

The practice of teaching: A handbook for new teachers

 British Columbia Teachers' Federation





BCTF Mission Statement

The BCTF is a union of professionals that represents and advocates for social, professional, and economic goals of teachers and promotes a quality pluralistic public school system through leadership and advocacy, professional development, and collective bargaining.

Teaching is a planned process based on standards of professional practice which incorporate principles of pedagogy, social responsibility, ethical practices, and collaborative relationships.

Adapted from BCTF Policy 31.A.02



Jinny Sims
President

A message to new teachers

A very warm welcome to the teaching profession! Ours is a noble calling and a wonderful career for all of us who care about kids. I want to offer you my congratulations for choosing teaching, and my very best wishes as you begin your career.

What job could be more important than helping students learn, grow, and become active citizens in our democratic society? In today's rapidly changing world, schools and teachers play an increasingly crucial role in the lives of our young people.

On behalf of your 42,000 colleagues in the BCTF, I also want to welcome you into our Federation—a union of professionals. The BCTF has been the voice of teachers in this province since 1917. The purposes of the Federation remain the same today as they were then: to foster and promote the cause of education, to raise the status of the teaching profession, and to promote the welfare of teachers. Professional development, economic welfare, and social justice still form the foundation of our work in the BCTF.

Through collective bargaining, the BCTF and its locals have gained many improvements for teachers, students, and the public education system as a whole. These gains include smaller class sizes, preparation time, inclusion of students with special needs, teacher autonomy, and top-notch professional development opportunities. Teachers' working conditions and students' learning conditions truly are one and the same!

However, in January 2002, the B.C. Liberals stripped many important provisions from our collective agreements: provisions such as, class-size limits, and guaranteed support from non-enrolling teachers, provisions that protected quality of education. Without these contractual guarantees and with the funding freeze, working and learning conditions are being eroded in B.C. schools.

There can be no doubt that you are entering our profession at a particularly difficult time in the history of public education in B.C. In the past three years, school boards have faced multi-million dollar funding shortfalls. Almost 3,000 full-time teaching positions have been cut, and more than 100 public schools have been closed. Despite the devastating impact of these cuts, teachers and parents continue to work together to meet the needs of students and build strong communities of learning.

Public opinion research shows that British Columbians understand the many challenges we face in our schools. Almost 85% of British Columbians believe that classroom teachers are the most credible sources of information about the education scene, and they support teachers' right to speak out on issues in education. By contrast, only 58% believe the media is credible and a paltry 35% believe the premier is credible!

Throughout the school year, please try to make time in your busy schedule to keep up to date with events and issues in your school, your local, and the BCTF. Regular *School Staff Alerts* are posted in the staffroom, *Teacher* newsmagazine will come to your mailbox, and *Issue Alerts* will inform you of emergent issues. I encourage you to get involved in the work of our union through your local and Federation networks (professional development, social justice, health and safety, and staff union representative).

The BCTF is a proud union of professionals. It is **your** union. We are here to support and assist you through many programs, services, and leadership initiatives. We welcome your voice and encourage your active participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jinny Sims".

Jinny Sims
President

Acknowledgements

The Practice of Teaching: A Handbook for New Teachers is a revision of the 2001 *Handbook for New Teachers*. The BCTF first published a *Beginning Teachers' Handbook* in 1997, a publication that sprung from the work of the Teacher Education Committee under the co-ordination of Professional Development Division staff member, Charan Gill. In 2000, after much consultation, the publication was combined with the *Teachers On Call Handbook*. It was felt that one publication would best serve the needs of new teachers on a continuing assignment as well as teachers on call who are waiting for a continuing assignment or who have opted to be on call. Jan Eastman of the Professional Development Division worked with the Teacher Education and the teacher on call advisory committees to bring this project to fruition.

This current handbook is a work of collaboration by staff members from all the BCTF divisions who updated sections relevant to their areas of expertise. The publication is also available in French for immersion and programme francophone teachers.

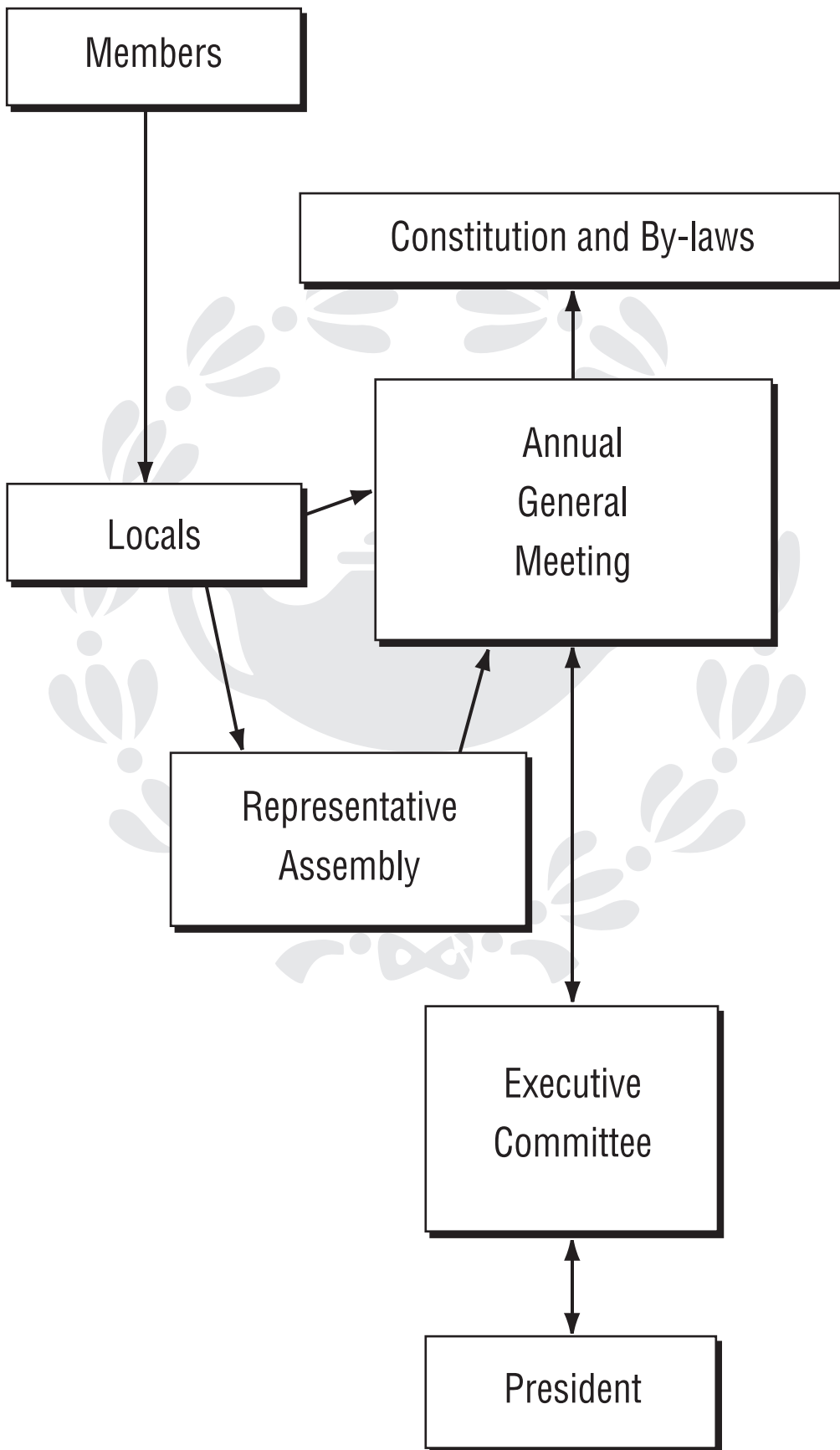
Paule Desgroseilliers
Project co-ordinator
Professional and Social Issues Division

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GOVERNANCE



Introduction

The B.C. Teachers' Federation offers you assistance, support, and encouragement through its many services, programs, and publications. Your colleagues in the union are willing and eager to help. Ask!

Please call your local teachers' association or the BCTF for information and advice about any professional, personnel or welfare issue.

Visit the BCTF online at bctf.ca/about/presidents.cfm for a list of the BCTF locals.

Setting the B.C. context

Following are a number of background pieces for easy reference.

THE BCTF: A UNION OF PROFESSIONALS

In 1872, the initial Public Schools Act for B.C. contained few rights for teachers. In 1917, the B.C. Teachers' Federation was formed, with the original objectives of dealing with the economic, professional, and social concerns of teachers. Teacher salaries at the time were determined by lists developed by school boards. There was no pay equity for women or for teachers working at elementary level as opposed to the secondary level.

From 1917 until 1987, many gains were made in bargaining salary and benefits. However, the right to full and free collective bargaining remained a major objective of the BCTF.

Then, in 1987, the government introduced two pieces of legislation, known as Bill 19 and Bill 20, which were to have a major impact on the BCTF and teacher bargaining.

An end to the denial of basic bargaining rights for teachers was contained in an amendment to the Industrial Relations Act (Bill 19), which eliminated the restriction on teachers' being considered as employees under the act. Bill 20 eliminated compulsory membership for teachers, took principals and vice-principals out of our bargaining unit, and created a College of Teachers. The legislation was viewed by teachers as an attempt to split the BCTF,

and on April 28, 1987, B.C. teachers closed schools and held study sessions in every community in the province to protest the assault on their organization. On June 1, 1987, B.C. teachers acted in solidarity with the rest of the labour movement and participated in a general strike to protest Bills 19 and 20.

The legislation required teacher locals to decide whether or not to choose the union model with the right to strike, or to opt for the association model, with limited access to resolution rights. Teachers in all 75 locals chose the union option and in a massive voluntary sign up of members, 98% to 99% of all teachers in B.C. joined the BCTF.

Task forces on membership, PSAs, and the College of Teachers helped restructure the BCTF. Meanwhile the organization mobilized its energies to prepare for the first round of what was close to full and free collective bargaining.

In 1988, trained and co-ordinated by the BCTF, locals went to the bargaining table for the first time as equals to their employers.

Through local and provincial collective bargaining, the BCTF and its locals have gained many improvements for teachers, students, and public education. These gains include issues that are central to the teaching/learning process, such as smaller classes, preparation time, inclusion of students with special needs, teacher autonomy, professional development, education change and improvements for teachers on call.

The third round of provincial bargaining began March 2001. The government of the day hijacked the collective bargaining process despite an historic strike vote that saw 91.04% of members vote in favour of job action to achieve a fair agreement negotiated at the bargaining table.

Instead, two pieces of legislation were passed in January 2002. Bill 27 (Education Services Collective Agreement) imposed a settlement and Bill 28 (Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act) eliminated agreement provisions that determine maximum class size, workload, and support provisions.

In the summer of the same year, a government appointed "arbitrator," Eric Rice, set to work

striking out clauses dealing with class size, class composition, support for students with special needs, and ratios for specialist teachers from all teacher collective agreements around the province. The Federation appealed the ruling of this arbitrator and in the spring of 2004 won a significant victory in the courts. Justice D.W. Shaw of the B.C. Supreme Court ruled that “in light of the fundamental nature of the errors of law, the determination of the arbitrator must be quashed.” However, in response to the decision of the B.C. Supreme Court, the government passed Bill 19, which legislated the contract-stripping decisions of Eric Rice into effect.

The elimination of learning condition guarantees in the collective agreement has been coupled with the under-funding of public schools in B.C. Beginning in 2002, a three-year funding freeze was imposed while, at the same time, additional costs were downloaded to school districts. The impact has been dramatic. In June 2002, 44 schools in communities around the province were closed and another 45 were closed the following June. At the end of the school year in 2004, an additional 24 schools were slated to join the list of closures.

In the course of the school years from 2002–04, class sizes have increased significantly and many students with special needs are not getting the services they require in order to be successful. The number of specialist teachers, such as teacher-librarians, ESL teachers, counsellors, learning assistants and resource teachers, has been reduced. Programs have been eliminated and, in some districts, the number of full days per week that school is in session have been reduced.

For many decades, teachers in B.C. have played a significant role in advocating for public education. In the past three years, teachers have spoken out about the impact of underfunding and instability in the system, at times in the face of many efforts to discredit and diminish the voice of teachers. Research conducted through focus groups and polling, clearly shows that the public holds teachers in high regard, considers teachers the most credible source of information about education, and fully expects teachers to speak out about conditions in the schools. Teachers care deeply about students and public education. Speaking out is simply part of being a teacher.

In the spring of 2003, the government took political control of the BC College of Teachers by passing Bill 51, the Teaching Profession Amendment Act. The duly elected college councillors were dismissed and replaced with twenty councillors directly appointed by the minister of education. These appointees adopted a set of “standards” for the teachers, actively encouraged parental complaints, hired additional staff for the college, increased the expense rate for college councillors. However, teachers in B.C. held firm to the belief that the college of teachers should be a democratic body governed by a majority of councillors chosen from the teaching profession. They also felt it was most unfair for teachers’ college fees to be paying for the cost of running a college that had been taken over by political appointees. The Federation, locals, and members undertook a campaign which saw members refusing to pay their fee to the college and paying into a BCTF Democratic College Fund instead.

Teachers continued to speak out on the problems caused by Bill 51 and were able to secure a very high degree of member and public support for the BCTF position.

The campaign was so successful that many school boards joined the BCTF and its locals in opposition to Bill 51, and the government eventually declared that the legislation would be amended to grant that a majority of college council positions would be elected by the members of the college.

THE PUBLIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY FUND

In the fall of 2001, the BCTF began to develop a comprehensive report entitled the Public Education Advocacy Plan. Realizing that under-funding, threats to learning conditions, privatization, and other government policies were putting quality public education at risk, the Federation saw the need to put in place a plan to advocate for a strong and stable public education system that met the needs of all students. The plan included active advocacy for students and their learning needs, professional support for teachers dealing with increasingly difficult conditions, political action to influence government at the municipal and provincial levels, coalition building with others in the community, and opposition to attempts to privatize public education. The plan was adopted by the Annual General Meeting of 2003. An out-

line of the key points of the plan is included in this booklet.

CHARTER FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

In 2002, the BCTF initiated a process to conduct a thorough canvas of the perspectives on public education held by British Columbians and develop a charter based on the findings. The Federation provided funding for a panel of five members to conduct the review and, once the panel was set up and running, the BCTF removed itself from the process to allow the panel to work independently. The Charter for Public Education panelists were Margaret Marquardt (parent and Anglican church priest), Kathy Whittam (parent and community activist), David Chudnovsky (teacher and BCTF past-president), John Moss (retired superintendent) and George Watts (former president of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council).

Throughout the 2002–03 school year the panel held hearings in communities all around B.C. They then developed a statement of principles, the Charter for Public Education, and a thorough report on the submissions to the panel and the discussions held at the hearings. The consensus was clear, British Columbians consider public education a sacred trust and strongly believe that everyone has the right to a free, quality public education system. They want to see the learner at the centre and clearly expect the government to fully fund public schools.

Go to www.charter.publiced.ca for more information, including the full report of the Charter for Public Education.

ROYAL COMMISSION

In 1988, the report of the Royal Commission on Education, also known as the Sullivan Report, placed an emphasis on the learner and articulated the principles of learning.

The principles of learning, which appear in the ministry policy document *The Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Plan* (September 1994), also appear in the introductions of all ministry integrated resource packages (IRPs) and are endorsed by the BCTF in policy statement 9.A.15 (4).

Principles of Learning

Three principles support the foundation of the education program. They guide all aspects of

educational practice including curriculum development, instructional planning and practice, resource selection, school and classroom organization, assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

They are:

- Learning requires the active participation of the student.
- People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and a group process.

The Primary Program grew out of the Sullivan Report and presented a framework based, not on curriculum, but on a model of integrating curriculum and of incorporating assessment and learning rather than regarding assessment as something to do at the end to make sure the students have learned what has been taught. Strategies such as observations, portfolio assessment, self-assessment, and conferencing became part of many teachers' repertoire.

SCHOOL ACT AND REGULATIONS AND MINISTER'S ORDERS

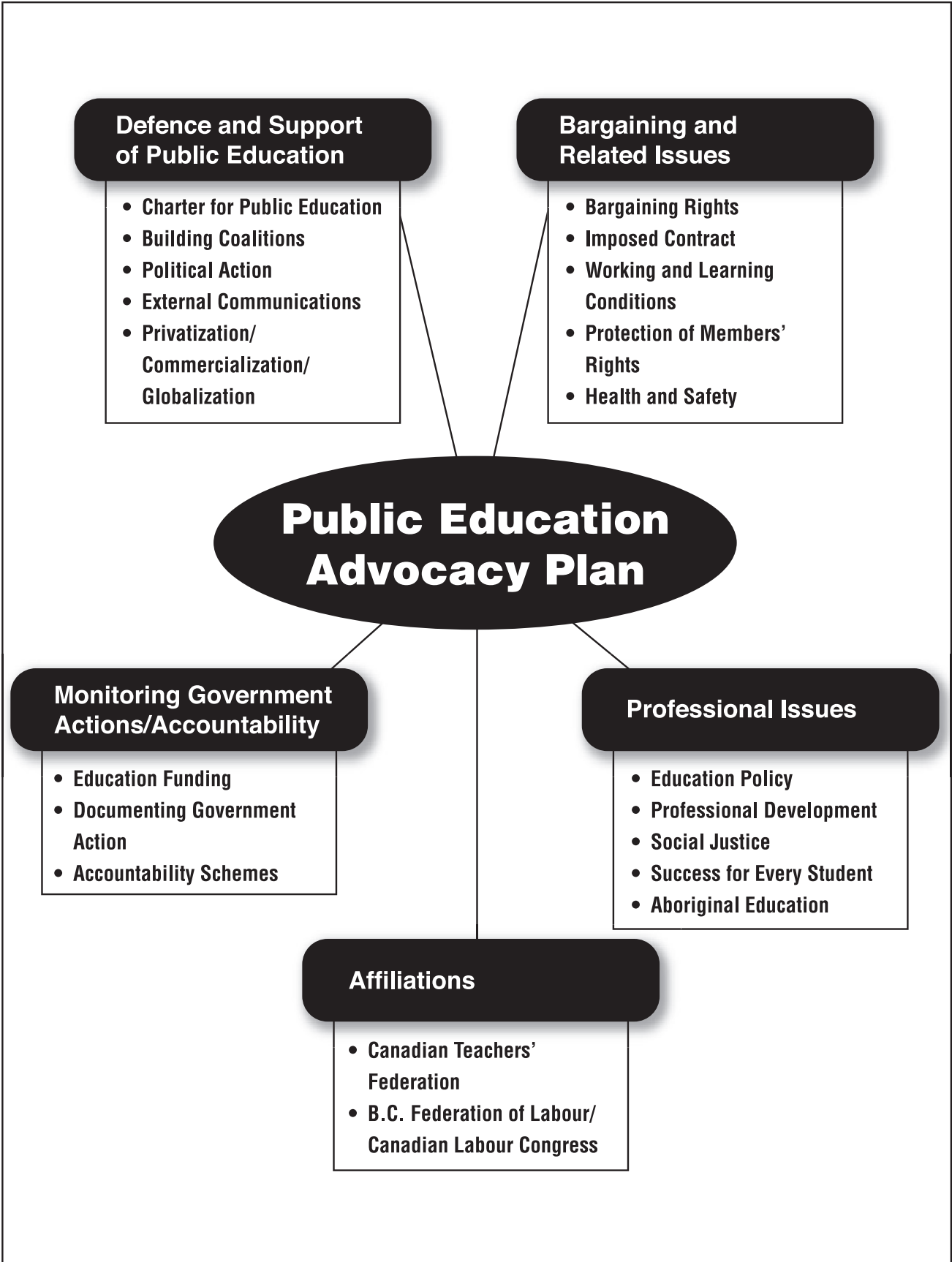
The school system is governed by the School Act and Regulations and Ministerial Orders. The School Act and Regulations outlines the roles, responsibilities, and rights of teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Current policy changes are found in the Ministerial Orders. For example, the School Act and Regulations requires that teachers write report cards for their students while the Minister's Orders detail the specifics about which letter grade can be used and how often the reports must be sent.

Where to find: This information is available at your school, at/through the local union office or the school board office or, go to www.bced.gov.bc.ca.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Your provincial local collective agreement is an important source of information, and you should have your own copy. Ask your school staff rep and/or your local president for clarification you require. The collective agreement documents your rights, responsibilities and benefits as an employee. www.bctf.ca/bargaining/agreements/

Where to find: Ask your staff rep or local president for a copy.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Integrated resource package (IRP)

An IRP is the official curriculum that all teachers in the province must teach. The IRP format is the same for all subjects. Column one details the “Intended Learning Outcomes,” (ILOs) the only required component of the IRP. As a teacher, you must teach the ILOs. The second column lists a number of “suggested instructional strategies,” the third column offers a variety of “suggested assessment strategies,” and the fourth column offers a number of recommended “learning resources.” Columns two through four are suggestions only. Using your professional judgment, you may choose to use the ideas or to develop your own. As a teacher, you have the professional autonomy to choose the “how,” “when,” and “where” of the curriculum. Only the “what” is mandated.

Copies of all IRPs can be downloaded at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/

Adapted program

An adapted program retains the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum, but it is adapted to accommodate different abilities or learning needs. An adapted program may include adjustments to instruction, assessment, or the amount of time allocated for specific studies to help the student achieve success. Students on adapted programs are assessed using the standards for the course or program, and they can receive credit toward a Dogwood Diploma.

Modified curriculum

A modified curriculum has learning outcomes substantially different from the prescribed curriculum.

Modifying curriculum involves changing or deleting significant numbers of the learning outcomes in the provincial curriculum so that low-achieving students can achieve success.

Courses modified at the school level are not counted as credit toward a Dogwood Diploma.

Individual education plan (IEP)

When students with special needs are unable to meet the learning outcomes of a course and it is necessary to modify the program, an individual

education plan (IEP) outlining goals and objectives for each student must be developed.

In these cases, the use of letter grades and percentages on reports is inappropriate. Structured written reports are used to report how well students have succeeded in meeting the modified goals and objectives of their IEPs.

Letter grades and percentages may be assigned only when students with special needs are able to meet the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum. (See also page 37.)

Assessment/evaluation/reporting

Teachers gather information and data on student achievement on an ongoing basis (assessment), make judgments about student growth (evaluation), and then share the information with students and parents (reporting). (See also page 35.)

ACRONYMS REVEALED

ACFPS	Advisory Committee on French Programs and Services (BCTF)
ACLP	Advisory Council of Local Presidents (BCTF)
ACPI	Association canadienne des professeurs d’immersion
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ASU	Administrative Staff Union (BCTF)
BCCPAC	British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
BCCT	British Columbia College of Teachers
BCFED	British Columbia Federation of Labour (BCFL)
BCPSEA	British Columbia Public School Employers’ Association
BCPVPA	British Columbia Principals’ & Vice-Principals’ Association
BCTF	British Columbia Teachers’ Federation
BCSSA	British Columbia School Superintendents’ Association
BCSTA	British Columbia School Trustees Association
CAPSD	Collective Agreements and Protective Services Division (BCTF)

CCPA	Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives	LRB	Labour Relations Board
CCPSF	Comité consultatif des programmes et services français (BCTF)	LSA	Local Specialist Association (BCTF)
CIEA	College Institute Educators' Association	LTD	Long Term Disability
CLC	Canadian Labour Congress	MAE	Ministry of Advanced Education
CMEC	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada	MOE	Ministry of Education
CCD	Communications/Campaigns Division (BCTF)	NEA	National Education Association of the U.S.A.
CSF	Conseil scolaire francophone	NID	Non-Instructional Day
CTF	Canadian Teachers' Federation	P&P	Policy & Procedures
CV	Curriculum vitae	PAC	Parent Advisory Council
DPAC	District Parent Advisory Council	PCAC	Provincial Curriculum Advisory Committee (BCTF)
EC	Executive Committee (BCTF)	PD	Professional development (BCTF)
EI	Education International	PIAC	Professional Issues Advisory Committee (BCTF)
EI	Employment Insurance	ProD	see PD
FAS	Finance and Administrative Services (BCTF)	PSA	Provincial Specialist Association (BCTF)
FCE	Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants	PSAC	Provincial Specialist Association Council (BCTF)
FEA	Francophone Education Authority	PSID	Provincial and Social Issues Division (BCTF)
FFWL	French as a First or Working Language	PQT	Program for Quality Teaching (BCTF)
FLTP	Français langue de travail ou première	R&T	Research and Technology (BCTF)
FSA	Foundation Skills Assessment	RA	Representative Assembly (BCTF)
FSD	Field Service Division (BCTF)	RTA	Retired Teachers' Association (BCTF)
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent	SBT	School-based team
FTTO	Full-Time Table Officers (BCTF)	SD	School district
H&H	Heterosexism & Homophobia	SEPF	Syndicat des enseignantes et enseignants du programme francophone
IEP	Individual Education Plan	SER	Student-educator ratio
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome	SIF	Salary Indemnity Fund
IMS	Internal Mediation Service (BCTF)	SIP	Salary Indemnity Plan
IRP	Integrated Resource Package	SJAC	Social Justice Advisory Committee (BCTF)
IWD	International Women's Day	SPC	School Planning Council
LP	Local President (BCTF)	SURT	School Union Representative Training (BCTF)
LoP	Letter of Permission		
LoU	Letter of Understanding		
LR	Local Representative (BCTF)		

TFEU	Teachers' Federation Employees' Union (BCTF support staff)	BCScTA	B.C. Science Teachers' Association
TOC	Teacher on call	BCSSTA	B.C. Social Studies Teachers' Association
TOCUTAC	Teacher on call and Underemployed Teachers' Advisory Committee (BCTF)	BCTEA	B.C. Technology Education Association
TPA	Teaching Profession Act	BCTELA	B.C. Teachers of English Language Arts
TQS	Teacher Qualification Service (BCTF and BCSTA)	BCTLA	B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association
WCB	Workers' Compensation Board	BCTPGE	B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education
		CUEBC	Computer-Using Educators of B.C.
		EAR	Educators Against Racism
		ESLPSA	English as a Second Language Provincial Specialist Association

THE 33 PSAs WITHIN THE BCTF

bctf.ca/about/PSA/PSAC.cfm

AEPSA	Adult Educators' Provincial Specialist Association	FNEA	First Nations Education Association
AEGTCCBC	Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Children in B.C.	LATA	Learning Assistance Teachers' Association
ABCDE	Association of B.C. Drama Educators	PEPSA	Physical Education Provincial Specialist Association
APPIPC	Association Provinciale des Professeurs de l'Immersion et du Programme-Francophone	PITA	Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association
BCAEA	B.C. Alternate Education Association	SEA	Special Education Association
BCATA	B.C. Art Teachers' Association	THESA	Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association
BCAMT	B.C. Association of Mathematics Teachers		
BCATML	B.C. Association of Teachers of Modern Languages		
BCBEA	B.C. Business Education Association		
BCCA	B.C. Culinary Arts Provincial Specialist Association		
BCCLPSA	B.C. Co-operative Learning Provincial Specialist Association		
BCDEA	B.C. Dance Educators' Association		
BCDEDL	B.C. Educators for Distributed Learning		
BCMEA	B.C. Music Educators' Association		
BCPTA	B.C. Primary Teachers' Association		
BCRTA	B.C. Rural and Small Schools Teachers' Association		
BCSCA	B.C. School Counsellors' Association		

The application form to join any of the PSAs can be found on page 57 of this handbook or online at: bctf.ca/psas/~PSA-ApplicationForm.shtml



Beginning your career as a teacher on call

Beginning your career as a teacher on call

Many teachers are beginning their careers in B.C. as teachers on call (TOCs). As a TOC, you are a very important component of the school system.

Few explorers have set out to conquer the unknown with more uncertainty than teachers on call. You may be called at a moment's notice regarding your teaching assignment: where you will teach, what you will teach, and whom you will teach. All this can be overwhelming unless you keep in mind that, first and foremost, you are a teacher.

As a professional teacher doing the job of a teacher on call, you are vital to the effective operation of the school system. No school can run without you! Fortunately you are around to take on this often difficult job.

WHO ARE TEACHERS ON CALL?

TOCs are certificated and qualified individuals who replace a regular classroom teacher for the purpose of continuing the instructional program, maintaining discipline, and generally promoting the educational welfare of the students.

There are also more blunt descriptions, descriptions that indicate a great deal about how we perceive their role and their importance to the educational process.

The stereotypes

TOCs are often viewed as:

- *Baby sitters*—implying that they aren't expected to do any "real teaching."
- *Cannon fodder*—like lambs to the slaughter, substitutes are often seen as expendable, thrown to the lions (the students) as some sort of sacrificial offering.
- *Stand-ins*—replacing the "star" performers when they are unable to perform.
- *Spare tires*—sitting in the trunk until needed in an emergency.
- *Outsiders*—"alien beings" from some strange planet, unable to fit into our world.
- *Chameleons*—old lizards with the uncanny ability to alter their appearance. Thus when encountered, they are usually addressed as

"just a sub"—implying that the TOC has no training or authority in the classroom.

The reality

- In the classroom, TOCs are as legally responsible as any other teacher.
- TOCs are not trainees. They are equal in training to many contract teachers.
- Stress is added to TOC work by the multitude of unknowns.
- TOCs are always eager to hone their management skills as discipline is a big challenge.

The following information comes from *teachers on call in B.C.: A BCTF Research Survey (Spring 1999)*, prepared by the BCTF Research Department.

The "typical" teacher on call in B.C. today

- Holds a professional certificate.
- Is female. In 1997, about 80% of TOCs were women.
- Is in her 20s or 30s.
- Has been working as a TOC for about four years.
- Earns about \$11,000 from teacher on call work.
- Wants more on-call work than she is currently getting.
- Aspires to continuing contract employment with her school board.
- Supplements teaching-on-call income with other employment income.
- Sees a general problem with the non-availability of continuing employment.
- Feels that district hiring is unfairly handled.
- Wants more recognition and support from the local teachers' association.
- Perceives herself to have professional development needs broadly similar to those of contract teachers.

Overview of specific findings

- Average days of employment and income: The average days of employment in 1997–98 was 73 days, about 40% of the school year.
- The desire to get more teaching-on-call work: More than 60% of those currently working as teachers on call indicated they want more work than they currently get.
- The desire to get a continuing position: Three out of four teachers on call surveyed aspired to continuing-contract employment.
- Supplementing income from other employment:

A significant proportion of TOCs (40%) supplement their total income from other sources.

- Obstacles to getting a continuing contract: A majority of respondents felt there were significant obstacles to getting continuing appointments. Reasons cited included age discrimination and favouritism in the posting.

For updates, check the following Web page:
www.bctf.ca/TOC

The advantages of being a TOC

- You are able to observe a variety of classroom and school environments.
- It's often the route to a full-time position.
- It "opens the door," and lets administrators see what you can do.
- On-call teaching provides flexibility in your working schedule.
- On-call teaching is interesting and challenging work, offering the chance to exercise knowledge and creativity.
- On-call teaching provides the opportunity to experiment with different teaching strategies and to become familiar with a variety of resources.

TEACHERS ON CALL: NETWORKING IN THE LOCAL

It is important for you as a TOC to develop a strong support system to tap into for any number of issues/situations and to offset the potential isolation in your job. Find out who your local president is and who the staff reps in the various schools are. They can answer your questions and concerns immediately and provide necessary assistance. Find out if your local has a TOC committee or association; if not, consider starting one. Get involved. Your local president can help.

Ideas for a local teacher on call association to pursue

- Set up a local telephone-answering machine with messages, and update regularly.
- Establish a teacher on call telephone tree, with a co-ordinator to manage it and initiate messages.
- Have the local association mail materials to teachers on call (newsletters, notices, etc.).
- Provide teachers on call with mailboxes or bulletin boards in staff rooms.
- Provide a local teacher on call newsletter or a column in the local association newsletter.

- When items like a bargaining survey are distributed, see that all teacher on call members receive a copy.
- Arrange for the local association to set up a board for TOCs at its office for notices related to professional development and curriculum implementation.
- Provide an orientation session for teachers on call.
- Establish a teacher on call host teacher in each school to welcome teachers on call and provide any current information the local wishes to pass on to teachers on call.
- Encourage school staffs to invite teachers on call to school staff functions.
- Ensure that teachers on call are included in staff representative training.
- Inform teachers on call of PD opportunities and social activities.
- Invite TOCs to induction ceremonies.
- Encourage the local to provide professional development dollars for TOC use.
- Plan TOC socials and resource swapping events.

Sources of support and opportunities for involvement in the BCTF and/or local

- *BCTF meetings*—be aware of, and become informed about, the provincial teacher on call and Underemployed Advisory Committee.
- *BCTF web site*—www.bctf.ca
- *BCTF workshops*—have your local book through the BCTF PSI Division Training Department.
- *Local association meetings*—volunteer to serve on, or to develop, a local TOC committee.
- *Teacher* newsmagazine.
- *BCTF New Teachers' and Student Teachers' Conference*. Annual conference held in January or February.

School Act requirements to hire certificated TOCs

In B.C., the School Act requires school boards to hire teachers who:

- hold certificates of qualification, *and*
- are members of the BC College of Teachers.

The only exception to this requirement exists when no teacher holding a certificate is available and the assignment is for 20 or fewer consecutive teaching days. In such instances, a non-certificated teacher may be employed.

Section 19 of the School Act covers this requirement. It reads as follows:

Teacher and administrative officer qualifications

19. (1) Subject to subsection (2), a board shall not employ a person as a teacher, administrative officer, superintendent of schools, or assistant superintendent of schools unless that person is:

- (a) a member of the college and holds a certificate of qualification as a teacher, or
- (b) holds a letter of permission to teach issued under section 25(3) of the Teaching Profession Act.

(2) A board may employ a person who possesses qualifications approved by the board but does not meet the requirements of subsection (1), if that person is:

- (a) employed for 20 or fewer consecutive teaching days and teaching a particular class or classes where no teacher holding a certificate of qualification is available, or
- (b) instructing a general interest course that is not leading to school graduation.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT AS A TEACHER ON CALL

Duties and responsibilities

Arrive well in advance of the first bell. You will need at least 30 minutes when posted to a new situation. Advise the school if you will be late due to a last minute notification of assignment.

Apon arriving at the school

- Orient yourself to the building and introduce yourself to staff. If time permits, find the medical room, staff-room, gym, and fire exits. Ask for a safe place to store your valuables (purse, wallet).
- Some teachers are able to prepare clear instructions for a TOC for a planned absence. Others may not, due to an unexpected absence. If the teacher has not provided information regarding the absentee procedure, check with the office. Ask if there is supervision in the school.
- Locate the teacher's daybook and go over the day's lesson plans.
- Find the copy machine code, teacher supply room, and supervision schedule.
- Run off any material needed.
- Write your name on the board (and a special message/greeting if you wish).
- Put up any board work assignments.

- If audio-visual material is to be used during a lesson, double check to make sure the necessary equipment has been signed out at the school and that it works.
- Plan your introduction. Check on class opening exercises. If there are uncertainties about directions or you have questions about materials, ask a neighbouring teacher.
- Ask about attending meetings (staff, committee).
- Leave a detailed history of the day.
- Mark the day's work. If you are unable to do so due to the complexity of the work, leave a note to that effect.

When the students arrive

- Welcome the students as they enter.
- Introduce yourself to the class.
- Explain to the class that you are the teacher who has been called in, that the regular teacher has left lessons that would normally have been taught, and that you will teach them. Follow lesson plans as closely as you can.
- Don't expect to cover everything. It is better to go for quality rather than quantity. Remember, your pace will be different, as will the students' responses.
- Record absentees and late arrivals. Check the seating plan. If there is no seating plan quickly draw one up. Attempt to match names to faces. Try to keep seating arrangements as shown in the seating plan.
- Collect or check any pertinent notes such as absentee notes, permission forms for field trips, etc. If there is a need to collect money, turn it in to the office for safekeeping, with the division number, the student's name, and the amount indicated. If you are giving out supplies such as pencils, notebooks, and erasers, record which students are receiving what items.
- Go over the classroom rules and your expectations (keep them brief—three or four rules) and the consequences (ones you can enforce) you will use for inappropriate behaviour.

If you encountered a difficult situation, don't try to cover up the difficulty. The administration appreciates your directing problems to the office for assistance. That is preferable to leaving behind a note describing a near disastrous day.

The first few minutes of attending to a class are crucial in clarifying values and setting the stage for the general routine of the day. Getting pupils

down to work quickly is one of the best methods of good classroom management. Act upon the first sign of sustained unco-operativeness. Students from Primary to Grade 12 must learn that some behaviour will not be tolerated under any circumstances. It is important not to make a scene in front of the class, so take a student aside and discuss the matter one on one.

In the secondary schools, attendance (backed up with a head count) must be taken at the beginning of each period or block. If possible, check the class roll call with the school's list of absentees, note any students not on the list who are missing from your class, and report those names to the teacher and the office.

In the primary grades particularly, try to learn names as quickly as possible—use name tags if they are available.

Medical situations

Report medical emergencies to the office immediately.

Under no circumstances should you attempt to move a seriously ill or injured student. The class should not be left unattended. Know where your students are at all times. Send a student to the office for assistance.

Finishing off your day

- Allow things to wind down a few minutes early, to tidy up and put things away.
- You may wish to play a game or other fun activity to finish off the day.
- Thank the students for their co-operation—you'll tell their teacher how co-operative they were.

You and the classroom teacher could use the following form to facilitate communication.

Here is a model of a report to the classroom teacher.

TOC REPORT TO TEACHER

TOC's name _____

Phone number _____ Date _____

In for _____

At _____ Grade _____

It was a _____ day.

Work completed

All work was assigned and completed as requested. Any exceptions are noted below:

Observations/marking _____

Student behaviour _____

Student's name _____

Behaviour _____

Action taken _____

Other comments _____

SHOULD THERE BE NO LESSON PLAN FOR THE DAY

There will be times (rarely, it is hoped) when there is no daybook or lesson plans. Sometimes, the proposed material may be too difficult to cover adequately with no prior preparation, or the plan may be too sketchy to be understood. Here are some suggestions:

- Check with the office; the regular teacher may have phoned in instructions, or asked for you to call her/him for direction.
- Consult with the principal and/or another teacher teaching the same subject.
- Refer to the last completed day in the daybook, if available, and then do a reasonable follow-up to the previous lessons. Student notebooks may be checked if the daybook is not available.
- Accumulate a set of your own prepared materials—a “survival kit.” Include math reinforcement worksheets, creative-writing stencils, educational puzzles and games, books to read aloud, art ideas, thinking skills, etc. Materials for the subject and grade levels assigned to you can usually be reproduced quickly at the office.
- Younger students often become disturbed by a departure from the routine. Explain to them that some things will be done differently that day. Ask students for their patience and co-operation.
- A teacher on call’s visit is often enjoyed by the students—they are glad for the break from their normal routine. Capitalize on this by providing activities that have an element of fun.

Survival kit

Should you need a little more time to read through the teacher's lesson plan, you can engage the students with one of the following activities:

Problem-solving activities for teams of students

These activities should:

- Require minimal explanation.
- Take between 20 and 30 minutes to complete.
- Be something that the whole class can share briefly when completed.

Here are some examples:

Thinking activities

- Think of all the things that come in pairs.
- Think of all the things with:
 - buttons
 - handles
 - zippers

- Think of what you could eat if there were only:
 - purple things for dinner
 - yellow things for dinner
- Draw the dashboard of your parent’s car.
- Think of all the things that are:
 - pointed
 - red and hard
 - cold and soft
- What are some things to smile about?

Discovery activities

Assign the following questions for discussion and on-line research if computers are available in the classroom. Advise students that there will be a sharing of creative responses.

- Are there two kinds of rainbows?
- Can a fish drown?
- Can seaweed predict the weather?
- Do plants sleep?
- Does oil calm troubled waters?
- What do blind people dream about?
- What is 24 carat gold?
- What is Fool’s Gold?
- What is the origin of blue jeans?
- What makes fabric shrink?
- What makes the holes in Swiss cheese?
- Where do wood knots come from?
- Why are furs warm?
- Why do aging things turn yellow?
- Why do stars twinkle?
- Why does a glowworm glow?
- Why does an egg harden when it is boiled?
- Why does salt make us thirsty?
- Why does tea run up through a lump of sugar?
- Why doesn’t the sea freeze?
- Why is the sky blue?
- Why will a rotten egg float?

Ideas for forming groups

The following ideas will help you divide the class into groups of different sizes. Ideas for random grouping are followed by strategies to form assigned groups with a balance of skills and skill levels.

Ask students to become partners with the first person they see who:

- Enjoys the same sport as you do.
- Gets up on the same side of the bed as you.
- Rolls out of bed on a different side than you do.
- Has a birthday in the same month as you.
- Has a birthday in a different month than you.

- Has a different favorite TV show than you.
- Has a different hobby than you.
- Has on the same colour socks as you.
- Has on different coloured socks from yours.
- Has the same favorite colour as you.
- Has a different favorite colour than you.
- Has the same first vowel in his/her first name as you.
- Has a different first vowel in his/her first name than you.
- Has the same last digit in his/her home phone number as you.
- Has a different last digit in his/her home phone number than you.
- Has the same number of brothers and sisters as you.
- Has a different number of brothers and sisters than you.
- Has the same number of letters in his/her first name as you.
- Has a different number of letters in his/her first name than you.
- Puts his/her shoes on in the same order as you.
- Puts his/her shoes on in the opposite order as you.
- Was born in a different province than you.
- Was born in the same province as you.

Ideas for forming pairs

Have students find the other half of a pair. To prepare, write paired items on slips of paper. To accelerate pairing, one half of the slips should be one colour and the other half a second colour. In other words, part one of a pair is one colour and part two of the same pair is another colour. (Save the slips to use again. You might laminate them.) Have each player draw a slip from the container and find the person with the matching half.

Here are some ideas:

- *Capital and small letters*—A and a, B and b, C and c.
- *Famous couples*—Bert and Ernie, Hansel and Gretel, Simon and Garfunkel.
- *Fairy tales*—Split the title in two: Snow/White, Sleeping/Beauty
- *Opposites*—Hot and cold, tall and short, quiet and noisy, neat and messy, smooth and rough, easy and difficult, wide and narrow, north and south, morning and evening, big and little, up and down.
- *Pictures and words*—A picture of an apple and the word apple.

Dividing into teams randomly

Counting Off

Have players count off by:

- *Arm positions*—*Example*: For two teams, players count off by alternately raising both arms up high or holding them close to the sides. Arms up high are one team; arms close to the sides, another.
- *Colours*—*Example*: For three teams, count off with red, white, and blue. Reds are one team; blues, another; and whites, a third. Select familiar groups of colors, such as school colors, state or province colors, or those in a country's flag.
- *Days of the week*—*Example*: For seven teams, count off by the days of the week.
- *Exclamations*—*Example*: For five teams, count off with *Oh no!*, *Ahhh*, *Wow!*, *Hmmmm*, and *Huh?*
- *Motions*—*Example*: For six teams, count off by motions, such as clap hands, snap fingers, pat thighs, wiggle fingers, circle arms, raise elbows.

Word groups

Choose a word with the same number of letters as the number of groups you need. If you need four groups, you could use the word *team*. (All the letters have to be different.) The class counts off by saying the letters. All the *T*s are one group, the *E*s another, and so on.

You can write the letters or words in large print on separate pieces of paper. As each student says her or his letter, she or he holds up the letter so that the same letters can find one another quickly.

Create a calendar

Divide the class into 12 groups, and have each group create one month of a calendar on a sheet of newsprint. Each group member will write a significant day or event on the group's calendar. Post the months so classmates can add important dates and family celebrations to one another's calendars and share events in their lives.

Question box

Set up a question box, and call it "Dear Funny-Bones" or another humorous name. Encourage students to write humorous questions and jokes put them in the box. At various moments during the day, invite a student to read a question from the box and invite the class to answer it.

Food favourites

Students count off with food combinations, such as the ingredients for a great pizza. For example,

“sausage,” “pepperoni,” “cheese,” “mushrooms,” and “onions.” All “sausages” then come together as a group. Do the same using ingredients for a favorite ice-cream sundae or for trail mix.

Card games

A number of books are available on educational card games. One of the best is *Reading, Writing and Rummy*, by Margie Golick (Pembroke Publishers Ltd., Markham Ontario). Golick shows how to use a deck of cards as an educational tool through games that develop memory, number skills, visual/spatial concepts, and problem solving.

Creativity and problem-solving

Students can benefit from problem-solving activities which act as a break from subject-oriented lessons and activities. A number of “mental exercises and warm-ups,” such as brainstorming and Synectics, can take up those difficult 15 or 20 minutes of “dead time” at the end of a period.

Two excellent source books are Edward DeBono’s *Lateral Thinking* (Penguin Books, 1985) and Sydney Parnes’ *Guide to Creative Activities* (Wiley 1977). *Teaching Creativity Through Metaphor*, by Donald and Judith Sanders (Longmans, 1984), is another book that teachers have found useful. *The Critical Concept*, an OSSTF Resource Booklet co-authored by Barry Duncan and Neil Walker, provides good ideas for creative activities involving the popular media.

Memory enhancement skills are examined in *Improve Your Memory Skills*, by Francis Belleza (Prentice-Hall, 1982). This book includes a number of classroom activities that can help students remember names, faces and details. Popular techniques such as mnemonics are described.

Trivia games

The huge popularity of *Trivial Pursuit* and similar games can be exploited easily in the classroom. Regular classroom teachers use homemade trivia games to liven up Friday afternoons and to lessen the agony of reviewing course content.

Mental Gymnastics for Trivia Freaks and Puzzle Nuts, by noted Canadian educator Ken Weber (Methuen Publications, 1984), provides a number of enjoyable trivia games and word puzzles. It can also be a jumping-off point for developing your own games and activities.

Facts versus opinions

The following is a variation on a theme used most often by history and English teachers. Students are given a number of sentences and asked to identify which are fact and which are opinion. Social science and mass media teachers use similar exercises, in which the students examine a short newspaper or magazine article/editorial and separate the facts from the opinions.

Directions: If the following statement is *fact*, circle the **F**. If, on the other hand, the statement is an *opinion, an inference, or a judgment*, circle the **O**.

- F O She goes to church only to show off her new clothes.
- F O It was a wonderful car.
- F O She really thinks a lot of herself.
- F O Jerry was convicted of theft and served two years in prison.
- F O Look at that drunken driver.
- F O For sale: 1965 two-door Ford Mustang.
- F O A man was killed and two teenagers injured in an auto accident.
- F O The performance began at 8:30 sharp.
- F O He is un-Canadian.

Scrambled ladders

Directions: Using the number **1** to indicate the *highest abstraction*, the number **2** to indicate the *next highest*, and so forth, unscramble these ladders.

Example:

- livestock 3
- hamburger 6
- animal 2
- ground beef 5
- beef 4
- living creature 1

- forest _____
- maple wood _____
- maple table _____
- tree _____
- plants _____
- living things _____

- army weapon _____
- grenade _____
- equipment _____

M15 anti-tank grenade _____
army battle equipment _____
anti-tank grenade _____
army equipment _____
military equipment _____

cooking equipment _____
pan _____
frying pan _____
copper bottom pan _____
cooking utensil _____
household item _____

equipment _____
Parker ballpoint pen _____
a pen _____
a writing tool _____
school equipment _____
green Parker ballpoint pen _____

Naval vessel _____
USS Wisconsin _____
battleship _____
ship _____
warship _____
flag ship _____

Marge likes to sew. _____
Marge sewed a button on my
blouse yesterday. _____
Marge is an excellent homemaker. _____
Marge makes all her own clothes. _____
Marge made the drapes for the
living room of her home. _____
Marge is very capable. _____

Have the students create their own scrambled ladders.

Letter writing

One of the easiest types of writing assignments is letter writing. Students can write letters as an exercise in many different subjects. Specify the length of letter required. Also consider how the letter will be evaluated. Teachers do not appreciate having to do additional marking.

- *History*—Students write a letter to a world leader they admire (past or present).
- *Geography*—Students write a letter describing

another country or region.

- *Languages*—Students write to an imaginary pen pal in the language they are studying.
- *Art*—Students write a letter to their favorite artist, asking questions about the artist's style, subjects, etc.
- *English*—Students write a letter to their parents or to their future child.

Using newspapers and magazine articles

An interesting article from the morning's newspaper or downloaded from the internet can be put to good use in the classroom, so can a short article from a magazine. Students can analyze, dissect, and criticize the article. They can debate a controversial topic raised by the article. They can write their own letter to the editor in reply to an article.

Classroom routines/procedures checklist

Every school has policies and procedures for the following:

- behaviour during PA announcements
- dismissing the class
- distributing supplies and materials
- fire drills, earthquakes, and emergencies
- format for assignments
- hall movement
- lining up
- lunch
- make-up work
- playground
- putting away supplies and equipment
- roll call, absentees, students who leave early
- tardy students
- washroom routines
- what students do when they are finished

Try to familiarize yourself as much as possible with these policies and procedures.

Rules and consequences

Be aware of already established consequences and procedures. Make children aware of any new classroom rule that you will use for the day.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Make sure you know the following procedures prior to starting your day. In a crisis, you will not have the time to familiarize yourself with the procedures.

- Any injuries or medical emergencies must be reported to the administrator immediately.

- If a student appears to be seriously injured, do not move her or him.
- Students who indicate they are ill and wish to go home during the day must get approval from the office.
- Follow-up on any student sent to the office.

Fire drills or emergencies

- Check the fire-drill regulations for the classroom.
- Remember to carry the class list with you during an alarm.
- You are responsible for taking your class outside.
- When outside, account for all students and keep them together.
- Remain outside until the all-clear signal is given.

Reporting to the regular teacher

Reporting absences

- Leave a dated slip of paper for lates and absences (afternoon and morning).
- Check the roll call with the school's absentee list, at the end of the day.

Reporting on the day

- Follow as closely as possible the work planned by the regular teacher.
- Make note of any deviations from or extensions to the regular day plan.
- Indicate in the daybook what work has been completed.
- Mark written work, particularly if it is objective.
- If you are unable to mark complex or subjective work, leave a note for the teacher.
- Include any specific items of concern or interest. Include the names of students who were co-operative or unco-operative students.
- Leave your phone number so that the classroom teacher can contact you.

LONG-TERM ASSIGNMENTS

Some TOCs will be offered the opportunity to be employed in longer-term/temporary assignments. If you find yourself in this position, more extensive planning and student reporting is required.

With thoughtful planning in place, you will be confident in providing quality learning opportunities for your students.

- Get acquainted with the physical layout of your school.
- Familiarize yourself with school/school board policies and handbooks, and with your collective agreement.

- Prepare short-term and long-term learning objectives, and assessment and evaluation strategies.

Long-term planning

In most instances, the regular classroom teacher will have already done long-term planning. Consult with the teacher. In the event that long-term plans are unavailable, you will be responsible for planning, assessing and evaluating.

You will find the IRPs of great assistance, so follow them closely. Copies of the IRPs should be available at the school. They can also be downloaded at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/

Include the following in your long-term planning:

- the objectives and learning outcomes for the course
- the strategies you will use to reach those objectives
- the overall strategies for including learning outcomes
- the time to be allocated
- how you will assess student learning
- how you will evaluate student progress
- what resources you will need
- which non-instructional days have been scheduled
- any school-wide activities or assemblies that have been scheduled

Short-term planning

Initially, your planning will be very detailed. Design individual lessons as part of the whole unit to increase knowledge and skills based on previously learned concepts. This way you will give your students the learning opportunities they need, and avoid gaps and needless repetition.

Daily planning

Organize and carefully prepare daily lesson plans. They should include the following:

- student learning outcomes
- subject matter
- learning strategies
- materials to be used
- assessment and evaluation process

Write up the daily plan before you leave school each day.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT PROVISIONS

The collective agreement between the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association. Section C deals with current provisions for teachers on call.

Teacher on call pay and benefits

1. All school districts will ensure that they are in compliance with vacation provisions under the Employment Standards Act in respect of the payment of vacation pay.
2. Effective September 1, 1997, for the purposes of Employment Insurance, the employer shall report for a teacher on call (9.1 hrs), the same number of hours worked as would be reported for a day worked by a teacher on a continuing contract.
3. Effective July 1, 1998, a teacher on call shall be entitled to the mileage/kilometre allowance, rate, or other payment for transportation costs, as defined by the collective agreement, for which the employee he/she is replacing is entitled to claim.
4. Effective July 1, 1998, teachers on call shall be eligible, subject to plan limitations, to participate in the benefit plans in the collective agreement, provided that they pay the full cost of benefit premiums.
5. **Effective July 1, 2000, teachers on call shall be paid an additional compensation of \$3 over daily rate in lieu of benefits. This benefit will be pro-rated for part days worked but in no case will be less than \$1.50. Any and all provisions in the previous collective agreement that provide additional or superior provisions in respect of payment in lieu of benefits shall remain part of this collective agreement.**

6. **Effective July 1, 2000, employees who are employed as teachers on call shall be paid in accordance with the provision of the previous collective agreement for the first three (3) days of an assignment. On the fourth consecutive and subsequent consecutive days in an assignment, an employee shall be paid 1/189 of their category classification and experience or at Category 4 Step 0, whichever is the greater amount, for each full day worked. Such payment on scale shall be retroactive to the first day of the assignment.**

7. **Effective June 2002 a Letter of Understanding between the BCTF and the BCPSEA established "consecutive" to mean "consecutive according to the assignment being filled", and "a day" to mean "the period of time being covered for each day the teacher on call reports to work."**

While the above provisions are common to all districts, local agreements vary throughout the province. Provisions that were in previous local agreements continue to exist unless they were altered by the present provincial agreement.

In all instances, read the provincial provisions in conjunction with the local collective agreement.

In June 2002, the BCTF and the B.C. Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) agreed in a Letter of Understanding to teachers on call provisions set out in Section 1.3 for "daily rate of pay" and a "teacher on call schedule."

Rates of pay for teachers on call

A table of rates of pay for a teacher on call is revised to reflect the July 1, 2001, changes to the provincial agreement. If you need specific information, call your local president, or phone the Collective Agreement and Protective Services Division at the BCTF at 604-871-2283.



Beginning your career as a classroom teacher

Beginning your career as a classroom teacher

Summer is over, and the new school year is about to begin. Making the year meaningful for you and your students requires advance preparation. Here is a checklist to help you get started. Take advantage of the experience of other staff members. Ask for their help. If you have been partnered with a mentor, make a list of things to ask. They might include the following:

PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY

You will want to prepare your classroom before the first day of school. Check with the school about summer hours. This is an opportunity to meet some colleagues, the support staff, and the administration.

Ask about school policies and procedures

- opening day
- registration
- class lists
- enrollment
- parent information forms
- meet the teacher evening
- hospitality fund
- school-wide rules
- school keys and security schedules and timetables
- student fees
- petty cash
- staff parking
- student supervision duties
- school arrival and dismissal times
- fire/earthquake drills
- photocopying
- paper and other supplies
- field trips
- student assessment and evaluation
- staff and grade/subject meetings
- library resources for students/teachers
- resources available for Aboriginal programs
- school handbook (policy, procedures)
- school assemblies
- teachers on call procedures
- additional student supplies
- student handbook and agenda
- homework
- school calendar

Prepare bulletin-board areas for display

- announcements
- calendar and current events
- different subjects
- student work

Prepare your classroom

- plan the first day in detail
- duplicate materials needed for the first few days
- prepare an outline for the first week
- prepare the classroom arrangements and seating plan
- make signs for the room
- put your name outside the classroom door with a class list
- prepare class list and post copy
- make a checklist for forms that need to be returned
- organize your daily plan book to include learning outcomes
- plan a textbook-distribution record
- set up learning centres
- locate the emergency kit for your classroom

Find out about your students

- find out which students are receiving special help
- prepare an inventory to find out student interests
- review your resources to meet individual needs
- meet a counsellor to discuss students with individual or modified learning plans
- prepare activities to find out different students interests
- check out your resources to meet individual needs

Assemble materials

- classroom supplies
- attendance materials
- textbooks and accompanying materials
- supplementary teaching materials
- appropriate books for reading or reference

THE FIRST DAY

A well-planned first day is crucial. It sets the tone for the remainder of your year.

- Before starting your first day, review the program of studies, the relevant IRPs, so that you know your materials and how they support the learner expectations.
- Be at the door to welcome your students.

- Begin your first day with a friendly business-like manner. Classroom management works well when you provide the framework and then form rules co-operatively with the students. Expectations worded in a positive sense have greater impact than does a list of things not to do.
- Review the school's code of conduct.
- Form rules with the students governing classroom behaviour.

Plan for a memorable and interesting day. Use a game to help you learn students' names. Here are some suggestions to help you remember your students' names.

Have your students form a circle. Pick a letter from the alphabet. Have each student whose name begins with that letter introduce herself/himself and say two things about herself/himself. Make sure to write down the name on a circle chart that you will have prepared beforehand.

Read through the class list prior to the first day and rehearse names that are difficult for you.

Make your first day a meaningful one for you and the students by being prepared, organized, and welcoming.

One of the most powerful tools you have for learning is self-reflection. Self-reflection means looking at and thinking about what you do and how you do it. Self-reflection includes asking yourself why you make certain choices over others, what you observe the results to be, and what else you might do. Self-reflection means asking yourself how you're feeling about your work and yourself.

Consider starting a journal or meeting with other new teachers on a regular basis. Write brief notes to yourself each day, and reread them on a regular basis. Take time to talk informally with both new and experienced colleagues.

Planning

The more grounded you are, the greater will be your successes in the classroom. With thoughtful planning in place, you will be confident in providing quality learning opportunities for your students.

- Get acquainted with the physical layout of your school.
- Familiarize yourself with school/school board policies and handbooks and with your collective agreement.
- Systematically prepare short- and long-term objectives.
- Share information and resources with other staff members.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

To carry out your teaching responsibilities, you will need to do long-term planning, following the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education and your employing board. Familiarize yourself with the IRPs. They are the curriculum. Copies can be downloaded at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/

Your long-term planning should include:

- the objectives and learning outcomes for the course
- the strategies you will use to reach those objectives
- the overall strategies for including learning outcomes
- the time to be allocated
- assessment and evaluation strategies to evaluate student progress
- what resources you will need

SHORT-TERM PLANNING

Initially, your planning will be very detailed. Design individual lessons as part of the whole unit to increase knowledge, abilities, and skills based on previously learned concepts. This way, you will give your students the learning opportunities they need and avoid gaps and needless repetition.

DAILY PLANNING

Organize and carefully prepare daily lesson plans. They should include the following:

- student learning outcomes
- subject matter
- learning strategies
- assessment and evaluation processes
- materials needed

Write up the daily plan before you leave school each day and leave it on your desk. In the event that you are away, it will guide a teacher on call.

Classroom management

Wondering how to maintain a positive classroom environment with minimal disruption can cause more anxiety for new teachers than any other aspect of their new career. Classroom management focusses on prevention and problem-solving rather than on punishment. A secure, inviting classroom, along with purposeful activities and respect for the dignity of everyone, prevents most discipline problems. Your role as teacher is crucial in establishing an effective learning environment. Your objective is to instill inner self-control in students, not merely to exert your control over them. Set the tone of your classroom from the start by being firm and fair, friendly yet professional. When you are more confident of your ability to maintain order, you will be more relaxed. Students appreciate an orderly classroom. Without order in your classroom, very little learning will take place. Children are basically good and appropriate behaviour is a purposeful response to a need for power, freedom, love, and fun (Glasser).

Discipline and good behaviour are learned, and they must be constantly reinforced. Guide your students to know what to do in all situations rather than punish misdeeds. Help your students understand that with rights come responsibilities. Encourage your students to be responsible for their learning and behaviour. When students make choices, they learn new skills and gain social awareness from the outcome of those decisions.

WHAT WORKS

- Involve students in forming rules and consequences.
- Tell students what you expect, provide a model for good behaviour, check for understanding, and allow for practice and follow-up. Don't assume that students know how to act appropriately. They need to be taught and coached to manage their behaviour.
- Create a classroom environment that provides structure and support and reinforces positive behaviour. Set your standards high; be clear and realistic in your expectations.

Classroom conflict is more likely to be reduced if you:

- are in the classroom when your students arrive.
- are organized and prepared.
- insist that everyone be treated with respect.
- seek student opinions.
- consider student feelings.
- listen to your students.
- maintain your sense of humour.
- assist students to make appropriate choices.
- teach students decision-making skills.
- encourage students to learn from their mistakes.
- use a quiet, friendly tone of voice.
- build on individual student's strengths.
- provide tasks that enhance the self-esteem of all students.
- have a low-key, consistent, and matter-of-fact manner.
- enforce consistently the consequences adopted by the class.
- move around the classroom.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK

Even with the most tact and careful preparation, students will test you. Let them know that while you disapprove of their actions, you still value them. If you are going to show that you are angry, do it because you have decided it is appropriate, not because you are "out of control." Be aware of the legal rights and responsibilities of both teachers and students. If you have any concerns or questions, contact your school staff rep.

Discipline problems may arise when a teacher:

- accepts excuses, bargains, or blames
- acts hastily without knowing the implications of actions
- offers "bribes/rewards" for behaviour
- preaches, nags, criticizes, shouts, and threatens
- punishes as a way to teach appropriate behaviour
- punishes the whole class for the misdeeds of a few
- rescues students rather than teaching problem solving skills
- uses put-downs, sarcasm, embarrassment, or humiliation

DEALING WITH POWER STRUGGLES

Power struggles can be difficult for beginning teachers. When this happens to you, try to:

- ignore the student's attempt to engage you in a power struggle

- describe to the student, in objective and explicit terms, the unacceptable behaviour
- give a warning, emphasize the consequence, and then follow through
- arrange for time out from the classroom
- consult appropriate school personnel for advice
- communicate with the parents to discuss a behaviour management plan

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Be aware of school policies and procedures for the following:

- roll call, absentees, early dismissals
- tardy students
- bullying, intimidation
- damage to school property
- classroom guests
- putting away supplies and equipment
- dismissing the class
- make-up work
- cheating
- washroom routines
- lining up
- playground
- fire drills, earthquakes, and emergencies
- lunch and lunch time activities
- hall movement
- field trips

SETTING STANDARDS

Give thought to setting standards, expectations, consequences, and procedures. Having the students participate in making classroom rules gives them a sense of ownership.

Tips for rules

- keep rules short, precise, and succinct to focus on specific behaviour
- limit yourself to six rules
- post rules, and send a copy home
- state rules in positive terms whenever possible
- teach rules, possibly use role play and/or quiz
- add a new rule if a misbehaviour is repetitive
- when enforcing rules, preserve student dignity

Tips for consequences

- be logical, clear, and specific
- have a range of alternatives
- use consequences, not punishment
- post along side the rule

Sample rules

- students will be quiet during PA announcements
- students will raise their hands for permission to speak
- students will walk in the classroom or halls

Suggested consequences for the sample rules:

- ask the chatty student to remind the class of the advantages of listening to the announcements
- teacher will not respond to a child who has not raised her or his hand
- students need to retrace their steps by walking

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Three basics to remember:

- *Monitor student behaviour*
Use an “active eye.” See what is going on. Don’t become preoccupied with someone or something and ignore the rest of the class. In terms of discipline and effective teaching, one teacher on her or his feet is worth two in the seat. Simply looking the student directly in the eye for prolonged contact while you continue your lesson sends a non-verbal message that says “I saw what you did, and I want it stopped!”
- *Be consistent*
Have the same expectations of all students for appropriate behaviour. Your students should know that you will enforce rules consistently and apply an appropriate consequence. Your goal is to be fair, but that might mean not applying the identical consequence to all students. If one student frequently fails to return homework, you may apply a different consequence than you would to the student who forgets her/his homework for the first time. Knowing that you’ll be fair, but not equal, your students should understand that being equal is not always fair. To be consistent, be certain that the consequences you apply are reasonable and appropriate.
- *Promptly manage inappropriate behaviour*
For effective classroom management know that misbehaviour must be handled immediately or there is risk of a snowballing effect. To provide maximum time for learning and to reduce minor behaviour problems, you can employ strategies that deal with behaviour in the least amount of time, with the least disruption and the least negative feeling.

Strategies

- *Proximity*
While teaching, move about the room, pausing near potential “trouble spots.” Remaining behind your desk or seated in the front of the class encourages misbehaviour in the less visible areas of the room.
- *Pause*
Continuous teacher talk may give students a noise screen for their own conversations. An occasional pause—just a few seconds of silence—brings an off-task student back in focus.
- *Asking for a response*
Hearing one’s name can be an attention-getter, even if one is not paying attention. Working an off-task student’s name into a question can often bring the student back into the lesson. Remembering the student’s dignity, say the student’s name first in order to allow her/him to hear the question to be answered. The purpose is to get the student back into the lesson, not to embarrass her/him.
- *Active participation*
Sometimes having the student respond to a question or become involved in an activity can eliminate the undesired behaviour. Asking for a show of hands, having students perform a physical activity, or having each student write a quick answer to a question can make all students accountable for an immediate response.
- *Avoid lengthy teacher talk*
Plan your lesson with a sequence of instruction, practice, and sharing.

Establishing a positive environment

BUILDING STUDENTS’ SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem is how people feel about themselves. It’s their perception of self-worth. Students with positive self-esteem feel good about themselves. If students do not value themselves, they will present themselves to others as negative. Ultimately, one’s sense of worth shows up everywhere.

There is a correlation between academic achievement and self-esteem. You can foster self-esteem, and you can make a difference. You can promote a feeling within a child of being lovable and capable.

You can create a safe and accepting environment where each child feels free to grow and change. As you begin to shape a child’s self-esteem, you also nurture your own. It is important to consider how classroom organization and routines can build self-esteem.

TIPS FOR FOSTERING SELF-ESTEEM

- acknowledge positive qualities
- be non-judgmental, and accept students as they are
- demonstrate appropriate ways of releasing anger
- develop skills to help a child feel better about herself/himself
- emphasize what each child knows
- encourage positively; say, “You can succeed”
- give students choices
- inform parents/guardians about student growth
- keep boundaries that allow give and take
- listen reflectively and genuinely give support for growth and change
- participate, facilitate, and share feelings
- provide a safe classroom—minimum risk fosters openness and honesty
- provide acceptance
- teach self-awareness
- provide undivided recognition
- reaffirm a child’s existence with a compliment or an acknowledgment
- respect others’ feelings
- see the uniqueness of each student
- separate the action from the person
- structure opportunities for success
- use humor, but not at the expense of students
- use “I messages” such as “Heather, I hear exciting events in your story”
- validate feelings

ENCOURAGING STUDENTS

Not all students react to praise the same way. Your objective in using praise is to get students to develop an internal locus of control to improve behaviour and academic achievement. Here are some suggested uses of praise:

- At times, give praise privately to avoid competition, embarrassment, or “teacher’s pet” syndrome.
- Be careful not to compare one student with another: “Gee, you have almost caught up to Karen.”
- Don’t minimize a student’s success: “Your math assignment must have been easy, you finished so quickly.”

- Draw the student’s attention to her or his effort and ability: “You sure learned those 10 addition facts quickly. You must have spent a lot of time practicing.”
- Give praise for desired behaviour, and define the behaviour: “Thank you for picking up the paper. You really helped the class save time.”
- Praise needs to be genuine and matched by your body language.
- Vary your praise, and be creative. Don’t simply say: “great,” “fine,” “wonderful.” Be specific with praise.

HOMEWORK TIPS

There is a difference between homework and home study. Even though a student may not always have homework, she or he should be encouraged to do home study and to develop study habits. Organize a study schedule for the students so that they study for a given time each night. The subject and time schedule can be communicated to the parents/guardians to establish a study partnership.

Some schools have homework policies. Consider these purposes for homework. Homework can provide:

- an opportunity to practice a skill or concept that has been taught
- an opportunity to tie in school learning with real-world experiences
- different ways to monitor student learning other than tests
- a means of communicating with the home on student progress
- open-ended activities that allow for success
- student preparation for in-school activities
- ways to involve the family in the student’s education

HOMEWORK DO’S AND DON’TS

Do’s

- Do be aware of the resources that are, or are not, available in students’ homes in order to complete the assignment.
- Do give feedback and acknowledgment on completion of homework.
- Do have a homework policy, and communicate it to students and parents/guardians.
- Do hold students responsible for completion of homework, but be sensitive to outside obligations.
- Do make sure students know objectives of the assignments.

Don’ts

- Don’t assign homework every night. Check your school policy.
- Don’t assign homework just because a parent requests it.
- Don’t give 25 problems if 5 will accomplish the objective (more is not always better).
- Don’t give homework as punishment.
- Don’t make unrealistic demands on students’ time.
- Don’t use homework as busy work.

Communicating with parents/guardians

Developing a strong home-teacher partnership is important. Be sensitive to different family configurations. You and the parents/guardians share a common goal: to help students achieve their fullest potential. The parent-teacher-student conference is an excellent way for parents/guardians to be involved in the education of their children.

In enlisting the assistance of parents/guardians, your approach will have a lot to do with the level of co-operation you might receive. Very few parents/guardians object to a teacher’s approaching them with an idea that might help their child if the idea shows the teacher’s commitment to the success of that child. Parents/guardians may react negatively when told, “Here’s what your child did today!” Consider parents/guardians as part of the support for mutually agreed upon solutions to discipline problems.

When working with Aboriginal parents, ask the Aboriginal worker to assist you, however, making direct contact with the parent is ideal. Working closely with the parent and the child builds strong support network for making improvements in the child’s progress.

Encourage parents to participate in their child’s educational program by volunteering in some capacity in the school.

MEET-THE-TEACHER NIGHT

The first formal introduction to parents/guardians will usually be a meet-the-teacher activity. This is a time to introduce yourself and your curriculum.

- *About parents/guardians*—You will want to talk

to colleagues to find out what parents/guardians expect from the session.

- *About you*—As a new teacher, many parents/guardians will be coming to “check you out.” Be prepared to instill confidence regarding your instructional abilities and your interest in their child. Communicate your relevant experiences. Let your enthusiasm show!
- *All about your classroom management*—Explain the learning outcomes for the year. Highlight some of the activities planned. Discuss the classroom code of behaviour and your expectations.
- *Your presentation*—Be well prepared for the session by making an outline of points to address. Some of the following may help: handouts of curriculum, grading procedures, homework criteria, code of behaviour. Dress professionally.
- *Working together*—Identify how home and school can work together. Inform parents/guardians of when, where, and how you can be reached, and discuss how parents/guardians can best support their child’s learning. Invite parents/guardians to volunteer.
- *Cautionary note*—Don’t let one parent monopolize the discussion or sidetrack you.

Once you have opened the doors of communication with parents/guardians, you are on the road to developing a trusting relationship. Use several ongoing means of communication such as phone calls, e-mail, newsletters, progress reports, notes, “happygrams,” and conferences (informal and formal). The BCTF pamphlet *Parent Involvement in Schools* is an additional source of information.

COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST FOR CONFERENCING

The best communication climate is a comfortable one; if you are relaxed, parents/guardians usually will relax, too. There are many communication techniques that will lead to a successful conference. You may wish to use some of the following:

Before the conference

- Be aware of school procedure on parent-teacher conferences.
- Before your meeting with parents/guardians, review the school history of the student.
- Complete a data page on each student’s strengths (emotional, social, physical, intellectual).
- Be well prepared: use the student portfolio and other work to substantiate your evaluation.

- Ensure privacy. Hold the conference in a private area.
- Arrange informal seating around a table displaying the student’s work.
- Post appointments outside the door, and keep to the schedule; invite parents/guardians needing additional conference time to come at a later date.
- Have chairs available outside the classroom.
- If the conference is part of the regular reporting period, send home a newsletter describing your programs and some of the topics being studied.
- If the students are not included in the conference, meet with them beforehand so that they are aware of what will be discussed.
- Prepare a conference form for record keeping to keep the discussion focussed and to be an aid for future conferences and for follow-up.
- Successful conferences deal with only a few issues because of time constraints; make sure to cover your points but allow equal time to cover parental concerns.

During the conference

- Greet the parents/guardians at the door.
- Introduce yourself with a friendly voice; keep opening comments to a minimum to allow for more discussion time.
- Be clear and concise in your comments; be an attentive listener.
- Keep the parents/guardians involved by encouraging them to share pertinent information with you.

Use the following stems to keep the conversation positive and focussed on the student:

- How might I at the school and you at home work together to help (student) be successful in (subject area)?
- When thinking about (student)’s behavior, what are the things that we most want to focus on?
- Here are some examples of (student)’s behavior in class. Can you tell me if some of these things are also noticeable outside of school?
- Here are some things that I have noticed about (student)’s interaction with other students.
- How might we use these examples of behavior that we have observed to set up a program to help (student) change the unacceptable behavior?
- As (student)’s parent, what would you like to see in place to help her/him modify her/his behavior?
- What are some of the reasons that would lead (student) to act this way?

- No matter how many problems a student has, find some positive things to report. Mention some at the beginning of the conference and some at the close off.
- With the parents/guardians' help, develop some goals or an action plan for the next learning period.

Concluding the conference

- Check that the parents/guardians have a clear understanding of what was discussed.
- Highlight the conclusions and the agreed-upon actions.
- Set another date for another interview if one is needed.
- End as you began—on a positive note.
- Thank the parents/guardians, and walk them to the door.
- Summarize the points covered, and add them to your files.

The following stems will help you close the conference:

- How would you like to be kept informed of (student)'s progress in (subject)?
- How would you like to be kept informed of (student)'s progress with the behavior management program that we have discussed?
- Looking at what we have worked out together to help (student), the chances for success are very high. We will keep in touch by a weekly call and a note in the agenda.

After the conference

- If agreed to, phone the parents/guardians with a progress report.
- Keep a brief record of all communications with parents.
- Keep your principal informed.

Ways to communicate regularly with parents/guardians

- Keep file cards for each child, noting the positive things that have happened; then send home a couple of happygrams during the term using the information.
- Make phone calls or e-mail about good things the child has accomplished.
- Send newsletters containing student work.
- When you discuss a problem with parents/guardians, be truthful, sincere, and objective; they will respect your integrity.

SAMPLE CONFERENCE FORMATS

Regularly scheduled conference

• **Introduction**

State the agreed upon purpose of the conference.
Share something positive about the child.
Provide an update on past concerns, if necessary.

• **Academic achievement**

Discuss academic strengths/weaknesses.
Present documentation.
Seek parental input and reaction to information.
Discuss one academic goal.

• **Social interaction and behaviour**

Discuss social strengths/weaknesses and behaviour.
Present specific examples.
Seek parental input and reaction.
Discuss a behaviour/social goal, if necessary.

• **Other issues**

Invite parent to discuss other issues.
Provide additional information.

• **Closure**

Review agreed-upon goals.
Plan for follow-up.
Close on a positive note.

Problem-solving conference format

• **Introduction**

State the purpose of the conference.
Update the situation.

• **Description of the problem**

Describe the problem and supporting documentation.
Describe what has been done to date.
Allow parent time to react to the problem.

• **Problem solving**

Seek parent input and suggestions.
Discuss possible solutions.
Develop an action plan for improvement.
Identify specific actions.

• **Closure**

Plan for follow-up.
Close on a positive note.

Additional sources of information are four assessment handbooks available from the Ministry of Education:

- *Student-Centred Conferences*
- *Portfolio Assessment*
- *Performance Assessment*
- *Student Self-Assessment*

Teaching strategies and classroom complexity

In any given day, you may have more than 1,000 personal interactions with students. Each of these complex interactions must be interpreted on the spot. Respond to these immediate needs as you teach, and make the time to later reflect on what you are doing and planning to do. Teaching is helping young people meet the learning outcome of the curriculum.

Teachers need to develop a repertoire of teaching strategies that become second nature. By having many teaching strategies, you can continually monitor the class and make adjustments during the busy and complex task of teaching, and the busy and complex process of learning.

Vary your teaching strategies. The process of learning is as important as what is being learned. Teacher talk or lecture has its place in instructional strategies, but there are other effective strategies that engage students.

Remember the principles of learning:

- Learning requires the active participation of the student.
- People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and a group process.

Teaching strategies can be grouped into five broad categories:

- *Direct instruction*—The teacher imparts knowledge or demonstrates a skill.
- *Experiential learning*—The students experience and feel; they are actively involved.
- *Independent study*—The students interact more with the content than with the teacher or other classmates.

- *Indirect instruction*—The teacher sets up strategies, but does not teach directly; the students make meaning for themselves.
- *Interactive instruction*—The students interact with one another and the information; the teacher is facilitator.

When choosing which type of teaching strategy, consider the nature of the topic, the resources available, and the age, maturity, learning styles, and gender of the students, as well as your teaching style. Your lessons will be more successful if you structure opportunities for students to be involved and to apply the content and skills they have learned.

Learning together promotes co-operation, interaction, individual and group accountability, and development of group skills. There are various approaches to grouping students for learning activities:

- *Group inquiry*—Have groups of two to six students' work together using inquiry, discussion, co-operative planning, and execution.
- *Jigsaw*—Have individuals within the group learn parts of the material, discuss it with like members from other groups, and then teach their own group.
- *Teams, games*—Have team members assist one another to master materials or skills in order for the team to compete against other teams.

Experiment with a variety of teaching strategies. Select these while recognizing the different learning styles and multiple intelligences of your students. Remember that a strategy may work well with one group and be less successful with another.

Reflect on your teaching. Ask yourself the following questions:

- If I did this again, what things would I change?
- What made it work well or not?
- What connections were made to other learning or real life?
- Were all the intended outcomes met?
- Make a note of the best resources.
- Try different methods of grouping for instruction for different lessons.

Teaching is challenging and exciting work. Recognize your successes, analyze your failures, and build on them. Remember, you are a life-long learner too!

Student assessment and evaluation

Student assessment and evaluation is part of the ongoing co-operative process among teachers, students, and parents/guardians. Teachers daily gather information and data on student achievement (assessment) and then make judgments about student growth (evaluation) to:

- gain information about future instructional needs.
- gather information on student progress to report to parents/guardians.
- make students aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

Student assessment and evaluation includes teacher-designed tests, projects, assignments, and observations, as well as government standardized and commercially developed tests.

Your teaching plans must include well-designed methods of student assessment/evaluation. Effective assessment/evaluation must serve a specific purpose.

You will use the results of assessment/evaluation to:

- determine the achievement in one learning sequence and the readiness for the next.
- determine the degree of success you are having with students.
- give students the feedback necessary to make study plans.
- improve your instructional strategies.
- test student knowledge.

Properly constructed tests, direct observation, and student interviews provide you with assessment data to help measure progress. Assessment should be continuous and consistent; you should try to use a variety of assessment techniques, and be cognizant of students' multiple learning styles.

TIPS FOR ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

- Before the beginning of the year, you will need to have in place a written procedure for evaluating student achievement.
- Ask your administrator for a copy of the current provincial reporting policies.

- Ask your administrator for a copy of the school policies on student evaluation. Also get a copy of the school report card so that you know how student achievement is reported to parents/guardians.
- Allow students some choice in the topic or method of presentation. Students will perform better if they enjoy the task.
- Avoid using evaluation as a threat or a punishment. Students should not feel tricked. Hand out your marking criteria when you give the students the task. Students need to know how they will be judged so that they can perform their best.
- Keep accurate records of student achievement.
- Keep parents/guardians informed of student progress. Parents/guardians should not be surprised with a student achievement problem cited on a report card or at parent-teacher interviews.
- Keep up to date with any ministerial orders regarding student reporting.
- Plan your student assessment and evaluation tasks when you plan for instruction. Make sure that the assessment task is consistent with the type of learning outcome specified in the curriculum.
- Talk with other teachers of the same grade level or subject about strategies they use and appropriate weighting for different units of the curriculum.
- Use a variety of assessment strategies. For example, use a combination of short written assignments, pre-tests and post-tests, projects, performances, tests, teacher observation, student self-assessment, and unit exams.
- Use student results as feedback on your test or project design. If there is a problem with your wording of a question, throw it out. If the project instructions were not clear, allow the student a second chance.

RECORD KEEPING

- Accurate record keeping is the responsibility of the teacher. When you report to parents/guardians, you will want to relate student achievement to the learning outcomes.
- Devise a simple method of keeping your student records current. They should be immediately available should parents/guardians wish to discuss the progress of their child.
- Keep an anecdotal file where you can note pertinent information on work habits or

behavioural problems (useful when preparing formal reports).

- Have students keep portfolios of their work so that they can demonstrate their learning and progress to parents.
- Some records can be kept by the students using graphs or comments to show weekly progress.

For a new teacher, making judgments about student progress may seem a bit overwhelming, but with organization and a good plan for evaluation, you will be able to give your students quality information about their progress.

B.C. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The performance standards represent the collective professional judgments of a significant number of B.C. educators about what student performance is expected to look like at specific grade levels. The standards are optional resources that teachers, students, and parents can use to compare student performance to provincial standards.

Performance standards have been developed for Reading, Writing, and Social Responsibility K–10, and Numeracy K–8.

The performance standards include rating scales that describe the following performance levels of specific grade levels in detail:

- not yet within expectations
- meets expectations (minimal level)
- fully meets expectations
- exceeds expectations

They also include *Quick Scales*, a short version of the rating scale for daily use/quick reference, and sample tasks with illustrations of student work at all four levels, along with teacher comments.

The standards focus exclusively on *performance assessment* where students are asked to apply the skills and concepts they have learned to complete complex, realistic tasks. The standards include both evaluative statements (e.g., not yet within expectations), and assessment criteria (e.g., supports and elaborates ideas, makes comparisons); they support a criterion-referenced approach to evaluation.

The performance standards are available on the Ministry of Education web site www.bced.gov.bc.ca/

[classroom_assessment/perf_stands/](#). Supplementary materials, such as additional tasks, with two samples of student work and a worksheet for planning instruction or intervention, developing criteria with students, elaborating or tailoring criteria for special purposes, outlining assessment tasks, recording observations, and guiding discussions, are also available on the web site.

Student reporting

The purpose of reporting on student progress is to communicate to students and parents/guardians how well students are progressing in relation to the learning outcomes in the curriculum of the course or subject they are taking. Teachers gather evidence of what students are able to do in each course, evaluate students' progress, and report that to parents/guardians and students. The process of assessing, evaluating, and reporting student progress enables you to monitor student learning and identify what action, if any, is needed to help students succeed.

There are many ways to inform students and their parents/guardians of progress in school. It is important to have communication with the students and parents/guardians long before the first report card goes home. Document any communications with parents/guardians.

Provincial policy requires that teachers report to parents/guardians both formally (on report cards) and informally. Methods for reporting information include:

- checked and returned work.
- notes sent home.
- parent-teacher conferences.
- interim reports.
- student-parent-teacher or student-led conferences.
- teacher-student conferences.
- telephone calls home, reporting outstanding performance as well as concerns.

OFFICIAL REPORTING POLICY IN B.C.

Ministry of Education policy

1. *During the school year, school boards will provide parents/guardians of students with at least five reports describing students' school progress.*

Three of the reports will be formal written reports, and two will be informal reports.

2. Formal written reports must, for Grades K to 7, and, when appropriate, for Grade 8 to 12, describe:
 - what students are able to do
 - the areas in which students require further attention or development and
 - ways to support students in their learning.
3. Informal reports to parents/guardians may include telephone calls, student-led conferences, parent-teacher conferences, and the use of journals. Schools and teachers determine how they will informally communicate with parents/guardians.
4. Parents/guardians of students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 must be provided with oral or written comments on students' school progress. Comments should relate progress to the expected development of students in a similar age range.
5. In Grades 4 to 12, letter grades will be used to indicate students' levels of performance in relation to the learning outcomes for each course or subject and grade.
 - Letter grades and structured written comments will appear on the formal report cards for Grades 4 to 7 unless the school board chooses an alternative way to communicate grades to parents/guardians.
 - Letter grades and structured written comments, when appropriate, will appear on report cards for Grades 8 to 10.
 - Letter grades, percentages and structured written comments, when appropriate, will appear on the formal report cards for Grades 11 and 12.
 - All formal reports will include a description of student behaviour, attitudes, work habits, and effort.
6. When students with special needs are unable to meet the learning outcomes of a course and it is necessary to modify the program, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlining goals and objectives for each student will be established.

In these cases, the use of letter grades and percentages on reports is inappropriate. Structured written reports will be used to report how well students have succeeded in meeting the modified goals and objectives of their IEPs.
- letter grades and percentages may only be assigned when students with special needs are able to meet the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum
7. Reporting symbol "I" (to replace "IP"): The reporting symbol "I" will be used to alert parents that students, for a variety of reasons, are not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes. There may be various reasons for this. Examples include: students may be making progress but require additional time or support in order to meet the expected learning outcomes; students have not completed important assignments and the teacher is unable to adequately assess the students' progress without the assignments being completed; and students have not been attending class.
8. The reporting symbol "I" may be used at any time during the school year to alert parents that students are having problems meeting the expected learning outcomes. The report symbol may be used on informal and formal reports. The underlying principle is that parents and students should be alerted to a problem as soon as it is detected by teachers.
9. When an "I" reporting symbol has been assigned:
 - students and parents must be informed and must be provided with an opportunity to consult with teachers about the problems students are having and possible solutions; and,
 - teachers must be prepared to identify what the problems are and specify plans of action to address the problems which gives students opportunities to achieve the learning outcomes. This may be communicated in a variety of ways, including: through a written plan, verbally by telephone, or in a direct meeting involving teacher, parents and students.
10. The "I" letter grade must be converted to another letter grade:
 - before a student's records are transferred to another school, unless there is agreement between the principals of the two schools to defer conversion of the "I" reporting symbol;
 - when letter grades are recorded on the permanent student record card; and
 - before submission of Grade 11 and 12 marks to the ministry for inclusion on students transcripts.

11. An "F" letter grade can only be assigned if an "I" reporting symbol was previously assigned or, as a result of failing a provincially examinable course.
12. The "I" letter grade will be implemented for Grades 4 to 12 beginning in September 1997.
13. The old letter grades "D" and "E" will no longer be used as of September 1997.

Students with special needs

One of the challenges teachers have faced in recent years is how to meet the diverse needs of students in today's classrooms.

The BCTF supports the principles of equity and opportunity for all learners, and the concept of inclusion, while recognizing that inclusion may not be appropriate for all students some or all of the time.

Careful planning is necessary for a student with special needs to be placed appropriately, and with the required resources available. The assessment of a student with special needs must be an ongoing process of consultation between the teacher or teachers, the parents, the administrative officer, paraprofessional personnel and the student (where applicable).

Most likely you will have one or more children with special needs in your class(es). You should expect to be consulted in planning for this student. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be prepared for each student with special needs. The IEP documents the resources and strategies that are needed to help the student meet his/her full potential.

The IEP is often jointly written by the school-based team (SBT). Be clear about the resources and the help you will need in order to provide a successful experience for the child, and insist on regular follow up with the SBT.

Check your collective agreement, or ask your staff rep for specific integration/mainstreaming policies and procedures. Other sources of assistance are school-based resource teachers (learning

assistance, special education teachers), district resource staff, consultants, your administrative officer, and community resource people.

Often district workshops and/or in-service funds are available for classroom teachers to support them in this area.

RESOURCES

BCTF modified and adapted materials database

Materials which can be used with elementary and secondary students who have learning difficulties have been developed locally by teachers and district staff around the province of B.C. The database facilitates wider access and awareness of the resources available.

Search the database by subject category, curriculum area, grade level, and format (audio tape, video, etc.). Some items are available through the BCTF Lesson Aids Service. All other materials can be obtained from the original source.

The database can be reached at:

www.bctf.ca/mam/

Ministry of Education publications

Through the Ministry of Education, there are a variety of resource materials to help classroom teachers understand and work with students who have special needs. They are as follows:

- *Awareness of Chronic Health Conditions: What the Teacher Needs to Know* (1995)
Ministry reference #RB0057
- *Awareness of Chronic Health Conditions* (Volume 2)
Ministry reference #RB0072
- *Gifted Education: A Resource Guide for Teachers* (1995) Ministry reference #RB0050
- *Hard-of-Hearing and Deaf Students: A Resource Guide to Support Classroom Teachers*
Ministry reference #RB0033
- *Individual Education Planning for Students With Special Needs* (1996)
Ministry reference #RB0061
- *Students with Intellectual Disabilities: A Resource Guide for Teachers* (1995)
Ministry reference #RB0060
- *Students with Visual Impairments: A Resource Guide to Support Classroom Teachers*
Ministry reference #RB0047

- *Teaching Students with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/ Effects: A Resource Guide for Teachers* (1996) Ministry reference #RB0059
- *Teaching Students with Learning and Behavioural Differences: A Resource Guide for Teachers* (1996) Ministry reference #RB0063

Many of these documents can be found online at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/welcome.htm

- Select “online documents.”

A complete list of Ministry of Education resources is available online at:

www.publications.gov.bc.ca/

- Select “public.”
- Select “list by government organizations.”
- Select “education.”

Publications can be ordered online, or by contacting:

Office Products Centre

742 Vanalman Avenue

Victoria, BC V8W 9V7

Tel: 250-952-4460

Toll free: 1-800-282-7955

Fax: 250-952-4442

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION —SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

Policy circulation number 95-09

Date of issue: September 29, 1995

Please note: The funding formula has been revised and policy is currently under revision to match the funding.

Definition

Students with special needs have disabilities of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, or have a learning disability or have exceptional gifts or talents.

Policy

Inclusion issues

- A board must provide a student with special needs with an educational program in a classroom where that student is integrated with other students who do not have special needs, unless the educational needs of the student with special needs or other students indicate that the educational program for the student with special needs should be provided otherwise.

- Neighborhood school classroom teachers whose classrooms include students with special needs should adapt instruction and evaluation methods and materials as necessary.
- Students with special needs should only be placed in settings other than a neighborhood school classroom with age and grade peers when the school board has made all reasonable efforts to integrate the student, and it is clear that a combination of education in such classes and supplementary support cannot meet their educational or social needs, or when there is clear evidence that partial or full placement in another setting is the only option after considering their educational needs or the educational needs of others.
- Placing students with special needs in settings other than neighborhood school classes with their age and grade peers should be done as part of a plan that is regularly reviewed and updated with a view to returning these students to neighborhood school classrooms as soon as it is feasible.

Planning issues

- Schools and school districts should organize themselves to provide educational programs and services to students with special needs. This includes planning with other districts, the Ministry of Education, other ministries, and community agencies.
- Teachers whose classrooms include students with special needs should have timely access to support, such as school-based teams.
- Assessment practices should be designed to ensure timely identification by personnel trained in the assessment of specific special needs. Assessment results should be used in educational planning activities.
- Planning educational programs for students with special needs should begin in neighborhood school classrooms. Planning is conducted by teachers, parents, school-based teams or school administration, and/or students.
- Students identified as having special needs must have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) developed as soon as practical after identification unless:
 1. the student with special needs requires no, or only minor, adaptations to educational materials, or instructional or assessment methods;
 2. the expected learning outcomes established by the applicable educational program guide have not been modified for the student with special needs; and
 3. the student with special needs is receiving, in a school year, 25 hours or less remedial

instruction, by a person other than the classroom teacher in order for the student to meet the expected learning outcomes.

- IEPs should be implemented, reviewed and updated at least annually.
- Principals should ensure that all students with special needs are assigned case managers to co-ordinate the development, documentation and implementation of their IEPs.
- Parents must be given the opportunity to participate in the planning process. To the extent that they are able, students should also participate.
- Education facilities and transportation systems should be free of physical barriers which may hinder some students.
- Services should be organized along a continuum which reflects the diversity of special needs and the prevalence levels of various special needs in the school population.
- School districts should provide in-service training to ensure that all staff can develop the skills and understanding needed to work in an inclusive environment. Schools should have a systematic training plan for all staff to ensure that staff remain current in their knowledge and understanding of special education.
- Teachers and other professionals should also upgrade their own knowledge.

Accountability issues

- School districts are accountable for expenditures in special education.
- Where it is determined that students with special needs are not capable of achieving the learning outcomes set out in provincial curriculum and course or program modification is necessary, specific individual goals and objectives will be established for the students in their IEPs. Structured written comments will be used to report the level of the students' success in achieving their modified goals and objectives.
- Where specialist support personnel, other than classroom teachers, are responsible for providing some portion of students' educational programs, those persons should provide written reports on the students' progress for inclusion with the reports of the classroom teachers.

Parent involvement in schools

THE CONTEXT

BCTF members agree, and research overwhelmingly concludes, that when parents/guardians participate in their child's education, children tend to be more successful learners. That is why teachers endorse policies that promote a positive relationship between the home and the school.

Parents/guardians have always been involved with schools and teachers. They volunteer, sit on school committees, and drop in before and after school. Most have, at one time or another over the years, accompanied a class on a field trip, made cookies for bake sales, talked to a class about their career, or promoted "dry grad" parties.

The 1989 School Act gave new powers to parents. Parents in each school could establish Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) to "advise the board and the principal and staff of the school...respecting any matter relating to the school..."

This broad mandate, "to advise...(on)...any matter" presents several challenges for educators. No longer satisfied to be out of the decision-making loop, parents/guardians are looking for meaningful involvement beyond the usual roles. Ongoing discussions in which parents and teachers can speak frankly, confidently, and respectfully about concerns and opinions, contribute to the creation of a partnership that benefits students.

Teacher locals are encouraged to have regular contact with the District Parent Advisory Councils (DPACs).

In addition, in the spring of 2002 legislation was introduced creating School Planning Councils in every school. The School Planning Council consists of the school administrator, three parents, one teacher, and in schools that enroll Grades 10, 11, or 12, one student. School Planning Councils provide advice to the school board with respect to: allocation of staff and resources in the school; matters contained in the board's accountability contract relating to the school; and educational services and programs in the school.

The teacher representative on the SPC is elected by and reports back to the teaching staff in the school.

BCTF POLICY ON PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Detailed policy information is in the *Members' Guide to the BCTF* (ask your staff rep for a copy).

Key points to remember:

- The BCTF believes in working co-operatively with the Ministry of Education and the B.C. School Trustees Association, the B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, community agencies, and other groups interested in education.
- The goals and directions of the school system should be determined by interaction of students, parents, and teachers at the local level through a process that would involve examination of present and future needs of our young people.
- Teacher locals are encouraged to establish regular communications with their district parent advisory councils.
- Each school staff should consult with the students of the school, the parents of the students, and other members of the community, with a view to formulating school policy regarding the effective and orderly operation of the school.
- The BCTF supports the concept of parent and student involvement in educational decision-making.
- Teachers are encouraged to develop further the relationship between the home and the school.
- All the educational partners continue to support and encourage meaningful student, parent, and community involvement in schools.

Most parents/guardians in British Columbia report they are either satisfied or very satisfied with their child's teacher. However, parents/guardians have identified barriers that prevent them from getting their needs met in the school system. Teachers are interested in exploring ways to remove the barriers and to include parents/guardians in appropriate discussions and decisions at the school level.

Working with teacher assistants

Although all decisions related to designing, supervising, and assessing educational programs for students are your responsibility, the teacher assistant is an important partner on the educational team, providing support to students with special needs. Invite the teacher assistant to sit in on any conferences that are pertinent. Hold meetings for sharing information and decision-making.

When the roles are defined and clarified, the teacher assistant can then decide how to approach the assigned responsibilities. For students to receive maximum benefit, you will need to build a climate of trust and give encouragement and support to the teacher assistant.

Key points to remember:

- A teacher assistant must always work under the direction of a teacher or the principal.
- The teacher's role is to manage the classroom.
- Teachers must fulfill their responsibility for diagnosing learning needs, for selecting and implementing appropriate educational programs, and for assessing educational results.
- The assistant's role is to carry out the work that has been planned and developed by the teacher, either with an individual student or a small group.

The BCTF and CUPE B.C. have published a joint paper entitled, "Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers and Teacher Assistants." A copy is available in your school or online at www.bctf.ca/education/InclusiveEd/TeacherTA-Roles/

If you have any questions or concerns about working with teacher assistants, contact your staff rep and/or your local president.

Preparing for a teacher on call

Most schools have developed a policy handbook for TOCs. If your school does not have one, the following information may be useful.

To ensure that a quality education program continues in your absence, advanced preparation for a TOC is important. Such planning will help to maintain a consistent routine in a safe and caring environment. Students should be aware of your expectations for behaviour when a TOC is in charge of the class. The TOC is an important part of the education system, and provides for meaningful and authentic teaching and learning opportunities in your absence.

Prepare an information folder for the TOC, which could include the following:

- Class list with phone numbers.
- Class rules, expectations, and responsibilities.
- Seating plan.

- Classroom routines.
- Daily and weekly timetable, showing bell times.
- Homework assignments and policy.
- Information about students with special needs, including health needs.
- Map of the school, including the fire exits.
- Name of the teaching assistant and assignment of work.
- Names of some students who could be of help.
- Names of administrators that deal with discipline matters.
- Notes on procedures such as taking attendance, opening exercises.
- Notes on procedures such as student becoming ill during class.
- Supervision schedule and guidelines.
- Up-to-date daily plan book.
- Supplementary material the TOC could use.

It is not always possible to anticipate everything that a TOC will need, so it is helpful to indicate the names of teachers and/or teacher assistants who may be able to provide assistance.

See the following forms for examples.

SPECIFIC CLASSROOM INFORMATION FOR YOUR TOC

My buddy teachers are _____

Class rules/routines _____

Washroom/break procedures _____

Free-time activities _____

Recess/lunch time procedures _____

Quiet signal _____

Other signals _____

Acceptable rewards _____

Discipline procedures _____

Helpful students _____

Special-program students _____

Students who need extra attention _____

File for _____

Grade/Year _____ Phone number _____

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES AND ROUTINES

Bells and class times _____

Homeroom and opening procedures _____

Washroom and drink procedures _____

Duty days, times and responsibilities _____

Library routines _____

Emergency evacuation procedures _____

How to assist ill students _____

Pets and plants _____

Students with health or behaviour concerns _____

Additional notes _____

CLASSROOM ROUTINES

Signal for getting student attention is _____
_____ All students should STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN.

Attendance taking _____

Collecting completed assignments _____

Correspondence from home _____

Dismissal _____

Distributing books, supplies _____

Drinking fountain _____

Entering the classroom _____

Failure to bring materials _____

Library _____

Pencil sharpener _____

Restroom _____

Tardiness _____

What to do when finished with work _____

Additional notes _____

Working with volunteers

Volunteers bring special talents to our schools.

THE CONTEXT

For generations, parents/guardians, grandparents, university students, neighbours, young, and old, have volunteered in our public schools. Volunteers come to school to talk to students about their jobs, listen to children read, help coach school teams, sew or paint backdrops, help out on field trips, make hot dogs for all the kids, or cook special meals with classes.

At the same time as services in public schools have expanded so has employment of people to provide them. In various situations, conflict arose regarding the roles ascribed to employees and to volunteers. At the BCTF Annual General Meeting of 1986, teachers adopted a policy that welcomes and defines appropriate roles for volunteers in schools.

People volunteer for a variety of personal reasons. We recognize, however, that a volunteer's first commitment may not be to the school, and that career or family commitments may prevent her/him from helping on the day or time planned. We do not expect volunteers to be familiar with all the employer's rules and policies that guide us in our work. Volunteers complement the work of paid teaching and non-teaching staff; they do not substitute for it.

In recent years we have all noticed fewer services in our schools. Many elementary and secondary schools have lost staff, caretaker hours have been cut back, band programs have been cancelled, and fewer teacher assistants are available to help with students with special needs.

Volunteers have sometimes been asked to replace employees who have had their hours reduced, have been laid off, or were never hired for needed positions. Often volunteers do not know that the work they have been asked to do is part of regular duties of absent employees. Sweeping the hallway, providing regular assistance for a student with special needs, providing withdrawal remedial programs, and driving school buses are all jobs done by paid staff. Volunteers should not be asked to evaluate students' work, nor should they

implement programs with groups of students. That is the job of a teacher. Parents/guardians, some of whom are school volunteers, deserve to feel confident that their child is being taught, assessed, and evaluated by a teacher.

Volunteers bring special talents to our schools. In the best scenarios, volunteers and the public schools benefit equally from the relationship. Volunteers continue to enrich the lives of the children in their communities, and volunteering brings them closer to their neighbours and their neighbourhood.

BCTF POLICY ON VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS

Detailed policy information is in the *Members' Guide to the BCTF*.

Key points to remember:

- Volunteer participation in schools will be encouraged and will be related to educational programs where volunteers can bring their special talents to schools.
- Volunteers will be used on a by-need, special-occasion basis in the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities of the school.
- Teachers will respect the provisions of any collective agreements between boards and non-teaching employees regarding the use of volunteers in the schools.
- In the absence of any such provisions in collective agreements, teachers will be guided by the following principles:
 - (a) *Policies regarding the use of volunteers should be developed at the district level and with agreement from the school board, teachers, and non-teaching employee unions.*
 - (b) *Implementation of policies on use of volunteers should be monitored by a committee with representatives from the school board, the teachers, and non-teaching employee unions.*
 - (c) *Districts should develop, through such monitoring committees, mechanisms for:*
 - (1) *ensuring school adherence to policies,*
 - (2) *resolving conflicts that may arise between teaching or non-teaching staff and volunteers.*
 - (d) *Volunteer participation in schools should complement the work of paid teaching and non-teaching staff and should not substitute or it.*

- (e) *Volunteers should not be used in schools to replace teachers, teacher aides, or other school personnel who have been laid off or had their hours of work cut.*
- (f) *Volunteer participation in schools should not be a substitute for adequate staffing by professional and non-teaching support personnel.*

Knowledge of this policy by volunteers in schools can prevent conflict. If you have questions or concerns about a particular situation, ask your staff representative or call your local teachers' union office.

Wellness—taking care of yourself

Wellness depends on our lifestyle and on how we cope with physical, mental, and emotional demands. Good wellness habits formed in our initial years of teaching are an investment for our career.

First-year teachers are going through a transition from student to professional teacher. Transitional phases are sometimes difficult and painful. You may be away from family and long-time friends for the first time. You may be aware that your expectations and your capacity differ. You may also be overwhelmed by your workload and, therefore, work late into the night, on weekends, and at lunch and recesses, to the point where your health and wellness may suffer.

You are facing the challenge that all first-year teachers face: striking a healthy balance.

PERSONAL LIFE AND WORK LIFE

Your work may consume you. There is so much to do and learn. Personal life may suffer in the first year of teaching. Exercise is forgotten, and there is little time to meet new friends let alone join them for activities outside school. Taking time to relax every day and to exercise relieves stress and makes your transition easier. Exercise and seeing friends will maintain your energy.

You may have a variety of emotions, and it's important to stay connected with what's really going on. Experience it fully, and act accordingly. Everyone has a first year. Laugh at yourself, and enjoy your talents even when others do not.

Recognize your emotions. You can express them appropriately rather than at times when "they just come out." You will need to decide if you can live with the difference between the dream you had of what teaching would be and your discovery of what it really is.

PERFECTIONISM AND SURVIVAL

To have the perfect lesson and the perfect class, where all students are working to their potential all the time, is impossible. Realize that there are students in your classroom with so many personal and home problems that no matter how your lessons are planned or what you do, they are unable to focus on the work at hand. Do not take that personally. It does not mean you are not being a good teacher. Look for the help of colleagues when you need support or ideas.

A teacher needs to contain the demands and set priorities. It takes too much energy to be perfect all the time. No one else expects a first-year teacher to be perfect. Surviving the first year depends on letting go of thinking you have to do it all, all the time, all alone.

ASKING FOR HELP VERSUS DOING IT ALL YOURSELF

You are a trained teacher with new ideas and information. Situations or concerns may come up that you do not know how to handle. Ask others, and ask early. It is not a sign of incompetence to ask questions. Other people have experience in areas that you may not have. Asking early may save a lot of grief and a lot of time. Ask for support. Be honest about how hurt or how excited you are about a situation or project. Ask any of the following for help/advice: colleagues, mentor, staff rep, local president, other new teachers, school counsellor, and PSAs.

SAYING "YES" AND SAYING "NO"

It is all right to say no to too many extra-curricular activities or assignments. First-year teachers often think they have to do everything that is asked of them and do it well. There are only so many hours in a day, and you have only so much energy. If something is too much for you, say so. It doesn't help anyone for you to be so stretched that you cannot do anything well or you are not getting the sleep you need. If you cannot figure out how to get into balance, get support from friends and staff members.

For more information, check with your staff rep or local president, and seek out information about employee-assistance programs, BCTF wellness workshops or mentoring/collegial support programs.

BUILDING A SUPPORT SYSTEM

As you begin teaching, develop a support system you can tap into for any number of issues/situations. Further in this handbook is a discussion of who might form your support system; however, the best model is that of “teachers helping teachers.”

Do you know:

- Who your staff rep is?
- Who your local president is?
- Which teachers on your staff teach the same grade level or the same subject?
- If there is a formal mentoring program in your district? How do you become a participant?

- What specific provisions in the collective agreement benefit you as a new member?
- Which PSAs would support your teaching assignment?

Aboriginal teachers

The BCTF supports Aboriginal teachers and students through the following:

- First Nations Professional Association
- Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee
- BCTF Training Department
- BCTF Lesson Aids
- BCTF Aboriginal education assistant director will assist you in finding information regarding Aboriginal education in areas such as locating resources, connecting with resource teachers, etc.

Remember that teaching is both a demanding and a very rewarding profession. Take care of yourself, and enjoy being part of a profession that truly does make a difference.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

My local president is _____

The local's phone number is _____

The first report cards are due _____

For help, I could ask _____

I have 35 kids in my class. I need to _____

I teach a split class. _____ can help me with the organization and delivery of curriculum.

I'm entitled to _____ minutes of prep time a week.

My staff rep is _____

My PD rep is _____

The BCTF web site is _____

An electronic mailing list for new teachers is _____

A teacher mentor or helpful colleague is _____

I will take care of myself and have fun by _____

I can access funds for my PD this year by _____

How the B.C. Teachers' Federation helps

STRUCTURE, DECISION-MAKING, AND SERVICES

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The sovereign decision-making body of the Federation, it is made up of the members of the Representative Assembly, the BCTF Executive Committee, and one or more delegates elected by each local on a per-capita basis. The AGM meets 3.5 days during spring break, decides policies for the Federation, and sets fees for the year.

Representative Assembly (RA)

Made up of elected representatives from each local, it meets three times a year to advise the Executive Committee (EC) and adopt a budget based on the fee set by the AGM.

Executive Committee (EC)

Made up of 11 members elected at the AGM, it is responsible for making decisions for the Federation between Annual General Meetings.

Full-Time Table Officers (FTTO)

The president, first vice-president, and second vice-president are released full time from their teaching duties to represent the 42,000 members. The president is responsible for the general supervision of all matters and affairs of the Federation.

Executive director

The executive director advises the EC and is responsible for assigning duties and directing the activities of the Federation's 140 administrative and support staff.

Locals

Locals represent teachers in each school district in the province. The Francophone Education Authority is the school district for all teachers working in the Francophone program. Le SEPF is the local for all teachers employed by the Francophone Education Authority (FEA). Some teachers belong to another local but their services are purchased by the FEA.

Organizational divisions within the BCTF

- *Field Service Division (FSD)*—Supports locals and assists with political action/outreach campaigns; professional, social justice and Aboriginal

education issues; grievances, personnel, and health and safety matters; working and learning conditions issues.

- *Collective Agreement and Protective Services Division (CAPS)*—Has responsibility for legal and related collective agreement matters; supports bargaining and collective agreement implementation/administration; health and safety prevention initiatives and WCB advocacy.
- *Professional and Social Issues Division (PSID)*—Has responsibility for curriculum, education policy, and PSA support, including PSA services; professional issues and teacher career development matters; French programs and services; Social Justice Program; Aboriginal Education Program; Lesson Aids service; Program for Quality Teaching; College of Teachers liaison; liason with universities, and supports Judicial Council and Mediation Services.
- *Communications/Campaigns Division (CCD)*—Provides support for Federation governance structures; internal and external communications including graphics; community and labour outreach; political action initiatives and campaign co-ordination.
- *Research and Technology Division (RT)*—Provides research for the Federation.

Advisory committees

The Professional Issues Advisory Committee, Social Justice Advisory Committee, Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee, Advisory Committee on French Programs and Services, College Advisory Committee, Provincial Specialist Association Council, Teacher on Call and Under-employed Teachers' Advisory Committee, Pensions Committee, Finance Committee, *Teacher News*-magazine Advisory Board, and Health and Safety Advisory Committee provide advice to the BCTF Executive Committee.

Ongoing services

As a new teacher, you may be especially interested in the following:

- BCTF web site: www.bctf.ca
- Lesson Aids services
- PD online
- Beginning Teachers' list serv
- New teachers' conference

Provincial specialist associations

The 33 PSAs foster professional development through a variety of means and provide members with:

- teaching/learning materials
- information on new teaching methods
- support for new teachers
- a network via local chapters
- a collective voice to help shape BCTF direction and influence curriculum policies
- specialty publications
- support for exemplary practice and teacher awards.

PSAs host for members:

- annual general meetings
- annual conferences
- local or regional conferences

You may join as many PSAs as you wish. For a PSA application form, check your New Members Kit, or page 57 of this handbook or online at bctf.ca/psas/~PSA-ApplicationForm.shtml

PD workshops

Workshops on a variety of topics are designed and delivered by BCTF associates. See your school PD representative and the PD Services Book for details or visit pdonline.bctf.ca

HOW YOUR BCTF LOCAL HELPS

Your BCTF local is a source of support and information on professional, contractual, and personnel matters. Find out who your school representative(s) are and what services are available through your local. Locate and read the collective agreement and other material to find out how you can take part in your professional organization. Information regarding local funding for PD and in-service activities is available through your local. Talk to your local PD rep. Information regarding health and safety concerns is available through your local and your Health and Safety school representative.

Staying safe at work

No matter how minor an injury might seem, it is important to document it with your employer. For example, a paper cut can lead to a secondary infection and a twinge in your back from lifting textbooks may be indicative of a more serious injury.

The procedure for reporting an injury is:

1. Inform an administrative officer of this injury or disease that you feel is work related. Make sure the information is documented. WCB requires that you report your injury as soon as practical, don't delay.
2. Make sure the appropriate person has filled in the first aid log at the worksite. Always get the log filled in no matter how minor the injury, it may develop into something more serious.
3. File a "Workers' Report of Injury or Occupational Disease to Employer." This may be a district-developed form or a WCB Form 6A. The employer is required to file a "Form 7" within three days of receiving the report from the member.
4. At the same time you file the report to your employer file an "Application for Compensation and Report of Injury or Occupational Disease" Form 6 to WCB. If you are not sure about the questions seek help.
5. Always copy "Form 6A" and "Form 6" to the local union office. Always ask for help for the WCB claim's process.
6. Always report your injury or occupational disease to your doctor and request that the doctor file a "Physicians First Report Form 8" to WCB.
7. A WCB officer should contact the worker after they have received Form 6.

HOW THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT HELPS

In general, the existing language includes one or more of the following as a way of providing special consideration for the needs of new teachers:

- mentor programs
- release time for professional development, mentorship
- orientation to district and school.

Some sample collective-agreement clauses:

Nelson District Teachers' Association, 1995

Teacher Headcount: 361

Article 48.00: .i. Beginning Teachers

48.00.1 Wherever practicable, beginning teachers shall be provided with teaching conditions designed to assist them in being successful in their first (1st) year of employment.

48.00.2 Considerations may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. A carefully designed teaching assignment whereby the most demanding classes are not the responsibility of a beginning teacher.
- b. The assignment of a reasonable number of subject preparations, to beginning teachers, if possible, within their area of training.
- c. A comprehensive orientation to the school, its facilities and operations.

48.00.3 The parties shall request the Professional Development Committee to explore further strategies to assist beginning teachers, including the development of a mutually acceptable mentor program.

Langley Teachers' Association, 1994

Teacher Headcount: 1,416

Article 85: Beginning Teacher

- 85.1 In determining the teaching assignment of a beginning teacher the principal in consultation with the staff shall consider the following:
- a. the instructional assignment
 - b. class demands
 - c. mentor support
 - d. orientation.

Richmond Teachers' Association, 1994

Teacher Headcount: 1,673

Article 17: Beginning Teachers

- 17.1 The board and the association shall support and assist beginning teachers in their adjustment to teaching by administering and facilitating a mentor/beginning teacher program. Participation of mentors and beginning teachers in such a program shall be voluntary.
- 17.2 The mentor/beginning teacher program shall include:
- a. an appropriate teaching assignment
 - b. an orientation and teacher induction program, and
 - c. an opportunity for observation, demonstration, collaboration and consultation pertaining to job related activities such as planning, classroom management, instructional strategies, evaluation, reporting and other assistance as mutually agreed by the mentor/beginning teacher.

17.3 Each mentor/beginning teacher pair shall be funded to a maximum of five (5) days release time.

Bulkley Valley Teachers' Association, 1994

Teacher Headcount: 233

Article 11: Beginning Teachers

- 11.1 Beginning teachers shall be provided with teaching conditions to help them in their adjustment to teaching. The conditions shall include, but not be limited to:
- a. a teaching assignment whereby the most demanding classes are not the responsibility of a beginning teacher
 - b. a mentor's program
 - c. an in-school orientation and induction program.

Article 14: Mentor/Beginning Teacher Program

14.1 The mentor/beginning teacher program shall be administered and facilitated by the association and the board.

- 14.2 A mentor is a teacher who voluntarily agrees to mentor a beginning teacher and who:
- a. may have experience in assignments similar to that of a beginning teacher
 - b. has informed the association of a willingness to serve as a mentor.

14.3 Participation in the mentor/beginning teacher program is voluntary. The relationship of the mentor/beginning teacher shall be in confidence.

14.4 The pairing of mentor/beginning teacher and the continuation of the pairing for up to one year shall be by mutual agreement of the mentor and the beginning teacher.

14.5 The mentor/beginning teacher program will not comprise any part of the evaluation of a teacher.

14.6 Each mentor/beginning teacher pair shall be provided release time for conducting observations, demonstration teaching, collaboration, consultation, and professional development activities.

14.7 *The number of days of release time shall be based on the amount of the grants received by the board targeted for this program.*

14.8 *The number of days of release time may be increased when an AO, the mentor, and beginning teacher agree to an increase, subject to approval by the superintendent.*

Others who can help

- *Colleagues, colleagues, colleagues*

- *Mentors*—Many locals in partnership with the school district have formal mentoring programs, in which new teachers are matched with experienced teachers.

If there is no formal process, develop your own network of mentors by tapping into the knowledge and expertise of experienced teachers in your school or in your district.

Meet with other new teachers, and develop a support system. Ask your local for assistance in organizing a meeting.

- *Resource/special education/learning assistance teacher*—Works with other teachers who have children with special needs in their classrooms. The resource teacher can help you design appropriate activities. In some cases, the resource teachers also operate programs that may take children with special needs out of their regular classrooms for part of the day or week. A resource teacher can be an important part of your support system. Find an early opportunity to meet to discuss how you can best work together to benefit the student.

- *Teacher-librarian*—A teacher-librarian does more than look after the collection of library materials. She or he can assist you in co-operative planning and help you design research-based projects and information-retrieval programs. Familiarize yourself with policies about using the resource centre, but also take advantage of the teacher-librarian's ability to help you develop resource-based learning strategies to enhance instruction. Your teacher-librarian may also assist you in ordering student and teacher resource materials.

- *School counsellor*—Your school counsellor can help you overcome many obstacles. Find out if there are any ongoing concerns in your class from previous years. The counsellor can be invaluable when meeting with parents, and she or he is often a good source for strategies when dealing with difficult students. Your students are your responsibility, and the counsellor is there as a support, not a disciplinarian. Ask how to make referrals.

- *School administrator*—The principal and the vice-principal are important parts of your support network. Don't wait for them to ask how things are going—let them know. When it's comfortable for you, invite the administrators into your classroom. Show an interest in their work so that you can gain a broader understanding of school operations.

- *Custodial staff*—A good working relationship with the school custodian will make life much easier for you. Ask the principal about the caretaker's responsibilities. Introduce yourself, and discuss ways you can work together to keep your classroom a pleasant place for you and your students.

- *School secretary*—The school secretary is an important link between you and the administration, and she or he is often the first contact parents have with the school. Learn about the secretary's responsibilities and what services might be available to you. Requests made of you by the school secretary are frequently for information required by the principal. Respond promptly.

- *Educational psychologists, speech therapists, and itinerant teachers*—Your school district may employ or have access to educational psychologists, speech therapists, and itinerant teachers. You will need to know about students with whom they have been working and about referral procedures. Talk to members of the school-based team (SBT), the resource teacher, and/or counsellors. See also your local collective agreement for specific information.

- *Aboriginal support workers*—Aboriginal family support workers and Aboriginal home-school co-ordinator.

- *Multicultural support workers*—Multicultural home-school co-ordinators can assist you with communication, including language.

Professional development

The purpose of professional development is to enhance student learning through socially responsible quality teaching. Professional development includes all those experiences that provide an opportunity for professional growth and learning. As a professional you have a responsibility to keep abreast of new developments in education and to take part in ongoing professional development.

As teachers, we need professional development because change is affecting all of us, our families, our work, and our communities. As active learners, teachers use PD days to keep on top of changes that affect their work with students (new technology, new ideas about teaching and learning, and different community needs). Skilled, enthusiastic teachers are key to maintaining the quality of education.

Change is a highly personal experience. It may involve new materials, new behaviours and practices, or new beliefs and understandings. Change in behaviours and beliefs are interactive. Change in practice frequently precedes change in beliefs and understandings.

People's attitudes to change differ. Responses to change might include the following:

- "This does not affect me because . . ."
- "How will this affect me?"
- "How will this affect my student?"
- "Will I ever get it all organized?"
- "Who will help me?"
- "What are other people doing?"
- "I know something that will work even better!"

Think about accepting and addressing our diverse individual concerns and pooling our strengths to support each other as we make changes.

Professional development activities are organized at various levels and times throughout the year. All locals have a PD fund that you may access to attend conferences and participate in other

professional development activities. The school may offer PD days on topics that come from the classroom experience of learning and teaching. Teachers decide individually and together the issues to address. They attend workshops and conferences, participate in mentoring programs, pursue self-directed professional development, and undertake other activities designed to enhance teaching and learning. Self-directed PD could also include classroom visits, co-operative planning, peer coaching, reading journals and references, action research, and study groups.

PSAs are an excellent source of professional development. You may join one or more provincial specialist associations, take part in the PD activities organized by them, and receive their publications.

Be sure to contact your school PD representative and the local PD chairperson for further information about PD opportunities. A number of PD brochures and leaflets are also available (see section on resources).

Note: *As a recent graduate, consider assisting the PD program at your school by sharing current research and ideas from your teacher education program.*

BCTF Declaration of Continuing Education

states the BCTF's belief in the importance of professional development in the lives of teachers, and represents the collective professional opinion of members of the BCTF. It is based on values and principles that reflect a democratic perspective on public education and is intended to provide a provincial standard of continuing-education principles.

1. *It is the responsibility of the individual teacher to make a continuing effort to develop professionally.*
2. *Participation by teachers in professional development should be on a voluntary basis.*
3. *An effective needs assessment process should be the starting point of professional development. Planners of professional development should work as colleagues with the users in identification of needs, the planning of training, and the continuing tailoring of the activities to fit the members' needs.*

4. *Professional development activities should include the growth of competence, collegiality, influence, social, and personal development and health.*
5. *Effective professional development requires a commitment of adequate resources, time, and organizational support.*
6. *The individual teacher should be given the opportunity and the time to pursue her or his professional development objectives.*
7. *The organization and delivery of PD programs are most effectively achieved at the school staff level or with other intact groups.*
8. *Effective professional development activities incorporate presentation and discussion, demonstration or modeling, and practice with feedback.*
9. *Collegial support, on-site coaching, and ongoing support should be available to the individual teacher to allow for adequate internalization or behaviour change.*
10. *The idea of teachers teaching teachers should be promoted in the provision of professional development programs.*
11. *Professional development programs should incorporate a wide repertoire of teaching approaches, and no one professional development program should be viewed as a universal panacea for the improvement of instruction.*

Professional responsibility and Code of Ethics

As a teacher in the public school system, you are bound by a code of ethics and by professional-practice rights and standards. Details of the professional rights and standards of practice can be found in the *Members' Guide to the BCTF*. In all of your dealings with your students, their parents, your colleagues and other school personnel, be guided by the BCTF Code of Ethics.

BCTF Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics states general rules for maintaining high standards of professional service and conduct toward students, colleagues, and the professional union.

1. *The teacher speaks and acts toward students with respect and dignity, and deals judiciously with them, always mindful of their individual rights and sensibilities.*
2. *The teacher respects the confidential nature of information concerning students and may give it only to authorized persons or agencies directly concerned with their welfare.*
3. *The teacher recognizes that a privileged relationship with students exists and refrains from exploiting that relationship for material, ideological, or other advantage.*
4. *The teacher is willing to review with colleagues, students, and their parents/guardians the quality of service rendered by the teacher and the practices employed in discharging professional duties.*
5. *The teacher directs any criticism of the teaching performance and related work of a colleague to that colleague in private, and only then, after informing the colleague in writing of the intent to do so, may direct in confidence the criticism to appropriate individuals who are able to offer advice and assistance. (See note following #10 and statement 31.B.10)*
6. *The teacher acknowledges the authority and responsibilities of the BCTF and its locals and fulfills obligations arising from membership in her or his professional union.*
7. *The teacher adheres to the provisions of the local collective agreement.*
8. *The teacher acts in a manner not prejudicial to job actions or other collective strategies of her or his professional union.*
9. *The teacher neither applies for, nor accepts, a position that is included in a Federation in-dispute declaration.*

10. *The teacher, as an individual or as a member of a group of teachers, does not make unauthorized representations to outside bodies in the name of the Federation or its locals.*

NOTE: It shall not be considered a breach of Clause 5 of the Code of Ethics for a member to follow legal requirements or official protocols in reporting child protection issues.

Evaluation of teachers

As a new teacher you will be required to engage in an evaluation process or, in a few districts, a professional growth plan. The process and procedure is outlined in the collective agreement between your employer, the school district and your union, the local association.

Check your local collective agreement for the process and procedures that have been established in your local. If you have any questions or concerns, ask your staff representative and/or your local president.

BC College of Teachers

The BC College of Teachers (BCCT) created under the *Teaching Profession Act*, is the professional regulatory body for teachers in B.C. The college establishes standards for the education of teachers, issues teaching certificates, conducts certificate reviews and where necessary, suspends or cancels certificates. School districts are required to report disciplinary actions to the BCCT. If you have any concerns about the BCCT please contact your local president.

For further information:

BC College of Teachers
2–2025 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6J 1Z6
Phone: 604-731-8170
Toll-free 1-800-555-3684
Fax: 604-731-9142
BCCT web site: www.bcct.ca

If you have any questions related to the BCCT, please contact the Professional and Social Issues Division at 604-871-1849.

Teacher Qualification Service

The Teacher Qualification Service (TQS) was established in 1969 by the BCTF and the B.C. School Trustees' Association. The purpose of the TQS is to serve as a neutral and independent body to deal with the issue of relating teacher salaries to their level of training. The TQS issues a TQS card indicating a category which reflects the teacher's level of training. Teachers wishing to upgrade their salary category must apply to the TQS. If you have any concerns about your salary category please contact your local president.

For further information:

Teacher Qualification Service
106–1525 West 8th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6J 1T5
Phone: 604-736-5484
Fax: 604-736-6591
TQS web site: www.tqs.ca

Resources

BCTF WEB SITE

- www.bctf.ca—Provides up-to-date information on BCTF policy, news, research, links to other teacher organizations, links to other educational sites, and much more, including the New Teachers' home page www.bctf.ca/NewTeachers
- Online Resource Centre www.bctf.ca/info/—Provides teaching materials, web resources covering educational issues, and electronic journals for professional research.

BCTF ONLINE E-MAIL LISTS

- *bctf-beginteach*—A list to facilitate discussion among and between beginning teachers and experienced teachers.
- *bctf-e-alert*—A list to alert members to new information on the BCTF web site.
- *bctf-edtech-issues*—An open list for exchange of information about technological issues, concerns with curriculum, implementation, professional development, assessment and related issues around information and communications technologies.

- *bctf-edtech-news*—A weekly report on issues regarding teachers and education technology which might have an impact on BCTF members with regard to implementation of information and communications technology.
- *bctf-enfrancais*—A discussion list, open to all educators interested in the field of French education.
- *bctf-pd-issues*—An information forum for professional issues including curriculum implementation, assessment, and related BCTF initiatives.
- *bctf-research*—Announcements about BCTF research projects, summaries of BCTF research reports, and education/labour research URLs and resources.
- *bctf-socialjustice*—A vehicle for the sharing of information, ideas and activities on social justice issues. The scope is broad and includes women’s issues, racism, poverty, homophobia, violence, the social effects of globalization, especially the aspects of these issues which affect children, schools, and teachers.
- *bctf-special-needs*—A forum for educators of students with special needs for comments, questions, information, and suggestions related to the inclusion of students with special needs into your classroom.
- *BCTF Lesson Aids Catalogue*—A list of classroom materials prepared by teachers for teachers. It is available through your school PD rep and online. bctf.ca/LessonAids
- *Teacher* newsmagazine—Articles of interest to teachers. It is distributed to all teachers in their schools and is available online. bctf.ca/ezine
- *School Staff Alert*—A newsletter to staff reps about significant issues. It is available through your staff rep and online. bctf.ca/SchoolStaffAlert
- *Professional and Social Issues Division Services Book*—Information about professional and social issues programs and services. It is available through your school PD rep and online. pdonline.bctf.ca/resources/PD-ServicesBook
- *BCTF e-alert*—To know what’s new on the web, sign up to e-alert: bctf.ca/signup
- *Various Brochures*—Published throughout the year as needed on a variety of issues, such as *Why No School Today?*, which gives answers to common questions about professional development days.

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

(Ask your staff rep and/or your local president about the following publications):

- local bulletins
- local newsletters
- school newsletters.

To subscribe to a BCTF e-mail list:

Go to our mailing lists web page, bctf.ca/lists-public for instructions to select and join a list or contact listsupport@bctf.ca.

BCTF PUBLICATIONS

For a complete list of BCTF publications (current news, briefs and position papers, catalogues, magazines, journals, maps, and research reports) visit the BCTF web site at: bctf.ca/publications

- *PD Calendar*—A list of conferences offered by PSAs and other professional groups. It is available in print in the *Teacher* newsmagazine and online. pdonline.bctf.ca/conferences/PD-Calendar.html

PROVINCIAL SPECIALIST ASSOCIATIONS

Social Insurance or BCTF ID number _____

Surname _____

Given name(s) _____

Former name _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal code _____

Home telephone () _____ Fax () _____

School telephone () _____ Work telephone () _____
(if different from school)

Name and address of school/institution/business _____

School district number _____

e-mail address _____

Visa number _____ Expiry date _____

Approval number _____

PSA MEMBERSHIP

BCTF MEMBER	STUDENT/ RETIREE/ TOC	BCTF MEMBER	STUDENT/ RETIREE/ TOC	BCTF MEMBER	STUDENT/ RETIREE/ TOC
41 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Art	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00	53 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Learning Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00	66 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 Environmental Ed	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00
42 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Business Education	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23.00	54 <input type="checkbox"/> \$18.50 Physical Education	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	67 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 Rural	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00
44 <input type="checkbox"/> \$40.00 Counsellors	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00	55 <input type="checkbox"/> \$42.00 Primary	<input type="checkbox"/> \$21.00	68 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 Peace & Global Ed	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5.00
45 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Immersion/Francophone	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	57 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Science	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00	69 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 ESL PSA	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00
46 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 English Language Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	58 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00	70 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 Alternate Ed	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00
47 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Home Economics	<input type="checkbox"/> \$16.00	59 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	71 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 First Nations	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00
48 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Intermediate	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	60 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 Special Ed	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	72 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 Co-operative Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00
49 <input type="checkbox"/> \$40.00 Teacher-Librarians	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	62 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Drama	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00	73 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Dance	<input type="checkbox"/> \$12.50
50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$40.00 Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00	63 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Gifted	<input type="checkbox"/> \$18.00	74 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 Adult Educators	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00
51 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 Modern Languages	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	64 <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 Distributed Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00	75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 Culinary Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> \$16.00
52 <input type="checkbox"/> \$60.00 Music	<input type="checkbox"/> \$36.00	65 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35.00 Computer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00	76 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 Educators Against Racism	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00

Subscriptions are available to non-BCTF members or institutions. Fees include GST (R 106779291 RT0001).

SUBSCRIBER	SUBSCRIBER	SUBSCRIBER
41 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Art	53 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Learning Assistance	66 <input type="checkbox"/> \$46.55 Environmental Ed
42 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Business Education	54 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50.83 Physical Education	67 <input type="checkbox"/> \$41.20 Rural
44 <input type="checkbox"/> \$62.60 Counsellors	55 <input type="checkbox"/> \$64.74 Primary	68 <input type="checkbox"/> \$46.55 Peace & Global Ed
45 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Immersion/Francophone	57 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Science	69 <input type="checkbox"/> \$46.55 ESL PSA
46 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 English Language Arts	58 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51.90 Technology	70 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51.90 Alternate Ed
47 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Home Economics	59 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51.90 Social Studies	71 <input type="checkbox"/> \$46.55 First Nations
48 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Intermediate	60 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51.90 Special Ed	72 <input type="checkbox"/> \$41.20 Co-operative Learning
49 <input type="checkbox"/> \$62.60 Teacher-Librarians	62 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Drama	73 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Dance
50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$62.60 Mathematics	63 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Gifted	74 <input type="checkbox"/> \$41.20 Adult Educators
51 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51.90 Modern Languages	64 <input type="checkbox"/> \$46.55 Distributed Learning	75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$51.90 Culinary Arts
52 <input type="checkbox"/> \$84.00 Music	65 <input type="checkbox"/> \$57.25 Computer	76 <input type="checkbox"/> \$41.20 Educators Against Racism

Print your name, address, etc., and check the appropriate association(s). Cite credit-card details, or enclose your cheque or money order, made payable to the B.C. Teachers' Federation. Do not mail cash. Retain a photocopy of your completed application for your records. Only BCTF members and students pursuing B.Ed. degrees can be members of PSAs; all others must become subscribers. The membership/subscription will run for one year from the date this form is processed. The BCTF ID number and the expiry date appear on envelopes bearing PSA publications. Six weeks before the membership/subscription is due to expire, you'll be sent a renewal form. Receipts are not issued because PSA fees are not tax deductible. **If in the course of the year you change your name or address, please notify the BCTF: B.C. Teachers' Federation, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2, 604-871-1848 or 1-800-663-9163 (local 1848), www.bctf.ca.**

The job search

Many teachers use teaching on call as a stepping stone to continuing types of employment. You can do several things to prepare for this prospect.

- Update your résumé.
- Learn more about job interviews and practice those skills.
- Find out about teacher supply and demand around the province: enrollment increases, grade and/or subject demand, TOC shortage.
- Check online for the latest information:
bctf.ca/ResearchReports
bctf.ca/education/recruiting/Jobsearch/JobsearchLinks.html

SCHOOL DISTRICTS, SUPERINTENDENTS, SECRETARY-TREASURERS

The superintendent's list is on the BCTF web site: bctf.ca/About/superintendents.cfm or the Ministry of Education web site: bced.gov.bc.ca/schools/sdinfol/welcome.htm

Job interviews

Visit the school district or school homepage prior to the interview to gather as much information as possible.

WHAT DO THEY ASK

Following are some questions that might be asked in an interview for a teaching position:

- From your observations and experience, what particular instructional strategies appeal to you?
- How do you feel about working in a collaborative setting?
- How do you think you would go about helping a child who is having more difficulty than the other children?
- How might you make use of the school library? The services of a librarian? The learning assistance teacher?
- How would you describe an effective teacher?
- Tell us about a lesson that went really well during your practicum or as a teacher on call.
- Tell us about a student who presented you with a discipline challenge, and describe how you handled it.
- What are some of your priorities in establishing a positive learning environment in your classroom?

- What are some specific evaluation methods that appeal to you?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What do you think are the major educational issues facing schools today?
- What classroom themes might you use?
- What other work and community experiences have you had?
- What professional development activities have you undertaken?
- What protocol do you follow for ongoing discipline problems?
- Why did you decide to become a teacher?
- Why would you like to teach in this district?
- With what age group do you think you will be most comfortable as you begin your teaching? Why?

WHAT SHOULD NOT BE ASKED

- What are your family plans?
- What are your personal values?
- What are your religious beliefs/affiliation?
- What extra curricular work will you undertake?

Note: When you are interviewed at a school for a particular position, subject-specific questions are often asked. Be prepared to answer questions in your areas of expertise.

WHAT SHOULD YOU ASK

If invited to ask a question in an interview, try one or two of these:

- What professional development opportunities exist in the district?
- Is there a mentoring program for new teachers to the district?
- Is there an orientation program for new teachers to the district?
- Is a statement of the school/district philosophy (mission statement) available to study? (If you did not find the information online.)

If you are in an interview for a job in a remote or rural district, you might want to ask questions about: housing, community activities, transportation, district resources, and out-of-district professional development opportunities.

Always have a question ready to ask. Most interviews now provide for this.

Notes & Quotes

Questions . . .

Ideas . . .

Reflections . . .

Notes . . .

Contacts . . .

Actions . . .

Follow-up . . .

Reflections/Notes

Teaching is a planned process based on standards of professional practice which incorporate principles of pedagogy, social responsibility, ethical practices, and collaborative relationships.

Adapted from BCTF Policy 31.A.02

Reflections/Notes

Whenever there are beginners and experts, old and young, there is some kind of learning going on and some sort of teaching. We are all teachers, and we are all pupils.

Gilbert Highet

Reflections/Notes

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Meade

Reflections/Notes

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove. . . but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.

Author unknown



Charter for Public Education

Public Education is a sacred trust. As a community we promise to prepare learners for a socially responsible life in a free and democratic society, to participate in a world which each generation will shape and build. We promise a public education system which provides learners with knowledge and wisdom, protects and nurtures their natural joy of learning, encourages them to become persons of character, strength and integrity, infuses them with hope and with spirit, and guides them to resolute and thoughtful action.

Everyone has the right to a free, quality public education.

Each First Nation has the right to be recognized and respected by those within the educational institutions located in their traditional territory.

We promise:

To recognize that the learner is at the centre of public education.

To offer learners a broad-based education which includes aesthetic, artistic, cultural, emotional, social, intellectual, academic, physical and vocational development in order that they can find and follow their hopes, dreams and passions.

To nurture and value critical thinking so that learners are equipped to be reflective and analytical global citizens.

To respect, encourage and foster the learner's role as a full participant, together with others in the educational community, in developing their own goals, learning activities and curricula.

To create an environment in which each learner can reach their greatest potential, each learning style is affirmed, and the achievements of each learner are measured and assessed accordingly.

To provide a safe and respectful environment for life-long learning which celebrates diversity, embraces the physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual integrity of each individual, recognizes and acknowledges differences and prevents discrimination in all of its forms.

We expect:

Government to be responsible for fully funding all aspects of a quality education.

The public education system to guarantee each First Nations learner the right to an education respectful of their history, language and culture.

Learners, parents, early childhood educators, teachers, support staff, administrators, school boards, post-secondary educators, the Government of British Columbia and communities to work in partnership to meet the needs of all learners.

Strong local democratic governance within the provincial education system.

Equitable access for communities to programs, resources, experiences and opportunities for learners, regardless of geographic location or socio-economic status.

These principles reflect the consensus heard during public hearings
across British Columbia, Canada, 2002–03.

www.charter.publiced.ca



British Columbia Teachers' Federation
PSI Division, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2
604-871-2283, 1-800-663-9163 • Fax 604-871-2286
bctf.ca/NewTeachers/handbook