

*From the Members' Guide to the BCTF 2009–10*

**7. College of Teachers**

**POLICIES**

**7.A.01—BCTF Agenda for Change—BC College of Teachers**

In May 2003, the BC Liberals seized control of the BC College of Teachers. The government appointed 20 people to the college council, directing them to change how the profession is governed. The political appointees adopted a number of radical changes with no input from the members of the profession.

After teachers withheld their college fees for 2003–04, the government agreed to allow professionals to elect 12 of the 20 council members. The newly elected council will have to review and consider a significant number of problems created and exacerbated by the political appointees.

**The college budget**

Teachers are expected to pay the expenses of the college without control over the fee or college expenditures. A democratically elected council should:

- review the increased per diem and expense rates adopted by the political appointees.
- review all staffing decisions.
- cancel the annual BCCT conference.
- cancel the glossy quarterly BCCT magazine, *Connected*.
- seek restoration of funding from the government for payment of all expenses for appointed councillors.
- stop plans to develop a public online registry of members. (The public can already contact the college to ascertain whether a teacher is a member in good standing.)
- not implement any by-laws or policies that require non-practising members to pay an annual fee.

**Democratic control of the college**

All professional bodies in BC are controlled by the members of those professions. Only practitioners can truly understand the nature and demands of any profession. A council representing the teaching profession, as opposed to representing the government, will want to:

- establish and maintain a policy of openness and accessibility in college operations and procedures.
- review all by-laws and policies adopted by the politically appointed council.
- ensure that elected councillors make up the majority of all council committee meetings.
- ensure that the college council is responsible for all matters rather than delegating responsibility to committees, subcommittees, chairperson, or registrar. (Non-council members should not be appointed to BCCT committees, subcommittees, or panels.)
- not implement any by-laws or policies regarding teacher recertification or requirements for the continuing education of members.
- suspend the *Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators of B.C.* pending consultation with teachers, revisions as a result of that
- consultation, and endorsement by the elected council.

### **Complaint process**

Misunderstandings and problems are best solved by the people directly involved. To begin the complaint process at the provincial level makes no sense. The political appointees and registrar set about to encourage more people to complain to the college about teachers. A more constructive approach for the new college to adopt would:

- ensure that local appeal processes are exhausted prior to filing a complaint with the BCCT.

### **Discipline**

The new college council should:

- ensure that college policies and procedures require boards to report serious disciplinary matters. (The college should not be investigating and processing minor or frivolous complaints.)
- not routinely seek legal costs for any discipline case in which an adverse finding is made. (It has been viewed as a form of intimidation.)

### **Privacy and fairness**

The new college council should:

- change the BCCT application form to delete the sections that require applicants to pledge allegiance to the college and to sign the statement of professional commitment that waives all legal rights to personal privacy.
- ensure that any information provided about members is consistent with the freedom-of-information and protection of privacy legislation.
- not routinely publish names of members involved in discipline cases. The decision to publish names should be made on a case-by-case basis.

It is expected that a democratically elected college council will request co-operation from the government to implement the changes the council deems necessary. (June 04 Ex, pp. 16-17)

#### **7.A.03—That the College Council should:**

1. Define the structure and services of the college to provide for certification, certification review and de-certification.
2. Seek restoration of all funding from the government for services assumed by the College of Teachers which were formerly provided by the Ministry of Education.
3. Establish minimal annual membership fees and set fees for-service that reflect the actual cost of the service provided, pending restoration of government funding.
4. Ensure that final authority in all matters rests with the council (rather than with committees, subcommittees, chairpersons, or the registrar).
5. Ensure that elected councillors make up the majority of all council and committee meetings.
6. Ensure due process for members through adherence to UNESCO's five basic rights of teachers (as adopted on October 5/66 by the UNESCO-ILO Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers).
7. Establish and maintain a policy of openness and accessibility in college operations and procedures. (88 AGM, p. 23) (90 AGM, p. 77)
8. Ensure that policies and procedures put in place by the council do not require boards to report to the college minor disciplinary actions, including verbal reprimands, directed against college members (01 AGM p. 14)

**7.A.05—That the College of Teachers ensures that a BCTF member requested to attend a meeting concerning possible discipline by the college, be informed of their right to representation at that meeting. (Jan. 98 Ex., p. 10)**

7.A.07—That the College of Teachers require faculties of education to include training in occupational health and safety as part of all teacher education programs in the province.

(01 AGM p. 12)

7.A.09—That the chairpersons of BC College of Teachers' Standing Committees be assigned only to elected members of the college council.

(Nov. 02 RA, p. 15)

7.A.11—That the BCTF urge the BC College of Teachers to suspend publication of disciplinary cases against BCTF members until such time as it has developed appropriate standards governing the publication of teachers' disciplinary cases.

(Jan./Feb. 03 RA p. 20)

7.A.13—That the BCTF strongly oppose the provisions of Bill 55 that:

1. merge BCCT membership and certification.
2. enable the council to appoint someone who is not a council member to sit on statutory committees of the BCCT.

(May 04 RA, p. 12)

### PROCEDURES

7.A.02—1. That the BCTF sponsor meetings of those councillors who are BCTF members, to enable these councillors to:

- a. discuss directions for the council and college;
- b. review relevant BCTF policies and procedures;
- c. develop advice to the BCTF on college matters; and
- d. prepare reports to Federation bodies.

2. That in addition to ongoing liaison meetings with BCTF members of the College of Teachers Council, the BCTF Executive Committee schedule at least two one-half day sessions each year with BCTF members on the College of Teachers Council to discuss college matters.

(Jan. 93 Ex, p. 23)

(Oct. 97 Ex.)

7.A.04—That the agenda of the RA and AGM include a report from the College of Teachers.

(AGM 03, p. 20)

7.A.06—That all councillors who are BCTF members be invited to attend BCTF AGMs at no cost to the BCTF.

(April 09 Ex, p. 3)

7.A.08—That the BCTF develop a process to apply in future college election campaigns, which allows for full membership involvement, over a reasonable period of time, in the selection of BCTF candidates for election to the college council.

(88 AGM, pp. 23–25)

\*7.A.10—That the statutory mandate of the College of Teachers be limited to:

1. establishing requirements for issuing teachers' certificates.
2. issuing teachers' certifications.
3. taking action up to and including reviewing, suspending, and or terminating a teacher's certification.
4. approving teacher education programs for pre-service teachers.

(2010 AGM, p. 20)

\*The AGM passed this Procedure:

Invite all college councillors, including appointed councillors, to BCTF-sponsored meetings with college councillors.

7.A.12—1. That the College of Teachers fee be set in such a way that a surplus will not accumulate and that the existing surplus be applied to operating costs. (June 90 RA, p. 18)

2. That the BCTF oppose any College of Teachers' fee increase for BCTF members. (99 AGM, p. 19)

7.A.14—That the College of Teachers fees be waived annually for members in receipt of Salary Indemnity benefits for at least two calendar months immediately prior to October 31 in any calendar year. (June 90 RA, p. 18)

7.A.16—Zonal Endorsation Grants and College Election Grants

1. Local nominees' expenses for zonal endorsation

That in seeking endorsation to become the BCTF-endorsed candidate in a college zone:

- a. the nominee from each local may, upon application to the BCTF, be reimbursed at current BCTF rates, for any necessary release time, travel, meal and accommodation expenses incurred in attending the endorsation meeting in each local in the zone;
- b. approval for reimbursement of expenses shall be by a full-time table officer and the staff person responsible for the College of Teachers.

2. Endorsed candidates' expenses for college elections

That if a college election is necessary in any zone, the BCTF endorsed candidate may apply for funding as follows:

- a. grants shall be available to a maximum of \$2,000 per college zone to cover mailings, design and printing of a campaign brochure and/or letter, release time, travel costs, etc.;
- b. costs of mailing/distribution to college members in the zone, within the maximum grant, will be covered provided that these costs have been minimized, where possible, through use of school district courier or mailing services;
- c. prior approval should be sought by the candidate or his/her designate by providing the Federation with an outline of planned activities and related costs;
- d. approval shall be by a full-time table officer and the staff person responsible for the College of Teachers. (Oct 90 Ex, p. 2)

7.A.18—Zonal Selection of BCTF-Endorsed Candidates

1. Eligibility

Only active BCTF members are eligible for BCTF endorsation as candidates in BC College of Teachers elections.

2. Local Nominees

- a. Each local has the right to select one nominee.
- b. Each local nominee must be endorsed by either an executive meeting, a delegate assembly or a general meeting.
- c. Each local nominee must undertake to abide by the endorsation process.

3. Zonal Endorsation

- a. A BCTF staff person will serve as the zone coordinator for the endorsation process. The zone coordinator's duties shall include those of returning officer.
- b. Voting to determine the zone's BCTF-endorsed candidate shall be by secret ballot at an executive committee meeting, staff rep assembly, or general meeting. Each local will cast the number of votes equal to its total Representative Assembly vote allocation and may choose to split its votes between candidates. (June 00 Ex., p. 28)

- c. In the event that only one person seeks nomination for BCTF endorsement in a zone, a ballot must be held in each local in the zone and the nominee may apply for BCTF funding if the nominee chooses to attend the local meetings.
  - d. A curriculum vitae form shall be completed by each local nominee, and the completed form will be forwarded to all locals in the zone by the zone co-ordinator. Nominees will have the opportunity to speak and answer questions at local venues, and after a review of the curriculum vitae/speeches, a secret ballot will take place.
  - e. The local president of each local shall report ballot results to the zone co-ordinator. The nominee who receives the plurality of the votes shall be declared the BCTF-endorsed candidate for that zone.
  - f. The zone co-ordinator shall report the total ballot results to each local and each candidate without reference to local counts.
  - g. Each local shall publicize the endorsed candidate's name among its members.
4. The BCTF shall publicize, among its members, the names of all BCTF-endorsed candidates.
5. That in each September/October issue of the *Teacher*, an article about the BCTF endorsement process be published. (June 00 Ex., p. 28)  
(Oct. 06 Ex., p.3)

Criteria for seeking BCTF endorsement

That any member seeking to become the BCTF-endorsed candidate in any college council zone be requested to confirm that they are prepared to:

- 1. regularly communicate with locals in their zones.
- 2. attend BCTF-sponsored meetings of elected councillors. (Jan. 07 Ex., p. 11)

7.A.20—That, on condition that the information is used solely for the purpose of promoting the election of a BCTF-endorsed candidate to the College of Teachers' Council, a local shall, upon request in writing, be provided with member name, address and telephone lists and/or labels free of charge for all active members who are also members of the College of Teachers in the zone. (May 97 Ex., p. 2)

7.A.22—That locals request that their boards send letters to teachers that state, —I hereby authorize the school board to deduct my BCCT fee annually, and remit it to the BC College of Teachers. I reserve the right to cancel this authorization at any time. (April 06 Ex., p. 4)

7.A.24—That the BCTF continue its support and work with the BC College of Teachers to develop.  
\*recent changes

