BCCPAC Representation Report

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Name of Event: BCCT – Teacher Currency Committee
Date of Event: June 1, 2011.
Location of Event: Vancouver

Meeting Purpose: Professional Currency – Practice/Continuing Education

Issues Discussed: Changes to the by-law regarding teacher certification after inactivity in the profession.

Current situation: If a member pays their BCCT fees they may re-enter the teaching profession without any mandatory skills upgrade for up to 20 years.

Proposed: The new by-law would reduce this time to 10 years, however BCCT would not recognize any absence when members' fees have been paid via payroll deduction by a School District. Notice would go out first after a 5 year absence and then 9 years. Teachers would have to prove significant teaching experience within the ten years – 75 days/ year or 100 days every 2 years for part-time teachers. Teachers working less may appeal.

Teachers deemed to have lost Currency would be required to take upgrade courses in at least 5 out of 6 areas: Assessment, Technology Education, Aboriginal Education, Integrating Special Needs Students, Student Centered Learning and Classroom Management. In addition a mandatory 10 week Practicum will introduce new curriculum and determine competency.

Questions and Comments:
How will this training take place? It doesn't fit into existing teacher training.
Some initial discussion has taken place with the SFU Education Faculty. BCCT staff is waiting for the by-law to pass before setting up programs.
BCCT Council member: Are the 6 areas of focus enough to upgrade currency? We need to define what we consider Currency.
Sandra Davie, BCCT Council: Is the idea to pass the policy of Currency, then organise the courses to be offered? These courses will put a strain on rural teachers, especially those with children. It may also reduce the teachers in these areas. Will Distance Ed. and summer learning opportunities be offered?

We will be considering different program delivery models when we work with universities on the programs.
Kelly Shields, BCTF: Many P/T teachers are parents of young children, this requirement creates a barrier for them.
How many hours of re-training?
Minimum 15 credit hours per course, but may vary according to how the University structures the program. It will most likely take 2 semesters plus the practicum, so almost a year.
Why 10 years?
It is a number that has been used in the past. Staff will research professional efficacy to determine if the time should be more or less. There has been no feedback on the number.
Has Currency in other Professions been researched?
Yes. 3 years is the most common period of professional inactivity to be flagged. 37/39 regulated professions have re-training programs to maintain Currency, the only other profession is Social Workers and they are implementing Currency by-laws now. This will leave BCCT the only provincial professional college without this by-law.
Independent Schools: Feels that some teachers don't require 2 full semesters of re-training. Also, how does <u>just</u> teaching keep a professional current?
BCCT: That is a Professional Development issue.
What about teaching assessments to prove currency?
Audible gasps from around the table.
Lynda Nicholson, BCCT Council: The payroll deduction exemption allows any P/T teacher to escape attention but not teachers that pay individually. Is this equitable?
Kit Krieger, BCCT: All 60 School Districts pay BCCT fees by payroll deduction.
Sue Ferguson, BCPSEA: Appeals: How would equivalency experience be quantified?
First we have to ensure the concept of Currency is accepted. Once a member has been flagged BCCT would first check employment records to avoid unnecessary appeals.
Independent Schools Assn.: Define Currency. If classroom management is a Currency requirement, how will <u>all</u> members, including non-teaching members such as Principals and Superintendents, qualify?
As professionals responsible for planning, delivery and assessment of current curriculum, these members continue to work in the field.
If implemented how many would be affected?
We don't know. There are 17,000 retired <u>or</u> non-practicing teachers, but we don't know how many would return.

<u>BCCT Website, Lynda Nicolson:</u> There has been feedback from the public that they have found it difficult to find information surrounding discipline (Professional Conduct) on the website. We would request that other agencies at this meeting review our website and provide us feedback. *It took me only a couple of clicks to get to the right place.*

<u>Recommendations and Topics for Discussion:</u> There seemed to be no objection to the concept of professional Currency, though there is still room for improvement, i.e. reducing the maximum period of inactivity to 5 years. The feeling from BCCT Staff is that this is a good start and there will be some growing pains. There were examples of 0.2 FTE teachers that may not

make the 100 days/2 years benchmark, but TOCs would be a group within the profession that may not teach the minimum number of days, but have their fees paid by payroll deduction and would not be flagged. The uncertainty of not having the skills upgrading courses laid out could be a stumbling block.