

Essential Services

UPDATE



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Labour Relations Board Issues Order on School-based Team Meetings

BCPSEA filed an application last week with the Labour Relations Board (LRB) challenging the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) position that School-based Team (SBT) Meetings should occur during the teachers' strike only on the basis that administrators' attendance at such meetings is limited to those where a student to whom they provide direct service was under discussion. After two days of hearing and discussions, the LRB has issued the attached Order, which recognizes the value of SBTs and the important role administrators play in those meetings, in the context of legal strike activity where teachers can refuse to participate in many meetings.

The Order provides that the administrator may, at their discretion, attend any portion of a SBT meeting at which one or more of the following matters will be discussed: a) custody; b) confidential and/or sensitive matters such as those relating to Family and Children's Services issues; c) police; and d) legitimate safety issues.

The administrator will inform the SBT or SBT chair regarding what portions of the SBT meeting, if any, he/she will attend with respect to the above referenced matters. If the administrator decides to not attend the meeting, he/she will provide any information in his/her possession that may assist the SBT discussion, to the SBT or SBT Chair in advance of the SBT meeting.

Before the meeting, the Order provides that the SBT or SBT Chair will provide notice of the meeting in the usual manner regarding the time and place of the SBT meeting, along with a list of names of students to be discussed at the meeting. An agenda will be provided if one is typically developed for the meeting. Additionally, the scheduling of SBT meetings will be in the usual manner; e.g., there is no requirement to hold such meetings inside instructional time if that is not the usual manner. If an administrator is unable to attend the meeting, the administrator can request the SBT meeting be rescheduled to accommodate his/her schedule; e.g., if meetings are usually held at 8:30 am and the administrator is unable to attend because of supervision duties, the meeting may be rescheduled.

Following the SBT meeting, any recommendations of the SBT and any minutes kept by the SBT will be provided to the administrator and he/she may request from the SBT any information the administrator believes necessary to ensure a proper follow up by the administrator.

The LRB has clearly indicated that it expects both parties to govern their conduct in a manner which will allow the SBTs to continue to meet the needs of students, even through the SBTs may be operating in a different manner than before the strike in some respects. BCPSEA is satisfied that the Order will effectively allow the SBTs to provide services for vulnerable students during the strike. While the methods of operating may be a change from normal practice in certain schools, the core functions of the SBTs should be maintained through this Order.

If you have any questions regarding essential services, please contact:

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