Meeting with Minister of Education

August 19,2011.

The meeting was initiated by the MOE to brief BCCPAC on changes coming to the future of the BC College of Teachers and its functions.

Present:
George Abbott, MOE
Ken Dawson, Ministerial Asst. To MOE
Ann Whiteaker, President BCCPAC
John Puddifoot, Director BCCPAC
Cathy Jewett, Director BCCPAC
Susan Wilson, Treasurer BCCPAC

It is the MOE's hope that the changes outlined in the meeting will establish a sustainable and durable model. The MOE has met with the BCTF to keep them informed of the planned changes. These changes may not align with the BCTF. The disciplinary piece is the most important. The concept is to move away from a College of Teachers model to a legislated Council.

Currently there are 21 members of the Teachers College. The concept is to reduce the number enough to be nimble while keeping it large enough to include other partners, i.e. BCCPAC. At this point the plan is to create a **Council of 15**. **Seven of those seats would go to education partners**: BCCPAC, BCSSA, BCPVPA, FNESC, BCSTA, FISA and the BC Dean of Education.

Five Teachers would be elected by majority from five regions similar to the Health Regions. Those eligible for election and voting must hold a valid teaching certificate. There is nothing to prevent an Independent School Teacher or a Principal or Vice Principal for example, to put their name forward for election to the Council. Due to the size of the membership, it is expected that BCTF members will still dominate these positions. **BCTF have three more seats** – they will identify three members, who will then be appointed by Ministerial Appointments.

The Council's responsibilities would include: Pre-service Preparation, Standards of Conduct (what they are, not what happens after they are breached). The Council would inherit the structure of the BCCT. Any changes would come as an "Order in Council"

Discipline would be handled by a 10 **member Panel/Board and chaired by a "Commissioner" a** non-voting position. A background in judicial affairs would be a primary qualification with a

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mandate of over-seeing a thorough, comprehensive and timely process. **Nine voting members** would sit on this Discipline Panel. **Five members would be drawn from the seven education partner Council members,** these seats would come from the balance left after FNESC and the Deans of Education step back due to jurisdictional relevance. **Four would be drawn from the Teacher and BCTF Council members**.

The MOE hopes that this will address concerns outlined in the Avison Report as well as communication regarding the teaching profession issues handled presently by the BCCT. The key is the non-union majority. The Discipline panel must meet with full attendance to maintain this balance.

You mentioned that parents or BCCPAC would have a seat on the council? Would BCCPAC be the parent connection or would any parent be able to apply for a seat?

ANN – Most likely BCCPAC would put forward three parents and the MOE would select one of the parents.

The MOE will take back management of teacher certification. This would improve tracking. There have been reports that teachers who have lost their certification due to a Discipline decision have taken a couple of years off, reapplied from a northern district and have come back into the profession.

How will this affect FNESC (not having a seat on the Discipline Panel)?

They are not ready to join due to issues surrounding certification of Aboriginal teachers.

What about fees?

We're not sure about that yet, but there will need to be a fee to cover the costs. There may be two fees for certification and discipline.

Will there be instructions that Council and Panel members make decisions independently?

No – all representatives will be able to consult with their organisations.

MOE – Transparency, that would be our objective. At a minimum, in line with health professionals.

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Currency – there are teachers that have been teaching for a quarter of a century using the same lesson plans. Also there is the issue that as long as teachers are paying dues through payroll deduction that their certification remains current, regardless of how little they teach.

Some of these issues will be addressed through Collective Bargaining. We also want to get started on the Special Needs piece.

Current bylaws will be adopted by the new Council.

Timing – The Fall session will be resuming next month. The changes will require a Bill amending the Teaching Profession Act. The legislation is being written now and will be presented to cabinet in Early September. We expect to introduce it in the Legislature around Mid-October.

Do you want this kept confidential?

Certainly these changes are only at the consultation stage. You may discuss the changes amongst yourselves, but wait to put out any public notice.

The timing of this legislation could be problematic with the BCTF Contract issue.

The BCTF will start the School year with Phase One of their Job Action. They may wait until this news is released in mid-October have some Ammo to go to the next level. We have spent 25 hours meeting with the BCTF on this topic. We don't have an agreement, but they have been informed. I believe there will be a muted response.

What about the parent complaint issue? This needs to start from the School level up.

We have addressed this. Having a Judicial professional heading up the process should improve this. Other partners are very supportive to thrilled. There is unanimous support to create a program that would mentor teachers for the first 5 years.

At this point BCCPAC presented the MOE with the financials for the last 4 years and asked for a block of funding to cover operating expenses for the next three years. He said that he would look into it.

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