



Photo by George Simpson

BCTF representatives met with Cabinet to present a brief on education finance. Shown here, left to right, are Dave Stupich, Minister of Agriculture, Jim MacFarlan, BCTF president, Mike Zlotnik, staff, Eileen Dailly, Minister of Education, and Lorne Nicolson, Minister of Housing.

Education finance brief

Boost teaching force, govt. told

The BCTF wants 3100 new instructional units added to the provincial school system next year at a cost of some \$48 million.

Federation officials met with representatives of Cabinet on

Wednesday, November 21 to present a brief on education finance that calls for improvements to the existing financing arrangements as an interim measure.

BCTF president Jim MacFarlan says the brief was well received. If the government acts on the brief, he said, it would remove some of the really bad situations and go part way to achieving teachers' ultimate goal of all classes under 25 in the province.

The main result, MacFarlan said, should be the elimination of all elementary classes over that really 'dreadful' mark of 30.

The Federation wants the size of the instructional unit — at present set at 20 pupils for secondary and 25 for elementary — changed to become 15 pupils for the first six units in any school. Beyond six, the unit size would again become 20 for secondary and 25 for elementary.

This change, the Federation says, would provide 400 new instructional units for secondary schools, and 2700 new instructional units for elementary, and would help improve staffing in all schools while maintaining priority in elementary education.

Teacher representatives presenting the brief were: Jim MacFarlan, President, Bill Broadley, First Vice-President, Rob Wilson, Second Vice-President, Stan Evans and Mike Zlotnik, staff.

MacFarlan stressed that 2400 teachers are needed for next year just to bring B.C. up to the average of the four western provinces.

'If we simply wanted the average of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in terms of class size, we would need 2400 teachers at a cost of nearly \$40 million,' he said. Alberta, which is not as rich a province as B.C., he noted, spends \$109 per pupil more than British Columbia. 'And when you multiply that by the number of students in B.C. you would get a figure considerably in excess of the \$48 million we have projected.'

'So we are asking, then, for 3100 additional teachers, \$48 million in total. But 2400 of that total is simply to bring us up to an average which we know the other western provinces have.'

Recognition is given in the brief to the present government easing restrictions on school board autonomy. But most finance deficiencies initially incorporated in the basic program remain, the brief says.

Recognition is also given to BCTF policy which holds that ultimately all funds for school operation should come from general revenue of the province, rather than from local property tax. However, the brief offers constructive suggestions for interim improvements in the existing finance policy.

Excerpts of the brief are reprinted in this Newsletter.

49 arbitrations

Scale increases average 12.85%

Four districts this year have set the trend for settlements with scale increases averaging 12.85 percent.

The four districts which successfully completed independent agreements before the arbitration deadline were Nechako (formerly Vanderhoof) at 14.85 percent, Merritt at 10.7 percent, Lillooet at 12.01 percent and Kamloops at 13.75 percent. All figures represent salary scale increases, and do not include improvements negotiated in bonuses, allowances and fringe benefits.

The same districts last year ranged from 1/4 percent to 1 percent below the provincial average of settlements.

Reduction in the length of scales was a feature of the Lillooet and Kamloops agreements. The Kamloops agreement also provides for an increase from 50 percent to 75 percent in the board's share of group insurance and medical premiums, and the inclusion of an extended health benefits plan.

The 12.85 percent average is in line with the average of recent settlements in the public and private employment

sectors of British Columbia. It is also consistent with association objectives set at the beginning of the bargaining season in September after a thorough analysis of wage and price data and trends.

Of the remaining districts, 21 have agreed to varying forms of "satellite" arrangements based on regional or provincial averages. Notable among these is Nanaimo, which will go to the provincial average salary scale in 1974. At the present time Nanaimo is approximately 3 percent below the average.

Forty-nine districts will have their contract differences resolved by arbitration. With four districts in the Okanagan arbitrating as one unit, it means that 46 arbitration boards will have been established. Arbitration hearings begin the first week of December; all awards must be handed down by December 31.

Among districts resorting to arbitration to settle contracts are Vancouver with 3,000 teachers and Stikine with 22.

The large number of arbitrations is not a record. This was set in 1969, when 53 arbitration boards had to be convened.

220,000 elementary pupils have classes over 25 mark

A BCTF class size survey reveals that 87 percent of the children in the province's elementary schools are in classes too large to be receiving quality education.

The survey, which covered 1080 of the province's 1168 elementary schools, shows that 220,000 students (87 percent) are in classes over 25, and that 127,000 (50 percent) are in classes over 30.

'We are now aware,' BCTF President Jim MacFarlan said, 'that B.C. has the distinction, a mark that we do not wear proudly, of leading the way with the highest class sizes in elementary schools in Canada.'

'Our research indicates 25 to 1 is a break point in quality education. A student's chances of getting a quality education when classes get above 25 is considerably diminished, but improves below that figure.'

The survey reveals that Kelowna, which spends \$100 per pupil less per year than the B.C. average, has the largest elementary classes in the province and probably in Canada.

Williams Lake increased class sizes this year with nearly three students per class on the average and now has 70 percent of the district's students in classes over 30.

Twenty-one school districts in the province actually increased the size of classes this year.

MacFarlan congratulated the Nelson School District which he said undertook a 'substantial program' for reducing class size last year.

Dailly likes small classes

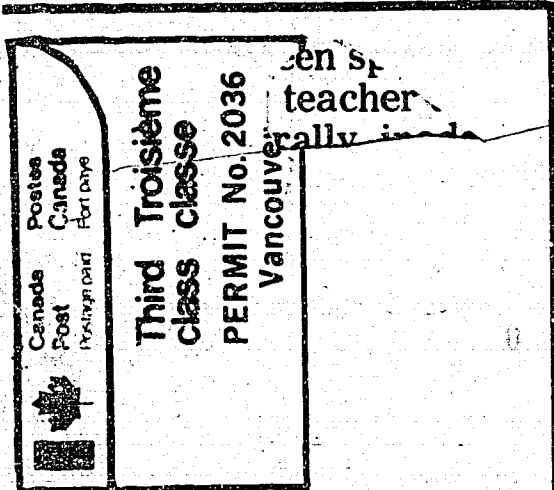
Mrs. Dailly confirmed that the BCTF's request for 3,100 new instructional units to be added to the provincial school system next year would cost almost \$48 million.

'As minister of education, I have always believed very strongly in keeping class sizes down to a size where the teacher can give individual attention,' she said from Ottawa, where she is attending a conference of western education ministers on post-secondary education.

But the "fairly massive injections of monies" needed to meet the BCTF request would have to be approved by the cabinet and treasury board.

If approved, the program could have a significant effect by September, 1974, she said.

—Vancouver Sun



The basic program and equalization grant

The central feature of the existing legislation is the concept of a basic education program and an equalization grant in partial support thereof. Each school district is thus enabled to budget at the basic program level at a cost to its local property tax-payers of a uniform basic mill levy. If the school board chooses to budget at a higher level, the excess cost is met through local taxation beyond the basic levy.

This concept tends to provide equity among districts only if the basic education program is so defined as to constitute a fully adequate education service. It is unjust and undesirable that any expenditure which is essential to a sound operation should fall outside the basic program and hence be not subject to the equalization principle. Injustice is compounded if the magnitude of such unequalized essentials varies substantially from district to district.

Through its very simplicity, the 1968 basic program failed to meet any of the criteria of acceptability. Because of its deficiencies, school boards were literally compelled to budget well above the basic program level, and some much more so than others.

Motivated primarily by consideration of cost control, the former administration set about compelling school boards to conform. In fact, the government had tried to force all local school systems into a common financial mould that fitted none of them well and many not at all.

Considerations of quality

The major element in the present definition of the basic education program for a school district is an amount which is the product of an Instructional Unit Value and an assigned number of instructional units. The Instructional Unit Value in any year is obtained by dividing the total approved expenditures of all districts in the preceding year by the total number of instructional units in that year. The Instructional Unit Value thus reflects provincial average spending practice, a year in arrears.

Because the IU Value is based on approved actual expenditure, it advances from year to year with rising unit costs, a year in arrears and to the extent that the government sees fit to approve. Because the IU Value is applied to the current count of instructional units, the basic education program keeps pace with changing enrollment.

No provision exists for improving the quality of education, unless school boards are able to finance such improvements initially from local revenue.

If basic financing is adequate, and school boards have both the means and the freedom to give responsible consideration to proposals for change, local initiative thus serves as the cutting edge of progress.

In actual fact, during the last five years of the late administration the opposite trend was clearly apparent.

Deteriorating conditions

In the fall of 1970, the BCTF established a commission to examine the evidence of deteriorating conditions in two such districts.

The commission's report included the following significant statements:

'The commission could find no evidence to substantiate the view that the cuts eliminated any fat components, i.e., components that were not contributing to constructive learning or developmental opportunities for youngsters. The budget cuts did not eliminate unnecessary spending, they simply reduced the number and scope of learning opportunities for youngsters in both districts. The quality of the educational program has been sacrificed.'

Restrictive effects were felt throughout the province. By the time the former administration had come mercifully to an end, we had lived through five years of steady retreat from the standards of 1967.

Yet even a return to the 'good old days' of 1967 would not give us ground for complacency. In terms of enlightened practice, British Columbia was far from a position of leadership in education. Our schools were generally understaffed. For too many children education was a formal ritual in classes too large to facilitate adaptation to individual

needs. The contribution that could be made by adequate clerical and paraprofessional personnel had scarcely been recognized. The appalling condition of school library services demands particular emphasis in a special section of this brief.

Under these circumstances, present education finance policy should not be geared merely to maintenance of existing standards. Additional provision is needed to remedy past inadequacies and to compensate for a lengthy period of neglect.

Coping with inflation

A system which gears the current year's Instructional Unit Value to the preceding year's average expenditure is always one year in arrears. To budget within the limits of a basic education program defined on this basis, a school board would have to engage personnel at the previous year's salary rates and purchase its supplies at the previous year's prices. Inevitably, of course, the board absorbs a year's inflation by budgeting beyond the basic program and consequently taxing beyond the basic levy.

Ideally, the basic education program should represent a fully adequate service, costed at current rates. School districts should be able, without serious sacrifice of quality, to budget at or very near the basic program level.

When inflation rates begin to exceed five percent, and to assume unpredictable proportions, the ideal relationship between basic program and budget requirements is no longer acceptably approximated.

Variation among districts

Even though a provincially computed Instructional Unit Value may coincide very closely with average unit budget requirements, it is wrong to assume that application of this average value to all school districts will produce equity. The several districts operate in contexts too dissimilar for such a simple device to be appropriate.

The small school

One problem which demands attention is that of adequate staffing of small schools.

To provide necessary administrative, library and counselling services, and to offer pupils even a minimally adequate course and program selection, teachers must prepare a multiplicity of courses, some of them outside the teacher's area of genuine competence, and some presented in double and triple programmed periods. Such a situation makes unwarranted demands upon the teachers and offers inadequate educational opportunity to the pupils. A staffing formula (direct or indirect) that is adequate in a large school is far from adequate in the small school situation.

Similarly, effective operation of an elementary school requires, in addition to regular classroom teachers, some provision for administration, for library service, for the use of specialists in certain instructional areas such as music and art, and for individual or small-group attention to particular pupil needs. The necessary special skills and organizational flexibility can normally be provided in a large school. Where schools are small, the same supportive services must be supplied by school district personnel on an itinerant basis or by supernumerary personnel on a shared basis.

For many years to come, many school districts will perforce operate very small schools at both the secondary and elementary levels. To enable school boards to staff these schools adequately, a revised definition of the instructional unit is recommended.

Staff seniority

An important variable not recognized in a provincially computed Instructional Unit Value is seniority of teaching staffs. The average salaries paid in the several quoted districts varied from \$9,163 to \$11,620, and the salary variations were remarkably consistent with the variations in staff seniority.

The provincial Instructional Unit Value in 1971 was \$14,030. Since this value was applied in each of the districts, the salary of one teacher in Victoria consumed 82.8 percent of the value of an instructional unit, while in Cowichan, a district of average staff seniority, only 74.2 percent of a unit was required. To meet the difference in salary costs for each teacher, Victoria was compelled either to raise \$1,200 through local taxation or to recover that amount through severe and perhaps undesirable

Excerpts from the brief on urgent current problems in education finance



'I have always believed very strongly in keeping class sizes down to a size where the teacher can give individual attention,' says Education Minister Eileen Daily

shown here talking with Dave Stupich, Minister of Agriculture, Stan Evans, staff, and Bill Broadley, first vice-president, about the brief.

economies in other aspects of its budget. It is clearly apparent that an Instructional Unit Value that is adequate in an average district like Cowichan is deficient in Victoria.

We must here reiterate the point that when any significant portion of necessary actual expenditure is not included in the cost of the basic program the important principle of equalization is violated. We must also point out that an ill-fitting finance formula, combined with artificial pressure toward conformity with the defined basic program has caused severe sacrifices of quality in the districts most adversely affected. To a considerable extent, the difficulties tended to occur in districts with high staff seniority. Real crises have occurred in several such districts, including [redacted] and West Vancouver, Kimberley, Trail and Nanaimo.

Regardless of any selection policy, districts which have low growth rates in pupil population automatically develop staffs of high seniority, simply through lack of opportunity for new appointments. Generally speaking, a growing staff is a young staff, while stability generates seniority. The architects of a satisfactory finance plan must recognize facts as they are. Variable staff seniority is such a fact.

We should certainly hesitate to suggest a return to the complexity of the former grant system which included a detailed salary grant scale. We do recommend that some gross measure of relative staff seniority be employed as an adjustment factor before the provincially computed Instructional Unit Value is applied to particular districts.

School libraries: A special case

Generally, when lack of money has caused services to deteriorate or stagnate in a number of ways, restoration of adequate support is all that is required of the provincial government. The new money provided need not, and probably should not, be earmarked for particular purposes. The local school board, with the assistance of its professional advisers, can best determine which aspects of its operation are most in need of stimulation and can allocate the new funds accordingly. It may, however, be wise to depart from this principle where a particular service has suffered such a lengthy period of atrophy that discontent has given way to apathy. This may well be the current position of school libraries.

If the admirable concepts of personalized learning, pupil growth and development, and student responsibility are to have real significance, the library or resource center must become the

heart of the school. In too many instances it is presently in danger of becoming a vestigial organ. Provincial leadership in a rescue operation would not be inappropriate.

Research and development

Research and development in education has commonly been conducted on a haphazard basis, without reliable financial support. The pure and applied research has occurred primarily in the universities, too often in an atmosphere remote from the realities of school operation. Developmental projects analogous to the pilot plant operation have been sporadic efforts on the part of school boards or teacher associations, often poorly controlled, generally inadequately financed, and always without assurance of reasonable continuity.

What is needed is a recognition of research and development as a legitimate aspect — indeed, an essential aspect — of school district operation.

Development of personnel

Provision of more money is not in itself a guarantee of improved quality in education. Reduced class size will benefit pupils only to the extent that teachers take advantage of the opportunity to adopt more productive instructional styles. Expansion of school library services will be of benefit to the extent that teacher librarians assume a creative role, and to the extent that teachers and librarians together can provide for pupils improved learning opportunities.

To the extent that needed personnel development consists of educating and motivating existing personnel, teachers themselves must accept a degree of personal responsibility. Leadership in planning and executing an appropriate program of developmental activities may properly be expected of the BCTF and its local associations, working co-operatively with school and school district supervisory personnel and with the teacher education institutions. The cost of operation of such activities, however, should be recognized as an integral part of the cost of the education enterprise, appropriate for inclusion in the basic education program.

Cost-benefit considerations

The numerous and significant benefits which may be anticipated from the proposed program have been described in some detail. They are here recapitulated in summary form.

- (1) The general quality of the educational service will be markedly improved, compensating for a lengthy period of excessive emphasis on conformity with a standard of uniform mediocrity.
- (2) The basic education program will reflect with much greater accuracy the actual budget requirements of the several school districts. As a result, a new degree of equity in the distribution of provincial funds will be achieved.
- (3) The problem of providing adequate staff and support service for small schools will be substantially resolved.
- (4) Variable staff seniority will be recognized as a factor largely beyond immediate control, and finance provisions adjusted accordingly.
- (5) An urgently needed impetus will be given toward improvement of school library services.
- (6) Since the impact of the proposed redefinition of the instructional unit is much greater on the elementary school than the secondary, there will be a significant extension of the process, begun a year ago, of according special priority to elementary education.
- (7) School districts will have an opportunity, on an equalized financial basis, to initiate sound programs of research and development, thereby increasing the probability that future innovations in education will be rational and practical.
- (8) A sound basis will have been established for a potential future move from dependence on the local property tax to financing of education from general provincial revenues. An ideal system of education finance must create equity in both the collection and the distribution of funds. The present system does stress equity of distribution, and our recommendations are designed to improve its performance in that area. The question of equity in revenue collection remains to be dealt with, and it is in this respect that the property tax is vulnerable to criticism. Having established a sound distribution system, the government may subsequently move away from reliance on the property tax, simply by reducing or eliminating the basic mill levy in support of the basic education program.

The estimated cost of these important benefits is a substantial amount of money. Yet, placing it in the context of the data set forth in Appendix 2, we cannot regard it as excessive. This government is known for its concern for the needs of people. It has embarked on programs which are massive and costly, but also constructive and humanitarian, for the benefit of the elderly, the sick and the economically deprived. We are confident that it feels equal concern for the legitimate needs of the young.

Provincial budget data

	1965	1970	1974
Gross provincial budget (millions of dollars):	488	1154	1719
Grants in support of elementary and secondary schools (millions of dollars):	107	204	329
School grants as a percentage of gross provincial budget:	21.9	17.7	19.1
If the school grants in 1974 amounted, as in 1965, to 21.9 percent of the gross budget, their amount would be 376 million dollars, an increase of 47 million over the amount forecast in the Budget Address.			
Total expenditure on education, health and social services (millions of dollars):	311	706	1195
School grants as a percentage of total social expenditures	34.4	28.9	27.5

If the school grants in 1974 amounted, as in 1965, to 34.4 percent of total social and education service expenditures, their amount would be 411 million dollars, an increase of 82 million over the amount forecast.

Data Source — Budget Address, February 1973.

Implementation problems

Full implementation of Recommendation 4 adds 3100 to the total number of instructional units. It is likely that school boards may direct some of the newly available resources toward engagement of clerical and paraprofessional personnel, toward improvement of facilities and learning materials, and toward cybernation projects designed to make more productive use of human resources. Inevitably, however, the major emphasis will be on an urgently needed expansion of the teaching staff.

Immediate recruitment of some 3000 new teachers may be a greater task than the system can successfully perform. Appropriate deployment of such numbers of new personnel also demands careful planning. Provision of space, equipment and supplies may be a further problem.

Accordingly, it may be wise to consider staged implementation of Recommendation 4 over a period of two years. This procedure would maximize the probability that new personnel are carefully selected and improvements in the system occur in orderly fashion. It would also provide time for needed alterations and extensions of physical accommodation. Any plan of staged implementation over a period in excess of two years, however, would frustrate the accomplishment of even the minimum educational standards determined by the BCTF as essential for the school years 1974-75 and 1975-76.

Recommendations

That the current objectives in education finance include restoration of lost ground and establishment of a sound base for improvement of quality in the education service.

That an essential objective be establishment of the cost of the basic education program at a level which represents in all districts a fully adequate program at current cost levels.

That the provincial average Instructional Unit Value in each year be computed by dividing the total approved expenditures in the preceding year by the total number of instructional units in that year, and adjusting the quotient by a factor which reflects the yearly change in purchasing power of the dollar.

That the size of the instructional unit be 15 pupils, or fractional remainder, to a maximum of six units in any school, and that beyond the sixth unit the unit size be 25 elementary pupils or 20 secondary pupils.

That the IU Value for each district be the provincial average IU Value, adjusted by a factor which represents a gross measure of relative staff seniority.

That an additional eight-tenths of an instructional unit be allotted in respect of each approved special class and also in respect of each full-time (or equivalent) teacher librarian employed.

That a fund be established from which grants are available to the school districts in support of research and development projects which are approved by the Minister, the grant in each case having the same ratio to the project budget as the basic grant to the school district bears to the cost of its basic education program.

That steps be taken, through expansion of teacher education facilities and possibly through student subsidies, to ensure an adequate supply of qualified personnel, especially in areas of particular specialization, and with particular present emphasis on the need for qualified teacher librarians.

That the government rely with confidence on the BCTF, in concert with the school districts and the universities to provide co-operative leadership in planning and executing projects for retraining and reorientation of teachers aimed at maximizing the educational benefit that will accrue from improved financial support, and that provision be made for inclusion in the basic education program of the operating costs of such projects.

Boards should budget for need not rely on LIP grants says Dept.

The Federation endorsed the principle that local boards should provide in their budget estimates adequate funds for the efficient operation of

schools and school programs, rather than rely on LIP grants.

The Executive Committee studied directives from J. R. Fleming, Associate Deputy Minister, to local boards, advising that the Department of Education intended to advise Manpower that LIP grants for schools were to be rejected.

It was found that a covering letter from the Minister should

have gone with the abrupt notification.

In the covering letter, school boards were encouraged to include in their budget estimates the cost of teacher aides, special aides, tutoring assistance, and other items so that the school board would not be in a financial bind when the federal money was no longer available.

French language group meets

OTTAWA (CTF News Service) — The French Language Commission of the Canadian Teachers' Federation held its first meeting of the year on October 19 and 20 at the Federation's offices in Ottawa.

John Powell, Kelowna, is the BCTF representative on the commission.

The French Language Commission, which is beginning this year its fifth year of existence, has as its aims to see to the particular needs and interests of (a) teachers who are teaching in French to French-speaking students and (b) teachers who are teaching French as a second language to English-speaking students.

Postal codes underway

Many BCTF members, in compliance with the Canada Post Office's request to notify correspondents of their newly assigned postal codes, have become concerned at our ignoring their notices.

It is our plan to have the post office assign codes to our master mailing list (24,000 names) early in the new year. We will then tackle the job of changing our records all at once rather than do it piecemeal over a long period of time. Until then, we will use the old postal zones for the metropolitan areas.

Along with our members, we look forward to speedier mail delivery in 1974!

Christmas Hours

B.C. Teachers' Federation

December 17 to 21 — regular hours (9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Saturday, December 22 — closed

Monday, December 24 to Wednesday, December 26 — closed

Thursday and Friday, December 27 and 28 — regular hours

Saturday, December 29 — closed

Monday and Tuesday, December 31 and January 1 — closed

Teachers' Investment and Housing Co-operative

Same hours as the BCTF except:

Saturday, December 29 — 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

B.C. Teachers Credit Union

Same hours as the BCTF except:

Saturday, December 22 — 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 29 — 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



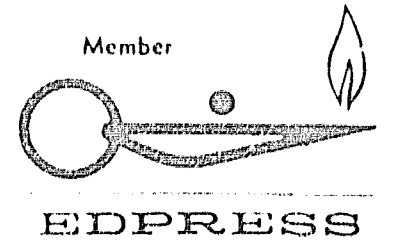
"This is what the board calls a generous proposal — last year's salary plus trading stamps?"

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

newsletter

Editor
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Widows' pensions change

The government has moved to reinstate Widows' Pensions, which have been terminated because of remarriage and to ensure adjustments to pensions go also to widows in the same amounts as to other pensioners.

Where payment of a Pension Allowance granted under the Teachers' Pensions Act ceased prior to November 1973, due to the remarriage of the widow, or the widow received a lump sum payment at the time the Allowance ceased, due to her remarriage, and she elects to repay the lump sum without interest, the widow may apply to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council for resumption of the pension.

Where a lump sum payment was received and the widow

does not elect to repay the lump sum, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may authorize, upon application, the resumption of the Allowance except that the Allowance will be reduced by the actuarial equivalent of the lump sum.

Where a widow remarried before November 1973 and was in receipt of an Allowance at that time which had been previously reduced by reason of her remarriage, the Allowance will be again increased to the amount she was receiving immediately prior to remarriage in addition to the increases granted in 1973.

Widows of teachers affected by these changes and requiring more information should contact Dave Smith at the BCTF office.

Group life plan amended

The BCTF trustees on the BCTF / BCSTA Group Life Insurance Plan (Earl Jorgenson of Nelson, Ken MacAteer of Burnaby and Bruce Watson of the staff) advise that the plan has been amended to permit single teachers and married female teachers without dependents the option of selecting higher coverage.

This means that single teachers and married teachers without dependents in districts still under the old plan may opt for \$15,000 of coverage while these same teachers in districts which are covered under

the new plan may opt for coverage which is related to salary; i.e. if under age 35, 300 percent of salary decreasing in stages to 150 percent of salary at age 55 or over.

Once a teacher is covered for the higher amount, the teacher would maintain the higher coverage regardless of marital status of dependents.

This new coverage is available on or after January 1, 1974. Teachers wishing to opt for the higher benefit structure should apply through their school board office.

curriculum brief says:

Drop centralized textbook bureau, give money saved to local schools

The BCTF has called on government to accelerate the decentralization of authority in education through specific changes in legislation and financial policy.

The Federation asks, in a brief on curriculum development, that two sections of the Public Schools Act that support centralized authority be deleted.

It calls the provincial system of curriculum development, supported by a central textbook bureau, an 'outworn heritage' that should also be thrown out.

One section the brief wants removed authorizes the Lieutenant - Governor in Council to prescribe courses of study and to prescribe the textbooks. The other section authorizes the Minister, at the request of a school board, to prescribe a course of study and textbooks.

'We consider both pieces of legislation to be anachronisms,' says the brief.

Other recommendations of the brief include:

1. Change the terms of reference for provincial curriculum committees, restricting their role to that of recommending intended learning outcomes for pupils.

2. Combine the two provincial advisory curriculum committees into one with appropriate changes in representation and terms of reference.

3. Transfer funds formerly used for provincial curriculum development to the district and school levels and add to the total funds available.

4. Encourage the development of district and regional resource centers of the comprehensive 'teacher center' type.

5. Change the role of the Curriculum Resources Branch to that of a supportive agency for local curriculum development.

6. Provide additional funds to school districts to finance continuing education programs for teachers and to provide time for teachers to develop curriculum.

7. Urge universities to give priority to principles of curriculum development in the training programs for future teachers.

The Federation wants to see locally developed courses without the need for submission to a provincial advisory committee. 'In one well-publicized case this year,' says the brief, 'a course in political science, which had been turned down twice by the advisory committee, was submitted to you and approved.'

The Federation suggests the changes in legislation will make it possible to retire some of the existing revision committees. Some committees, the brief points out, have been kept busy for seven or eight years writing detailed curriculum guides and selecting masses of instructional material, by which time new revisions were desirable.

The brief asks that the millions of dollars that now go to maintaining a centralized curriculum system, with free and rental textbooks, be made available to school districts.

Recognizing that the success of decentralizing curriculum and textbooks depends upon teachers having adequate time to do what is required, the brief suggests that time must be provided for committees of teachers at a district level, school staff committees, and individual teacher planning.

'School districts will have to provide appropriate facilities and resource materials for teachers to use during their planning sessions. The preparation of local materials should be facilitated through the development of a system of local and regional resource centers that combine the British "teacher center" concept with the type of resource center already established in some parts of B.C. (with books, periodicals, kits, various media, etc.).

'To assist more isolated school districts, mobile resource centers that could visit smaller centers should be considered. (The Quesnel School District provided this type of service a few years ago.)'

Teacher education programs at universities, which have placed very little emphasis on curriculum development, will have to provide a comprehensive continuing education program for teachers to assist them to gain the skills and knowledge required to operate successfully in a decentralized system.

'The BCTF has been offering courses and sponsoring seminars in curriculum development. A greatly expanded program will be required and the Department and local districts should be prepared to assume a significant share of the costs of such a program.'