

BC TEACHERS' COUNCIL APPROVED MEETING RULES

Below is a summary of the main rules that are proposed to govern the BC Teachers' Council meetings. They are partly drawn from the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11th edition) and partly from best meeting practices.

Principles

The rules are intended to promote the principles of fairness, equality and common sense. They should be used in a manner that facilitates consensus building and knowledge-based decision making. They should be applied in a manner that advances the BCTC's legal mandate and work plan, and that helps regulate the teaching profession in the public interest.

Quorum

Under the *Teachers Act*, the BCTC includes one non-voting member appointed by the Minister of Education and Child Care (Minister). A quorum of the BCTC is nine voting members. If a quorum is not present when a meeting is called to order, the BCTC may opt to wait and see whether a quorum can be attained normally within 30 minutes, or the BCTC may opt to adjourn the meeting.

Election and Role of the Chair and Vice Chair

The BCTC shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually at the first meeting after May 1st.

Policy for Electing BCTC Chair and Vice Chair

1. The non-voting member of the BCTC or Commissioner shall act as Election Officer.
2. Election for Chair will be followed by the election of Vice-Chair.
3. Nominations shall be called for from the floor three times by the Election Officer.
4. Nominations will become valid only after the nominee accepts the nomination.
5. If only one person accepts the nomination for the position the nominee shall be acclaimed.
6. When two or more nominees accept the nomination for a position election shall occur by secret ballot.
7. Candidates shall be provided the opportunity to speak to the BCTC for no more than 3 minutes to present their skills, knowledge and attributes which will support the BCTC in the desired position.
8. The successful candidate must receive 50% plus 1 of the votes cast to be successful. If this is not reached the lowest polling candidate shall be dropped off the ballot and subsequent voting shall occur until a successful candidate is selected.

Election Voting Procedures

1. Ministry of Education and Child Care (Ministry) staff will distribute one ballot per voting BCTC member.
2. The Election Officer shall instruct BCTC members to cast their ballot. BCTC members may participate in the voting process electronically or by phone. It is the responsibility of the BCTC member unable to attend in person to advise Ministry staff and the Chairperson in advance of voting to ensure these options are in place and available. Only BCTC members who are present in person or through electronic means for the full process will be entitled to vote. The BCTC will consider extenuating circumstances should they arise.
3. Staff shall collect the ballots and receive any electronic ballots.
4. The Election Officer shall call voting closed.
5. The Election Officer will oversee the count of ballots conducted by staff.
6. The Election Officer shall report the election results to the BCTC.
7. Upon completion of the election process a motion will be made by the BCTC to destroy the ballots.
8. The successfully elected candidates shall hold the position until the first meeting after the following May 1st.

Role of the Chair and Vice-Chair

1. The Chair's role is to preside over BCTC meetings, act as the BCTC's liaison with Ministry staff and provide overall leadership to the BCTC.
2. As a presiding officer, one of the Chair's duties is to enforce the meeting's rules. If a member is interrupted by the Chair, he or she must stop speaking until the Chair has explained the procedural concern.
3. The Vice-Chair assumes the Chair's duties in the Chair's absence.

Meeting Schedule and Electronic Participation

1. Pursuant to the Act, the BCTC must meet at least once a year and may meet more often subject to budget. A schedule of meetings will be determined before the end of each school year for the next school year and will include consultation with, or consideration of any new/incoming members. A meeting will be held in May or June of each year.
2. Meetings may be held by teleconference or by other electronic means.
3. Individual members of the BCTC may attend a face-to-face BCTC meeting by teleconference or by other electronic means.
4. BCTC meetings, pursuant to the *Teachers Act*, are held in public.
5. Ministry staff members attend meetings as needed to provide relevant comments based on their professional expertise. Staff members may speak after being recognized by the Chair.
6. In-private BCTC meetings may be held on those rare occasions when the BCTC believes it is in the public interest to deliberate privately, such as when the BCTC acts in an adjudicative role. A motion to move in-private requires a majority vote to adopt. The BCTC determines what information from an in-private meeting will be reported to the public.

Minutes

1. Minutes are a record of what was done at a meeting, including motions voted on, decisions made or follow-up actions to be taken.
2. Minutes must be approved by the BCTC and posted on a publicly accessible website maintained by the Ministry.
3. Approval of the draft meeting minutes will take place at the end of the meeting. Once approved the word draft will be removed, and the meeting minutes will be posted as final on a publicly accessible website maintained by the Ministry.

Rules for speaking in debate

1. Voting members and the non-voting member of the BCTC are entitled to speak in debate on the same basis.
2. A BCTC member who wishes to speak must request permission to do so, and then wait to be recognized by the Chair. Recognition is generally on a first-come-first-served basis, except that first time speakers receive preference in recognition to speak.
3. During debate, BCTC members may request additional information for further clarification from staff through the chair.
4. While speaking, members must remain courteous, maintain decorum and civility and help maintain a safe meeting environment.
5. Speakers must focus their comments on the issue before the BCTC and avoid digressions.
6. During informal portions of meetings (such as discussing reports and decision-making options), no formal time limits on speakers are established. However, BCTC members are encouraged to help efficiency by keeping their comments concise and purposeful.
7. On each debatable motion, each member is entitled to speak up to two (2) times, each time for no longer than three (3) minutes.

Setting the Agenda

1. A BCTC member who wishes to propose agenda items, including substantive motions, should submit these to the BCTC Chair at least ten business days prior to the meeting.
2. The Chair consults with Ministry staff in setting the agenda.
3. First priority on meeting agendas is given to items that are derived from the BCTC's work plan, as created and as updated from time to time by the BCTC.
4. A draft meeting agenda is circulated to the BCTC and posted on a publicly accessible website maintained by the Ministry along with supporting documents at least five business days prior to each meeting.

Input to the BCTC

Members of the public may provide input to the BCTC on matters that are directly related to its mandate. They must consider that the BCTC's work is guided by the principles of public interest

and service to the public. Two types of input will be considered: consultation and information outside of meetings, and information or presentations to the BCTC at BCTC meetings.

1. Sufficient time is given to gather and analyze relevant input from the public through these measures:
 - a. Notices of motions to amend standards or requirements must be given at a previous meeting.
 - b. Input will be actively sought from education partner groups.
 - c. Citizens will be invited to respond to issues and proposed motions upon reviewing information that is posted on a publicly accessible website maintained by the Ministry substantially before the date of the meeting at which they will be considered.
2. Input may be provided in-person at BCTC meetings:
 - a. A 'Comment Period' of up to ten minutes at the beginning of each meeting will be set aside for comments and input from the public.
 - b. Requests to make formal presentations to the BCTC must be received by the BCTC Chair at least ten business days prior to the meeting at which the matter will be considered. The Chair in consultation with Ministry staff may defer a request for a presentation to the next meeting. Presentations to the BCTC must not exceed ten minutes.
 - c. Requests from BCTC members for a formal presentation will only occur through the passage of a motion or through approval by the Chair. Duration for a presentation would be determined by the Chair in collaboration with Ministry staff when setting the agenda.
 - d. The BCTC will not engage in debate with the presenter(s) but may ask for clarification by posing brief clarifying questions through the Chair.
 - e. If a presenter is asking the BCTC to make a decision on a matter which is not on the current agenda, the matter may not be considered for a decision at the same meeting at which the presentation was made.

Decision Making

1. Rules will be used in a positive spirit that facilitates progress, creates a balance between individual rights and collective rights, advances the BCTC's mandate, and creates democratic yet efficient debate. The BCTC believes in the principle of consensus and recognizes it is not always possible. The Chair must confirm the BCTC's decisions (whether made informally, by consensus, or formally, by motions), so such decisions are abundantly clear to BCTC members, staff, and the public.
2. Voting BCTC members are entitled to make motions and vote.
3. Motions will be projected on a screen in the boardroom for viewing by the BCTC and the public.

4. A member who believes the vote on a motion should be delayed may move that the motion be postponed until the next meeting or that it be referred to Ministry staff or a designated committee for input and advice. The motion to postpone or refer requires a majority vote to adopt.
5. Debate on a motion may be closed informally (by unanimous consent), or formally by a motion to close debate (such a motion cannot interrupt a person who was recognized to speak, and, if voted upon formally, requires a 2/3 vote).
6. At the request of the member, the member's vote will be recorded.
7. Consistent with Robert's Rules of Order, abstentions are not counted as votes cast.
8. In cases where these rules are silent, provisions in current edition of the rules may be applied to the extent that they are relevant to the situation.

Committees

1. Committees will be approved by the BCTC.
2. Committee members will be elected by a rule of 50 percent plus one.
3. The BCTC Chair may be an ex officio member of any Committee, with a right to vote.
4. The Minister's Representative on BCTC may attend any Committee meeting with voice but no vote.
5. Elections will be held at the first BCTC meeting after vacancies arise.
6. Committees will select a liaison who will be responsible for reporting recommendations and updates in a timely manner and upon request.
7. Quorum shall be a majority of BCTC Committee members.
8. Terms of appointment will be defined in the terms of reference for each Committee as approved by the BCTC.
9. The BCTC Chair will work with the Director of Professional Excellence to ensure that costs of Committees are within the current workplan of the BCTC.
10. Ministry staff will act as secretariat to each Committee.

Working Groups

1. Working Groups will be approved by the BCTC.
2. The BCTC Chair may be an ex officio member of any Working Group, with a right to vote.
3. The Minister's Representative on BCTC may attend any Working Group meeting with voice but no vote.
4. Membership of Working Groups may include representatives from education partners who are not BCTC members.
5. BCTC members of Working Groups will be appointed or elected by the BCTC. Terms of appointment will be defined in the terms of reference for each Working Group as approved by the BCTC. Elected members will be elected by a rule of 50 percent plus one.
6. Working Groups will select a liaison who will be responsible for reporting recommendations and updates in a timely manner and upon request.

7. The BCTC Chair will work with the Director of Professional Excellence to ensure that costs of Working Groups are within the current workplan of the BCTC.
8. Ministry staff will act as secretariat to each Working Group.

Annual Report

1. Each year, the BCTC must produce an annual report for the Minister of Education and Child Care on the activities of the BCTC during the year, matters the BCTC considers important, and matters the Minister requested be included in the report.
2. Ministry staff in collaboration with the Chair and Vice-Chair will draft the report.
3. The Chair and Vice-Chair must approve the draft report before it is sent to the BCTC for approval.
4. Ministry staff will send the draft report to the BCTC electronically for approval.
5. Should consensus not be reached, a formal 2/3 vote is required to approve the report.