

teacher bargaining 2006 *For the Record*

BRITISH COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYERS'
ASSOCIATION

04

May 29, 2006

By E-mail: 2 Pages

BCPSEA Responses to BCTF and Local Teachers' Association Statements

BCTF questions job openings for teachers in B.C. CKNW 10:01 am – May 26-06

BCTF Statement	BCPSEA Response
While school districts like Kamloops/Thompson reportedly have no teacher positions that are difficult to fill, BCTF first Vice-President Irene Lanzinger says earlier this year the employer was advising districts how to deal with shortages.	In October 2005, arising from the Vince Ready Recommendations, the K-12 public education system was provided with an additional \$20 million dollars to hire more teachers — 1,200 more teachers were hired part way through the school year. Given the time of year that the funds were made available, many districts hired these teachers from their teachers on call (TOC) list rather than conducting a broad province-wide recruitment. This had the effect of reducing the number of available TOCs in a given district. BC universities generally graduate more than 1,900 teachers a year. This year there are more than 2,300 new graduates. These graduates will find opportunities as TOCs, to fill this temporary shortage.
Meanwhile, the BC Teachers' Federation is accusing the Employers' Association of releasing selective information on teacher recruitment.	BCPSEA conducts a cyclical market analysis — Labour Market Planning: K-12 Public Education Sector — that is reviewed and updated bi-annually. Our analysis indicates the declines in student enrolment that are projected to continue will keep pace with the projected retirements of teachers. So, even during the projected peak retirement years for teachers, the supply of teachers will generally still be sufficient to meet the demand. Our research indicates there is no general teacher shortage; however, there have been historical shortages in remote school districts and in certain subject specialties. BCPSEA has proposed to address these very specific situations through our proposal to provide recruitment and retention allowances to target these areas. BCPSEA utilizes data provided by school districts, the Ministry of Education, and the BC College of Teachers. It is not "selective." We have asked the BCTF to provide data to support their assertion that there is a teacher shortage that extends beyond the temporary TOC shortage and the historical shortages we have discussed above. To date, they have presented no data to support their comments.
Lanzinger reports no progress at the bargaining table and says there won't be until there's a better economic offer presented.	The parties have signed off on two articles: Pay Periods and Middle Schools. The offer presented by BCPSEA to the BCTF on May 15 was made in the context of the significant cost of the proposals the BCTF has on the table. In addition to a double-digit salary proposal, the BCTF proposals include double-digit increases to other areas of the collective agreement, including benefits, professional development, and preparation time. The BCTF proposals, according to our costing, would cost BC taxpayers \$3 billion over 3 years. Public school employers are not in a position to

	<p>conclude an agreement with cost increases of this magnitude. We have asked the BCTF to prioritize their cost items. We have also asked the BCTF to provide us with their costing of their proposals. We have received no information from them to date.</p> <p>The parties commenced bargaining on April 11. If the parties are going to conclude a collective agreement, they need to be at the bargaining table. BCPSEA has been available to bargain 24/7. While there will always be competing priorities during any bargaining phase, of the 49 available calendar days to date, we have accommodated the BCTF request to bargain on only 16 of those days.</p> <p>The parties will be at the table two days this week (May 30 and 31). We offered the BCTF a significant number of bargaining dates in May and June, including weekends, which were not accepted. Further, subsequent to presentation of the employer's offer on May 15, which was not a final offer but rather, was designed to promote serious discussions in order to achieve a collective agreement by June 30, the BCTF cancelled the scheduled bargaining dates for the remainder of that week.</p> <p>The BCTF has indicated that at its Representative Assembly scheduled for June 1, 2, and 3, they will seek a mandate to take a strike vote. The strike vote will be taken on June 7 and 8. The BCTF has not indicated whether it intends to engage in bargaining that week.</p> <p>Early on May 22, after round the clock bargaining sessions that began on May 19, BCPSEA concluded settlements with 13 support staff unions in 11 school districts. The settlements include a Framework Agreement that provides guidance to other boards and unions on the financial aspects of 2006-2010 collective agreements. This is an example of how agreements can be achieved where there is will and commitment on both sides.</p>
--	--