

BCPSEA Responses to BCTF Comments

BCTF Comments: CJFW Radio October 11, 2005	
BCTF Statements	BCPSEA Response
<p>"This is the government that has created this crisis and has forced teachers of this province to take part in civil disobedience against an unjust law."</p>	<p>The action the BCTF is engaged in is not "civil disobedience." This is an illegal strike contrary to a ruling of the Labour Relations Board and an order of the BC Supreme Court of BC.</p> <p>What is an "unjust law"? On October 9, Madam Justice Brown of the BC Supreme Court said, "If one may breach a court order, so may another, leaving none of us with rights and privileges. No citizen of group of citizens may choose which orders they will obey."</p>

BCTF Comments – CBC Radio One, BC Almanac October 12, 2005	
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<p>"We're asking for":</p>	
<p>"restoration of our students' learning conditions back to where they were in 2002."</p>	<p>Class size maximums and averages were enshrined in the <i>School Act</i> in 2002.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten classes cannot exceed 22 students • Grade 1, 2, 3 classes cannot exceed 24 students • The average in Grades 4 – 7 and Grades 8-12 cannot exceed 30 students. <p>The use of averages means boards can afford to offer a greater selection of subjects. Chemistry 12 or Physics 12 classes can be offered even with an enrollment of 15 students by offsetting with PE, Band and Drama classes of more than 30 students.</p> <p>Class sizes on average have increased by only 0.6 students since 2001.</p> <p>Average elementary class sizes declined last year.</p>

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	Support for students with special needs is determined through Individual Education Plans. If a teacher is not satisfied with the support being received, there are a number of informal and formal appeal procedures to address that concern.
	Government has made significant investments in education. Funding is higher than in 2001 with 30,000 fewer students. Elected school boards and their senior staff consult with teacher and support staff unions, parents and other stakeholders in setting budgets that reflect the best use of tax dollars.
	<p>Many people have a stake in public education. The Minister of Education has established a Learning Roundtable to talk about learning conditions like class size, class composition and special needs supports.</p> <p>The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, the BC School Trustees Association, the BC School Superintendents' Association and the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association have agreed to participate. The BCTF have not yet indicated if they will participate.</p> <p>The first meeting will be held October 24.</p>
"a fair and reasonable salary increase"	<p>BC teachers are the third highest paid in Canada.</p> <p>In the last contract, teachers received a 7.5% increase.</p> <p>In this round of bargaining, 131 other public sector unions accepted 0, 0, 0. Doctors, nurses and government workers accepted a freeze on salaries for three years.</p> <p>Under the <i>Teachers' Collective Agreement Act</i> (Bill 12), teachers will receive 0 for only two years.</p> <p>Teachers, along with all other public sector employees, will be eligible for salary increases under a new compensation mandate in 2006.</p>
"bargaining rights"	<p>All parties agree that the current teacher collective bargaining structure needs to be fixed.</p> <p>Vince Ready, a respected mediator, has been appointed as an Industrial Inquiry Commissioner to recommend a new collective bargaining structure for teachers and employers. Ready is to report back to government by December 31.</p>