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## Teachers to walk out on Friday;; [Early Edition]

Jeff Rud and Rob Shaw. **Times - Colonist**. Victoria, B.C.: Oct 6, 2005. pg. A.1.FRO

### Abstract (Summary)

Teachers were also expected to vote in favour of their union continuing to push government to change its mind about this week's legislation. A meeting is scheduled for today at the legislature, between Labour Minister Mike de Jong, BCTF president Jinny Sims and B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair.

Locally, a teacher walkout would affect around 36,500 students at almost 100 schools in the Greater Victoria, Sooke and Saanich districts. Principals would still be in the schools, but unionized support staff -- such as secretaries, special needs assistants, lunch monitors and custodians -- would not cross a teacher picket line, said Greater Victoria district superintendent John Gaipman.

Many of Greater Victoria's 1,041 public school teachers filled a UVic auditorium lobby Wednesday night to cast their ballots. The ballot card simply asked teachers to mark yes or no to their support for 15 BCTF resolutions.

### Full Text (569 words)

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Open-ended action will keep BCTF members out of classrooms until they vote to return

B.C.'s 42,000 public school teachers are expected to stage a full-scale walkout beginning Friday in response to the provincial government imposing a contract on them through legislation.

Votes were still being tallied at press time Wednesday but teachers were expected to endorse recommendations from the B.C. Teachers' Federation executive council to walk out starting Friday.

Unlike the one-day protest teachers staged in January 2002 -- the last time the province legislated a contract -- this time the strike action is open-ended. Under recommendations expected to pass Wednesday night, teachers will stay out until they complete a second vote to return. That opens the door for the possibility of more than one day without instruction in B.C.'s schools.

A vote to return to classes could be completed in a single day, according to a union source. Such a vote would be called on the recommendation of the BCTF executive council.

Teachers were also expected to vote in favour of their union continuing to push government to change its mind about this week's legislation. A meeting is scheduled for today at the legislature, between Labour Minister Mike de Jong, BCTF president Jinny Sims and B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair.

Rallies and lobbying by teachers province-wide are planned during the walkout.

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The district will send notes home to parents today explaining what the teacher job action will look like and when it will happen, he said. "We will be asking parents to keep their kids at home," said Gaipman, echoing the plans of other B.C. districts.

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Some teachers were "wrestling with the legality issue" of any job action that could break the law, said Sharon Lassey, a Grade 2 teacher from Eagle View Elementary. "A lot of people are upset and frustrated," she said. "I guess what's really frustrating is that we've been forced into this situation."

Bert Slater, a special education teacher at Victoria's Jack Ledger House school, said he was certain he'd vote for job action. "I'm absolutely clear in my mind and many members are clear as well," he said. "If we accept nothing, nothing, nothing [wage increases], what's going to happen? The government will say, 'Take minus-five per cent.' When do we draw the line? We draw it now."

Saanich Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils president Ron Broda said he expected a Friday walkout "and that will be it."

"Bottom line, parents will do what they need to do. It may come down to parents may need to miss a day of work."

De Jong said today's meeting with the BCTF is not going to change the government's plan to pass the contract bill today. "I operate on the basis that everyone will abide by the law," he said.

### [Illustration]

Colour Photo: John Gaipman: 'keep kids home';

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