

September 15, 2006

Teachers Ratify Agreement

The ratification of the teachers' collective agreement by BCTF members was the big news this week. 93.4% of teachers voted for the agreement, which was recommended for approval by the BCTF executive committee and bargaining team. The final hurdle to a five-year period of labour peace has been crossed. I was particularly impressed by an observation made by Jinny Sims, President, in a press release: "...Sims says the settlement offers increased stability in public education and allows teachers to focus on the joy of teaching and learning." I agree, and I know that our many dedicated teachers are most interested in the learning of their students. The system will benefit from this historic agreement.

Accountability Framework Under Discussion

In the Ministry's ongoing efforts to increase the effectiveness of each element of B.C.'s Accountability Framework, we are currently in discussions with key partner groups to seek their views about how well our accountability tools are supporting improved student achievement. Key questions include:

- Are the right structures and processes in place?
- Does the timing and process used to develop and monitor district Accountability Contracts result in

better decision-making and ultimately improved student achievement?

- Do District Reviews lead to improved achievement and are the 10 points of inquiry the right points, or do we need to focus on a few questions?

Meetings are being scheduled through September with representatives of BCSTA, BCSSA, BCPVPA and other groups. The input provided will inform future directions and refinements to the Framework.

In all school districts, work is well underway to complete this year's school plans and to finalize district Accountability Contracts for submission to the Minister on October 31st. You may find it helpful to review Ministry guidelines that support the development of Accountability Contracts at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/schools/sdinfo/acc_contracts/ Information to support school planning can be found at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/spc/

Errata

Last week I wrote about Bill 33 and highlighted that much of the foundation for the *School Act* amendments arose from the work of the Learning Roundtable. The article included the members of the Roundtable, and I erred in omitting the British Columbia School Trustees Association in the membership list. Penny Tees, President, and Lee Southern, Executive Director, have attended each of the meetings of the Roundtable and ably represented the interests of BC students and the trustee community.

"Shine a light" on our most promising practices

I would like to feature practices in B.C. that are demonstrating that they are making a difference to student learning. I know that in the schools and classrooms in our province there are many success stories that we can all learn from. If you know of a teacher or a department or a school that is meeting with particular success, please inform me by replying to this email. We would like to make others aware of these practices through [Report on Education](#).