

newsletter

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

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BCTF will monitor

Joint aid policy for handicapped

27 locals settle for average of 8%

Contract settlements for 1979 have been reached by 27 of the federation's 79 local associations. The remaining 48 districts, where agreements had not been reached by the Nov. 15 deadline, automatically go to binding arbitration.

In 15 of the 27 completed contracts, the settlement was based on a specific percentage increase in salaries and fringe benefits. In three cases the amount of the increase was not immediately available. In the other 12 districts in this category, the package increases ranged from 7.8 per cent to 8.4 per cent.

In 12 other districts, teachers and trustees agreed to increases based on zonal or provincial averages.

The districts where specific package increases were achieved are: Alberni (7.9 per cent), Cariboo-Chilcotin (8.0), Central Coast (8.0), Coquitlam (8.04), Fort Nelson (percentage unavailable), Lake Cowichan (unavailable), Lillooet (7.8), Nechako (8.4), New Westminster (7.85), Peace River (7.85), Prince George (7.99), Sechelt (unavailable),

Smithers (8.05) and Vancouver Island North (7.95).

Locals with "satellite" agreements based on other settlements are: Agassiz-Harrison, Arrow Lakes, Burnaby Administrators, Burns Lake, Cranbrook, Fernie, Keremeos, Kimberley, Nelson, North Thompson, Queen Charlottes and Stikine.

Most of the large locals on the Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island are in arbitration, as are the eight Okanagan locals which bargain on a zonal basis.

This year, under new legislation, arbitrations will be heard by a single three-person board for each of 14 zones. One member of the board is nominated by teachers of all districts in dispute within a zone, and one member is nominated by the trustees. The two nominees then choose a chairperson.

In each zone, however, individual arbitrations will be held for each district in dispute, rather than a single arbitration for the zone.

Arbitrations will be under way soon. The deadline for completion is Dec. 31.

Legal aid for teachers

The B.C. Teachers' Federation will provide legal aid to two teachers in a court action against the Langley school board. The court will be asked to set aside the suspensions of the two teachers and to restore the salary lost by one of them.

The teachers involved are Doris Ferry, a Grade 3 teacher at Wix-Brown Elementary, and her daughter, Mary Anne Johnston, of Belmont Elementary.

The two, along with Trevor Erlendson, also of Belmont, were summonsed to an in-camera meeting of the board on Aug. 21, when all were on vacation. They did not attend.

The board accepted Erlendson's and Mrs. Johnston's reasons for failure to comply with the summons but suspended Mrs. Ferry. Subsequently she was reinstated with full pay but Mrs. Johnston was suspended for a period without pay.

The three teachers and Terry Eastman, president of the Langley Teachers' Association, appeared before the BCTF Executive Committee Nov. 3 to ask for assistance. The executive agreed unanimously to provide legal aid.

Action will be taken in the Supreme Court of B.C. under the new Judicial Review Procedures Act.

The executive will also ask the Langley board for assurance that the files and records of the three teachers "are devoid of any correspondence or information or reports which have not been revealed to the teachers and which reflect negatively on their competence and ability as teachers and employees."

The executive also unanimously agreed that the BCTF should take action to ensure that teachers have the right to be informed in writing of any allegations against them in disciplinary matters.

The BCTF and the B.C. School Trustees' Association have adopted a wait-and-see attitude, pending further clarification and developments, toward a new joint policy statement by the ministers of education, health and human resources on education for handicapped children. (See complete policy statement on page 3.)

Both groups had put increasing pressure on the Ministry of Education for clear-cut inter-ministerial solutions, particularly concerning funding and provision of non-educational support services, since a policy statement issued by J. L. Canty, the ministry's superintendent of administrative services, in August.

The Canty policy stated, in part, that children with special needs who can benefit will be accepted in regular classes provided that support service as required by the board is provided by the child's parents or guardians, an agency or volunteer group or the Ministry of Human Resources.

The problem of providing additional educational services had become acute for the Vancouver School Board, partly because of gradual decentralization of such facilities as Jericho Hill School. The board said in July that admission of new exceptional children would be limited unless the government came up with additional funds.

The board's request for additional funding was turned down by Education Minister Pat McGeer.

The recent joint ministry announcement said that the ministries, "to ensure that special needs of handicapped students are addressed in a more co-ordinated manner," will expand the role of the Interministerial Youth Committee and its 13 regional counterparts.

Other excerpts:
• Each handicapped child wishing to enrol in the program of a school district will undergo an analysis which will assess his or her ability to benefit from an educational program.

• Where the child's needs

can be met by additional services regularly available in the community, school district and local Ministry of Human Resources and health officials will co-operate in developing a program specially designed for the child.

• Where it is determined the needs cannot be met with existing resources, the case will be referred to the regional Children's Committee. The ministries anticipate that in most cases the regional committees will be able to arrange for the additional resources.

However, in a BCTF brief presented at the B.C. Federation Council for Exceptional Children annual meeting Nov. 18, BCTF First Vice-President Allen Blakey gave notice that the BCTF will press for changes in the Public Schools Act.



AL BLAKEY

These changes would guarantee the rights of handicapped children to appropriate educational service within the public school system. The BCTF also seeks legislation to guarantee methods by which such services are to be funded and provided.

The federation's brief is being forwarded to the Ministry of Education.

The federation will also press for a new fiscal policy ensuring that all districts carrying the brunt of special educational needs receive extra funding.

In commenting on the inter-ministerial statement, Blakey told the meeting that there are "guarantees, on paper at least, of some possibilities for im-

(Continued on page 4)

Executive rapped for 'inadequate response'

The BCTF executive and staff have been criticized by Burnaby and Coquitlam members for what they called the federation's inadequate response to surprise amendments to the Public Schools Act last June.

Among other things, the amendments established zonal

arbitration boards for teachers' salary disputes. In the past a separate board has been set up for each district in arbitration.

The changes were made in an omnibus bill, incorporating amendments to a number of statutes, that was introduced in the legislature with no prior warning on the evening of June 22. It was passed within a week.

On June 23 President Pat Brady issued a press release strongly criticizing the legislation, and immediately sought a meeting with Education Minister Pat McGeer to discuss it.

That meeting took place June 28. Brady said he and Jurd Kirby, director of the federation's Division of Economic Welfare, "very directly and concisely expressed our strong opposition" to McGeer, but "the results were negligible." The bill passed third reading the next day.

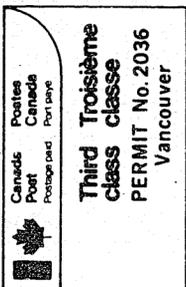
The federation's response did not satisfy the Burnaby Teachers' Association and the Burnaby Administrators' Association, both of which unanimously passed resolutions expressing their concern.

The Burnaby teachers sent their resolutions to the BCTF executive, the Economic Welfare staff, and the Provincial Agreements Committee and asked why they had not been informed and consulted about the amendments.

(Continued on page 4)



Special needs children in Jean Gaiotti's classroom at G. F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre. They require a lot of attention for a good start in life.



IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

An editorial

By PAT BRADY
President, BCTF



Education Minister Pat McGeer apparently does not agree with our recent policy statement that teachers in B.C.'s private schools should be required to have the same qualifications as those of us in the public school system.

McGeer was recently quoted as saying that "private schools can provide an equal or even better education than the public school system, even without the qualifications."

That is a mischievous statement. It further damages the public school system in the eyes of the people who pay to support it. McGeer has the ministerial mandate to maintain and improve the public school system, yet often he seems to go out of his way to shake public confidence in it.

It's true that some private schools can provide an education that's equal to or even superior to that offered by some public schools. They can do this because they have a kind of freedom that we don't have — the freedom to set the ground rules for their classrooms.

Private schools can accept or exclude students as they please; public schools have to accept all comers. That means that private schools can limit the size and determine the makeup of their classes.

Private schools can, if they wish, choose only the brightest, most academically oriented students from among their applicants, children who are almost certain to shine in the traditional measures of scholastic achievement. Public schools don't have and don't want that right.

Private schools can choose only children from the upper socio-economic brackets, children who come from solid homes, with cultivated parents who support and encourage them in their school activities. Public schools don't have and don't want that right.

Private schools can select only children from the dominant culture, who hear nothing but English from the day of their birth. Public schools don't have and don't want that right.

We in the public school system believe that the best education we as teachers can provide should be freely available to every child in our society — including those who are handicapped by inadequate English, poverty, culturally deprived home backgrounds, or physical, emotional or intellectual handicaps.

I believe we can achieve that objective — but not if we ourselves are handicapped by the current ministerial policy of starving the public school system while fattening the private schools.

There is a place in our society for private schools, so long as they are privately financed. We have long fought against the principle of funneling public tax dollars into schools over which the people have little or no control. Although we continue to oppose the principle we must now deal with the realities of the situation.

If private schools are to be publicly funded, then the expenditure of those public funds should be subject to public scrutiny. They should be supervised in the same manner as public schools — by publicly elected school boards.

They should also be subject to the same kinds of quality controls as public schools. One of the most important of these is teacher qualification.

While it may be true that some private schools do a better job than some public schools, it's equally true that some private schools are not nearly as good as the best public schools. One reason for this is inadequate preparation of teachers.

As the professional organization of teachers in B.C., we have a legitimate right to insist that teachers in every private school be at least as well qualified as every teacher in every public school.

Government aids study

The BCTF pension study that began this fall and is currently being completed by the consulting firm of Paterson, Cook Limited has received a financial assist from the provincial government.

Provincial Secretary Grace McCarthy, has advised the federation that the government will pay half the cost of the study to a maximum of \$25,000.

"We are very pleased that Mrs. McCarthy's interest in this study is supported also by the government through its financial support," says BCTF President Pat Brady.

Approximately 400 retired

teachers and a similar number of active teachers aged 50 and over were asked to participate in the study by providing income and expenditure information.

The Retired Teachers' Association supplied volunteer interviewers.

The study was undertaken to aid the Pensions Committee in its ongoing development of the pension plan, particularly in regard to indexing.

Copies of the report will be made available to the provincial secretary and the Superannuation Commission.

Resolutions

Members are reminded that resolutions are acceptable all year round.

Dec. 15 is the deadline for resolutions intended for the Annual General Meeting, but most resolutions are dealt with by other groups, and are acceptable at any time.

Associations that have resolutions ready should submit them to the BCTF office now.

The resolutions procedures are detailed in statements 3.C.02 and 3.C.04 on page 17 of the *Members' Guide*.

Stride School plans reunion

Calling all ex-students, teachers and anyone else involved in the 50-year-old history of Stride Community School in Burnaby.

The school will celebrate its half-century anniversary in 1979.

More information can be obtained by phoning 522-3833 or writing to the school, 7014 Stride Avenue, Burnaby, V3N 1T4.

A clarification

Apparently there has been confusion resulting from a comment I made during the address on declining enrolment to the Status of Women conference (reported in the *Newsletter*, Oct. 12). I hope this note will clarify the situation regarding the movement of teachers from continuing full-time employment to continuing part-time employment.

The Public Schools Act is silent on this issue, therefore not guaranteeing protection for teachers wishing this type of change in assignment. Some districts, such as Vancouver and Coquitlam, have developed policies which allow teachers to move from continuing full-time to continuing part-time assignments. Other districts require the teacher to first resign from the position held, thereby causing a loss of seniority (which will become increasingly important in forced transfer situations).

It may be possible to achieve legislative changes in this area. However, until such is the case local associations should be negotiating policies which protect those teachers

Exceptional child conference

A day-long conference on the Exceptional Child in the Regular Classroom will be held beginning 8:45 a.m., Friday, Dec. 1, at the Teachers' Centre, 1010 Austin Avenue, Coquitlam.

The conference is sponsored by the Secondary Learning Assistance Teachers' Association.

Further details are available from Les Seward, Como Lake Junior Secondary School, telephone 936-1451.



Barbara Macfarlane, associate editor of THE B.C. TEACHER for 23 years, received an honorary life membership in the BCTF at October RA.

Letters

wishing to make changes in assignment.

Lynne Hampson,
Chairperson,
Declining Enrolment
Task Force
Nov. 20

'Damaging statements'

I was directed by the Provincial Learning Conditions Committee, at our October 13 and 14 meeting, to respond to the October 12, 1978 BCTF *Newsletter* article, "How can the BCTF provide aid for fired teachers?" due to the fact that there are erroneous, damaging and misleading statements contained in this article.

The article refers many times to "redundant teachers." According to BCTF policies 13.7 and 13.8.4, teachers with continuing contracts who are terminated under Section 156 of the Public Schools Act "in a district that does not meet the basic and supplementary professional teaching staff formulas in all its schools" will be, and must be,

Names needed

Every year the BCTF gives recognition to outstanding contributions to education in B.C. through the G. A. Ferguson Award presented at the Annual General Meeting.

The award is the highest honor bestowed by the BCTF.

It was established in 1933 to honor the memory of G. A. Ferguson, BCTF president in 1923-24 and member of the UBC Senate. He was instrumental in initiating the UBC summer school, and one week before his death in 1928 the University's board of governors approved regulations that made it possible for teachers to obtain degrees through summer sessions.

Those eligible for the award are BCTF members (or ex-members no longer eligible for membership), or member associations.

Nominations, which should be accompanied by a brief, must be received by the BCTF secretary no later than Feb. 20.

Names of nominees are kept on file and reconsidered for two succeeding years by five trustees, all previous recipients of the award.

Words mean nothing if support lacking

By MARDEE GALT

The buzz words are "mainstreaming," "integration," "the least restrictive environment," "normalization" and even "progressive inclusion."

Whatever one wants to call the process of removing exceptional children from segregated specialized facilities and placing them in public schools in their home communities, or in classes closer to their communities, the shift toward decentralization of service has caught many school boards unprepared. There has also been much anxiety and concern among many parents, teachers and among the pupils themselves.

This has been a troubling period of transition.

First of all, there is widespread confusion about what mainstreaming or these other terms really mean.

Special educators say mainstreaming does not mean putting all exceptional children in regular classrooms, but instead ensuring that a range of options and support services is available within the public school setting — when possible.

"When this concept became popular I was scared to death that people would grab on to it

and say here's a chance to save money," says one special services administrator.

Add to this confusion the Cauty policy statement in August that non-educational support services would have to be supplied by a child's parents or guardians, agencies or volunteer groups or the Ministry of Human Resources; a legal opinion received by the BCSTA that under the Public Schools Act school boards could not deny service to handicapped students; and legal action taken in Alberta on behalf of a 10-year-old cerebral palsied child wanting to enrol in school.

"The philosophy that these kids should live in the community is a good one, but once that decision is made there are immediate complications," says a special education specialist.

"There have been misfirings through lack of lead time, and when we make lifetime decisions for kids we have to pool our resources before we make those decisions."

A school trustee said on an open-line radio program recently: "The ministry made a mistake in telling all districts they had to take handicapped children without allowing them

an opportunity to properly prepare for this."

A parent of an exceptional child adds, "Mainstreaming has moved too far, too fast in B.C., and maybe for some of the wrong reasons. There's an appalling lack of knowledge and an appalling lack of services. The whole system has to change and the teachers in the system have to change."

The BCTF has become increasingly concerned. Here are a few examples of the types of situations that have caused that concern:

- A first-year teacher with five blind children — all multiply handicapped and some with emotional problems — at different ages and stages of development. A physiotherapist, usually a different one every two months, turns up once a week.

- A teacher of hearing-impaired children waiting for equipment from September to February, with no curriculum, and with seven students, age range from 7 to 12, requiring two different teaching methods.

- An autistic boy bounced from one school to another in a district until his parents, in desperation, appealed to their MLA. The boy was eventually

placed in a private boarding school.

- Hearing-impaired students being placed in rooms next to the gymnasium or under the music room.

- A principal scrambling to find financing to continue one-to-one therapeutic tutoring for an intelligent child, a ward of the court, who first came to the school emotionally disturbed and three years behind his grade level but who caught up with extra tutorial assistance. "Without this help he will surely regress," says the principal.

- A teacher frequently having to ignore 29 other children in her regular classroom to attend to the needs of a disturbed, handicapped child who had been phased out of a hospital setting.

- A Grade 10 math teacher trying to assist a legally-blind student. The math text book was not taped and the teacher had to round up lenses from the physics lab and introduce a telescopic device to help the student read her textbook and see the board. She was happy to be included in the group, but left school in mid-term. He does not know where she's gone. There were no academic gains.

- A muscular dystrophy child in regular classes who can't stand and has to be helped with toileting. A relative is currently providing this service but as the child becomes older and heavier this will become more difficult.

- An itinerant teacher working with the hearing-impaired, with 35 children to see, in separate areas. She spends most of her time travelling.

- Hearing-impaired children, placed in foster homes in near decentralized facilities by too-busy social workers, finding that their temporary foster parents use a different method of communication or can't communicate with them at all.

- A mother worrying about how her severely physically handicapped son of normal intelligence can ever catch up with his peers because the only placement she has been able to find for him is in a class for retarded children.

- A mother of an autistic child feeling that "mainstreaming ran its course with him in elementary school. These are pioneer kids and I'm not willing to sacrifice educational gains for socialization. I can't let him be a guinea pig any longer."

- A muscular dystrophy

Education of handicapped

Education, Health and Resources policy statement

AN OVERVIEW

In British Columbia every child who can benefit from the basic education program as prescribed by the provincial government is entitled to an education.

The responsibility for providing this education, under Section 158 of the Public Schools Act, rests with the locally-elected Board of School Trustees of the district in which the child is resident. The act requires each school board to provide the basic education program in a classroom, or in a hospital, or in a home, or in an institution using teachers on either regular or special assignment.

While formal responsibility for a child's education is vested in the school board, the responsibility for providing the necessary support services for the child rests with the parents. The provincial government, through the ministries of the attorney-general, health, and human resources, is prepared, and willing, to help parents meet their responsibilities.

In August of this year, the ministry of education issued a statement outlining how this right to an education should be applied to children with severe handicaps.

In August of this year, the Ministry of Education issued a statement outlining how this right to an education should be applied to children with severe handicaps.

There is great value to be derived from having a handicapped child participate in the activities of a regular classroom. Not only does the child benefit, but so do his peers.

The statement recognized that there are some children whose mental, emotional and / or physical handicaps are so severe that even the provision of the usual support services will not provide an environment in which effective learning can take place. It also recognized that the presence of the students may inhibit the learning of the majority.

The provincial government recognizes that integration of handicapped students into a regular classroom places an additional financial burden on the local school district.

To help the local school districts meet the special needs of handicapped children, the provincial government, through the ministries of the attorney-general, education, health, and human resources has provided, and will continue to provide, generous assistance.

Hundreds of handicapped children are now receiving educational programs in the regular school situation. However, a very few severely handicapped children have not been served because there is no process by which their special needs, drawing upon several government ministries, can be addressed.

The Ministry of Education, through its special approvals system, and the local school districts this

year are sharing in the provision of \$20 million worth of additional services to an education.

The Ministry of Human Resources has, at this moment, 100 child care workers in British Columbia public schools. This \$2.6 million program enables children with behavioral and emotional handicaps to remain in the regular school system. The ministry, through other programs, contributes a further \$3.4 million to facilitate the education of the handicapped.

The Ministry of Health, through its community health, mental health and long-term care programs, also provides assistance to ensure that handicapped children receive an education. The ministry is presently developing new methods to better co-ordinate these agencies to further improve the delivery of services available to children.

The evidence is there. The provincial government is committed to a policy of providing the handicapped student with an education. The government will remain committed. However, the education programs must be provided in a setting that is most beneficial to the student.

The provincial government is not prepared to see one aspect of a child's development sacrificed for another. The prime concern must be the child's overall well-being. While it may be desirable for a child to enroll in a regular classroom, such a move may prove detrimental to a child's well-being.

In such instances, the government will insist that the individual's overall well-being be the prime consideration.

PROCEDURE TO BE IMPLEMENTED

To ensure that the special needs of handicapped students are addressed in a more co-ordinated manner, the provincial government ministries of the attorney-general, education, health and human resources are expanding the role of the Interministerial Youth Committee and its regional counterparts.

The policy of co-operation remains fundamental, but the new process provides a clearer understanding of how the more severely handicapped youngsters will be provided an education.

Under the new system, each handicapped child wishing to enroll in a program of a school district will undergo an analysis which will assess the individual's ability to benefit from an educational program. If the child can be served in a school by regular teachers, teachers-aides and other resources of the special services branch, he will be accepted.

Where the child's needs can be met by additional services regularly available in the community, school district and other local Ministry of Human Resources and health officials will co-operate in developing a program specially designed for the child.

Where it is determined that the needs cannot be met with existing resources, the case will be referred to the regional Children's Committees.

It is anticipated that in most cases the regional committees will be able to arrange for the additional resources. Through this co-operative venture, the special needs of handicapped children will be addressed on an individual basis.

Where this is not possible, the regional committee will refer the case to the provincial Interministerial Youth Committee for resolution.

This process is supported by the findings of the Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children. Following its three-year national study, the commission, in its 1969 report "One Million Children — The CELDIC Report" recommended: "that an assessment of the child's differing educational and treatment needs be provided so that remedial education resources can be mobilized in the residential centre or with its local school system; that the services provided by health be co-ordinated with the services and programs provided through education, welfare and corrections and that the local services be given the greatest possible degree of administrative responsibility in their operation with standards of care established and supervised by provincial authorities."

This procedure, while new to providing services to severely handicapped students, is not unique. A similar system, with a high level of participation by the Ministry of the Attorney-General is presently being used with great success in dealing with children in conflict with the law.

There are 13 Children's Committees operating in the province at the present time. They are supported by local committees in approximately 65 communities. To date, only 10 cases have been referred from the local level to the provincial level, and in each instance solutions have been found.

It has become obvious that the most effective solutions have been developed in communities where there is strong community involvement. Local support of these programs is vitally important and cannot be over-emphasized.

This new procedure will not only provide a vehicle for a structured evaluation of the needs of each child, but it will serve several other important purposes.

It will enable school districts and government ministries to identify future needs and begin early planning to address those needs. This planning may involve the allocation of additional resources and the training of specialists.

It will also draw attention to the relative effectiveness of each region in meeting the needs of its residents, which may influence the allocation of resources.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION
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Letter

Editor
ARNIE MYERS
Associate Editor
MARDEE GALT



Letters to the editor must be signed by and bear the address of the writer. The Newsletter may edit letters for brevity, clarity, legality or taste. Articles contained here-in reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily express official policy of the BCTF.

'Inadequate response'

They also wrote to McGeer, urging him to "consider changing your decision and allowing us to return to local autonomy."

In his three-page reply, Brady set out a detailed chronology of events relating to the amendments. He said the executive welcomes constructive criticism and advice from members, but that it deserves a fair hearing on its actions. He suggested the BTA executive should have pointed out the executive's actions to its Representative Assembly, which passed the critical motion, and that it might have made its own representations to its MLA.

Brady asked for suggestions on how the BCTF could have acted more quickly or more strongly, and how it could have consulted locals in the short time available, at the end of the school year.

Kirby made similar points in a letter to Craig Bassett, BTA president. "We reacted as soon as possible and as strongly as we could under the circumstances," he said. "Stronger reaction needed the active support of the membership and that was not there, for any number of reasons."

In a second, open letter to Brady and Kirby, Bassett argued that most locals probably expected the federation to deal with the matter. "When the government introduces legislation that threatens our collective bargaining rights, do the locals really have to tell the federation that they are concerned?" he asked.

He suggested the federation should have organized a telephone fan-out to alert the locals to the situation and to urge them to send telegrams protesting the amendments to their MLAs.

A delegation should have gone to Victoria immediately to protest and to demand a meeting with the minister, he said.

The issue came up again at

New term staff appointment

Mavis Guretzki has been appointed to a term position on the BCTF staff to assist in the work of the learning conditions group.

Ms. Guretzki will be on staff from Jan. 1 to June 30, 1979. She was chairperson of the Learning Conditions Committee of the Abbotsford District Teachers' Association last year. Currently she is president of the association and is also teaching kindergarten half-time.

Pioneer teacher on CBC radio

Kate McQueen, 93, pioneer, historian and teacher (she taught English at King Edward High School for 33 years) will be interviewed on the CBC radio program, "Voice of the Pioneer," Dec. 2 and 9.

The program is broadcast at 8:15 a.m.

Kate moved with her family across Canada by train in 1891 to the west coast and will relate anecdotes about this journey and pioneer life in Canada.

the federation's Representative Assembly on Oct. 21, when Jack Gilmore reported that the Burnaby Administrators' Association had passed a motion expressing its concern over the federation's response and calling on the BCTF to mobilize to publicize and fight the amendments.

Later, 14 teachers at Lakeview School in Burnaby expressed their concern in a letter to the BCTF executive. Teachers are under attack as never before, they said, and the BCTF doesn't seem to be doing enough about it.

They said they wondered "if the millions of dollars pouring annually into our provincial association is going to any of these issues. In short, is there anyone there?"

At the October RA, Brady rejected suggestions that nothing was done about the amendments. "We did as much as we could at the time," he said. "We did make it clear to the minister and in our press release that this (change in bargaining procedures) was contrary to our policy and was unacceptable."

Tom Krall, executive member-at-large, also dismissed suggestions that "the executive is sitting on its hands." He called for locals and federation to work together: "The enemy is not at the executive table," he said, "the enemy is out there. We know where they are but sometimes we tend to lose track of that."

The RA passed a Coquitlam motion calling for the federation to send a copy of the Public Schools Act to McGeer, "drawing to his attention the sections outlining local school boards' responsibilities with respect to teacher bargaining."

Norm Vennard, South Cariboo, objected that the motion was in bad taste. "Bad manners is not the way to gain our ends," he said.

General Secretary Bob Buzza warned that the motion might play into the minister's hands. McGeer could "have a field day" with it, he said, and could easily arouse public support on the ground that he was meeting his obligations as minister of a significant portfolio which puts hundreds of millions into the school system.

Said Second Vice-President Ken Smith: "That has got to be the silliest motion I've ever seen."

When taking a pension benefit, teachers have a choice of plans, singly or in combination, whereby they can (1) ensure payment over the longer of the lifetime of the retiree or a guaranteed number of years and (2) ensure payment over the longer of the lifetime of the retiree, the spouse or other nominee (*Members' Guide*, page 72).

The Teachers' Pension Plan has provision for allowances upon retirement, disability and death, provided the teacher has a minimum of 10 years of pensionable service and meets the other eligibility requirements (*Members' Guide*, page 72).



Jim Killeen (left) and Norm Ornes doing their homework for new administrative guide preparation.

Revised guide in works for '79

A two-man team is busy revising "the bibles" — the administrative guides for elementary and secondary schools, which will be combined into one volume.

Jim Killeen, principal of Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School and Norm Ornes, principal of Eric Hamber Secondary School, have been seconded to the Ministry of Education by the Vancouver School Board to examine the requirements of and then prepare the new guide.

The revised guide, an administrative reference work, will define philosophy, goals and procedures for the public school system and will offer a variety of additional information for school administrators.

The elementary schools handbook was last published in 1971 with partial revisions and the secondary school handbook was reissued, with few changes, in 1974.

It is expected that the new guide will be ready by September, 1979. It will be published in looseleaf form so that amended and new material can be easily inserted.

There will be consultation throughout the project with advisory panels, one the Ministry of Education Schools Management Committee, and the other composed of Ministry of Education and teacher representatives. BCTF advisory panel representative is Wayne Rutherford, principal of 108-Mile Elementary School.

Contact will also be maintained with the BCSTA and the BCTF throughout.

An initial draft is expected to be completed by the end of November and submitted to the Ministry of Education for preliminary approval.

Then Ornes and Killeen will travel to 13 B.C. centres early

in 1979 to meet with school boards, teachers and other interested people to seek further recommendations.

Final copy will be presented to the ministry after consultation with the advisory panels and the BCSTA and BCTF.

"It's an interesting task — an attractive thing to do," says Norm Ornes, chairperson of the BCTF education finance committee and first vice-president of the B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association.

"Practising administrators appreciate a reference work which draws on the experience of others," says Jim Killeen. "This revision is necessary because it hasn't been attended to for a number of years."

Jim Killeen is a former president of the BCTF, the CTF and a vice-president of the WCOTP (World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession).

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provement over the present situation."

He expressed concern, however, that if final decisions on funding rested at the provincial level, these decisions would be made "a long way from where the problem is."

He called for legislation to enact the existence of an inter-ministerial agency and said, "We intend to monitor the directions the government is going and to point out all situations and occurrences where what they say is not actually the reality of the situation."

"Teachers have all too often been put in the position where policy statements and decisions to do nice things have been carried, in terms of paper resolutions, but these have been subverted by the lack of adequate resources which have made them a sham rather than a reality."

The brief outlined federation policy that a decision concerning the appropriate placement of any exceptional child — that is, in the best interest of the child — should be reached only after: consent or co-operation of parent or guardian whenever possible has been obtained; a complete diagnosis including an individual psychological assessment has been made; and a conference, which includes the appropriate school personnel and, when necessary, professionals from outside the school, has been held.

Two additional conditions,

adopted as interim policy by the BCTF executive at its Nov. 6 meeting, were included in the brief: that placement of exceptional children be made after it is indicated that appropriate financial, physical and educational resources are made available; and after commitment has been given to supply teachers who have the qualifications and training required to provide the necessary educational programs.

The BCTF brief points out that "it is our understanding and our grave concern that placements are being made and have been made without proper planning, with inadequate consultation and with unsound phasing (existing services were withdrawn before new services were fully in place). There has been little if any attempt to provide adequate training for teachers who have new responsibilities, nor to properly fund programs."

BCTF President Pat Brady, in responding to the joint ministry statement earlier, had applauded the new policy, but qualified his remarks by noting that he assumed McGeer's statement that "all of the resources needed will be supplied" would include providing extra training for teachers, provision of teaching aids and special equipment.

BCSTA director Helen Casher, who presented that organization's brief at the Council for Exceptional Children annual meeting, expressed concern about a statement in the inter-ministerial policy announcement that "the responsibility for providing the

necessary support services for the child rests with the parents."

She said the BCSTA had received a legal opinion that under the Public Schools Act responsibility instead rests legally with school boards, and that although this information had been passed along to the Ministry of Education, "we have as yet heard no comment from the minister of education that he will amend the Public Schools Act to amend this contradiction."

She also expressed concern over the policy statement that each handicapped child wishing to enrol will undergo an analysis which will assess the individual's ability to benefit from an education program.

"Nowhere in the statement do the ministers suggest who it is that will conduct this analysis and what criteria will be used to make appropriate judgments. We would hope that clarification of these questions could be made immediately by the ministers."

She said she shared the concerns put forward by the BCTF and added, "Needless to say, we will be monitoring the actions stemming from the joint policy position very closely."

Prior to the joint ministerial policy statement, the BCTF executive, at its Nov. 6 meeting, had agreed that an ad hoc committee be appointed to describe the current situation, review existing policy and prepare policy on the education of exceptional children for consideration by the 1979 Annual General Meeting.