

BCPSEA Makes Significant Move at the Bargaining Table: Term of Agreement and Compensation Proposals

Consistent with the announcement of the Minister of Education yesterday, the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) made a significant move during today's bargaining session with the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) in order to conclude a negotiated collective agreement.

BCPSEA tabled:

- a revised proposal on the term of a new collective agreement: six (6) years (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2019), rather than the previous proposal for 10 years
- a signing bonus of \$1,200 per FTE teacher, **if** a negotiated agreement is concluded by June 30, 2014. The signing bonus is in addition to the 7.25% wage increase already tabled by the employer.

It's important to note that the BCTF proposals currently on the table would add \$2.5 billion to the \$4.7 billion in operating grants provided by the Ministry of Education to school districts, which is simply not realistic. At today's bargaining session, BCPSEA called on the BCTF to revise its proposals to bring them into a reasoned and realistic zone of settlement. If not, the employer will have no choice but to consider options to place reciprocal pressure on the union — in response to its current and projected strike action, and unrealistic positions at the bargaining table — to incent movement to conclude an agreement..

In addition, the BCTF continues to misrepresent the employers' position:

BCTF Statement	BCPSEA Response
The teachers' federation says... government has acted in "bad faith" at the negotiating table this year...(Chetwynd Echo Reporter, March 12, 2014)	The BCTF continues to repeat this statement both in the media and at the bargaining table. BCPSEA rejects this allegation outright and has clearly stated to the BCTF that it should either take that complaint to the Labour Relations Board or cease and desist in making this baseless allegation.
"And this government is still pushing zeros, a non-retroactive increase in year one, and another zero in year two and we've just come off two legislated zeros." (Jim Iker, "B.C. teachers to be offered 6-year term on new contract," CBC News, May 15, 2014)	As clearly illustrated in the BCPSEA wage proposal (see page 2), effective the date of ratification of a new collective agreement, we are offering 1.0% plus a further 0.75% contingent on savings derived through modifications to the collective agreement. We are also offering a further 5.5% over the proposed term of the collective agreement, for a total increase of 7.25% over six years (plus a \$1,200 signing bonus if an agreement is concluded by June 30, 2014).
"The government has not tabled or proposed a single improvement to class size, class composition or staffing levels for specialist teachers and that's so important for us," he said. (Jim Iker, "B.C. teachers to be offered 6-year term on new contract," CBC News, May 15, 2014)	BCPSEA has tabled a fair and respectful opening proposal that addresses teacher concerns about having a voice in determining their working conditions, including workload issues. Please refer to For the Record No. 2014-02 , dated March 6, 2014, for a review of the parties' respective proposals on class size and teacher workload.

BCTF	BCPSEA
Wages	
<p>The BCTF proposed a change to the term of the agreement from three years to four years (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2017). The union also increased its salary proposal to fit a four-year term. The end salary lift now being sought by the BCTF has risen to 15.9% over four years, from the previous 13.3% over three years.</p> <p>The BCTF wage proposal includes general wage adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ July 1, 2013: 3% increase ▪ July 1, 2014: 2.5% increase (REVISED APRIL 30, 2014) ▪ July 1, 2015: 2.75% increase (REVISED APRIL 30, 2014) ▪ July 1, 2016: 2.5% increase (NEW APRIL 30) <p>And cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ January 1 2014 – 0.50% of COLA (REVISED APRIL 30, 2014) ▪ January 1, 2015 – 0.75% of COLA (REVISED APRIL 30, 2014) ▪ January 1, 2016 – 0.75% of COLA (REVISED APRIL 30, 2014) ▪ January 1, 2017 – 0.75% of COLA (NEW APRIL 30) <p>The union said its COLA proposal means that each increase would be a percentage equal to the percentage increase in cost of living in the previous year. The BCTF said that matters such as the choice of index and the exact time frame for measurement would be subject to negotiation. This, plus the unpredictability of future inflation, makes it impossible to quantify.</p> <p>A conservative estimate of future inflation indicates the proposed COLA would produce well over 3%. Together with the defined wage proposal (which compounds to 9.3%), this would result in an increase of approximately 13.5% over three years.</p> <p>The BCTF is also seeking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Shortening” of the teacher salary grid from 10 steps to 8 steps by removing the first two steps on the grid ▪ Restoration of three salary grid categories removed during the salary harmonization process in 2006 ▪ Increases to all allowances by a set percentage. 	<p>REVISED MAY 16, 2014</p> <p>The revised wage proposal tabled by BCPSEA on May 16, 2014 includes a six-year term expiring June 30, 2019 (reduced from 10 years) as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If a negotiated agreement is concluded by June 30, 2014, a signing bonus of \$1,200 per FTE teacher, prorated for teachers who work less than full time or who started during the school year. TTOCs are also eligible for the signing bonus, which will be calculated on the proportion of time actually worked relative to a full time, full year employee. ▪ Date of ratification – 1.75% with 0.75% of this contingent on savings derived through modifications to the collective agreement. ▪ Consistent with the settlement pattern established through agreements concluded with other major public sector unions in the province, a 5.5% increase over five years (0% - 1% - 1.5% - 1.5% - 1.5%) totalling 7.25% over six years.

BCTF	BCPSEA
<p>Further, the BCTF is seeking increases to wages for teachers teaching on call (TTOCs, also known as substitute teachers), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addition of vacation pay ▪ Placement on the teacher salary grid from day two of the assignment (rather than the current daily rate) (REVISED APRIL 30) ▪ Minimum call-out of 0.5 day <p>Call-out of greater than 0.6 would equal a full day.</p>	<p>REVISED APRIL 9, 2014</p> <p>A counter-proposal package, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TTOCs to be paid on scale from day one to a maximum of the rate at Category 5, Step 5 ▪ Standardized experience credit of 180 full-time equivalent days equalling one year of experience, as well as increment awarded in the month following the month in which it is earned ▪ Agreement of the union to reimburse all benefit costs where a TTOC replaces an employee on union leave.
TTOC Employment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seniority call-out ▪ Experience credit of 170 days or part-days equalling one year's experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See package above.
Benefits	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coverage for teachers on the Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP — long-term disability) to be the same as teachers who are actively at work ▪ Upon the teacher's death, continuation of benefits for dependents for a period of 12 months ▪ Mandatory participation in the benefits plan. <p>Improvements to the extended health benefits plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open formulary drug plan ▪ Inclusion of fertility drugs ▪ Medical services and supplies ▪ Hearing aids phased in from \$1,500 – 2,500 ▪ Orthotics phased in from \$300 - \$400 ▪ Vision phased in from \$300 - \$400 ▪ Paramedicals phased in from \$600 - \$700 ▪ Massage Therapy - \$3,000 per year maximum with a doctor's prescription. <p>The BCTF is seeking the following improvements to the dental plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A phased transition <u>from</u> the current plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 100% Plan A ○ 60% Plan B ○ 60% Plan C - \$4000 limit <u>to:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 100% Plan A ○ 75% Plan B ○ 60% Plan C (\$5,000 limit) (REVISED APRIL 30) <p>The BCTF is also proposing that the employer have no ability to change benefits carriers without the prior agreement of the union.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negotiable, subject to the compensation mandate. ▪ A full re-opening of wage, benefit, and all policy matters at the six-year point of the agreement, including the opportunity for binding arbitration if agreement is not reached.

Pregnancy/Parental Supplemental Employment Benefits (SEB)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include all definitions of parents including birth fathers and adoptive parents ▪ Top-up of 100% for pregnancy leave ▪ Top-up phased in for parental leave from 60% to 70% for full period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update provisions in districts to reflect the current provisions of the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> and standardize the provision ▪ SEB to remain unchanged.
Professional Development Funding	
<p>REVISED APRIL 30</p> <p>The BCTF is proposing that each teacher employee would receive the following funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October 1, 2014 - \$300 ▪ October 1, 2015 - \$400 ▪ October 1, 2016 - \$450 <p>AND, each teacher employee receiving the Recruitment and Retention allowance would also receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October 1, 2014 - \$800 ▪ October 1, 2015 - \$900 ▪ October 1, 2015 - \$950 	<p>Negotiable, subject to the compensation mandate.</p>
Preparation Time	
<p>The BCTF is proposing increases to preparation time as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elementary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Effective July 1, 2014 - 120 minutes ○ Effective July 1, 2015 - 160 minutes ○ Effective July 1, 2016 - 200 minutes ▪ Secondary (current provision is 12.5% + 2 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilization at full discretion of the teacher ○ A classroom move would result in awarding of two additional days of preparation time ○ All preparation time “lost” (e.g., due to statutory holidays, non-instructional days, and meetings) to be “made up” ▪ The BCTF is also proposing that teachers teaching on call (TTOCs — substitute teachers) would receive the same preparation time as a regular teacher, or pay in lieu. 	<p>Negotiable, subject to the compensation mandate and sound educational practice.</p>

Sick Leave	
BCTF is proposing no change.	<p>BCPSEA proposes standardizing the sick leave provision for teachers in all 60 public school districts, which would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capping the maximum accumulation of unused sick leave at 120 days (for teachers who have more than 120 days in their sick leave banks, those banks would be grandparented) ▪ As soon as eligible, the teacher must go onto long-term disability (LTD) ▪ On acceptance of this sick leave proposal, teachers would receive a wage increase of 0.5%.

Further resources are available on the BCPSEA [website](#). In addition, current fact sheets on class size, composition, student achievement and funding are available on the Ministry of Education's [Newsroom page](#).

Further bargaining sessions scheduled for May include: May 22, 23, 26, 27, 28.

BCPSEA will continue to provide updates and clarify information as events progress.

Please contact Mike Roberts at 604 730 4519 or miker@bcpsea.bc.ca if you have any questions.