

Board of Directors

AGM and Winter Update



January 30, 2024 | By email: 9 pages

Annual General Meeting recap

Thank you to all who attended BCPSEA's AGM on January 25, 2024. We were honoured to have opening remarks from Hon. Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care, and greetings from Tracy Loffler, Vice President, BC School Trustees Association.

Budget

The 2024-2025 BCPSEA budget was approved.

Auditors

KPMG was appointed as auditors for fiscal years 2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027.

Elections

Congratulations to Shirley Wilson and Eve Flynn who were re-elected to the BCPSEA Board of Directors by acclamation as follows:

- Fraser Valley Region: Shirley Wilson, Abbotsford School District, BCPSEA Board Vice-Chair
- Vancouver Island-Coastal Region: Eve Flynn, Qualicum School District

Resolutions

At the meeting, the following two bylaw amendments were passed:

1. **Special Resolution S-1: Conflict of Interest** *Submitted by BCPSEA*

BE IT RESOLVED that Part 1 Interpretation and Part 2: 2.4 of the BCPSEA Bylaws be amended to include common law conflict of interest, as such:

Part 1, Interpretation, add:

“conflict of interest” means any of the following circumstances, as determined by the Board:

- a. where a trustee has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest, within the meaning of the *School Act*, in respect of teacher or support staff collective bargaining or in respect of the administration of a teacher or support staff collective agreement
- b. where a conflict of interest exists at common law for a trustee in respect of teacher or support staff collective bargaining or in respect of the administration of a teacher or support staff collective agreement

Adjust PART 2 Members:

- 2.4 No person ~~with a direct or indirect pecuniary interest, within the meaning of the School Act, in teacher or support staff collective bargaining, in a conflict of interest~~ is eligible:
- to be elected to the Board of Directors of the Association
 - to represent a member at any general meeting of the Association
 - to represent a member at any other function of the Association.

Rationale

BCPSEA's Bylaws define Conflict of Interest simply as that which is in the *School Act*. However, Common Law legally applies as well, but is not mentioned in the Bylaws. To add clarity and to ensure legal compliance, it is recommended that the bylaws be amended to include Common Law conflict of interest provisions.

2. Special Resolution S-2: Voting Process Submitted by BCPSEA

BE IT RESOLVED that the following BCPSEA Bylaws be amended to deal effectively with the voting process and spoiled ballots during the election of new Trustee Board members to the BCPSEA Board.

Bylaw, Part 1, Interpretation, add to 1.1 (Page 3)

"valid vote" means a vote that is not spoiled as per [Elections Canada guidelines](#) for rejecting ballots.

Bylaw replace/amend to (Page 9):

- 7.14 Elections for Trustee Directors shall be conducted as follows:
- If there is more than one candidate on the ballot for a regional grouping, there shall be a contested election;
 - If there are more than four candidates on the first ballot, the four candidates with the greatest number of valid votes on the first ballot shall advance to a second ballot;
 - If there are three or four candidates on the first ballot, the candidate with the least number of valid votes shall be dropped from the list of candidates for the succeeding ballot;
 - On the second ballot and any subsequent ballots, the candidate with the least number of valid votes shall be dropped from the list of candidates for the succeeding ballot. This process shall continue until a candidate receives 50 percent plus one of all valid votes cast in the ballot.
- 7.15 The Chair shall announce the results after each ballot round by stating the number of valid votes cast for each eligible candidate.

Rationale

At the January 2023 Annual General Meeting, there was an issue and confusion regarding spoiled ballots and the voting process under BCPSEA's bylaws. To clarify this issue and the voting process, the Governance Committee reviewed the bylaws and determined that amendments were needed to BCPSEA's bylaws.

Board Chair and CEO reports

Please see the appended Chair and CEO reports from AGM 2024.

Bargaining

Teacher bargaining

Teacher bargaining starts this year. Local teacher bargaining will run from November 4, 2024, to February 28, 2025. Local teacher bargaining plans are due to BCPSEA in July 2024. Consultation with Boards of Education for provincial teacher bargaining will begin soon. The Provincial table opens in March 2025.

BCPSEA will be offering six Bargaining Academy training sessions:

Vancouver	March 4-6, 2024
Victoria	March 25-27, 2024
Prince George	May 8-10, 2024
Richmond	May 29-31, 2024
Vancouver	October 2-4, 2024
Kelowna	October 16 - 18, 2024

Support staff bargaining

Support staff bargaining will begin in 2025. An additional BCPSEA bargaining staff position (Senior Manager, Labour Relations) has been added to better support school districts with their local support staff bargaining.

Hiring incentives

BCPSEA and the Ministry of Education and Child Care have worked together to create a new-hire enrolling teacher hiring incentives program for the sector, with \$1.5M available over three years (\$500,000 in each fiscal year – 2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026). Under Round 1 of incentives provided in August 2023 (fiscal year 2023-2024), 19 school districts were approved for a total of 66 incentives. Under Round 2 (fiscal year 2024-2025), on December 21, 2023, 16 school districts received approval for a total of 58 incentives. These second-round incentives are available for new-hire enrolling teacher employees that commence employment April 1, 2024, or later.

Support staff job evaluation

The purpose of the Joint Job Evaluation Program for support staff is to implement and maintain a standardized method of measuring and classifying support staff jobs. The substantial work required prior to creating and implementing a provincial plan is nearly complete. We are soon moving into the final phase of the project – implementation.

French Teacher Recruitment Project:

The second round of funding to school districts for their French teacher recruitment efforts is underway. [The French recruitment micro-website is ready.](#)

CLASS

In the last two years, BCPSEA has implemented a number of efficiency strategies including making greater use of associate-level legal counsel with external law firms, using in-house legal counsel, and instituting proactive and ongoing file reviews. In addition, starting next year, BCPSEA will be introducing a usage-based component to the fee model. This fee model update will allow school districts to influence their yearly CLASS program fees and will encourage districts to participate in controlling legal costs at the local level.

AGM 2024 – Chair Report

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST YEAR

Passing of Russell Searle:

- In November, former BCPSEA Vice Chair and long-term school trustee, Russell Searle passed away. He was passionate about ensuring that the children in his community were able to get the best possible education. Our thoughts go out to his family and friends. We appreciate his dedication to BC public education and his work with BCPSEA.
- BCPSEA has made a donation in memory of Russell to The Coleman/Rogers Memorial Bursary Fund.

Bargaining:

- Committees that arose from the last round of both teacher and support staff bargaining were active throughout the past year. Seven teacher committees and five support staff committees worked on a variety of items, including benefits plan improvements and employment equity.
- Preparation for the next round of bargaining also took place all year. Local teacher bargaining starts this year in November. Consultation and training are planned for the next eight months.

CLASS:

- In the last two years, BCPSEA has implemented a number of strategies to help reduce legal expenses associated with rising arbitration costs. These measures include making greater use of associate-level legal counsel with external law firms, using in-house legal counsel, and instituting proactive and ongoing file reviews.
- In addition, starting next year, BCPSEA will be introducing a usage-based component to the fee model. This fee model update will allow school districts to influence their yearly CLASS program fees and will encourage districts to participate in controlling legal costs at the local level.

Employment Data and Analysis System (EDAS):

- With support from the Ministry of Education and Child Care, BCPSEA is developing a plan to update the EDAS system, which will provide for easier use and better reporting.

Exempt staff:

- The Exempt Compensation Working Group was formed this past year. This committee is addressing important issues, including resource development, pay equity, and the annual salary review process.

Make a Future:

French recruitment:

- Make a Future's French Teacher Recruitment Project team won a national public relations and marketing award from the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education for the new French teacher recruitment video.

- A French teacher recruitment funding program was created and launched for school districts to access funding for their recruitment efforts.
- The French teacher recruitment website will launch at the end of this month.

Northern recruitment:

- The Northern Recruitment and Retention Inquiry Pilot Project was initiated this past year. A Working Group was established comprised of superintendents from school districts in Northern BC, BCPSEA, and the Ministry of Education and Child Care. This group determined that the Project should focus on four specific regions with the greatest need for recruitment and retention support: SD82 Coast Mountains (Hazelton region), SD87 Stikine, SD91 Nechako Lakes (Fort St. James region), and SD92 Nisga'a.
- Jessa Chupik was hired as a temporary Northern Recruitment Specialist from February to November 2023. Jessa spent individual time with each of the four school districts, reviewed and created recommendations regarding recruitment and retention, and provided recruitment support.
- BCPSEA and BCTF negotiated a Letter of Agreement for the use of hiring incentives for SD87 and SD91. BCPSEA also authorized the use of pre-employment hiring incentives for SD82 and SD92.
- Make a Future has launched a digital advertising campaign on Google Ads and Meta to generate leads for the northern pilot project districts, which will continue until the end of February 2024.

ONCORE:

- This past year, two online, self-directed learning courses were created and launched.
- Additionally, all course content is being reviewed and updated – including embedding Reconciliation and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion considerations into all courses.

Safety and Wellness:

- BCPSEA is supporting school districts through many WorkSafeBC changes.
- An FAQ on the refusal of unsafe work has been created with sector partners and will be shared soon.
- The Safety Taskforce committee with support staff unions has formed.

Support Staff Job Evaluation:

- The purpose of the Joint Job Evaluation Program for support staff is to implement and maintain a standardized method of measuring and classifying support staff jobs in BC public school districts. It is a joint project with support staff unions.
- The substantial work required prior to creating and implementing a provincial plan is nearly complete. This has been years of hard work at both the local and provincial level. This means we are soon moving into the final phase of the project – implementation.

Symposium:

- This year was the largest attendance for a BCPSEA Symposium that we have ever had with roughly 300 people.
- Feedback from attendees was very positive, with an appreciation for practical learning sessions.

Thank you:

- I would like to conclude by sharing my appreciation for our Board and for BCPSEA staff.
- Our Board of Directors works incredibly well together. We are a mixed Board of elected and appointed Directors. We have seven elected Trustees and four appointed government staff members. But we are not a Board of seven and four. We are a Board of 11 and we operate as one. We have respectful dialogue. We tackle difficult issues together. We accomplish a great deal. Over the past year and a bit, we have welcomed Cloë Nicholls, Angie Delainey, Donna Sargent and Ken Dawson to our Board. It is a pleasure to be working with you. It is an honour to serve as Chair of the BCPSEA Board of Directors. Thank you to all of my colleagues on the Board.
- I also want to share how much the Board values BCPSEA staff. We are incredibly pleased with staff's work. They are a well organized and competent group of individuals providing excellent service to the K-12 sector. The ongoing engagement staff has with the sector is purposeful, important and effective. The progress that has been made towards BCPSEA's Strategic Plan goals is outstanding. Thank you to the team at BCPSEA for diligently giving your best towards ensuring an inclusive and thriving BC public education sector.

AGM 2024 – CEO Report

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SCHOOL YEAR THUS FAR

Partner engagement:

- We have done 31 information bulletins sent to the sector on numerous labour relations and human resources issues.
- We have issued an annual report and reported on our satisfaction survey results.
- We have prepared and provided a document called “BCPSEA 101” that describes what BCPSEA does.
- We met with the Metro Region trustees and are attending the upcoming VISTA regional meeting in March.
- BCPSEA has been actively engaging this school year with our sector partners, including the BCSTA, BCASBO, BCSSA, and BCPVPA, plus PSEC-Secretariat, and the Ministry of Education and Child Care.
- Since September:
 - We have had five meetings with BCSTA, BCASBO, BCSSA, and BCPVPA.
 - We attended all partner associations’ fall conferences (they also attended our Symposium).
 - We have done four presentations at sector events.
 - We have regular meetings and presentations scheduled through the rest of the school year.
- BCPSEA has bi-weekly meetings with Ministry of Education and Child Care staff, and weekly meetings with PSEC-Secretariat staff.
- I meet bi-weekly with the Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Child Care.
- I have had one-on-one Zoom meetings with 19 of 60 Superintendents, the rest are being scheduled throughout the remainder of the school year.
- Our District Liaison staff will be visiting school districts across the province throughout the spring.

Pre-employment hiring incentives:

- BCPSEA and the Ministry of Education and Child Care have worked together to create a new-hire enrolling teacher hiring incentives program for the sector, with the Ministry receiving \$1.5M from the Treasury Board with \$500,00 available over the current and the next two fiscal years.
- **Round 1** incentives (\$10k/\$5k) were provided in August 2023 (for fiscal year 2023-2024), 19 school districts were approved for a total of 66 incentives.
- **Round 2** incentives (for fiscal year 2024-2025) were announced on December 21, 2023, and 16 school districts received approval for a total of 58 incentives. Round 2 incentives are available for new-hire enrolling teacher employees that commence employment April 1, 2024, or later.
- In both rounds, applications far exceeded the amount of available funding. Difficult choices had to be made to ensure equitable allocation of incentives. Requests were prioritized based on a number of factors, including:
 - Risk of functional school closure
 - Significant recruitment challenges due to the nature of the location (e.g., remote schools)
 - Vacancy rate for enrolling teachers
 - Potential impact of unfilled vacancies on students facing systemic barriers

- Significant risk of having a large number of uncertified teachers in enrolling positions
- Number of individuals hired under a letter of permission, and the ratio of this in relation to overall teacher staffing

BCTF Provincial Grievance

- In July 2023, BCPSEA met with the BCTF to inform them of the urgent challenges to fill vacancies in remote and rural districts. BCPSEA proposed discussions regarding amending the recently negotiated Northern Pilot LOA and a potential broader sector-wide agreement. BCTF was not able to enter into discussions over the summer to reach agreement within BCPSEA's proposed timeline (for September 2023).
- On August 23, 2023, BCTF filed a provincial a grievance regarding the incentives program. The Step 3 meeting was held on October 6, 2023. The Arbitration date has not been set, but the parties have begun the process and are trying to expedite the hearing for Spring 2024.
- In addition, on a without prejudice and precedent basis, BCPSEA has met with BCTF to discuss how we can work together to address the sector's recruitment challenges; these are ongoing discussions.

Strategic Plan progress:

- To achieve our Strategic Plan 2023-2025, BCPSEA staff create an annual Operational Plan with measureable actions that directly support the plan's strategic goals and objectives. The first year of the operational plan was highly successful with BCPSEA achieving nearly all of its measureable objectives.
- The outcomes of year one were reported to the sector in our Annual Report that was issued in September 2023.
- The Operational Plan for the 2023-2024 school year has been successful to date (mid-year) with all Operational Plan actions on track for completion.

Thank you:

- First, I would like to thank our BCPSEA Trustee Representatives for all of the work you do in support of BCPSEA. We rely on you to share and receive information from your boards, and to provide us feedback on important topics such as bargaining. We greatly appreciate all of your hard work towards our shared goal of fostering student success.
- I also want to thank school district staff – senior leadership and HR professionals. It is through collaboration with you that BCPSEA is able to support the success of the public education system through our labour relations and human resources work.
- Next, I want to thank our Board of Directors. You represent Boards of Education, the Ministry of Education and Child Care, and the Ministry of Finance through the PSEC Secretariate. Thank you for your leadership and guidance, and for the support you provide to enable us to effectively do our jobs.
- Finally, I want to thank BCPSEA staff. We have a phenomenal team at BCPSEA. We are small with roughly 35 people, but we are efficient and effective in our work because of the dedication, passion and skill of our team. We care about public education and helping school districts provide this critical service to the people of BC. Thank you for your continual efforts.