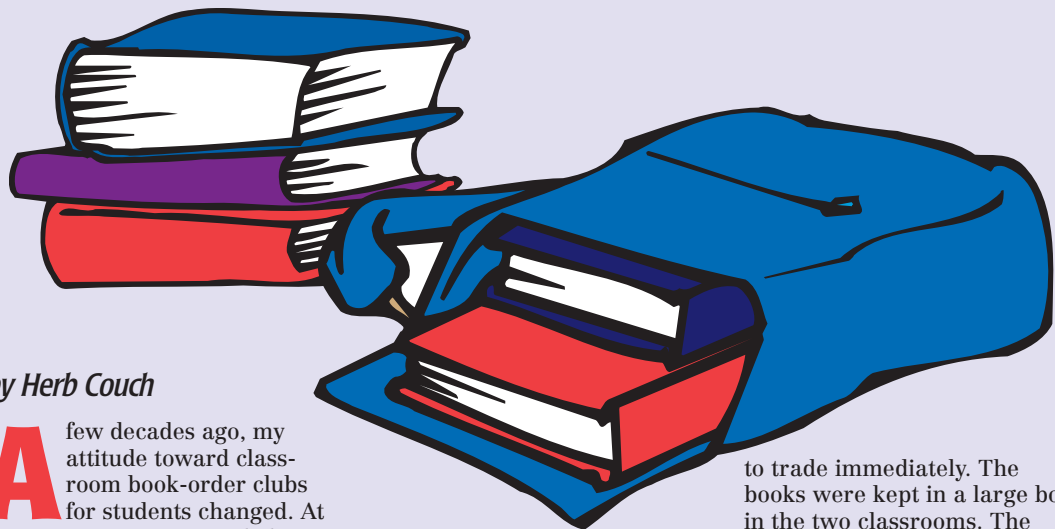
While Munroe acknowledges that school boards and their employees are equally bound by the statutory class-size maximums, his award means that teachers will not have access to the grievance procedure to address violations of those maximums unless the decision is overturned.

The BCTF is considering an appeal of the decision to either the Labour Board or the Court of Appeal. Beyond that, there are other avenues of redress that must be carefully assessed. They include civil suits by individual teachers or parents against school boards for breaches of the class-size maximums, support for teachers who may risk discipline for refusing to teach oversize classes, and/or applications to the B.C. Supreme Court to compel the ministry to enforce the statute.

Notwithstanding the decision of the arbitrator, the voices of the BCTF, local associations, and individual teachers will continue to be raised to ensure that class-size and class-composition issues remain in the forefront of the public debate.

— Brian Porter

## Book-trade day



by Herb Couch

**A** few decades ago, my attitude toward classroom book-order clubs for students changed. At first, I participated in *Scholastic* and other book-order clubs because other teachers in my school did so and I didn't want my class to complain that they were being left out.

I was careful to collect book-order money at the beginning of the school day, and I put the cash under lock and key. The books were not expensive, and most children ordered several books. I sent in book orders right away before the company ran out of any titles.

It was exciting when the book orders arrived at school. Everyone loves shiny new books! Also, there were always books "awarded" to the classroom for all students to share.

Then it happened. Book-club orders lost their shine. I was transferred to a new school where parents hadn't as much spare cash. The economy was going down the tubes, and money was tight. Only a small number of students in my class ordered book-club books. The students who did order books often spent \$20 to \$50.

When the book orders arrived, it was a major disappointment for most students. While three or four students were happy with their shiny

new books, most students were envious and had their family poverty shoved in their faces. Also, students who needed to do recreational reading the most were often from families who could not afford to order book-club books.

An alternative to book-club orders was needed. I got together with another primary teacher, and we decided to have a Book Trade Day for our students. A note sent home to parents explained the special day. Students could bring up to 10 books from home to trade with other students.

*Important:* We stressed to parents and students that books were to be traded, and the trade was permanent. Students were *not* to bring any books from home that were family heirlooms. Books to be traded at school had to be books that the students no longer wanted. However, the books needed to be ones that other children would enjoy reading. We wanted parents to check and okay the books that students brought to trade.

The Book Trade Day was to be held in 10 days, but students were encouraged to bring books

to trade immediately. The books were kept in a large box in the two classrooms. The teachers' job was to record how many books each child brought to trade.

When Book Trade Day arrived, excitement was in the air! The books were spread out around the gym floor and students were given a few minutes to wander around and look at the books. Next, we asked each child to sit down with a book she or he wanted. We wanted to make sure everyone got at least one desirable book. We had discussed with our students beforehand good manners at the book trade. We gave a reminder in the gymnasium.

When all students were finished choosing one book, we were ready to carry on. For example, students who brought five books to trade could choose up to five books in exchange. After the book trade, students went back to their classrooms for silent reading and a discussion about our "new" books. All students brought books to trade. Everyone was reading. Best of all, the Book Trade Day did not cost any money. And we all went home happy.

*Herb Couch teaches at Distance Education School of the Kootenays, Nelson.*

## Gems from high school essays

He was as lame as a duck. Not the metaphorical lame duck, either, but a real duck that was actually lame, maybe from stepping on a land mine or something.



He was as tall as a six-foot-three-inch tree.

Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.

His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without *Cling Free*.

John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.

She grew on him like she was a colony of e-coli and he was room-temperature Canadian beef.

Shots rang out, as shots are wont to do.

The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.

The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.

The young fighter had a hungry look, the kind you get from not eating for awhile.

Source: *Three Quarter Times*, Vancouver Folk Song Society, December 2003.

## British Columbia teachers honoured at Rideau Hall

**S**usan Anderson, a teacher at Beach Grove Elementary School, Delta, and her former colleague, Susan Earles, a newly retired teacher, collaborated for several years to produce an integrated history resource that led to their winning one of the six Governor General's Awards for excellence in Teaching Canadian History. In November, the two teachers, along with the five other winners from across Canada, received their gold medals in a formal ceremony at Rideau Hall and were hosted by the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul at a private luncheon. During the weekend in Ottawa, the recipients enjoyed a tour of the

National Archives of Canada collection and a dinner and reception at the Canadian Aviation museum. Among the prizes was a \$1,000 donation to each recipient's school.

Anderson and Earles developed two major units of study in local history for the intermediate level: *Tsawwassen and the Settlement of Ladner* and *Early Pioneers of Delta*. The units include prehistory lessons on the geography of the area, a simulated archaeological dig conducted by the students, and excursions to local museums. When engaging in the local pioneer study, students design quilts and examine primary documents from England to understand the role of the

founding Ladner family. The studies are integrated with other curriculum areas and incorporate a variety of hands-on activities and field trips.

The Governor General's Award recognizes teachers' invaluable contributions to the teaching of Canadian history. Excellence in the social studies classroom ignites young Canadians' interest in their history and inspires them to explore Canada's story and appreciate past circumstances.

Lesson plans from past and current participants are available through the history society web site:

[www.historysociety.ca/edu.asp](http://www.historysociety.ca/edu.asp).

— Paule Desgroseilliers



# Teachers in Vancouver advocate for public education

by Verena Foxx

*"In your own province, at this very moment, the most basic principles of inclusive, universal, fully funded public education are being challenged."*

—John Ralston Saul  
addressing SFU graduates

It is becoming increasingly important for the minister of education and the elected officials in British Columbia to know that there is strong support for a well-funded public education system. Through our advocacy and demonstrated success, the public education system can be preserved and improved. All individuals deserve to have access to the

resources and opportunities that public education affords them.

Vancouver teachers have become hands-on advocates of restoring adequate funding to public education, and also celebrating its success. In the month surrounding Education Week (March 1–5, 2004), elementary teachers in Vancouver will take part in "Schools in Action." They'll invite the neighboring community into the schools and take the schools to the neighborhood. Teachers will share aspects of their daily teaching routines with members of the public, who will be invited to take part in, observe, and visit their community's schools.

Vancouver elementary teachers are represented at a district-wide advocacy committee of representatives from all Vancouver School Board employee groups, elected trustees, and students.

The VSB Advocacy Committee has created an *Advocacy Toolkit*. For example, school communities are urged to send the minister of education a "Blue Ribbon" postcard, requesting an 8% funding increase to address the true needs of Vancouver students. The testimonials on the postcards will reflect the diversity of the people writing them. Some will be in languages other than English. Other toolkit

suggestions are writing letters to the editor about issues that students are facing in schools today, discussing what adequate funding could mean for different programs, meeting with local MLAs to outline the ongoing impact of cumulative cutbacks, and contacting the school liaison trustee to speak at parent meetings.

The adaptable VSB Advocacy Toolkit is available through [www.vesta.ca](http://www.vesta.ca) or [www.vsb.bc.ca](http://www.vsb.bc.ca).

Verena Foxx is communications officer for Vancouver Elementary Teachers' Association.



## Persistence trumps failure

by Wendy Tarasoff

*"Education is as necessary as light. It should be as common as water and as free as the air."*

—Egerton Ryerson, 1847

My greatest learning has always followed on the heels of a failure—when I struggle, decide not to give up, and forge ahead.

I came to see other points of view. Before me was a Grade 9 student trying to translate from his mother tongue into English, in a foreign country with a different set of beliefs, customs, and unfamiliar sounds.

"Sam" says to me, "What you say?" over and over as if trying to get me to understand. I make eye contact and do my best to

acknowledge; I draw word pictures. His vocabulary starts to increase, but he grunts when he gets something.

It takes a lot of patience to understand him, and a willingness on my part to present a concept several different ways without making him wrong. He gets the idea he says—metaphor—a cat is a dog when it growls and howls. I take the wins as they come, try to build on them.

Sam can now make a sentence with a subject and a verb. I remember a time when I too struggled with that, and I watch step by step as he writes words he knows that he can't spell. Sam's frustration level is very high, and like any other

student, he is struggling on essays. He looks to me for help. I make no comment on the essay assignment: discuss several characters in a story or a movie you have seen. Explain in your essay, why it is important for a character not to give up. The central motif suggests that the decisions we make determine the outcome.

I worked with Sam, mapping his ideas on paper about Peter Pan, the protagonist, and Captain Hook, the antagonist. Sam describes some of the things Peter is up against, how he bests them, and how he learns to fly. Then, there was the Lord of the Rings and Frodo Baggins. Frodo carried a heavy burden. At times, it looked as if

he would not make it. Sometimes he needed the help of a friend.

Sam grunted and came to a conclusion, "...giving up may not be the best idea even if it is hard...maybe okay to fail but what we do with it, decide, matters."

The assignment may have helped Sam recognize what failure is, brought him to a new decision, even changed him into a hero. I thought so, because the next time I saw Sam, there was light in his eyes. We worked together on more sentences, definitions of words, pictures, and examples. Sam took sentences home to do on his own for the first time.

A teacher has to take into account the individual and find ways to help each "Sam" access

education. I root for each student (including Sam) to have that voyage of self-discovery and gain both confidence and ability.

With Sam, the learning outcome of the assignment was met despite the numerous errors. They could be corrected on a gradient. What is important is that Sam is willing to be his own hero in learning. I learned from Sam that failure is failure only when nothing is done about it. What about Tom and Suzy? How can we help them to become hero and heroine too? I will look for opportunities to change failure into success.

Wendy Tarasoff, an English tutor has just applied to SFU PDP and hopes to become a teacher in B.C.

# Tuition fees increase



Summer McFadyen, president of the CFS, talks to reporters.

*Let's be clear about the effect of unsustainable cost and the resulting debts on individual students. Wherever tuition goes down, enrolment goes up. And where does the increase in students come from? From those with less money. In other words, the lower the fees, the more egalitarian the society. The lower the fees, the more we are able to release the genius of the citizenry as a whole. And that genius, that collective unconscious is the key to a successful democracy.* — John Ralston Saul

by Summer McFadyen

Students across British Columbia are bracing for another round of tuition increases. Several of B.C.'s post-secondary institutions have projected tuition

increases of up to 35% for the 2004–05 academic year.

Budget letters from Gordon Campbell and Advanced Education Minister Shirley Bond have told post-secondary institutions that their budgets will be cut by five percent in 2004–05.

This will be the third year of massive tuition fee increases since Gordon Campbell broke his promise to freeze tuition fees. In the last two years, tuition fees have increased by more than 80% at B.C. universities and by more than 100% at B.C. colleges.

Administrators at Simon Fraser University have proposed tuition fee increases of up to 35% for the coming year, which would take fees at SFU to almost \$5,000 per year. Students at the

University of Victoria expect to face another 30% increase.

"Tuition fees at Okanagan University College have nearly tripled after this year's increase," said Shayne Robinson, a student at Kelowna's Okanagan University College (OUC). Tuition fees at the Penticton Campus of OUC, which has no real library, increased from \$1,400 in 2001–02 to \$3,800 this year.

At Vancouver Community College, college administrators plan to implement fees of \$280 per course for adult basic education (Grade 4 to 12) courses. Adult basic education courses, offered to those attempting to complete or upgrade their high school equivalency, have, until recently, been provided at no cost.

"The massive tuition fee increases introduced by Premier Campbell have forced many students to drop out of school because they simply cannot afford an education," said Summer McFadyen, B.C. chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students. "It's no longer a matter of merit, but rather the size of a students' pocket book."

Shayne Robinson agreed. "The truth is, some of my former classmates aren't in classes this semester simply because the cost of an education has gotten out of hand."

The rapid fee increases have had a negative impact on students pursuing post-secondary studies—student debt has risen, and accessibility has declined.

Statistics Canada's Youth in Transition Study, released in January 2002, considered the implications of rapid tuition fee increases over the past decade. The study found that financial barriers were overwhelmingly the most common barriers to

access for young people in Canada. Over 70% of high school graduates who had not gone on to post-secondary education because of barriers listed their financial situation as a primary obstacle.

A similar percentage of respondents who had dropped out of a post-secondary program cited financial barriers as a primary reason for not continuing with their education.

A recent study, "Access Denied: The affordability of post-secondary education in Canada," confirms that B.C. is at an historical low in ensuring the affordability of post-secondary education. Post-secondary education is less affordable today than at any time in the last 60 years. The report examines changes in tuition fees from 1857 to 2002. When fees are adjusted for inflation, undergraduate university students today are paying more than at any other time in the past century, and six times what a student was charged in 1914.

Despite the premier's assertion that higher tuition fees increase access to post-secondary education, numerous studies provide evidence of the negative impact of increased tuition fees on the participation rates of low and middle-income students.

The University of Western Ontario Study on Accessibility (1999) was conducted over a four-year period to determine the effect of deregulated tuition fees on accessibility. As tuition fees rose, the study documented a dramatic decline in participation rates from low-income families by the fourth and final year of the study. As a result of deregulated tuition fees, there was a 50% decline in the participation of low-income students (to only 7.7% of students).

Premier Gordon Campbell will be remembered as the premier who deliberately and dramatically increased the cost of obtaining an education. The Canadian Federation of Students' *Bring Tuition Fees Back to Earth Campaign* seeks to raise awareness of the effect of Gordon Campbell's policies on youth, students, and the post-secondary education system. For more information about the student federation, or to get involved in the campaign for an accessible, high-quality, fully funded, public post-secondary education system, go to [www.cfs.bc.ca](http://www.cfs.bc.ca).

Summer McFadyen is B.C. chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students.

Founded in 1981, the Canadian Federation of Students currently unites more than 450,000 college and university students across Canada through a co-operative alliance of over 70 students' unions. Since 1926, the Federation and its predecessor organizations have been the voice of Canada's student movement.

- The Canadian Federation of Students is demanding that the B.C. Liberals:
- Legislate tuition fees to be set at 2001–02 levels.
  - Increase post-secondary education funding.
  - Increase significantly the number of fully funded spaces available to students at B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions.
  - Maintain and augment the needs-based, non-repayable grants program.
  - Call on the federal government to restore federal funding for post-secondary education and to negotiate a national agreement on standards of quality, accessibility, and mobility for post-secondary education.



## Health & Safety

# The sky is falling! Now What?

by Maureen L. MacDonald

Chicken Little said it. “The sky is falling! the sky is falling!” Well, Chicken Little was a birdbrain. Didn’t have a clue. Please allow me to translate that famous phrase into health and safety language, which states the situation and aims for a solution. “Bad things are, or might be, happening! We need a plan!” My work as a prevention officer in the BCTF’s Health and Safety Department is not to prevent health and safety, (that always makes me smile), but to help locals and members to prevent injuries and illnesses on the job. In other words, I assist in developing plans.

Here’s a small sample of some recent events. See if you can formulate a workable plan to avoid or to correct the falling of the sky.

### Button up your overcoat

Is it too cold for comfort in your classroom? If you have been reading this column since I started writing it, in November 2002, you know that the topic of cold indoor temperature has come up many times.

The plan in some districts is to tell students and staff members to dress warmly. If you think that is a good plan, you may have frostbite of the brain. You could use a little adjustment of your thin cotton thinking cap. Step right up, and I’ll fix that for you.

On the other hand, if you think that a cold school is a likely eventuality and a plan should be discussed by the Joint Occupational Health & Safety (JOH&S) Committee and known by all staff in advance of the indoor cold snap, you are thinking clearly. When the plan is developed, keep in mind WCB Regulation 4.80, which states, “The employer must ensure that temperature and humidity levels within the indoor work environment are maintained within acceptable comfort ranges, as far as is practicable.” In winter, those ranges are 20 to 24°C. Also know that the *School Act* Section 90 (2) says “A school medical health officer may require a board to close a school when the school medical health officer considers that the health or safety of students is at risk.”

In January 2004, a school operated all day at 11°C in one

district, while in another district all the students in a school were sent home by 9:30 a.m. The staff didn’t have to stay there in the cold either.

### Eau de varnish and paint

A gym floor was varnished. Several teachers and students got headaches. Paint, some water-based and some oil-based, was applied during the school day. Several staff members and students experienced runny eyes, sneezing, sore throats, and rashes.

Should the plan be (a) grin and bear it, or (b) grumble to colleagues and friends, or (c) develop some guidelines for painting and recommend them to your school board through the JOH&S committee at your worksite? If (c) is your plan, you may want to apply for my job some day.

You don’t even have to start your plan from scratch. The BCTF has a Construction/Renovation/Maintenance/Repair Protocol that you can get from the Health and Safety page on the BCTF web site at [bctf.ca/education/health](http://bctf.ca/education/health).

Adapt it for painting. If you know in advance that you suffer adverse reactions, ask to be temporarily reassigned to a location with non-smelly air. If you get sick at school, file a WCB claim. Don’t use your sick leave for work-related illnesses. Keep in touch with your local president.

### Oh give me time, lots of planning time...

Does your school have a *fire safety plan* and an *earthquake plan*? Of course it does. In writing. For reference and review regularly. Everybody knows.

Don’t stop at just those two plans while you’re on a roll.

Violent students? Report to your school’s Joint Occupational Health & Safety (JOH&S) Committee. Read WCB Reg. 4.27 – 4.31. Do a risk assessment, and develop a *violence prevention plan*. Find out your district’s restraint policy. Each violent student needs a *safety plan*. Put it into the IEP if there is one. File a WCB incident report if you are threatened. Have the first-aid attendant record any injury, no matter how small, in the first-

aid log. Tell your local president.

Strangers wandering the halls? Develop a *visitors plan*, and ask each visitor to report to the office to get a visitor’s badge.

Bomb threat? Who goes back into the evacuated school to see if it is safe? (Police come to mind right away.) What if the weather is too miserable to stay outside on the field while waiting? Hand me the *emergency plan*, and I’ll check.

Other emergency? These actual announcements have been heard over the PA system as a coded way to tell teachers to lock their doors and wait for further instructions. *Attention all staff: Dr. Nightingale is in the school; the superintendent is in the building; Dr. Sharp is in the building; Please return the large scissors to the office immediately; Code red.* What’s the secret phrase in your school? If you are an itinerant teacher or a TOC, would you know what to do? Find a way to inform those valuable colleagues. Speaking of *emergency plans*, plan a *lockdown procedure* that includes “No one use the washrooms.” Hope you’ll never have to test it.

Are you the only one on site? Who knows where you are? Get right on this item if it has not been discussed lately by your staff. Put it on the agenda of your school’s next JOH&S committee meeting. You need a *working alone or in isolation plan*. See WCB Reg. 4.21 to 4.23. The plan is not just for school days if teachers have keys to the schools. There have been some serious problems on holidays.

Going to your car on a dark and stormy night? Think *staff safety plan*. Many schools have a buddy system for leaving after dark. Many JOH&S committees have successfully recommended that outdoor lighting be installed around their schools.

### The end is near

No, the sky is not falling! And even if the sky really is falling, we have plans to prop it up safely. The end of this list of plans is near. Just one more thing. Plan to report all health and safety concerns to your worksite JOH&S committee. Without a record of a problem, some higher-ups think there is

no problem. Plan to serve on a JOH&S committee during your career. Plan to attend the health and safety workshops offered to committee members annually. (The BCTF workshops are superb. Just ask the hundreds who have taken them.) And finally, *plan to speak up for health and safety*. Be vocal in your local. Don’t keep parents in the dark about things like mouldy ceilings or poor indoor air quality. Remember, our working conditions are our students’ learning conditions.

Thanks for reading this article. Special thanks to the members of the BCTF Health and Safety Advisory Committee, the BCTF Health and Safety Trainers, the locally elected Health and Safety reps, and all the JOH&S committee members, whose ongoing work is so important.

*Maureen MacDonald is the prevention officer in the BCTF Health and Safety Department.*

If you would like your name added to the BCTF occupational health and safety e-mail list, contact Whitney Burgess: [wburgess@bctf.ca](mailto:wburgess@bctf.ca).

## On being well

## Making healthy choices

by Julia Johnson

At a local gym during the Christmas break, I encountered one of the part-time librarians from my school. She and her partner librarian would be going into the school over the holiday to catalogue books. Going into school to work when school is not in session is not unusual. Many teachers use their personal time on weekends to plan units of study, prepare tests, mark papers and projects, write student reports, sponsor extra-curricular activities, organize lessons, and coach. Spending extra time at school or taking school work home is considered part of the job. Working overtime comes with the territory.

The librarians believed that going to school during the Christmas break was necessary because they no longer have administration time for the

countless duties for which a librarian is responsible. Not to go in would mean they would be unable to do their jobs properly. Listening to my colleague, I sensed the frustration over having to take time out of one’s personal life to do work-related tasks that used to be part of the work day. That situation epitomizes the working conditions of today’s teachers.

We teach in uncertain and complex times, where rapid change and the external demands on teachers are greater than in any other period in our educational history. Since the educational cuts began, the message we hear regularly from our educational leaders and colleagues is that teaching cannot proceed as usual. How can it, when there are fewer resources for those requiring counselling, learning assistance, ESL, or individual program-ming? when there are fewer student support workers, less secretarial and janitorial time? when class sizes have increased and class composition is given no consideration? when science equipment is scarce, curriculum texts are falling apart, and fine arts programs are eliminated? Yet somehow teaching, does seem to be continuing as usual, and the changing working conditions teachers have been forced to accept seem to be having little impact on their daily work. As a profession, we strive to achieve the same quality performance of yesterday with the decreased funds and resources of today.

Daily in the teaching profession, we guide and counsel children to make wise and appropriate choices. We want young people to consider their safety and well-being in all they do, and we teach lessons to foster that message. In the context of educational cutbacks I wonder about the choices teachers are making in their professional lives. Will the additional time teachers spend performing the multitude of teaching tasks actually make it easier for them when they face their classes each day?

Teaching is an endless job, and we could be engaged in schoolwork 24/7 if we had the motivation and the energy. So, just how much does one need to do to get the job done? As a group, teachers are characteristically perfectionists, with high expectations for their students and for their profession as well. With these qualities, are teachers able to recognize when they have done enough? Do they understand the importance of letting go of some of their expectations so they can develop other areas in their lives? Do they have the strength and the courage to establish boundaries and set limits to the work they do so the choices they make will foster their health and wellbeing and bring balance to their lives?

The time has come for teachers to reflect on these questions and the professional choices they make. Given the context of reduced educational funding, teachers cannot be expected to do more with less. If they do, they risk their health and become their own worst enemy. It is time for teachers to learn to walk the talk of the “smart choice” lessons they teach to the young. It is time for teachers to choose personal wellness as a way of life over the workaholic life that teaching can be.

*Julia Johnson, a learning resource teacher at Red Bluff School, in Quesnel, is a BCTF PD wellness associate.*



## Teachers' tips

# Components of an excellent reading program

by Steve Naylor

**R**eading is essential to success in school. All of us teach reading, be it showing students what their teachers are reading or showing students how to read the content selections in the course. Here are some techniques for building an excellent school reading program.

### Read aloud

Reading aloud to students is always effective. The more students hear the selections read carefully and correctly, the more they will benefit. Having some selections read aloud in all subjects encourages understanding.

### Create a literacy-rich environment

Have many types of reading materials in your classroom. Students are always impressed to see that teachers are readers. Discuss the books you are reading when students show interest. Teachers of all subjects can have their personal reading favourites on their classroom shelves.

### Encourage reading for pleasure

Some schools have a program of sustained silent reading. Other schools have book fairs, reading weeks, and the like. Encourage students to read material other than their course readings. If students read for pleasure, their understanding of content reading will likely improve.

### Promote home/school partnerships

Encourage parents to ask questions about the students' reading. At meet-the-teacher events explain the importance of reading and help parents understand that reading is the basis of learning.

### Integrate language activities

Explain to students how to read the material you expect them to understand. Have students write what they understand about their content reading. Use exit slips and entrance slips as ways to show students you are interested in what they understand about their reading.

### Accommodate students' interests and backgrounds

When students are permitted to read material in which they

are interested, they become engaged. Students who are engaged appreciate the opportunity to learn and will likely be more attentive in class.

### Use systematic, varied strategies

Show students a variety of reading techniques such as SQ3R, formulating their own questions, and summarizing. Photocopy a page of the textbook, and allow students to highlight or underline the main points. Remember that you probably did the same in your university texts.

### Use a variety of reading methods

Explain to students that reading poetry is different from reading a science text. Explain that slowing reading down and asking questions while reading are two ways to adjust reading to fit the text.

### Activate students' prior knowledge

Students need to connect new learning to what they already know. Find out what students already know about a topic, then introduce the reading assignment. Help students connect the new material to what they already know.

### Provide authentic purposes, materials, and audiences

Students need to know that school is part of the real world. As often as possible, connect school assignments with the world outside the classroom. Have students write about their subjects to audiences other than the teacher. By using newspapers, show students that the material they are studying is also important to other people.

### Construct, examine, and extend meaning

Building understanding means connecting learning to the students' experiences. Start with what the students know or where their interests lie. Discuss their understanding, and challenge students to explore new or diverse opinions. Students need to know that there is not always a right answer.

### Use meaning-driven reading activities

Tell the students what they are going to be reading. Give them a framework on which to build their new understandings. Giving a set of questions before the students start reading is often better than giving questions after they have read.

### Model reading strategies

Show students how you read. Put a selection on the overhead, and read it aloud. Underline as you read, make notes in the margins, and talk as you read. Students will appreciate knowing that you make meaning as you read. Reading is not a secret skill that only the teacher knows.

### Allow students to work in a variety of groupings

Have students read and then explain their understanding of their reading to partners. Have students meet in small groups and summarize their understanding of a reading selection. Talking and writing about their reading helps students solidify their understanding.

*Steve Naylor teaches at Salmon Arm Senior Secondary School, Salmon Arm.*



## Welcome to the future of Canadian democracy

**A**n exciting initiative is coming this spring to a school near you. *Student Vote 2004* is a non-partisan, educational initiative inspiring a habit of electoral and community participation among students. Student Vote 2004 will operate during the upcoming federal election, in all provinces and territories across Canada, targeting the high-school grades.

Registered schools receive an instructional resource and other materials, at no cost, for use during the campaign. Through in-class lessons and school-wide activities, students learn about the democratic process, and

become aware of the party platforms and local candidates. Partnering newspapers will provide complimentary publications to registered schools to promote media literacy and an understanding of current affairs.

Closer to Student Election Day, schools receive election kits containing ballots, ballot boxes, and an operations manual. Students take over the roles of returning officers and poll clerks, and conduct a school-wide vote. Once students have voted on their local candidates, the results are tabulated and called into the Student Vote 2004 returning office. Results

are broadcast on partnering television networks and published in regional daily newspapers.

A successful trial, operated during the Ontario Provincial Election, involved more than 800 schools and introduced 335,000 students to the electoral process. For Student Vote 2004, a million students will likely cast a ballot, in every riding across Canada.

To register your school for Student Vote 2004, visit [www.studentvote2004.ca](http://www.studentvote2004.ca) or call 1-866-488-8775.

# Government deregulates private education institutions

**I**n February 2002, the B.C. government announced its intention to replace the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission, which was established in 1992 to provide consumer protection to students and to address issues of educational competence.

In August 2002, the Ministry of Advanced Education posted a discussion paper on a proposed new private training policy framework on its web site and invited responses. The College Institute Educators' Association (CIEA) responded, and in addition to identifying a number of areas of specific concern with the proposals, strongly recommended that the ministry develop a more comprehensive document based on the feedback and suggestions to the initial paper and engage in a more meaningful discussion of the regulatory framework. That did not happen. Instead, on May 12, 2003, the minister of advanced education tabled the *Private Career Training Institutions Act* (Bill 52).

*Bill 52 seeks to limit the number of private institutions that must be registered in order to operate.*

Bill 52 appears to follow much of the discussion in the ministry paper, creating an arms-length agency that will have the ability to develop most aspects of the framework for regulating private institutions in B.C. Many of the significant decisions will be made by by-law of the new board or by regulation (cabinet decision). The institutions to be regulated are more narrowly defined than those in the *Private Post-Secondary Education Act*. Bill 52 seeks to limit the number of private institutions that must be registered in order to operate. Institutions required to register would be those that provide "training or instruction in the skill and knowledge required for employment in an occupation defined in the regulations." In addition to the designated occupations being defined in regulation, the act also provides for further limitation on what will be regulated by identifying that there will be a minimum prescribed amount of tuition and instructional time for the regulated programs.

*One of the major debating points around the new regulatory framework was whether ESL schools and programs would continue to be required to be registered.*

They too, will be in regulation. One of the major debating points around the new regulatory framework was whether ESL schools and programs would continue to be required to be registered. The legislation leaves the issue up in the air.

Legislative debate and regulations will reveal more.

The act creates a Private Career Training Institutions Agency and identifies its governing structure and purposes. The new board, which will be made up of no more than 10 members, will initially be appointed by the minister of advanced education and will then become into a board with up to nine members elected to represent

*The new board... will then become a board with up to nine members elected to represent registered institutions and one member appointed by the minister.*

registered institutions and 1 member appointed by the minister. The first board will have the power to develop by-laws to govern the election of future board members and to govern the workings of the agency. Bill 52 establishes a Student Training Completion Fund that on first reading looks like it will function like a tuition assurance fund. This legislative requirement can be seen as a positive development, given that the original government proposal did not have a legislated requirement for a tuition-protection fund.

### Issues and concerns

1. Government has chosen to adopt a self-regulated approach to the sector. The previous Private Post-Secondary Education Commission had a balance of government appointees representing the public (including a representative of the Better Business Bureau) and those from private institutions. How is the public interest better protected with less public oversight of the regulation of the private-training sector?
2. How many of the current 1,100 registered institutions will still be required to register under the new legislation?
3. What kind of public reporting will be required of the new agency? Will student outcomes, attrition, or drop-out rates and other performance information be published for easy public access?
4. Will the new agency be subject to freedom-of-information legislation, as was the previous commission?
5. The original ministry proposal suggested that ESL language programs and schools should not be required to be registered in order to operate in B.C. because they are not necessarily "career-related." When will a decision be made as to whether ESL schools will be required to be registered?

— Canadian Institute Educators' Association



# Per-pupil funding continues downward

Real per-student funding for public education in B.C., dropping in the past three years, is now at its lowest level in more than 15 years. Despite contrary claims by the former education minister, the province is not giving school boards enough money to meet cost increases. The result? School closures, larger class sizes, and lost funds for special needs.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), in “Who’s Cutting Classes? Untangling the Spin about K–12 Education in B.C.,” examines education financing in B.C. since the early 1990s. The study shows that after inflation, per-student education funding declined through most of the 1990s, increased for a few years toward the end of the decade, and has been falling ever since.

There’s been a lot of talk lately about the state of education financing, says Marc Lee, author of the study and an economist with the CCPA. Parents, students, and teachers know that all is not well, and yet we’re told by the former

education minister that any fault for cutbacks lies with the school boards, that the province is spending more than ever on K–12, and that per-student funding is rising. It simply doesn’t add up.

Lee says that while Christy Clark, the former education minister, is technically correct when she said total dollars spent on public education have risen under her government, the increase has not kept pace with the increased costs of providing education even with the recent decline in student enrolment. As a result, school boards have had to make cuts.

Lee says the education minister should stop playing with the numbers and pointing the finger at school boards. We need a \$300 million boost to the education budget in 2004 to return to 1990 real funding levels. We shouldn’t be short-changing B.C.’s students, the province’s young citizens and future workforce.

“Who’s Cutting Classes? Untangling the Spin about K–12 Education in B.C.” is available from the CCPA: [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca).

# The case for business education

by Peter Noah

For the last 12 years, business education in the secondary schools in B.C. has been disappearing, steadily and surely, one course after another. Business education might be gone from our schools in five years. After that, business courses will be available only at the college or university level.

Business education detractors will smile and say, “Business didn’t belong in our schools anyway.” I disagree.

I am a business-education teacher, with a vested interest in seeing my field of study and teaching survive. That said, I have feelings of sadness and

*...because those are the very courses that are so necessary for today’s economy and society.*

foreboding on the passing of business education. Sadness, because business education has been a part of the B.C. secondary school curriculum and economy for more than 100 years. You may remember the old Commercial High School at 12th and Oak in Vancouver. And almost every school in the province had typing and shorthand labs. Accounting 11 was an option instead of Math 12, and many worthwhile community projects were started in an entrepreneurship class. Many a fisher, shop owner, and tradesperson could make a go of it having learned to read an income statement in a high-school business course. So it is sad to see an integral part of our educational heritage pass away.

Foreboding, because those are the very courses that are so necessary for today’s economy and society.

In 2004, in our personal and working lives, we are being bombarded with computers; online banking; online shopping; marketing scams; “credit hooking,” where cards are easily granted and harshly

*More than ever, we need business education as a basic life-skill.*

collected on; employee exploitation, discrimination, and harassment; employee vs. employee conflicts; and so many other challenges.

Those are all problems that basic business-education courses could prevent, reduce, or resolve.

Each of us needs to know how to behave in an office, how to do a tax return, how to use a computer effectively, how to understand the advertising world, how to calculate a mortgage, how to balance the family chequebook, how to prepare a budget, and how to invest and save for old age. Business education courses address those challenges.

If we let business education die out of our secondary schools, every small business owner, every tradesperson, every

*Let’s work to get business education back into our schools.*

employee, and every consumer will be the worse for it. More than ever, we need business education as a basic life-skill. Let’s work to get business education back into our schools.

Peter Noah teaches at David Thompson Secondary School, Vancouver, and is president of the British Columbia Business Education Association.

# A modest proposal after Jonathan Swift

by Wayne Wiens

In dire times, dire solutions must be found; in modest times, modest solutions may serve us better. Some would argue that our public schools are facing severe cutbacks, which have begun already and which will soon be debilitating. They therefore eagerly propose dire solutions, falling short only at selling their grandmothers.

I have heard dire solutions proposed for the financial rescue of our public schools that involve the sale of school properties for high-rises or the leasing of prime sites to private schools and corporations. Stuff and nonsense say I. The problem is only a modest one in the great scheme of things, and thus worthy of only the most modest of solutions.

*School uniforms are a perennial topic of discussion.*

Here, then, is the crux of my modest proposal. Could we not do better by playing the corporate-sponsor game, as any self-respecting corporation would, by capitalizing on the *raison d’être* of such corporations that seek access to our schools and to our students, their potential consumers? By this I refer to nothing less than increased competition. Some would argue that the public school is no place for competition, but I demur, and wish only to suggest that such weak thinkers look no further than the grading system so well entrenched and respected in the self-same schools.

Would we not be better served in the new order of public school-private enterprise partnerships (PSPEPs, pronounced pisspeps) by offering a competitive process that will maximize school profits by enhancing corporate access to a captive student market? Why, I ask, settle for naming or renaming merely the schools? Why not, indeed, seek a myriad of sponsorships, each appropriate to an area or a component of the school and to the corporate product? This is what corporate marketers, I am

told, refer to as a natural fit—intelligent and targeted marketing at its best, leading to premium pricing of what we have on offer. Competitive bids allow a choice of the most appropriate partnerships, and also the most lucrative ones. Thus, after the competitive-bid process is completed, I envision the following as examples of winning PSPEPs in the most appropriately renamed areas of the school:

- *A & B Sound Music Wing*
- *Adidas Gym*
- *CanWest/Global School Library and Media Centre*
- *Chapters/Indigo English Wing*
- *Dow Chemistry Lab*
- *Ernst & Young Math Wing*

As for the student cafeteria, multiple PSPEPs could be established. Thus on Mondays, we would have the *McDonald’s* Eatery, on Tuesdays, the *A&W* Diner, etc. In this way, we would also be keeping faith with our commitment to provide choice to our students by way of a varied, if not a nutritious, diet.

We could also reduce the cost of furnishing our classrooms and offices by seeking sponsorships for individual desks, in return for artfully placed logos.

And what would be left to sell? Why, I modestly propose, our students themselves. School uniforms are a perennial topic of discussion. Uniform jumpsuits with corporate logos on the breast pockets would likely be well received by parents for their economy and by administrators for their clarity. By colour-coding them, could we not calm the sometimes chaotic hallways, codify the adolescent pecking order, simplify the life of teachers, and clarify the world for school-building administrators? Competitive bidding would maximize our profits here as well, since we could identify our honour-roll students by their gold lamé jumpsuits sporting the logo of the highest bidder, silver lamé for the second honour-roll students, bronze lamé for the honourable mentions; lime green cotton for the majority of the students, purple for those in special education, and brown for the congenitally late students.

Teachers would appreciate this colour-coding, for in these days of larger classes and fewer support services, would it not be useful to provide a ready method to signal which students were more deserving of attention, and which were not? Administrators would also find this coding useful, since it would render more efficient the process by which they determine which students among those who commit misdemeanours would be deserving of punishment and which would be dealt with more leniently, since it is a well-known fact that good grades are an indication of good character, and, sadly, vice versa.

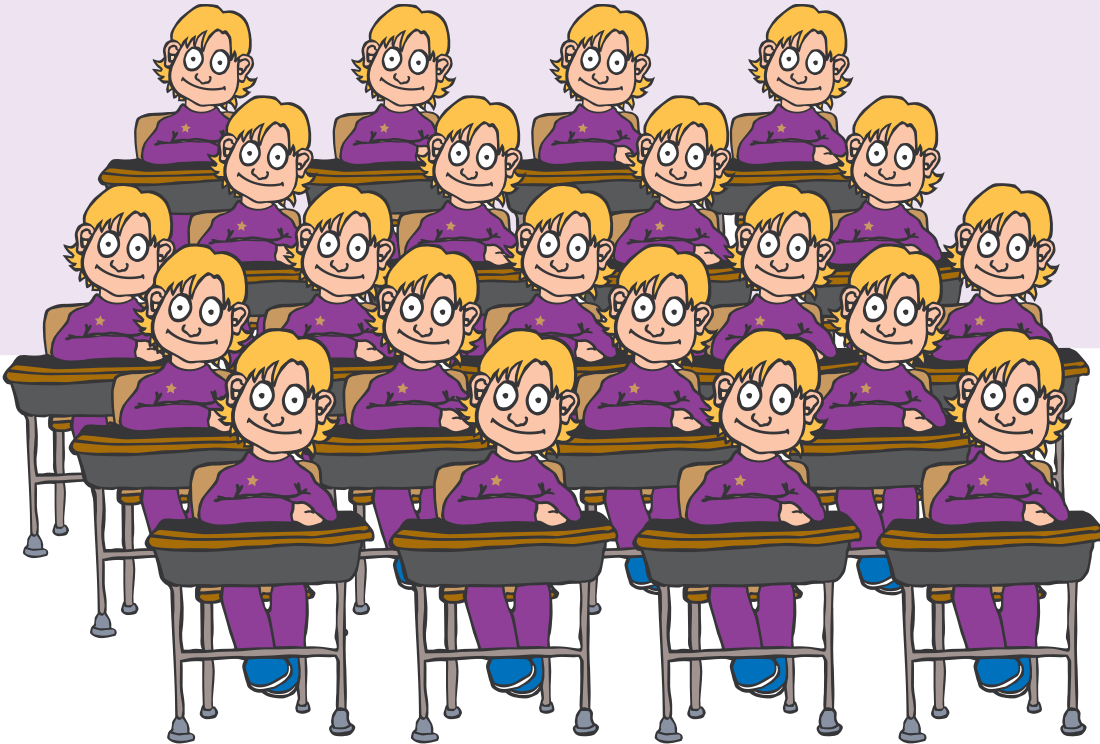
We could seek sponsorships to purchase suitable clothing and logos for our teachers; for example, in the *Home Depot* Industrial Education Wing, teachers could wear bright orange coveralls with the awesomely appropriate motto: You can do it; we can help.

Similarly, why not seek input for a revised school motto? Our currently ambiguous *Carpe Diem* could become *Dodge Trucks’ Grab Life by the Horns*.

*Uniform jumpsuits with corporate logos on the breast pockets would likely be well received by parents for their economy and by administrators for their clarity.*

I should emphasize that this modest proposal is submitted by one who has dedicated his life to the well-being of students and schools. With nothing to gain from the submission, he prepares to leave the scholastic arena for the fields of retirement with one last contribution. Thus he offers this modest proposal as his final effort to enhance his life’s work and to improve schools for the students of the 21st century.

Wayne Wiens teaches at Argyle Secondary School, North Vancouver.





## Should teachers continue on school planning councils?

**S**chool planning councils were legislated in the spring of 2002. Each school council was to comprise three parents, one administrator, and one teacher. Amended legislation provided for inclusion of a student in schools enrolling Grade 10, 11, or 12 students. Delegates to the fall 2002 Representative Assembly set out conditions for teacher participation on school planning councils: being elected at a school-based union meeting, reporting back to the staff, promoting a wide range of data, and advocating for “conditions necessary to create a strong and stable public education system and success for every student.” RA delegates also asked for a reassessment and report back on school planning councils the following year.

This fall, through a focus group and questionnaire, we asked teacher representatives on school planning councils to describe their experiences and to give their opinions as to whether or not teachers should continue to participate. Eighteen hundred surveys went to teacher representatives on school planning councils; 35%, or 635, were returned.

Approximately half the teacher representatives had been elected, about half volunteered, and 6.9% were recruited by administrative officers. Most councils meet after school four to six times a year.

Of the teacher reps, 82.3% received input and direction from teaching staff on issues being addressed by the SPC, and 91.2% reported back to the staff. Nearly 80% (79.7%) of the SPC

representatives reported back to the whole staff; 14.1% reported back to a school union meeting.

More than 87% of teachers who responded felt they could influence parent representatives on the SPC; 83.1% found parents on the SPC receptive to discussing aspects of school funding.

Despite their reservations about the relevance of school planning councils and the political agenda that initiated school planning councils, the overwhelming majority (96.4%) of teacher representatives on school planning councils believe that so long as school planning councils are legislated, teachers should continue to participate.

Comments from the forms:

- While there are many things that cause me concern about SPCs, I believe a strong union person should be there to filter information, help interpret data, and protect teachers from another “improvement to education.” I also have made good alliances with parents, which may eventually help my staff.

- I think the parents were a bit disappointed that they really were only there “for looks” and yet they did say to me, “What do we know anyway? You guys are the experts.”

- Although the parents were very involved in the school, they had no idea how children were assessed, what the teachers did to plan and implement lessons, and how much of our time and money we put into teaching.

- Parents now are able to see the limited value of standardized tests and they jump right on board with teacher concerns. They finally realize we are on the same side.

— Kathleen MacKinnon

## No yard sale!

by Gay Bruce

**W**hen you retire, what will you do with your accumulated stuff? I was saved from the horrendous experience of first sorting through all the beloved paraphernalia that I had gathered in my 36-year career and then having to part with each bit piece by painful piece in a “yard-sale.” Leaving everything to my elementary school for a tax receipt was the answer.

I asked the AO (who asked the secretary treasurer of the school board) if a tax receipt would be possible and was told it was. The process went something like this:

- An enthusiastic TOC thought sorting through my filing cabinet was the next best thing to Christmas morning. After each season and theme had been visited, I had her empty my filing cabinet and theme boxes. Things that she thought would be useful in the school were offered to the staff; otherwise they were hers.

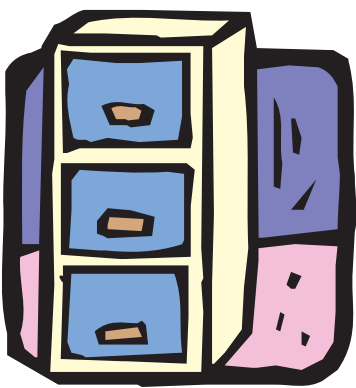
- Then I began sorting through my professional collection by loading a trolley with material for the staff to peruse. I tried to do a trolley load every week or two until that cupboard was bare. Staff selected items that they wanted catalogued in the school professional library. I could use

books that I needed because they were still in the school. Any items left on the trolley were offered to TOCs, and the leftovers were discarded.

- The art supplies that I had purchased were placed in the school art-supply cupboard.

- The classroom library that I purchased over the years was left in place. I boxed the few items that I couldn’t live without, but I was completely out of the school by the last day school in June. It was relatively painless and quick! But best of all I’m not planning a yard sale of boxes and boxes of stuff in the basement that I wish I hadn’t kept. Instead I had a lovely tax receipt to apply to my 2002 income tax return!

*Gay Bruce is a retired Saanich teacher.*



## Ten reasons why privatizing electricity and breaking up B.C. Hydro are a bad deal for British Columbians



### Higher rates for consumers and businesses

After 10 years of frozen rates that saved consumers millions and helped create jobs, B.C. Hydro electricity rates are going up next year, Energy and Mines Minister Richard Neufeld has confirmed. But will the rate increases ever stop? Not with the privatization of electricity. Rates in B.C. are the third lowest in North America, thanks to public power ownership. But all new power generation will be privately owned and billed at market rates. Ontario deregulated its energy sector in May 2002, and the price of electricity rose 33% in just one year. Alberta’s experience was even more devastating after deregulation: The price of electricity rose over 500% between June and October 2000. Why wouldn’t the same thing happen in B.C.?

### Taxpayers will have to subsidize private power

It’s costing the province tens of millions of dollars to dismantle and privatize B.C. Hydro. Giving away one-third of B.C. Hydro’s operations and jobs to Bermuda-based Accenture alone cost us more than \$60 million. Bill 10 and Bill 39 transfer public control of our electricity system over to the private sector. But breaking up B.C. Hydro into three parts—generation, distribution, and transmission—ultimately means less public accountability, more bureaucracy, and increased costs to ratepayers.

### Privatization will lead to public service cuts, higher taxes

On average, B.C. Hydro returns between \$300 million and \$800 million in annual revenues to government. Those revenues go to pay for health-care, education, and other social programs. Privatizing

existing operations and relying on private power producers will reduce income available to government and lead to service cuts, higher taxes, or both.

### B.C. citizens oppose B.C. Hydro privatization

The provincial government never consulted with the people of B.C. before privatizing B.C. Hydro’s future. Polls consistently show that more than 80% of British Columbians oppose the sale of B.C. Hydro. And more than 60,000 British Columbians have signed a letter of intent supporting B.C. Citizens for Public Power’s class-action lawsuit to stop the privatization.

### B.C. municipalities want public power

In the past two years, more than 90 B.C. municipalities have passed resolutions opposing the end of public power. In 2002, the Union of B.C. Municipalities unanimously adopted a motion rejecting the transfer of B.C. Hydro operations to Accenture.

### Privatization will hurt the environment

B.C. Hydro has been banned by the provincial government from developing any new power projects, leaving all future generation to the private sector. That means B.C. will increasingly have more coal-fired, natural-gas-fired and wood-waste-burning sources of electricity, which create far more pollution than B.C. Hydro’s hydroelectric dams. And unlike a public utility, private companies have little incentive to conserve power. The opposite is true: the more they sell, the higher their profits.

### Privatization is leading to U.S. control

Plans are under way to have B.C. join RTO West, a “regional transmission organization” controlled by American corporations that will run Hydro’s transmission system. The RTO will decide how much to invest for electrical infrastructure, who has access, and how much will

be charged to transmit power. Even public power utilities in the United States, such as Seattle City Light, oppose the RTO West proposal, but the B.C. government thinks it’s a great idea.

### Privatization is costly to consumers

The cost of electricity privatization became well-known in the Enron scandal and the California blackouts. In a privatized system, large utility companies benefit by controlling the market and by making secret deals. Meanwhile, the public is on the hook for cost overruns and maintenance of transmission lines. Enron showed that a handful of private producers can create power shortages to inflate the price of electricity. During California’s crisis, publicly owned power utilities had enough power and kept prices fair, but customers of private energy corporations were hit with huge price surges and blackouts.

### Less regulation of power

In November 2000, Gordon Campbell told the Canadian Institute of Energy, “It’s critical that we restore the independence of the [B.C.] Utilities Commission to properly do its job on behalf of utilities and consumers alike without political interference.” Yet the government used new legislation to stop the BCUC from proceeding with a requested review of the Accenture takeover deal and refuses to make public the details of the multimillion dollar contract.

### Privatizing electricity in B.C. may be irreversible

Private power companies that produce electricity in B.C. will be protected by the North American Free Trade Agreement and other international trade deals, making it almost impossible to return to a publicly owned utility. The only way to get out of such agreements would be to buy back what was once ours and then compensate private corporations for “lost profits” they may have made in the future—an enormous financial cost.

— B.C. Citizens for Public Power, [www.citizensforpublicpower.ca](http://www.citizensforpublicpower.ca)



# When will the ministry step up to the plate?

by Murray Warren

**"M**aking our schools safer will take a fundamental shift in our school culture. Each of us must demonstrate a renewed respect for the diversity of our people. We have to ensure that the values and principles that are the cornerstone of Canadian society are honoured, respected, and taught in our school system." (Lorne Mayencourt, MLA, Vancouver-Burrard and chair of the Safe Schools Task Force report, "Facing our Fears—Accepting Responsibility," June, 2003)

Fine, lofty words, Mr. Mayencourt, and sentiments with which teachers wholeheartedly agree. However, words are often cheap and sometimes belie a reality that mirrors back to us situations that are less than flattering. A case in point is the unfortunate circumstances in which Azmi Jubran now finds himself. Here is Jubran's story.

The son of an immigrant family from Iran, Jubran entered Handsworth Secondary School, in North Vancouver, in 1993. He quickly became the target of homophobic bullying by students at the school and endured repeated incidents of physical and verbal harassment and assaults. At one point, in a classroom with a teacher present, some boys set fire to his shirt.

Jubran and his parents made complaints to the school administration, to little effect. Unable to endure his plight any longer, Jubran filed a complaint with the B.C. Human Rights Commission (which was dismantled by the Liberals shortly after they took power) against his school board and the school administration. According to the B.C. Human Rights Act, a person cannot be denied a service or facility customarily available to the public or be discriminated against on the basis of her or his sexual orientation.

The complaint was referred to the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal, and it ruled in Jubran's favour. He was awarded \$4,000, which the school board was ordered to pay, for his pain and suffering. The board subsequently sought the assistance of the Ministry of Education's Schools Protection Program, which provides legal and financial assistance to boards faced with litigation. The case was taken to judicial review at the Supreme Court of British Columbia, with Jubran having to bear the costs of his legal representation. At no point did the board deny the allegations against it.

The judge in the case overturned the Tribunal's decision, ruling that since Azmi Jubran is not gay, he couldn't have been discriminated against! The fact that Jubran endured repeated homophobic bullying seems to have been of little or no importance in the judge's ruling. The board, with the assistance of the ministry's Schools Protection Program, then sought costs against Jubran, and the court ordered him to pay the board \$7,500 in damages.

Faced with the prospect of having to pay the court-ordered costs to the board, plus a \$5,000 legal bill from his lawyer for the judicial review, Jubran has little choice but to contest the Supreme Court ruling in the B.C. Court of Appeal. The case is scheduled for later this year. (Jubran will not receive any of the award until the board's appeal is completed.)

Azmi Jubran's situation sends a deep chill through the public education system. The message his case sends to students who may have a legitimate and justified grievance about their treatment at school is that if you try to do anything about it, what happened to Azmi Jubran could happen to you.

The Safe Schools Task Force report makes copious references to the challenges faced by sexual-minority students, as well as those who are perceived to be so:

"In nearly every community visited by the Safe Schools Task Force, no matter how large or small, individuals made presentations about the issue of harassment and intimidation based on sexual orientation.

Presenters talked about their experience in the school system and the ways that homophobic discrimination had led to harassment and intimidation that made their schooling

difficult. Many gay and lesbian youth told us that they dreaded coming to school.

The task force members heard that even the perception of being homosexual or of being tolerant of homosexuality is enough to result in harassment and intimidation, including both emotional and physical abuse from those who choose to bully."

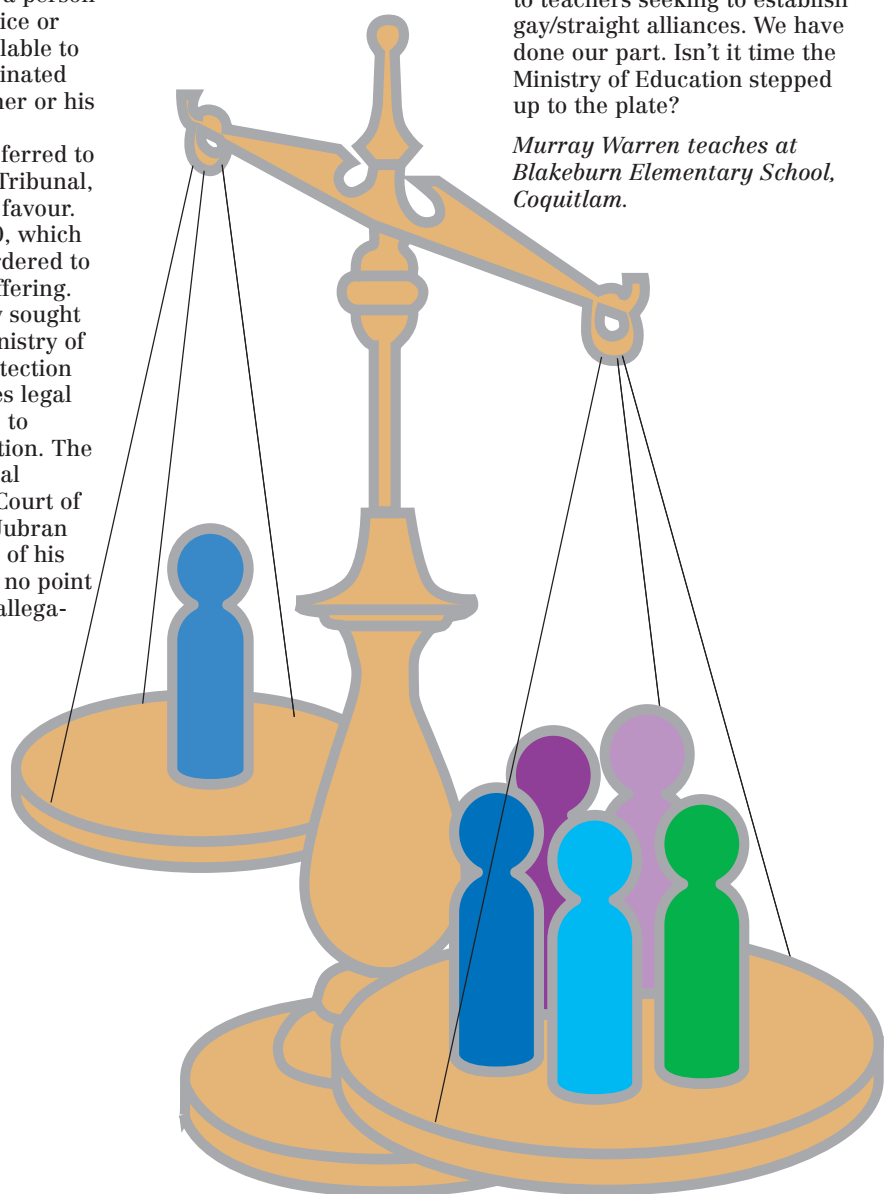
With plenty of evidence that homophobic harassment and bullying are widespread throughout the public education system, one might have reasonably expected the report's recommendations to address the issue head on. Search as you may, you won't find a single reference to it in any of the recommendations.

My partner and I have an outstanding human rights complaint waiting to go to tribunal, charging that the Ministry of Education has failed to make schools safe, affirming, and inclusive for sexual minority people and failed to make curriculum inclusive of their realities and has actively worked to suppress this from happening. At every turn, we have faced ministry obfuscation and delay in meeting its obligations to Azmi Jubran and students like him.

Lending ministry assistance to a school board through its Schools Protection Program to vindictively seek reprisals against a young man whose only goals were to seek justice and fair treatment makes a mockery of Lorne Mayencourt's words.

For the past six years, the BCTF has been at the forefront in Canada in combating homophobia in our schools, training professional development associates in anti-homophobia work, supporting the inclusion and affirmation of same-sex families in our schools, and offering assistance to teachers seeking to establish gay/straight alliances. We have done our part. Isn't it time the Ministry of Education stepped up to the plate?

*Murray Warren teaches at  
Blakeburn Elementary School,  
Coquitlam.*



## Mars La Semaine de la Francophonie: La culture, ça se célèbre

**E**n fait, ce sont deux semaines de la Francophonie car les activités et festivités se dérouleront du 7 au 21 mars partout à travers la francophonie canadienne. Quels sont vos projets d'école ? Quelles sont les activités prévues pour vos élèves ?

Chaque fin d'hiver, l'ACELF nous propose La Semaine de la Francophonie, un temps de ralliement pour tous les intervenants en éducation de langue française. C'est l'occasion de planifier une célébration de la culture francophone en sol canadien. Sous le thème 2004, « Toi, moi, tout un monde », l'ACELF invite les francophones et les francophiles à s'unir dans l'action.

Planifier sa participation à la semaine de la Francophonie offre une occasion de réflexion par rapport aux différents aspects de la culture francophone que les jeunes vivent dans tous les milieux de leur quotidien, à commencer par l'école. Pour bon nombre d'élèves, cette semaine est un moment privilégié car la culture francophone ne se vit pas régulièrement dans leur réalité sociale en-dehors des heures de classe.

Et voilà le dilemme : comment faire voir aux jeunes que la culture francophone n'est pas restreinte au milieu scolaire mais qu'elle se véhicule à l'extérieur dans la communauté et dans le quotidien de milliers de gens en Colombie-Britannique. La culture doit passer de l'abstrait au concret dans l'imaginaire des jeunes impliqués dans l'apprentissage de la langue française. C'est essentiel pour façonner leur identité culturelle en tant que francophone ou anglophone bilingue qu'ils comprennent le rôle essentiel que joue la culture francophone dans leur francité ou leur bilinguisme. Une constatation qui se produira dans leur esprit à un moment ou à un autre pendant leurs études scolaires seulement si les modèles humains sont là et les activités et manifestations culturelles sont multiples, variées et authentiques dans la mesure du possible.

L'intégration de la culture sous toutes ses formes dans le programme et la journée scolaire demeure un des meilleurs outils pour l'éveil, le développement et l'épanouissement culturel. La fréquence et la qualité de cette intégration dans le quotidien d'un établissement scolaire détermine la valeur de cette culture dans le milieu. Les interactions culturelles véhiculées soit par la parole des intervenants en éducation, soit par des représentations visuelles et artistiques dans le milieu scolaire, soit par des manifestations planifiées autant que spontanées contribueront à valoriser la culture francophone non seulement auprès des jeunes francophones mais aussi auprès des milliers d'élèves en français langue seconde.

Les moyens pour mettre en évidence la culture dans la salle

de classe sont nombreux. La culture peut être introduite formellement à l'aide d'outils tels que textes, manifestations artistiques ou des ressources informatisées. Dans ces situations d'apprentissage, l'objectif est clair : sensibiliser les jeunes à un élément culturel. Toutefois, cette culture de la classe demeure souvent dans la classe. Les élèves ne se l'approprient pas ; plutôt ils la vivent, le temps de l'activité. La tâche de l'enseignant, c'est de trouver les moyens d'enraciner ce vécu culturel chez le jeune. L'enseignant en français langue seconde a une obligation professionnelle énoncée dans le programme d'étude d'éveiller et de développer un intérêt pour la culture francophone.

L'enseignant au programme francophone, lui, a la responsabilité non seulement d'éveiller et de sensibiliser mais aussi d'accompagner le jeune dans son développement identitaire. Le but des activités et manifestations culturelles proposées en milieu scolaire doit viser l'engagement des jeunes francophones auprès de leur communauté et de la société et chez les élèves de français langue seconde, l'appréciation et le respect de la culture francophone.

La langue et la culture sont intimement liées. La langue est le cœur de la culture. Sans le soutien de manifestations culturelles constantes et variées, la langue s'affaiblit et à la longue se perd. L'école demeure le véhicule principal de transmission de la culture francophone pour les non-francophones et aussi pour un certain nombre d'élèves franco-colombiens. L'école est le lieu privilégié de la transmission des valeurs culturelles linguistiques et historiques que la société canadienne tient tant à cœur. Connaître la culture francophone, vivre cette culture, en être fier et la revendiquer n'importe où au Canada, voilà des responsabilités qui appartiennent non seulement au personnel enseignant dans les programmes en français mais aussi aux finissants francophones et bilingues de nos écoles secondaires.

Nous, le personnel enseignant, avons un double rôle, celui d'enseigner les matières au programme en s'assurant de rencontrer les résultats d'apprentissage touchant la culture ; mais aussi celui de transmettre aux jeunes francophones les valeurs de fierté et d'affirmation de leur francité et aux élèves de français langue seconde les valeurs d'acceptation et de respect à l'égard de l'autre langue officielle. La Semaine de la Francophonie est un moyen parmi tant d'autres pour vous aider à accomplir cette tâche. Célébrez avec enthousiasme !

### Synopsis

The importance of culture in first- and second-language education and the opportunity to celebrate the francophone culture during the national Semaine de la Francophonie

— Paule Desgroseilliers



# Teaching is a dangerous profession in Colombia

by Jacqui Birchall

Some 50 teachers are murdered in Colombia yearly. Others are kidnapped or are missing. On April 7, 2003, Luz Elena Zapata Cifuentes, a teacher, was violently extracted from the vehicle in which she was travelling and murdered by a death squad in Aserma. One day later, Ana Cecilia Duque, also a teacher, was executed by an ELN firing squad. On April 7, Evelio Germán Salcedo Taticuán was shot dead as he was walking home. Those are only three of many teacher deaths reported by Education International (EI), a Brussels-based organization representing

*Teachers are the targets of violence because of their influence in Colombian society.*

education personnel worldwide. For many years the persecution of trade unionists in general, but educators in particular, has been well known. Assassination, disappearances, beatings, and threats have become a regular occurrence. Teachers are targets of paramilitary groups rarely brought to justice.

Many colleagues have been assassinated. Hundreds have received written warnings that they are targets and will be killed from the paramilitary United Self Defense League. The sinister letters are distributed to the individuals and to the media, and some letters indicate that the government has been advised of the plan to kill “parasites.”

In some parts of the country, young pupils are recruited by the paramilitary and drug traffickers and trained to kill. The young killers, the “sicarios,” have threatened and on occa-

sion killed their teachers to prevent the teachers from revealing them. More than 200 teachers are in hiding. Threatened by the paramilitary, the guerillas, the army, the “convivir” (civil armed groups), or by the drug traffickers, the teachers have had to flee their homes and their jobs, often leaving family behind whose only support is whatever the teachers’ union, FECODE, is able to provide.

Teachers are the targets of violence because of their influence in Colombian society. They teach democratic values, they defend human rights, and they speak of a culture of peace, of a different way of life. They are often leaders in their communities. That is all it takes to make them targets.

FECODE (the Colombian Teachers’ Union) activists are targets, as are all the members of the executive committee of the union. A thousand teachers are internally displaced in Colombia, and the numbers are growing. All sectors of the education system are targeted—from preschool to tertiary teachers and education personnel. No group is exempt. Families are divided when teachers are forced to move to safety.

In some areas of the country, it is possible to be given a status that indicates authorities are

*Some teachers’ children have been murdered or tortured because the teacher has gone into hiding.*

aware an educator has to go into hiding. This helps teachers who must flee maintain some employment rights even though they are not on the job. Most, however, cannot stay in their

home villages long enough to get such status and sometimes as a result are also prosecuted for leaving their position without permission. Families are prosecuted when the prime target of the paramilitary group is in hiding. Some teachers’ children have been murdered or tortured

*EI asks teachers around the world to send letters of protest to the president and the minister of justice in Colombia with a copy to FECODE.*

because the teacher has gone into hiding.

EI asks teachers around the world to send letters of protest to the president and the minister of justice in Colombia with a copy to FECODE.

**The president:**

S.E. Dr. Álvaro Uribe Vélez, President de la República, Palacio de Narino, Carrera 8 no 7-26, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia. f: 571-566-20-78, [auribe@presidencia.gov.co](mailto:auribe@presidencia.gov.co), [rdh@presidencia.gov.co](http://rdh@presidencia.gov.co)

**The minister of justice:**

Sr. Fernando Londono Hoyo, Ministro del Interior y Justicia, Palacio Echverry, Carrera 8a no8-09, piso 2o, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia. f: 571-566-45-73, [miniterior@myrealbox.com](mailto:miniterior@myrealbox.com)

**The teachers’ union:**

Sr. Jorge Eliécer Guevara, Presidente FECODE, Carrera 13A no. 34-54, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia. f: 57-1-285-3245, [fecode@fecode.edu.co](mailto:fecode@fecode.edu.co)

Jacqui Birchall teaches at Fraser Heights Secondary School, Surrey, and is a member of the Teacher Newsmagazine Advisory Board.

## PD Associate leadership opportunity: Performance standards

The BCTF offers workshops on the B.C. performance standards. Associates are required in the following areas:

**Using Performance Standards for Reading/Writing:** 1 secondary, 1 elementary or middle school

**Using Performance Standards for Numeracy:** 1 elementary, 1 middle school

**Using Performance Standards for Social Responsibility:** 2 secondary, 1 elementary or middle school

Applicants should have extensive experience using performance standards in the classroom, a strong background



in reading and writing instruction, mathematics instruction, or social responsibility/social justice work, and successful experience in facilitating workshops for colleagues. Teachers selected as associates work as volunteers and are provided with release time and expenses to cover facilitation of workshops/presentations, assist with the development of workshop materials and resources, and must commit to facilitate workshops/presentations for three years, 5 to 10 days per year.

To apply, send a completed curriculum vitae form with

references to the BCTF Training Department, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2, F: 604-871-2293. The deadline for applications is March 12, 2004. For more information on workshop programs, contact Nancy Hinds, 604-871-1840, Toll free: 1-800-663-9163, [nhinds@bctf.ca](mailto:nhinds@bctf.ca)

Because the BCTF has an affirmative action policy, each applicant may wish to provide on a voluntary basis, the information as to whether he/she is male or female, a person of colour, a First Nations person, a person with a disability, or gay/lesbian.

## Privatization: Who wins, and who loses?

by Chris Bocking

I was fortunate to hear Seth Klein, from the Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives, speak in mid-November about the winners and losers in the provincial government’s push for privatization.

“We must fight against the TINA syndrome,” said Klein. TINA stands for “There Is No Alternative.” Right-wing governments traditionally repeat that message over and over, and now that it has been faithfully chanted as a regular mantra by the corporate media (*The Times-Colonist*, *The Vancouver Sun*, CTV, etc.). Many people take TINA as unalterable truth.

Klein pointed out that there are always choices in public-policy decision-making, and now that it is clear that the Liberal tax cuts (personal tax cuts of \$1.5 billion, and corporate cuts of \$790 million) have been a dismal failure, the Liberals are turning to the Olympics as a last resort.

Tax cuts tend to favour high-income earners, as illustrated by the fact that 0.4% of people making over \$200,000 received as much extra money from their tax cuts as did the half of the population making \$30,000 or less.

“There will be a small economic boost with the Olympics,” said Klein, “but the net cost to the taxpayer will be about \$1.2 billion.” Gordon Campbell and his Liberals seem to have become “Olympic Keynesians,” touting the many jobs that they think will be created by their public-spending plan.

In other words, they admit that public spending can be a powerful way to stimulate the economy, but they are willing to use that method only with their favoured projects, not with public education or the healthcare system.

Klein spoke about the dangers of *Public-Private Partnerships*, or *P3s*. They are simply a way for governments

to shift the initial cash outlay for building infrastructure projects (schools, hospitals, etc.) to private companies. While attractive in the short term for governments trying to appear fiscally responsible, the result is much more expensive, with the taxpayer footing the bill.

Private companies cannot borrow money as cheaply as governments can, and they need to build in a profit expectation. Governments will often guarantee a profit to the company involved and design the contract so that the public pays when anticipated earnings do not materialize.

Also, private companies try to achieve savings by firing people who are earning a decent wage and replacing them with people willing to work for drastically lower wages. Higher staff turnover and poorer service to the public result.

The largest cut that resulted from the government’s haste to reduce the size of government was in the Ministry of Human Resources. “Six-hundred million will be cut from this ministry.” The NDP did cut welfare rates in the mid-1990s, but the Liberals’ plan for a two-year time limit may result in thousands of desperate people on the streets this coming spring.

What can teachers do about this government’s obvious desire to sell off our publicly owned assets and favour its wealthy backers? The first step is always to become aware and to have the facts.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives publishes a monthly newsletter called *The Monitor*, which has a great deal of useful information that you will not find in the mainstream media. Supporting the CCPA as a member entitles you to the newsletter and allows the organization to continue with its progressive research.

Visit the CCPA web site [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca).

Chris Bocking teaches at Keating Elementary School, Saanich.

## Kids on the job: Back to old days?

One moment, Luke MacIver was sorting cardboard at Wastech Services, a Coquitlam recycling plant. The next he was dead, crushed under a pile of garbage when a dump truck driver failed to see the young worker. MacIver was only 15 years old, making him the youngest workplace fatality in B.C. in the last two decades.

“Luke holds the record. I don’t want to see anyone even younger get killed,” says his aunt, Deb Stead. In the eight years since the death of her nephew, Stead has had little reason to fear. Now, however, the B.C. Liberals have passed Bill 37, which lowered the minimum working age from 15 to 12.

The bill reduces government oversight of the province’s youngest workers. Before, the workplace of every child under 15 had to be inspected by a government official. Now, a 12-year-old could easily work under the same dangerous conditions that led to Luke MacIver’s death—the coroner’s report cited Wastech for overall deficiencies in training and supervision.

“There’s deregulation and then there’s unregulation,” says

Graeme Moore of Surrey, who worked for 21 years as an industrial relations officer for the Employment Standards Branch, quitting last year out of frustration with the Campbell government.

Since 1948, children 12 to 14 have needed permission from a parent, from their school, and from the Employment Standards Branch in order to work during the school year. Under Bill 37, all that is needed is a parent’s note to be kept on file by employers. Moore estimates that he and his colleagues turned down one in five work permits for youth under 15, while a further three in five were approved only after changes to the terms of employment.

Among the rejects, Bruce said, were applications to put kids to work as dirt-bike-riding scarecrows in a berry field bristling with unmarked wire at neck height, and to send a 12-year-old picking up garbage alone on the highway’s edge near Surrey. Parents had pre-approved every one of these altered or denied applications, Moore notes.

Excerpted from TheTyee.ca, November 24, 2003, [www.thetyee.ca](http://www.thetyee.ca)



# AGM 2004

## March 13–16, 2004

# Agenda

### FIRST SESSION

*March 13, Saturday evening,*

**7:00 p.m.**

- Welcome
- First Nations recognition
- Preliminaries:
- a. Adoption of chairpersons, scrutineers, tellers, resolutions committee
- b. Adoption of agenda
- c. Adoption of 2003 AGM Minutes
- d. Stewardship Report on 2003 AGM

### AGM

- a. Conduct guide
- b. Recommendation 3, Resolutions 102–104
- c. Briefing on procedures
- d. Adoption of advisory team

### President's report

Neil Worboys

### B.C. Federation of Labour

- Speaker
- Report
- Recommendations, Resolution 106

### Canadian Teachers' Federation

- Speaker
- Report
- Recommendation 7, Resolution 107

### B.C. School Trustees Association

Speaker

**9:30 p.m.**

Election statements from candidates for table officer positions

Call for nominations

**10:00 p.m.**

Adjourn

### SECOND SESSION

*March 14, Sunday Morning*

**9:00 a.m.**

- Leadership Report
  - Presentation
  - Recommendation

**12:15 p.m.**

Report on the Charter for Public Education

**12:30 p.m.—Lunch**

### THIRD SESSION

*March 14, Sunday Afternoon*

**2:00 p.m.**

- Political Action
  - Presentation
  - Recommendations 22–25

### Education Policy

- Recommendation
- Resolution 110

### Education Finance

- Resolution 109

### College of Teachers

- Resolution 108

**4:15 p.m.**

Report of the Executive Director, Ken Novakowski

**4:30 p.m.**

Election statements from candidates for members-at-large positions

Call for Nominations

**5:00 p.m.**

Adjourn

**5:00 p.m.–6:30 p.m.**

All candidates meeting—main ballroom. All delegates invited.

### FOURTH SESSION

*March 15, Monday morning*

**9:00 a.m.**

- Governance Report
  - Constitutions and By-laws
  - Recommendations 1–2, Resolution 101
  - Organization of the BCTF
  - Recommendation 21
  - Annual General Meeting
  - Resolutions 116–124

**10:30 a.m.**

Guest speaker

**11:00 a.m.**

- Social Justice
  - Report
  - Recommendation
  - Resolutions 134–136

**12:30 p.m. Lunch**

### FIFTH SESSION

*March 15, Monday afternoon*

**2:00 p.m.**

- Pensions
  - Report

### Health, Welfare, and Safety of Teachers

- Report
- Recommendations 17–20
- Resolution 113

### Professional Development

- Resolutions 125–128

### Public Affairs

- Resolutions 129–133

**5:25 p.m.**

Final call for nominations

**5:30 p.m.**

Adjourn

*Please note: An evening session will be scheduled if required.*

### BALLOT DISTRIBUTION

**March 16: 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.**

For one hour, the election tellers will distribute ballots, one pad for each voting card, in the Prince of Wales Room (on the Convention level). Each delegation is asked to assist by appointing one of its members to present all the delegation's cards, (including the LR cards) and to receive all its ballots individually.

No ballots will be distributed after the session has begun.

AGM Standing Rule 12.2 specifies that ballots will be given out only at the place and times specified on the agenda.

### SIXTH SESSION

*March 16, Tuesday morning*

**9:00 a.m.**

Elections

Guest speaker

### Bargaining

- Report
- Recommendations 4–6
- Resolution 105

### Teachers on Call

- Resolution 137

### Membership

- Resolutions 114–115

### TQS Report

**12:15 p.m.**

Committee Reports—Questions

**12:30 p.m.**

Lunch

### SEVENTH SESSION

*March 16, Tuesday afternoon*

**2:00 p.m.**

Finance

- Presentation on Financial Statements
- Recommendations 8–16
- Resolutions 111–112

### Presentations

Unfinished Business

Late Resolutions

New Resolutions

New Business

**5:15 p.m.**

Closing Courtesy Motion

**5:30 p.m.**

Adjourn

*Please note: An evening session will be scheduled if required.*

# Special resolutions

## Recommendation 18

That 13C (page 87) be amended as follows:

- a. a new regulation 13.C 11.8 to read: "The benefit shall be offset by the amount of a pension received under any registered pension plan."
- b. adding to 13.C 1.3 the words: "or, who is in receipt of a pension under a registered pension plan" after the words "factor 88."
- c. adding to 13C 19.4 (page 88) "(d) a pension received under any registered pension plan."

## Recommendation 19

That 13 C 3.10 be deleted and replaced with: "A member in receipt of benefits for more than 12 months shall provide proof of acceptance or denial of Canada Pension Plan benefits. A member who has been requested by the plan administrator to re-apply for, or to appeal a declination of Canada Pension Plan benefits, shall provide proof of acceptance or denial of such re-application or appeal. If the member fails to provide proof of the required application, re-application or appeal, as the case may be, the benefit shall be reduced by an amount equivalent to Canada Pension Plan disability benefits."

## Resolution 113

*From: Vancouver Elementary Teachers' Association*

That 13.C.11.2 (page 87) be amended to replace the words: "No adjustment of benefit attributable to increased salary shall be paid until the claimant has returned to work or sick leave for 20 consecutive days." with the words, "Benefits shall be adjusted to reflect any salary increase the member would normally receive from the salary scale in effect while the member is receiving benefits."

## Constitution and by-laws

### Recommendation 2

That the Constitution of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation be amended by:

- 1. Amending Purpose No. 4 by replacing the words "the foregoing objects" with the words "the purposes of the Federation" by replacing the words "the said society or corporation and any other society or corporations" with the words "the Federation and any other organization," by replacing the words "having objects similar to" with the words "having purposes similar to" and by replacing the words "this society or corporation"

with the words "the Federation":

*Purpose 4 as amended would then read:*

*"4. To provide for the enlargement of the scope of the purposes of the Federation by permitting an alliance or affiliation to be made between the Federation and any other organization having purposes similar to the Federation."*

- 2. Amending Purpose No. 7 by replacing the words "such other subsidiary services" with the words "such other services and programs";

*Purpose 7 as amended would then read:*

*"7. To organize and administer such other services and programs as the Annual General Meeting may from time to time order."*

- 3. Adding a further Purpose No. 13 as follows:

*"13. To safeguard teachers' pensions and act as joint trustee with respect to teacher pension funds."*

- 4. Adding a further Purpose No. 14 as follows:

*"14. To continue to develop programs of social responsibility, and to provide international assistance to educational organizations."*

- 5. Adding a further Purpose No. 15 as follows:

*"15. To promote the attainment of the purposes of the Federation by participation in educational, social, co-operative, electoral, political, economic, bargaining or other activity authorized pursuant to the by-laws of the Federation."*

## Recommendation 3

*Recommended by the Executive Committee and the Representative Assembly*

- 1. That By-law 6.1 be amended by adding "local presidents" after local representatives so that it would read:

"The representative assembly shall consist of the local representatives, the local presidents, and the members of the Executive Committee, but any decision at a meeting of the representative assembly shall be by vote of the local representatives only."

- 2. That procedure statement 25.B.02(2) be amended by adding a part (c) to read: c. "Local presidents as non-voting members, unless elected by their local as a local representative."

## Resolution 101

*Kamloops Thompson Teachers' Association*

That By-law 3.4 be amended by deleting:

"If two or more school districts amalgamate, the locals in those districts shall be supported by the BCTF as the locals determined the governance structures that best meet the needs of their members" and replacing it with:

*"If two or more school districts amalgamate and the locals in the newly amalgamated district operate with a single local collective agreement, the locals in those districts shall amalgamate to form a single local."*



## For President



**Jan Eastman**

We are a union whose members belong to the proud profession of teaching. How we represent ourselves is vital to our success. We can regain our role as the rightful voice of teachers, a credible authoritative voice, welcomed and believed. We can create member confidence and attract new members to activism.

This Federation too often seems remote to members. Instead, we can achieve our goals by representing teachers professionally, being politically and financially accountable to members, building relationships with like-minded unions and education partners, especially the Ministry, and developing intelligent strategic plans.

Most immediately, we must ensure that the College is a self-regulating professional body and that the current standards do not gain the status of bylaws.

Members want professional support that meets teachers' diverse needs and helps us find joy in teaching. We must halt the insidious takeover of teaching by a narrow definition of education, and provide real support to teachers.

Growing demands on locals require commensurate support. The sensitive balance between resources and support must be met respectfully, with real leadership.

I bring more than 30 years of activism, local, provincial,

national, international leadership experience. I believe in teachers and the job we do. I want members to say with pride, *"That's my Federation working for me."*

**EXPERIENCE:** *International:* Education International Executive Board, and chair of Status of Women Committee (3 yrs). *National:* Canadian Teachers' Federation President (2); President Designate (1); Vice-president (1); Board of Directors (10); CTF Trust Fund (2); AGM delegate (10). CTF National issues Ctee (4), Education development (2); Economic services (1). *Provincial:* BCTF 2nd Vice President (2); Executive Committee (8.5). BCTF EC rep to: Prov. Barg. Ctte (1); TF on Barg Structures & related matters; BCTF/CUPE TF on roles & resp. of teachers & teacher assistants; Negotiating team with admin union. Prov committees: Teacher personnel (6); Prof relations advisors'

ctte (mediation); Political action TF; Speaking to teachers-verbal skills; Prog for Quality Teaching; Labour liaison ctte; Charter challenge plaintiff; International solidarity. BCTF Administrative Staff (4) (PD-3, Field Service-1) *Local:* Delta TA-currently 1st VP & Barg chair; President (3); VP (3). Executive: Kitimat (4) Langley (4). Local cttee: Political action, bulletin, advocacy, status of women, Sign-up/certification co-ordinator, bargaining, PD, community action, teacher evaluation, liaison CUPE 1091, Violence-free Schools, advocacy for Public Education, communications.. AGM delegate 25+ yrs *Teaching:* Secondary Learning disabilities, Learning Assistance, English, Social Studies, English Second Language Grades 8-12, SFU faculty associate-PDP (2), Teaching assistant SFU. *Education:* B.A., Diploma of Education; M.A. (Educ.)



**Jinny Sims**

The commitment and strength shown by members in the College strategy must continue in our defence of public education and our social safety net. Solidarity and strength can defeat this government's agenda. I will continue strong leadership, one that is based on membership involvement and co-ordinated strategic action.

We must fight for our bargaining rights, intrinsically linked to teaching and learning conditions. We are a union of professionals that will not be silenced. We will be advocates for our profession and our students.

This is fundamental to our work, our goals, and our beliefs.

We will continue to work with our allies to focus on the devastating impact of education underfunding. We are not alone. We are making a difference.

We will work with others to address the social issues that affect the children in our classrooms, and help rebuild healthy communities.

I will draw on my strong background in bargaining, pro-d, social justice, and political campaigns to advocate for our members and students.

I look forward to the next year as we continue to build allies,

work within the B.C. Federation of Labour, with parents, students, and others who care about a strong and stable public education system and a just society.

I ask for your continued support.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* BCTF 1st Vice-president (2 yr), BCTF 2nd Vice-Ppresident (2), BCTF Executive member-at-large (1), CTF alternate (2), CTF delegate (3), CTF director (2), BCFed Education Committee (1), Ministry for Children & Families (3), Coalition for Public Education (3), Rehab Expansion (3), CUPE Liaison (2), Social Justice (3), PDAC (3), PSA/PSAC (3), Health & Safety (3), In-

come Security (3), Finance Ctte., Pensions, Summer conference workshop presenter/ facilitator, Advisory council of local presidents, pension plan training, Bargaining training; AGM delegate (12), LR (5), Bargaining council rep (2). *Local:* Nanaimo President (3), 1st VP (2);, Bargaining ctte. & neg. team (7), Grievance ctte. (6); S/W member & chair (3), ProD ctte. (2), Program Against Racism (2), Staff rep (10), Staff committee chair (5), member (15), Malaspina College partnership ctte. (2), EAC advisory board (4), Co-ordinator for multicultural curriculum (3), Facilitator for conflict resolution, *Teaching:* 24 yrs., English, social studies, counsellor. *Education:* B.Ed, UVic & Manchester, UK.

## For First Vice-President



**Irene Lanzinger**

At the heart of our work as teachers is the knowledge that public education is the foundation of a democratic society. One of the greatest threats to public education is the failure of governments to provide the funding necessary to meet the needs of students. We must continue our vigorous political action campaign to pressure the government on the issue of funding.

We strengthen public education through our work in professional development, collective bargaining and social justice. Through professional development we

improve teaching practice and learn how to better meet the needs of students. Teacher collective bargaining has helped meet the economic and professional needs of teachers and gain resources to improve teaching and learning conditions. Social justice activism helps to build a compassionate and just society.

We have had some success in the municipal elections, in the College of Teachers strategy and in the legal challenge to the stripping of our collective agreement. That success has been based on listening to each other, communicating clearly

and having faith in the strength of our members.

I would be proud to continue to work with members in our struggle for a strong and stable public education system.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* BCTF 2nd Vice-president (2 yr.), Co-chief Negotiator Bargaining Team (2000-02), Advisory council of local presidents (3), AGM delegate (8), Summer conference (6), Job action planning ctte., 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 Second Vice-President



**Susan Lambert**

The past year was tumultuous for teachers in B.C. The attacks on our profession and the deliberate attempt to undermine our credibility gave us the opportunity to assert our professional autonomy and collective voice. We debated issues of central concern to our profession and we have emerged the stronger for it.

Our integrity has seen us through. And so has our strategy.

I believe the strengths of our College strategy are its transparency, the degree of membership involvement, the nature of the lever we exerted, and our resolve. We have been

careful throughout to share all the information including the risks involved.

We held school visits, local and provincial meetings at each critical stage. Members directed the plan from the start. The decision to withhold our College fees was strategic, powerful, and practical. We understood the seriousness of the assault on our profession and we stood our ground.

We need to replicate these strengths in whatever we do as a union. I will always work for open processes that inform and involve members in meaningful decision-making. I am proud to

be a teacher and a member of the BCTF and I will do my best to defend our profession and strengthen our collective voice.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* BCTF Executive member-at-large (1 yr.); AGM delegate (20 yrs), Trainer/ facilitator in Namibia (8 sessions) and South Africa (1 session), Staff Rep Trainer (5 yrs), WOW facilitator, Summer Conference Participant and workshop presenter, BCTF OSD/PD Administrative Staff (4 yrs), Federation Appeals Board (2 yrs). *Local:* (Prince Rupert): Staff Rep (4 yrs), S/W Committee

(1 yr), Program Against Racism Chair (2 yrs), Bargaining Committee (1 yr); Communications Officer (2 yrs), Labour Liaison Officer (3 yrs). (Burnaby): Vice President (2 yr), LR (4 yrs), Leave of Absence Committee (2 yrs), Grade 7 Girls' Conference (1 yr), BTA Scholarship Committee (2 yr), Job Action Committee (1 yr). *Teaching:* 23 years—intermediate teacher, teacher-librarian, learning assistance, gifted education, special needs resource. *Education:* Honors English BA (SFU), PDP (SFU), Teacher-Librarian Diploma (UBC).



**Kathleen Thomson**

In the government's drive to turn education into a saleable commodity, it is teachers who have forfeited the most. Our collective losses are formidable: eradicated jobs; dismantled contractual and bargaining rights; and curtailed professional freedom instituted by a College dedicated to increased teacher surveillance and discipline.

Our federation—itself the target of government malice—has multiple responsibilities in its fight to restore funding and stability to public education. It must continue devising successful political strategies

and pro-active alliances with parents and citizens. Teachers' increased efforts to elect a government ruled by compassion rather than corporate ideals are critical and must be supported.

Political aims, though, must be counter-balanced by greater attention to teachers' immediate professional needs. Indifference to the union's purpose is real for many members. To counter this alienation, the BCTF must provide tangible improvements to teachers' working conditions by bargaining strategically, increasing support to large locals, and strengthening

influence over the new Education Minister and partner groups whose aims are antithetical to ours.

On my office wall a sign reads: "Never, never give up." If elected, I will dedicate my intelligence and foresight to serve teachers, and will never give up until B.C. teachers' rights are again honoured.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* BCTF Executive member-at-large (4 yrs.), CTF delegate (4), Staff pension plan advisory committee (2), Negotiations training, bargaining conference (2),

Summer conference delegate and workshop presenter (7), Chair Metro West zone council (1), AGM delegate (10). *Local:* President (7), Vice-president (1), Grievance panel (2), Staff Rep (5), Negotiations, job action, advocacy committees, etc. *Community:* Co-chair, Municipal planning/environment committees, SFU senate (2). *Teaching:* Secondary English, German, French (11), SFU TA (2). *Education:* BA, PDP (SFU). PhD courses and comprehensives.



## CANDIDATE'S STATEMENTS

## For Member-at-Large



Milan Boljuncic

"To foster and promote the cause of education, to raise the status of the teaching profession, and to promote the welfare of teachers in BC." – the original objectives of the BCTF have not changed significantly since the first AGM in Vancouver 87 years ago. What are also consistent are the oppressive governments who preach the virtue of education but deceive the public and teachers with "fiscal responsibility." Can we really equate children with products of a market economy?

Today's teachers continue to take pride in educating children, both in the classroom and

through extra-curricular activities. I believe that in order for the BCTF to remain relevant to activists and non-activists, we must continue to find ways for every Professional in our Union to have a voice. Our Federation needs to examine the values of both experienced as well as our beginning teachers.

We need to continue to advocate for a fully funded public education system as well as success for every child. I believe we need to continue to build and strengthen our ties with parents, labour, communities, and most importantly, our own teachers.

As a Member-at-Large I look forward to bringing new perspectives to our provincial body that strengthen the multiple interests of our membership.

**EXPERIENCE:**

School Staff Representative (4), School Staff Chair (3), School Planning Council Representative, NVTA Executive—Member-at-Large (2), Local Representative (1), Alternate Local Representative (2) Delegate, BCTF Annual General Meeting (5), Vancouver and District Labour Council Representative, Local Bargaining Committee,

District Counseling Review Committee, District Graduation Review Committee, School Health and Safety Representative, District Professional Development Committee, Joint District Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Committee. *Education:* Diploma of Liberal Arts (University of Zagreb, Croatia); B.A. (SFU); B.Ed. (UBC); M.Sc. (University of Oregon).



Linda Burkholder

These are critical times for teachers and for teaching as a profession. We have been under attack to an extent that we have never been before.

It is essential that we stand together. It is important that we deal with all the changes made to the College of Teachers, not just the issue of representation. As we begin a new round of bargaining, we must be committed to the restoration of full, free collective bargaining rights. Time to teach has never been so important. Teachers are buried under a workload that is crushing. At a time when class sizes are rising and support for

classroom programs has been drastically cut, administrators and the Ministry have added tons of bureaucratic garbage to teachers' workloads.

Professional autonomy is also being attacked. More and more, teachers are being told how they must teach.

Finally, the future of the BCTF—What kind of organization will it be? What services will it provide? These are crucial battles that need to be fought, problems that need to be solved and questions that need to be answered. If elected Member-at-Large, I pledge my time and energy to fighting the battles,

seeking solutions, and finding answers.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* Many years as a delegate to the BCTF AGM and BCTF Summer Conferences. Many years as a Staff Rep. *Local:* President, Local 59, Peace River South (5 yrs); Vice-President, PRSTA (5 yrs); PRSTA Bargaining Team (12 yrs); PRSTA Bargaining Chair and Chief Negotiator (7 yrs). *Teaching:* 32 years in British Columbia (grades K–7, and 10–12). *Education:* B.Sc. Ed., University of Texas @ Austin, 1971, U. of Calgary and UBC, Courses in School

Librarianship, U. of Lethbridge, currently working on Masters in Educational Leadership.



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 for reelection as a Member-at-Large.

The past three years of Liberal government have been difficult for teachers. We have worked hard to maintain a high standard of education in this province. The BCTF has initiated strategies to counteract the attack on our professionalism and our working conditions. Our strategies included direct membership involvement both at the provincial and local levels. We have recently seen

our strategies bear fruit in important wins, both in the courts, and in the recent announced change in the government's position regarding the B.C. College of Teachers.

Over the next year we must continue to build coalitions with others who support a quality public education system in BC. We must use our resources wisely in order to affect the changes we want politically and at the bargaining table.

Together, we can make a difference! Membership involvement keeps us committed and focused on our long term goals.

At the 2004 AGM I seek your

continued support to be a member of an Executive Committee that is receptive to membership concerns, and proactive in defending our important role in public education.

**EXPERIENCE:**

*Provincial:* BCTF EC Member-at-Large (3 yrs); CTF AGM delegate (3 yrs); CTF Director & Finance Committee (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 (12 yrs: 1981–82, 1983–85, 1995–2004); Bargaining Committee (19 yrs); Negotiating Team (3 rounds); Grievance Committee (16 yrs); Information Technology Steering Committee (6 yrs); *Teaching:* Physics/Science/Computer Science/Math (23 yrs BC); Science/Math (2 yrs ON); *Education:* B.Sc., B.Ed.



Ieke Giese

This has been a challenging years for ALL teachers in B.C. Our classes are bigger, support for our students is being dismantled, and schools continue to be closed.

Despite this, we need to celebrate. Our voices are strong and united, and some positive changes were made to the College. Because of teacher action, some of the stripped parts of our collective agreements have been returned. However, the fight is not yet over.

Now is the time for all members to become even more active in our Federation. With a

new Minister of Education, we need to ensure that our united voice regarding the underfunding of public education is heard. We must determine and control our own professional development as the true professionals that we are. We must maintain our professional autonomy. We must remain active in our role as a social justice union. We deal with social justice issues from the classroom to the international level. We must recommit, as devastating changes to our social safety net are enacted. Everyone will be affected by these changes.

I look forward to having the opportunity to work with BCTF members on these critical issues as we stand together and change the world.

**EXPERIENCE:**

*Local:* delegate to the BCTF (15 years), President of the North Vancouver Substitute Teachers' Association (3 years), chief staff rep (16 years), Bargaining Chair (1 year), member of Bargaining Committee (9 years), Status of Women Chair (5 years), Member-at-Large (3 years), Secretary (1 year)

*BCTF:* table officer of the Provincial Association of

Substitute Teachers (2 years), Social Justice Advisory Committee (3 years), co-chair (1 year), chair (1 year), local association representative to the BCTF RA (2 years), Staff Union Rep Trainer (4 years), Parent Presentations facilitator (4 years); *Teaching:* teacher-on-call (3 years), Kindergarten to Grade 7 (13 years) presently teacher-librarian (3 years)



Jim Iker

Our strength and passion comes from the work we do each day in the classroom, in the Local and in the Federation.

Continued membership involvement, and support for all locals is critical to a stronger BCTF.

We need to support members' needs in the classroom and defend our professional autonomy.

I believe in strong leadership that promotes democratic processes, seeks and listens to member input, and provides pro-active strategies and plans that help us achieve our goals and take back our profession.

Through our actions and unity we have achieved some real successes such as the "quashing" of the Rice stripping, our stand for a Democratic College, the Charter for Public Education and increased public support.

Together we can build on our successes and work toward restoring full and free collective bargaining. Through bargaining we need to improve learning and teaching conditions, and achieve a fair and reasonable salary increase.

We must advocate for full funding for a strong and stable public education system, the rebuilding of our social safety

net, and the election of a socially responsible government.

I ask for your continued support to work on your behalf as Member At Large.

I look forward to talking with you at the AGM about all the issues.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* Provincial Executive Member at Large (2 yrs); CTF AGM Delegate (1); Bargaining Mobilization Committee Chair (1); Provincial Bargaining Team member—1st 2 rounds of Provincial Bargaining GR/LR (12); AGM delegate (16); Local Presidents' Advisory Committee (2) Chair (1); BCTF

Interim Bargaining Structures Committee; Legislative Advisory Committee/team; Staff Rep Training; Summer Conference Participant (22). *Local:* President (12); Bargaining Chair (2); Chief Negotiator, Local Bargaining (all 3 rounds); Bargaining Committee; WLC Chair (2); Staff rep; District Health And Safety Committee Rep (4); EAP District Committee (10). *Teaching:* 21 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—UVic.



## For Member-at-Large



**Al Klassen**

This is a critical time for teachers in the public education system. After numerous setbacks, teachers have finally been able to demonstrate their resolve, and use that resolve to make their concerns about public education and their role as professionals known.

The BCTF will need effective leadership from every member of the Executive Committee in order to move forward with the issues that are causing so many challenges for our classroom teachers. The Federation must build stronger and more productive relationships with its members and with other

stakeholders in the public education system. Teachers are knowledgeable and dedicated professionals whose input must be heard by those who effectively control and shape public education in this province.

The Executive Committee needs a variety of perspectives and voices of reason. I offer my experience as the president of a mid size local, a classroom teacher and a person who takes a thoughtful, reflective and collaborative approach to problem solving.

Teachers have a number of important issues to be

addressed in the coming year. I am hopeful that my voice will be heard as part of the Executive Committee who will address these issues on behalf of all teachers in this province.

**Experience:** *Provincial:* ACLP (3 yrs.), BCTF AGM delegate (5 yrs.). *Local:* President (3yrs.), Vice-President (2 yrs.), Local Bargaining Chair (2 yrs.), Health & Safety Rep (2 yrs.), Member-at-Large (2 yrs.), Staff Rep (2 yrs.). *Teaching:* 11 years Secondary Technology Education. *Education:* B. Ed UBC, trades-BCIT (PVI). *Other:* 17 years Journeyman Ironworker/

Welder, General Foreman, Company Superintendent.



**Fran Robinson**

My fundamental principle is based on the belief that teachers are the BCTF. Teachers are responsible for making sure the Federation speaks and acts in ways determined through our democratic processes.

Teachers struggle to meet the needs of students and families who are suffering as a result of government social policy changes. The social responsibility teachers share enables us to speak out for public education and to advocate for change that makes a difference.

As we enter a bargaining year, teachers are concerned. Having been both a local

Bargaining Chair and President, I know first-hand what responsible collective bargaining is. We may not control this process, but we remain united. Our professional and economic concerns must be addressed so we can better focus on the needs of our students.

In spite of many adversities, we have successes to show for our collective commitments and decisions. The recent court ruling in our challenge of the Rice Arbitration, our determination in the face of the government-appointed College of Teachers and success of the Joint Trusteeship Pension Plan

demonstrate the collective strength of teachers. Support me, working for you, to put in force the resolutions and goals of the teachers of British Columbia.

### EXPERIENCE:

*Provincial:* BCTF Local representative (3 yrs). BCTF Pension Committee and TPP Advisory Committee (5 yrs): chair (1 yr). *Local:* Comox District Teachers' Association Executive (8 yrs): President (2 yrs), Past President (1 yr), Bargaining chair (2 yrs). CDTA staff rep (3 yrs); *Teaching:* 25 yrs at all levels. *Education:* Hon

BA in physical and health education, MAEd with counselling major.



**Kelly Shields**

The Pattullo, the Port Mann and the Alex Fraser are three different bridges which lead to Surrey. Like these bridges, my experience serving on the BCTF Executive Committee has shown me that there are different ways to get to the same place.

Working as a Staff Union Representative Trainer I have heard a variety of views from around the province. With the experience of coming from a large local, yet having the privilege of sharing with small locals, I have developed a deep respect for our diversity.

One of the most important bridges that we are building is

our outreach to the community, through Parent Presentations. We need to continue paving the way to solidarity and the provincial election by talking to parents, our families, friends and neighbours; building bridges to union and non-union alike.

The College has presented a number of roadblocks. The Executive has been united in providing leadership and negotiating each pothole along the way.

I am committed to casting my vote at the Executive based on principles and reflective of the network of roads which our members travel.

I ask for your support in re-electing me as a member at large.

**EXPERIENCE:** *Provincial:* Executive Committee Member at Large since November, 2003; Provincial Bargaining Team 2000-2002; Presidents' Advisory Committee 1994-1995; Judicial Council 1995 present; Local Representative 1996 present; School Union Rep Trainer current; Parent Presentation Facilitator current; RA Agenda Planning Committee current; AGM delegate (20 yrs); BCFed Education Committee current. *Local:* Surrey President (3); Acting President (6 mo); 1st

Vice President (1); 2nd VP (2); Grievance Officer (3-50%) (1-100%); Advocate for teachers at arbitration hearings; Grievance Committee (14); STARA Chair and co-chair (2); Staff Rep (9); WLC Committee (1); Political Action/Public Relations Committee (3). *Teaching:* 22 years teaching in Surrey, Primary Grades 1 and 2, Learning Assistance, Resource Room, Segregated Special Class, District Integration Support Teacher (current). *Education:* B. Ed in Special Education UBC, 1981, Early Childhood Education Diploma Capilano College, 1975.



**Val Windsor**

As a union of professionals, the BCTF purposes are clear: to promote the cause of public education, to raise the status of the teaching profession, and to promote the welfare of teachers. We are continuing the fight to save public education, thus raising the status of the profession by advocating for our students. There is another critically important purpose we must serve.

We must find a way to respond to the needs of the classroom teacher—one who may never be an activist but is no less important.

The BCTF will need to make a

number of difficult decisions with that teacher in mind. We must support, through bargaining strategies and processes, our members' bargaining priorities. We must represent the professional interests of our members. We must review recommendations of the Governance Review that last year's AGM directed be brought forward this year. Most organizations review all facets of their operations on a regular basis; especially in times of decreasing membership leading to shrinking resources and increasing costs.

I believe the BCTF must

continue to reach out to community and to government. The credible voice of teachers must be heard and I will continue to be an effective voice for teachers. I seek your support as a Member-at-Large.

### EXPERIENCE:

*Provincial:* Local Rep (9), BCTF AGM delegate (13), Judicial Council (3), Staff Rep Trainer (2), CTF AGM delegate (4), Organizing Committee CTF AGM Vancouver (1), G.A. Fergusson Award Trustee (5). *Local:* President (3), 1st Vice-President (3), 2nd Vice-President (3), Secretary (3), LR (8),

Bargaining Chair (3) and member (6), other committee membership: Health and Safety, Working and Learning. *Teaching:* 35 years in the profession, Grades 3-7. *Education:* BA, PBD, PDP SFU.



*North Okanagan-Shuswap Teachers' Association, (l-r) Richard Lonsdale (LR), Patricia Clough (LR), Neil Worboys (BCTF president), Lynda Nicholson (NOSTA president), Doug Brown (LR). Armstrong Teachers' Association and Shuswap Teachers' Association joined to form the NOSTA 83.*

## New locals



*South Okanagan-Similkameen Teachers' Union, (l-r) Ernie Millward (LR), Sherry Philpott-Adhikary (LR), Neil Worboys (BCTF president), Ray Pitt (SOSTU president). Keremeos Teachers' Association and Southern Okanagan Teachers' Association joined to form the SOSTU 53.*



# Improved pension seminars



**W**e've made some changes! With an ever-increasing number of teachers approaching retirement, we have been faced with the dual challenge of providing more information to a greater number of members.

To meet this challenge, the seminars have become a little more user-friendly, in that they provide more self-help information, they are over at

lunch time, and the afternoon is devoted to individual assistance.

As well, the presentation is now copied in the booklet for later reference.

To date, our feedback has included the following comments: "Really liked the revised format of the seminar." "Individual session is perfect." "I like the half day much better."

Check below for the schedule of remaining seminars.

— Arnie Lambert

## Pension planning seminars 2003–04

Our new and improved seminars now end at noon and staff will provide individual counselling following the seminars.

Seminars cover topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, purchase options, pension options, the pension estimators, and retirement information. Bring your personal pension information. Preregistration is not required.

Date	Location
March 6, 2004	Penticton, Penticton Lakeside Resort
March 6, 2004	Prince George, Inn of the North
March 27, 2004	Richmond, Abercorn Inn
March 27, 2004	Williams Lake, Overlander Hotel
April 3, 2004	Victoria, Holiday Inn
April 3, 2004	Fairmont Hot Springs, Fairmont H.S. Resort

# Pension Bulletin

from the Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees

## Teachers' Pension Plan contribution rates increase July 1, 2004

**T**he December 31, 2002, actuarial valuation report for the Teachers' Pension Plan was presented to the trustees on January 13, 2004. The report gives the trustees an assessment of the financial health of the pension plan and the changes in the plan-member and employer contribution rates that are needed to keep the pension plan financially healthy.

*...current unfunded portion is less than 3% of the total liabilities of the fund.*

The report is the first received by the trustees since the implementation of the joint-trust agreement of April 2001. Typically, an actuarial valuation report is prepared every three years.

The joint-trust agreement, established in 2001, provides that the plan members and plan employers share in all aspects of the management of the Teachers' Pension Plan—sharing the risks and rewards of funding the pension plan and sharing any increase or decrease in the contribution rates.

The trustees are pleased to report that the Teachers' Pension Fund remains strong financially with a relatively small unfunded liability of \$382 million. The current unfunded liability is down slightly from the unfunded liability of \$454 million at the previous valuation. To put this in context, the funded portion of the liability is \$13.2 billion; therefore, the current unfunded portion is less than 3% of the total liabilities of

the fund. The total liabilities of the fund are the funds required to pay current and future pension benefits as promised in the plan rules.

During the three years between valuations, the investment rates of return were 7.1% in 2000, –2.0% in 2001, and –5.1% in 2002. The good news is that those investment results were better than those obtained by the average pension plan or in investment markets generally over the same period of time. However, the results are disappointing when compared with expectations for the three-year period.

The changing economic conditions and declining market investment returns are the primary reasons the actuary has changed his economic assumptions for the future. Other factors have also put pressure on plan costs, including an aging

*Other factors have also put pressure on plan costs, including an aging plan membership and improving life expectancy.*

plan membership and improving life expectancy. The changes in economic assumptions will increase the amount of contributions needed to provide the promised pension benefit in the Teachers' Pension Plan. This is a fact that many pension plans are facing today.

As a result, the actuary has determined that an increase in contribution rates is necessary so that the pension plan will

maintain its financial viability and thus its ability to meet the pension promise made to plan members. The terms of the joint trust agreement state that the trustees are required to amend the pension-plan rules if they receive an actuarial valuation report concluding that an increase in contribution rates is

*...effective July 1, 2004, plan-member and employer contribution rates will each be increased by 0.55%...*

necessary. Therefore the trustees have decided that effective July 1, 2004, plan-member and employer contribution rates will each be increased by 0.55% as follows:

- Plan member:
- 7.55% of pensionable salary up to the YMPE\*, and
  - 9.05% of pensionable salary for salary in excess of the YMPE.

Employers:

- 10.68% of pensionable salary up to the YMPE, and
- 12.18% of pensionable salary for salary in excess of the YMPE.

\* Years' Maximum Pension Earnings (YMPE): the earnings on which you make Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions. The 2004 YMPE is \$40,500.

Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees, Pension Board Secretariat, PO Box 9460, Victoria, BC V8W 9V8, F: 250-387-4199, [Pension.Board@pensionsbc.ca](mailto:Pension.Board@pensionsbc.ca).

## Ten new BCTF lesson aids

**1 LA 2005 The Other American: North American History—1774–2001** by Eric Bonfield, 349 p. ©2003. This book fulfills all the learning objectives and themes of the Social Studies IRP for Grades 9 to 11. The book offers an 80-page critical thinking primer to support six themes and 30 critical thinking units. This full-indexed work also contains an ethical primer and an appendix of additional primary sources for classroom use. The book has been successfully field tested and has received praise from students and teachers. This textbook offers a thoughtful opportunity to critically examine the historical relationship between Canada and the United States. Grades 9 - 11 **\$69.95**

**2 LA 8080 Raising Readers** by Phyllis Mitchell, ©200 28 p. This unit is written by a teacher to offer parents a resource that will assist them to become fully involved in raising their children as readers. The unit includes suggested book titles for reading development, ritual, exemplary books, identification, literature, merit, and learning. The author offers tips for raising readers and for choosing books wisely. Ages 3–9 **\$3.50**

**3 LA 2097 Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is—A Fresh Look at Economics Through Agriculture** by BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, AgAware BC, Open Learning Agency, ©2002, 15-minute videocassette and 22-page handbook. Video follows host Ryan as he explores the hothouses and highways of agricultural production, distribution and marketing in B.C. Ryan delves into hot economic issues such as resource sustainability, branding, and international trade. Examining the economic cycle, viewers see how consumer choices have effects that reach far beyond the grocery store. Grade 11. **\$22.95**

**4 Fun Phonics** by Creative Teaching Press, Inc., ©1993, 24 p. These four illustrated resource books with accompanying CDs include a lively collection of poems, chants, songs and accompanying activities. Engaging themes, colourful imagery and game like activities draw the students' attention to the components of spoken and written language. Young learners quickly master basic phonics skills as they sing, dance, and move to the lively songs. Motivating movement games and related hands-on activities reinforce learning. Children make meaningful phonetic associations in the context of familiar, engaging text. Song lyrics can be reproduced to make student copies. Grades K–2

**LA 8076** Consonants \$14.95

**LA 8077** Short Vowels \$14.95

**LA 8078** Long Vowels \$14.95

**LA 8079** Blends and Digraphs \$14.95

**5 LA 8241 Rights, Roles and Responsibilities at School, Grades K–1** co-produced by The Critical Thinking Consortium and B.C. Ministry of Education, ©2002 109 p. The nine critical thinking challenges in this unit explore the responsibilities of various school roles, including students' own responsibilities. In the introductory section on needs and wants, students learn to recognize what is needed for different objects to work, activities to take place and people to function. They then consider their most important learning needs at school and the responsibilities they and others have to ensure that these needs are met. In the final challenge, students monitor and assess how well they meet their responsibilities to themselves and to others. **\$15**

**6 LA 9314 Explorers of Canada** by Sonja E. Schild, 2002, 71 p. This book includes worksheets, maps, an evaluation form, an answer key. It is reproducible and suitable for elementary students, ESL students, home schooling and special needs students. The first half of the book teaches students the most important discoveries and achievements of the explorers by using maps, charts and illustrations. The second half of the book reinforces and tests students by using pictures, games, maps and word-search puzzles. Brainwork sections require research and encourage creative thinking and problem solving. The following explorers are profiled in the book: Leif Ericsson, John Cabot, Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Henry Hudson, Henry Kelsey, Pierre La Vérendrye, Anthony Henday, Samuel Hearne, Alexander MacKenzie, George Vancouver, Simon Fraser,

David Thompson, John Franklin, Roald Amundsen and Henry Larsen. Elementary **\$24.95**

**7 LA 9323 The Resourcefulness of the Inuit, Grade 4** Co-produced by The Critical Thinking Consortium and B.C. Ministry of Education, ©2002 167 p. The 11 critical thinking challenges in this unit celebrate the cultural uniqueness and resourcefulness of the Inuit, both past and present. Students infer from drawings how the Inuit traditionally met their basic needs and the challenges they faced. They then examine modern-day life and what we can learn from the Inuit. Included in these activities is a simulated general store where students purchase the clothing and supplies needed for a trip to the Arctic. Three supplementary literature-based challenges further explore the resourcefulness of the Inuit. **\$15**

**8 LA F2227 Apercevoir l'arc-en-ciel** ©2002, 135 p. Document préparé par la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants. Ce nouveau document captivant présente aux éducatrices et éducateurs canadiens un survol des contextes sociopolitiques dans lesquels le milieu éducationnel a traité, traite et devrait traiter les questions relatives à la bisexualité, à la bispiritualité, à l'homosexualité et au transgenreisme. La première section du document donne des RENSEIGNEMENTS détaillés, et notamment des stratégies par lesquelles les enseignantes et enseignants ainsi que les communautés scolaires peuvent aborder l'homophobie et l'hétérosexisme et faire des écoles des milieux plus sécuritaires pour les élèves, le personnel et les parents. Cette section contient également des plans de cours et des activités pour les élèves et le personnel. La deuxième section du document comprend des HISTOIRES émouvantes d'éducatrices et d'éducateurs canadiens de diverses régions du pays. Ces histoires sont empreintes de conseils et d'encouragements. Finalement, la troisième section présente des RESSOURCES et contient des listes détaillées de matériel pédagogique, d'organisations intéressées à la question ainsi que de livres et de vidéos à l'intention des élèves et du personnel enseignant. Par Teacher. **\$18.50**.

**9 LA 9545 Coastal Creatures** produced by Engaging Science, a joint venture of the H.R. Macmillan Space Centre, Science World BC, and the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, ©2002 39 p. This resource package explores how bizarre and wondrous animals and plants thrive in British Columbia's rich coastal waters. Includes fun and easy hands-on classroom activities to get "up close and personal" with fish, investigates the lifestyles of the tiny and planktonic, and models how whales communicate. Students will discover how much can be learned about animals by relating their form and function, and grasp the animals' connections to each other, to their ecosystems and to themselves. Grades K–7 **\$11**

**10 LA S63 Beach Explorations** by Gloria Snively. This resource guide enables any teacher—beginner to expert—to help students understand basic seashore ecology. How is a surf-swept sandy beach different from a protected sandy beach? How is a mud flat different from a salt marsh or an estuary? This resource book teaches students basic marine ecology concepts: habitat, tidal cycle, predator and prey, microscopic plankton, life cycles, food relationships, limiting factors, adaptation, succession, zonation, and above all, conservation. Students develop basic inquiry skills, including how to collect and identify plankton, use microscopes, conduct beach studies, keep a field notebook, and much more. Besides a glossary of illustrated terms, this resource book contains 39 blackline masters for making transparencies and 15 students worksheets. Grades 5–10 **\$34.95**

Many curriculum resources and information are available at [www.bcalmer.ca/](http://www.bcalmer.ca/).

For a complete listing of over 1000 BCTF Lesson Aids, consult the catalogue in your school library or the Lesson Aids online catalogue. [bctf.ca/LessonAids](http://bctf.ca/LessonAids)

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





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## Yours for the asking

**Too close to home: Anti-Semitism and Fascism in Canada, 1930s-1940s, Discovery Kit**

This new resource provides students and teachers with primary source materials from Canada in the 1930s and 1940s, including newspaper articles, letters, diary entries, photographs, cartoons and propaganda materials, which address the issues of anti-Semitism, Fascism, Nazism, propaganda and immigration in Canada during the Holocaust. Kit contains 40 artefacts and a study guide. Cost \$20.

For information or to purchase contact: Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre  
50-950 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 2N7, ph: 604-264-0499, f: 604-264-0497, [info@vhec.org](mailto:info@vhec.org), [www.vhec.org](http://www.vhec.org).

**March is Nutrition Month**

This year's theme of "Eat Well, Play Well" is focussing on healthy eating and physical activity for school-aged children and youth.

It's a great time to foster healthy living habits with Mission Nutrition\*, a fun, interactive and easy resource to teach kids about nutrition, physical activity and positive self-esteem. Mission Nutrition is an engaging program that supports teachers with curriculum-based lesson plans and entertaining activities that target four grade levels:

Kindergarten-Grade 1, and Grades 2-3, 4-5, and 6-8. The age-appropriate classroom activities include fun and interactive games, songs, puzzles, science experiments, and activity sheets.

Mission Nutrition is a joint initiative of the Dietitians of Canada and Kellogg Canada Inc. The program was created by Canadian dietitians, with input from teachers and leading experts in physical activity, psychology, and health education.

The free, bilingual resources are available online at [www.missionnutrition.ca](http://www.missionnutrition.ca) or by calling 1-888-453-6374.

### Free business ed programs and materials

Junior Achievement of British Columbia is a not-for-profit organization committed to inspiring and motivating B.C.'s children and youth to take an active role in their future through business education. JABC currently runs the following programs for students in Grades 5-12.

- Business Basics Grades 5 and 6
- Dollars with Sense, Grade 8
- Economics of Staying in School, Grades 9 and 10
- The Company Program: A Student Venture, Grades 11 and 12
- JA Titan, Grades 11 and 12.

Visit the Programs section of the web site at [www.jabc.org](http://www.jabc.org) or call 604-688-3887 for further information or to register your class for a program.

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## Earth Day: April 22

The Environment and Plastics Industry Association (EPIC) is asking students across Canada in Grades 4, 5, and 6 to create a new plastic product using discarded plastic items. The "Let's Reuse It!" design challenge began in September with entries being accepted until Earth Day, April 22, 2004.

One winner will be chosen from each Grade and the three classes will each receive a free

microscope. Each student in the winning class will also receive a free litterless lunch kit.

Complete contest details are available at [www.plastics.ca/teachers](http://www.plastics.ca/teachers). To order copies of the poster, contact [rgauwin@cpia.ca](mailto:rgauwin@cpia.ca) with the words "contest poster" in the subject line.

To find out more about the free teaching resources, visit the Teachers' Resource area at [www.plastics.ca/teachers](http://www.plastics.ca/teachers).









# CLASSIFIED

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**WHISTLER** waterfront 1 bd. fully stocked condo. Newly renovated, cozy & bright. 3 min. drive to village. Sleeps 4, Carol 604-209-7220.

**BLACKCOMB** Luxury, sleeps 4. ski in/ out. 604-929-6589, [www.at-blackcomb.com](http://www.at-blackcomb.com)

**FRANCE** privately owned, beautiful furn. 1 bd. central Paris; Provence lovely furnished house close to Avignon. Wkly/monthly. 604-738-1876 or 604-298-3904, [ir\\_roland@hotmail.com](mailto:ir_roland@hotmail.com)

**WHISTLER** Alta Lake, waterfront, 1 bd. condo, 1 km to village, sleeps 4, F/P, TV/ VCR, summer/winter rates 604-298-2070.

**WHISTLER GETAWAY** Pinecrest Estates, 5 bd. 1400 sq.ft. cabin. sauna, deck with BBQ, fully equip. kitchen. D/W, W/D, wood stove (wood provided). Rates from \$170/nt. (seasonal). [glush@shaw.ca](mailto:glush@shaw.ca) or Jill or Gerry 604-936-3346.

**TOFINO** Chesterman Beach across the street. Cozy cottage, fully equip., avail. year-round, \$100/night (seasonal), \$80 off season. 604-581-3178.

**SUNSHINE COAST** (Halfmoon Bay) cozy cedar cottage, sleeps 4-6, fantastic ocean view, F/P, BBQ. Call 604-885-7606 or [www.blackberrycottagebc.com](http://www.blackberrycottagebc.com)

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**BLACKCOMB** Luxury 2 bd./loft, 3 bath, sleeps 7, ski-in/out. 604-940-0156.

**LONG BEACH** Furnished 2 bd. suite, sleeps 6. Pets on approval. Near Uduellet, 10 min. drive from Pacific Rim Park. 250-726-2311, [www.island.net/~s-kayak](http://www.island.net/~s-kayak)

**WHISTLER** 1 bd. condo (Whistler Creekside) sleeps 4, F/P, hot tub, swimming pool, sauna. Kitchen fully equip. Undergr. parking. Close to lift and stores. Call early to book and avoid disappointment. Call Jan at 604-530-0958.

**MAYNE ISLAND** Sunny retreat, 2 bd. & loft, fully equipped, N/S, 1 blk. from Dinner Bay Park. Call 604-264-1855, 604-838-5995.

**WHISTLER**, Alta Lake Getaway. Tranquility, only min. from the village. Sleeps 6, F/P, canoe. Call 604-850-1017 or 604-941-7302. Visit [www.members.shaw.ca/ruhl](http://www.members.shaw.ca/ruhl)

**WHISTLER TOWNHOUSE** Sleeps 8, fully equip. 604-985-7669 or Gary 604-669-7212.

**SAN JOSE DEL CABO** Two 1-bd. condos for rent. On golf course. 5 min. walk to beach. 250-724-0893, 250-723-4737.

**WHISTLER** Creekside townhouse for rent. Sleeps 8, 2 baths, view of Alpha Lake. 604-535-3447.

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**QUALICUM BEACH.** Dandelion Cottage. 1 bd., full kitchen, private suite, Cozy & comfortable, peaceful, near beach. Winter wkend specials, wkly & mthly rates. 250-752-5127 [www.geocities.com/dandelioncottageca/](http://www.geocities.com/dandelioncottageca/)

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**WHISTLER** condo. Sleeps 4, views, close to village, all amenities. 604-943-9423.

**TIBET** cultural trek/tour. 30-days July 2004. Small group. Nepal, Mt. Kailas, Lhasa, Katmandu. [www.facetofacetraveltours.com](http://www.facetofacetraveltours.com) 250-247-7652.

**GABRIOLA COTTAGE** Private, 2 bd., sleeps 6, kitchen, yard, sandy beach access, ideal for young children, N/P, N/S. \$725 wkly. Call 250-247-9883, E-mail [boysen@shaw.ca](mailto:boysen@shaw.ca), [www.gabriolacottage.net/firms.com](http://www.gabriolacottage.net/firms.com)

**EDUCATORS B & B TRAVEL NETWORK** \$34 a night for two! 6,000 B&Bs worldwide. Educators hosting educators since 1986. "A great service, we were overwhelmed by the kindness and hospitality of our hosts!" David & Alice, both professors, Halifax, NS. See our complete membership directory and join on-line at [www.educatorstravel.com](http://www.educatorstravel.com) Box 5279, Eugene, OR 97405, 1-800-377-3480. Fun, Friends, and adventure with fellow educators!

**KELOWNA** Executive lakefront house, downtown, fully equipped, private dock, boat lift, sleeps 6-8, quiet area, avail. year round, [ManhattanPointVacations@shaw.ca](mailto:ManhattanPointVacations@shaw.ca), 250-762-8138.

**BOWEN ISLAND** Country home avail. Spring Break (Mar 6-20) and Summer (daily, wkly, mthly) View, BBQ, quiet, near beach, ferry. Ideal for day trips and relaxation. 604-947-9813.

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**BIG WHITE CONDO** available for Spring Break, March 25-26. 1 bd. Great rates. 250-769-9316 or [keith.reid@shaw.ca](mailto:keith.reid@shaw.ca)

**TRAVEL DEALS FOR TEACHERS** [www.memberstravel.ca](http://www.memberstravel.ca)

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**OKANAGAN** Vacation home, 2 bd., spectacular view, lake, beach, 0.7 acres, fully equipped, covered deck, laundry, min. from golf, tennis, 12 wineries. Rent by week July/August \$875. 250-498-4539.

**LOOKING FOR VACATION HOMES?** Visit beautiful Quadra Island. From cozy cottages in the woods to waterfront homes, check our choices [www.quadraislandvacationrentals.com](http://www.quadraislandvacationrentals.com)

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**WHISTLER** 1 bd. condo in Creekside area. Very affordable rates. Comfortable sleeps 4. Call 604-209-7027 or e-mail [jo-anne.hibbert@telus.net](mailto:jo-anne.hibbert@telus.net)

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**VICTORIA** BC fully equipped 1 bd. condo nestled between downtown and Cook Street Village facing Beacon Hill Park. [www3.telus.net/victoriacondo](http://www3.telus.net/victoriacondo) or 1-866-222-0406

**VICTORIA** Teacher couple from Edmonton, neat, N/S, seek housesitting or home exchange near UVic, July-Aug. Have 2-year-old child. References 780-485-2588.

**KITSILANO** house, 3 bd. plus 2 bath, garden. Avail. Aug. 1 to Dec. 20, \$1400/mo. N/P, close to UBC. 604-738-1876, e-mail: [ir\\_roland@hotmail.com](mailto:ir_roland@hotmail.com)

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## RESOURCES

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**MANUAL FOR PARAGRAPH & ESSAY WRITING** Designed for teachers/parents of weaker or remedial students. To order, send \$10.75 plus \$1.60 postage to Avstan Publications, #18, 8533 Broadway St., Chilliwack, BC V2P 5V4. Ph/Fax: 604-792-0839.

**SCIENCE ACTIVITIES** for the visual learner. Designed for Junior Science and Senior Biology in B.C. To order, phone 604-852-0923 or e-mail [davidhague@uniserve.com](mailto:davidhague@uniserve.com), [www.visuallearner.ca](http://www.visuallearner.ca)

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## MISCELLANEOUS

[www.localtutorlink.com](http://www.localtutorlink.com)

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**TEACHERS** work online. \$500-\$2000+ PT/FT, [www.agoldmineonline.com](http://www.agoldmineonline.com)

**FOR SALE.** 1998, 25' Aerolite family trailer. V.g. condition, sleeps 6, bunks, fully equipped. One family owner. \$13,500. Surrey 604-535-3447.

**LIVE IN THE GULF ISLANDS!** Beautiful retirement environment on Gabriola Island! Easy access. Only 20 min. from Nanaimo. Visit online at [www.realestate-gabriola.com](http://www.realestate-gabriola.com) to see for yourself! Buy now, retire later! Email: [jheira@realestate-gabriola.com](mailto:jheira@realestate-gabriola.com) or phone 1-800-205-8080. Jheira Springford, Coast Realty (Gabriola Village).

**NEW CARS & LIGHT DUTY TRUCKS** for teachers to purchase at the lowest dealer cost. All factory incentive programs can be arranged. All vehicles will be registered to you, the purchaser. The New Car Purchase Plan for BC teachers was established in 1973 by Robert Montgomery. Call toll free 1-800-307-4808 or send a fax to 1-888-307-1230. Give me your best price and I will better it. That is a promise!

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**FOR SALE** Thriving, unique, Canadian children's wholesale book business. Contact PO Box 177, Saanichton, BC V8M 1A0.

**REUNION LORD BYNG GRADS OF '64** 40th Anniversary Reunion, Sept. 11 & 12, 2004. See information and list of missing grads on our web site [www.ethosevents.ca/lb64reunion](http://www.ethosevents.ca/lb64reunion) or contact Maureen MacDonald at 604-871-1891.

**MISSING HEIR** Johann Olaf Baumgartner, late of Salt Spring Island, BC, died September 25, 2002. It is believed that Mr. Baumgartner may have left a daughter who would have been born in the early 1950s. If you believe you are, or know of, this individual, please contact: Estate of Johann Olaf Baumgartner, c/o #1-105 Rainbow Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V5.

For information on advertising, go to [bctf.ca/ezine](mailto:bctf.ca/ezine) or contact Kathleen Smith at [newsmag@bctf.ca](mailto:newsmag@bctf.ca)

# PD CALENDAR

## MARCH 2004

**4 Prince George. B.C. Primary Teachers' Association (BCPTA) regional mini-conference featuring Kim Sutton: Critical Math Content, Vanbien Training and Development Centre.** Contact Sandra Hugget [shugget@sd57.bc.ca](mailto:shugget@sd57.bc.ca).

**6** Victoria. Teaching Respect and Responsibility: Ten Tools for Success using the proven methods of The Virtues Project to train children to be caring, courteous, and socially responsible, Victoria Truth Center, 1201 Fort Street. Contact instructor Nancy Watters, phone/fax: 250-746-3626, [VirtuesConsulting.com](mailto:VirtuesConsulting.com).

**11-12 Vancouver. Special Education Association (SEA) Conference, Crosscurrents 2004, keynote address by B.J. Wise (Difficult Students: What's a Teacher To Do?), Westin Bayshore & Conference Centre.** Contact Madeline Pohlmann, [madelinep@fnesc.bc.ca](mailto:madelinep@fnesc.bc.ca). Registrar is Liz Sparling, [sparw@telus.net](mailto:sparw@telus.net).

**12** Burnaby. Anxiety in Children and Adolescents, a BC/CCBD conference examining therapy at home and school and also examining anxiety in children from a family-system perspective, with Dr. Lynn Miller, UBC, and Stephen Fraser, R.C.C., Burnaby Executive Inn, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., \$80. Contact 604-601-3228, [anxietywork@hotmail.com](mailto:anxietywork@hotmail.com).

## APRIL 2004

**2 Kelowna. LATA Spring Conference 2004 with Trevor Calkins, creator and author of Power of Ten, an innovative and creative approach to teaching and learning how to use numbers, Grand Okanagan Resort and Conference Centre.** Contact Brenda Bell, 713 Nahanni Place, Kelowna, BC V1V 1N5, [bellbg@shaw.ca](mailto:bellbg@shaw.ca), f: 250-860-4526.

**20-24** Victoria. B.C. Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy, offered by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia to 15 selected B.C. teachers to spend 3.5 days at the Parliament Buildings participating in parliamentary democracy. Discover your Legislature. Contact Public Education & Outreach, 250-387-8669, or visit [www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca) and click on Public Education & Outreach. Application deadline is January 15, 2004.

**22-24** Penticton. MYABC Connections 2004, Middle School Educators Conference. Visit [www.myabc.bc.ca/connections2004](http://www.myabc.bc.ca/connections2004).

**25-27** Victoria. Focus 2004, Leaders & Healers II, Reaching Success Through Adversity, Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Barbara Smith, 250-598-1039, f: 250-598-2368, [barbarasmith@focusconferences.com](mailto:barbarasmith@focusconferences.com), [www.focusconferences.com](http://www.focusconferences.com).

**28-29** North Vancouver. Fast Forward 2004-Educational Media Showcase. Preview and evaluate the latest in educational videos, DVD, and multimedia programs on a wide array of subjects. Capilano College, Sportsplex, North Vancouver, BC. Contact Susan Weber, 604-323-5533

## MAY 2004

**1** Vancouver. Investigating Our Practices 2004, 7th Annual Conference. Teachers from different educational contexts convene at UBC to share their investigations, understandings, and questions, Neville Scarfe Building, UBC. \$20 (students \$10) includes refreshments and lunch. Contact Judy Paley, 604-822-2733, [judy.paley@ubc.ca](mailto:judy.paley@ubc.ca), [oop.educ.ubc.ca/wcs/c\\_investiprac.html](mailto:oop.educ.ubc.ca/wcs/c_investiprac.html).

**6-7** Vancouver. All Together Better Health: Progress in Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice, an international conference for health practitioners and academics to enhance knowledge and skills, share innovations, deepen understanding of positive outcomes, and determine future directions for collaborative research. Coast Plaza Hotel & Suites. Contact Heather, 604-822-2801 f: 604-822-4835, [ipsec@cehs.ubc.ca](mailto:ipsec@cehs.ubc.ca), [interprofessional.ubc.ca](http://interprofessional.ubc.ca).

**7** Kitimat. B.C. Primary Teachers' Association (BCPTA) regional mini-conference featuring Trevor Calkins: Power of Ten, Nechako Elementary School. Contact Margaret Sanou, [hsanou@telus.net](mailto:hsanou@telus.net).

**7-8** Richmond. Catalyst 2004, B.C. Science Teachers' Assn. (BCScTA) conference for K-12 science educators, Vancouver Airport Conference Resort. Keynote by James P. Delgado, executive director, Vancouver Maritime Museum. Contact Tim McCracken, 604-668-6430, f: 604-668-6132, [tmccracken@richmond.sd38.bc.ca](mailto:tmccracken@richmond.sd38.bc.ca), or Karen Morley, f: 604-582-7956, [morley\\_k@fc.sd36.bc.ca](mailto:morley_k@fc.sd36.bc.ca), [bctf.ca/BCScTA](mailto:bctf.ca/BCScTA).

**13-15** Ottawa. CTF National Conference, Moving from a Cult of Testing to a Culture of Professional Accountability. Plenary sessions by Alfie Kohn, Ken Leithwood, Lorna Earl and Anne Rodrigue, Andy Hargreaves, and Lise Charland. \$428 includes continental breakfasts, lunches, materials, and GST. Reduced-rate hotel reservations at Ottawa Marriott (1-800-853-8463). Visit [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

**21** Kamloops. Off the Beaten Path: New Directions in Language Arts, B.C. Teachers of English Language Arts (BCTELA) Regional Conference, Normark Secondary School. Many workshops within four strands: media literacy, poets in the classroom, speechcraft, and global education & social justice. Contact Dave Ellison, 250-542-3361, [davidaellison@hotmail.com](mailto:davidaellison@hotmail.com).

## JULY 2004

**5-7** Victoria. Geotechnology Institute for Grade 6-12 teachers interested in learning, or advancing their understanding of, Geotechnology (GIS, GPS, Remote sensing [satellite imagery], digital images, file management) for use in the classroom, St. Michaels University School. Contact Lindsay Thiery, 250-370-6117, [EdExtension@smus.ca](mailto:EdExtension@smus.ca), Cheryl Murtland, [cmurtlan@smus.ca](mailto:cmurtlan@smus.ca), or Kirsten Davel, [kdavel@smus.ca](mailto:kdavel@smus.ca), [www.smus.ca/programmes/extension](http://www.smus.ca/programmes/extension).

**12-14** Creston. Assessments for Career Choice and Job Success, a series of assessments to assist practitioners to understand themselves and therefore better understand the students they work with (includes minor assessments for students' self-discovery), College of the Rockies. Includes a catered lunch and tour of Creston Valley Wildlife Centre. Contact Rand Archibald, [rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca), Kathy Tompkins, [ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca), 250-428-5332.

**19-21** Creston. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, a workshop with Barbara West on understanding FAS, planning effective interventions, rethinking behaviours, and planning for a useful future, College of the Rockies. Includes a catered lunch and tour of Creston Valley Wildlife Centre. Contact Rand Archibald, [rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca), Kathy Tompkins, [ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca), 250-428-5332.

**26-28** Creston. Building Self-Management Skills, exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal skills for working with students, family, and co-workers, College of the Rockies. Includes a catered lunch and tour of Creston Valley Wildlife Centre. Contact Rand Archibald, [rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:rarchibald@cotr.bc.ca), Kathy Tompkins, [ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca](mailto:ktompkins@cotr.bc.ca), 250-428-5332.

## AUGUST 2004

**9-13** Maple Ridge. Science World's Loon Lake Science Camp for Teachers, Malcolm Knapp Research Forest. \$325 + GST. covers food and accommodation, and participants receive a travel subsidy. Contact 1-800-363-1611 or 604-443-7552, or Caedmon Nash, Science World, 604-443-7440, f: 604-443-7430, [cnash@scienceworld.bc.ca](mailto:cnash@scienceworld.bc.ca).

**26-27** Port Coquitlam. Literacy Connections: Comprehension Across the Curriculum. Thursday: all-day sessions with Stephanie Harvey and Debbie Miller; Friday: choice of sessions with respected B.C. educators. Terry Fox Secondary. Contact Barbara Kolbus, 604-291-5795, [bjkolbus@sfu.ca](mailto:bjkolbus@sfu.ca), [www.educ.sfu.ca/ip/elnetwork](http://www.educ.sfu.ca/ip/elnetwork).

**PSA PD Day-October 22, 2004**

**PD Calendar web site**  
<http://pdonline.bctf.ca/conferences/PD-Calendar.html>  
Additions/changes? E-mail  
Debby Stagg, [dstagg@bctf.ca](mailto:dstagg@bctf.ca)



# TEACHERS SPEAK OUT

## The biggest changes I've seen in the last two years are...



**Sue Brown**  
Victoria

I am a special education support teacher, so I really see that the funding freeze has reduced services for the students I serve. Also, the reduced library time is noticeable. The Grade 4 and 5 classes at my school are full, and the students are having to get by with less attention. The students with learning disabilities get by with less or no assistance in their classrooms, and many of them are wait-listed for placement in district programs where they can be taught in a special way suited for their learning disability. I fear that they will never be able to get into those programs.



**Lorraine Clair**  
Burnaby

There are too many people in my classes! I have less time to give students the individual attention they deserve.

In my foods classes, I have students who do not speak English. How am I going to teach and evaluate students at the Grade 12 level when they do not understand a word I say?



**Bill Forst**  
Sunshine Coast

Services to special education students have been decimated. Our teacher assistants' time has been halved. More than half the academic classes in my school have more than 31 students, with some as high as 35. No class would have had more than 30 last year. School busing in our district is greatly reduced, forcing students to walk on very busy roads and highways.



**Margaret Gardiner**  
Williams Lake

We now fundraise to meet classroom needs. I never envisioned fundraising as part of a teacher's job when I began teaching 28 years ago.



**Patricia Haley**  
Burns Lake

We have larger classes, including a three-way split. Just as Christy Clark is announcing her literacy initiative, her policies are making it harder for me (a classroom teacher who has spent 30 years studying literacy and young children) to continue to achieve the literacy successes that I previously managed.

My colleagues struggle with high-needs children with special needs with diminishing supports. All of this while Christy Clark continually tells the public all will be well just as soon as we get those teachers!



**John Hannam**  
Sooke

I have many more students with challenges, and I have less practical support in terms of materials and personnel. We are doing more with less. I am amazed that parents are not more upset at the trend in education to cut and slash and leave the bones of a previously viable system.



**Margaret Litch**  
Nanaimo

The reduction of teacher-librarians restricts library service, which in turn, limits the support to the best teaching strategies of resource-based, discovery learning. The teacher-librarians' knowledge about best resources, promotion of resources and evaluation of resources from literature to the Internet are not being utilized. Everyone loses.

Class sizes of 31 at the intermediate level mean students do not get the individual attention they need.



**Ken Manning**  
Vernon

My students with special needs have fewer opportunities to integrate into mainstream classes because the mainstream classes are all full and the mainstream teachers have fewer resources on hand to support students.



**Joyce Peatch**  
Richmond

There are more guidelines to the ESL program, which have serious effects on the classroom program. There is limited or no support for students with learning disabilities. Resource time is inadequate because of the combined ESL/resource model due to financial cutbacks. Students with English as their first language, who are experiencing learning difficulties, are being hit the worst.

Classes can be overloaded with students with special needs, students with behavioural difficulties, and ESL students and teachers are left with an impossible job.

These comments from teachers reflect the changes teachers have seen in school since the B.C. Liberals stripped learning conditions from our collective agreement. They are not in any way intended to be a comment on the work of colleagues.

*You can speak up about public education by going to [bctf.ca/SpeakUp.html](http://bctf.ca/SpeakUp.html).*

**General Provincial Election  
May 17, 2005**

## Staffing losses threaten our top-ranked system

Stripping the collective agreement and significant underfunding have together had a huge impact on the services available to students. Specialist teachers providing support to the classroom have been cut dramatically.

These statistics are from the staffing information collected by the ministry of education each year on Form 1530 for September in 2001 and 2003.

Two areas of staffing that were not guaranteed in the collective agreement have also lost staff and had program reductions: continuing education and career programs. In each of these cases, the ministry made a change in its finance rules that led to these reductions.

The major increases in staffing are also a result of

changing the finance rules. A cap on administrative staffing costs was eliminated in the name of "flexibility." The result has been significant increases in the number of administrators—both in the schools and in district business offices—according to the figures reported to the ministry by school districts.

The "flexibility" promised by Christy Clark has been used in ways that have dramatically reduced direct service to students, but increased administrative staffing. However, even if there had been no increase in administration, districts would still have had to make many of the cuts in specialist staffing.

A detailed report on the impact of the B.C. Liberal policies on staffing for education is available on the BCTF web site at [bctf.ca](http://bctf.ca).

### Between September 2001 and September 2003

Student enrolment -2.5%

Teachers -8.9% Includes:

Special education teachers -18.9%

Teacher-librarians -24.6%

Counsellors -10.7%

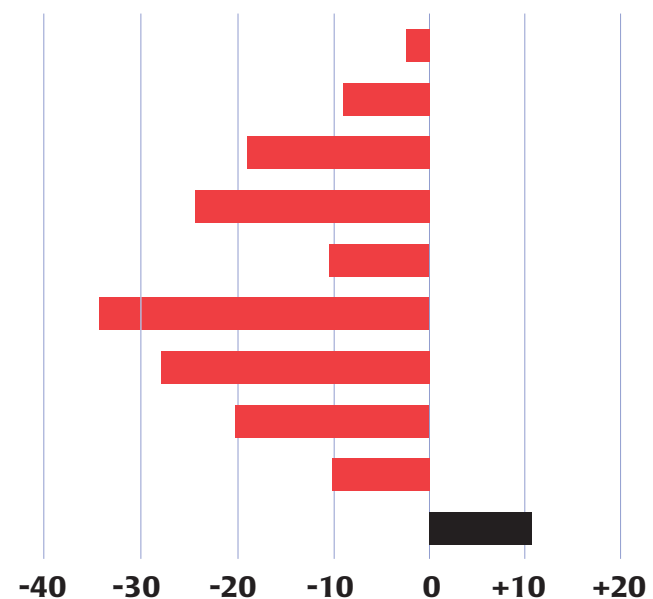
Continuing ed. teachers -34.5%

Career program teachers -27.9%

ESL teachers -20.3%

Clerical & support staff -10.2%

Administrators +10.7%



Source: Ministry of Education 1530 and 1554 forms