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THE MAGAZINE OF BC EDUCATION

TEACHER REGULATION BRANCH

The Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB), part of the Ministry of Education, provides operational support to BC's teaching profession regulatory structure. The regulatory structure includes the Director of Certification, the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, the BC Teachers' Council, the Disciplinary and Professional Conduct Board, and the Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee.

The regulatory bodies of BC's teaching profession work within a legislative mandate to ensure that educators in the K-12 school systems in BC meet and maintain the standards of competence and conduct required to keep students safe and foster public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Learn and other communications of the TRB are the means by which the TRB informs educators who hold BC teaching certificates, and other interested stakeholders, about professional regulation in BC. Certificate holders are responsible for reading these communications to ensure they are aware of current standards and other professional matters.

Learn is produced three times a year and is accessible online at bcteacherregulation.ca. Certificate holders receive an email when each new issue is made available.

Readers' questions and comments about *Learn* are welcome and may be submitted to trb.magazine@gov.bc.ca.

Learn's EDITORIAL POLICY

The TRB welcomes ideas and topics of interest for articles. Please send your suggestions by email to trb.magazine@gov.bc.ca.

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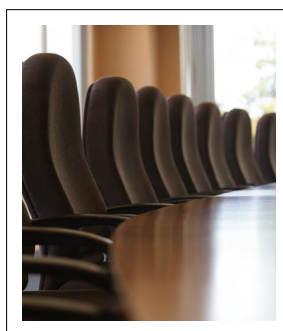
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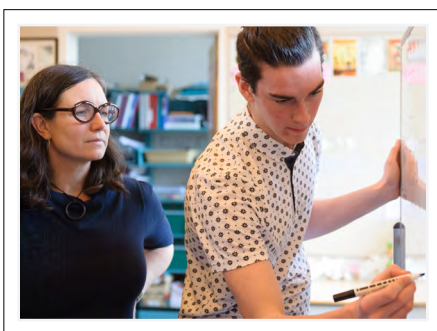
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Theresa Campbell
President - Safer Schools Together



TAKING ACTION TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Educators can play a vital role in supporting students and colleagues

When we talk about domestic violence, we often start with the numbers. Thirty percent of children in industrialized countries witness or are subject to abuse. Twenty-five percent of violent crimes in Canada are committed within a family. Up to 800,000 children in our country witness their mothers being abused each year. In BC, there were 23 deaths from domestic violence in 2014.

There are people behind each of these numbers, and often, the people are children. Children can be victims of neglect or abuse, and they can also be witnesses to abuse within the home. Whether victim or witness, the repercussions can be significant, detrimental and long lasting.

"The impact of witnessing violence is no different than the impact of directly experiencing it," says Dr. Sibylle Artz, a professor at the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria. She and a group of colleagues recently published a comprehensive review of the literature on the effect of exposure to domestic violence on children and youth.

Their findings are clear: children who witness violence in the home suffer a wide range of effects, including profound abnormalities in brain structure and chemistry, which impact everything from emotional regulation to memory development. As children who witness violence grow up, they are much more likely to have poor physical health, develop symptoms of depression and substance dependence, have poorer academic and employment outcomes, and have a greater likelihood of themselves being perpetrators of domestic violence and child abuse.

The stakes are high, and as Artz's article notes, exposure to domestic violence has ripple effects beyond

the child and his or her family into daycares, schools and workplaces: "It is a toxic, harm-producing experience that cascades into all aspects of our shared social world."

Tracy Porteous, the Executive Director of the Ending Violence Association of BC, says that a child who witnesses violence at home may demonstrate behaviour at school that suggests he or she is upset. "Educators could notice the same destabilization that you would see if there was direct child abuse. A home where there is domestic violence is chaotic, with the child overhearing threats and the sounds of violence – and that's a damaging situation with long-lasting repercussions."

Yet, while we clearly understand our legal obligations to report suspicions of child neglect or abuse to the Ministry of Children and Family Development, we may be unsure of what to do if we suspect that a student in our class is a witness to domestic violence.

If a child does reveal that there is violence in his or her home, teachers need to assure the child that he or she has done the right thing by disclosing this information and, most importantly, emphasize that the situation is not the child's fault. "Let the child know that you will try and assist him or her, but be careful about making promises of confidentiality or that things will be better," says Theresa Campbell, President of Safer Schools Together and developer and lead trainer for the ERASE Bullying Strategy.

Campbell also suggests that teachers develop student-specific strategies, such as adjusting expectations for their academic work or providing a safe, quiet place for them to go for short periods during the day. →→

Educators will want to share information about the situation with their colleagues, such as school-based counsellors and administrators. Youth and family counsellors can reach out to the family and refer them to resources such as community-based victim services agencies or transition houses, which offer counselling services and other supports and can connect the family to professionals who can complete a thorough risk assessment.

Porteous says that this risk assessment is essential for identifying cases where the possibility of severe violence is high. She states that a new coordinated approach to addressing domestic violence has shown great success in minimizing risks and keeping children and women safe. Since 2010, interagency case assessment teams (ICATs) have been established in 25 communities, bringing together multiple agencies – including the police, child welfare, corrections and victim support service organizations – to share information and take action on high-risk domestic violence cases.

“Since 2010, the Vernon ICAT has processed more than 100 high-risk domestic violence cases where there was a strong possibility of severe injury, bodily harm or death,” says Porteous. “By developing safety plans and offender management plans, there has been almost no recidivism of violence, virtually no breaches of order and no deaths.”

Campbell agrees that a multi-agency approach is absolutely essential. “We’ve learned a lot about what works, unfortunately some of it the hard way. Responding to domestic violence requires a multi-team response as each party often has key bits of information that are needed to connect the dots and keep kids safe.”

She and her colleagues are currently implementing the third phase of the ERASE Bullying Strategy, which is training school-based teams to identify domestic violence risk factors. Schools are an integral member of the multi-agency response to domestic violence: they need to know, for example, when a parent has a restraining order, and they need to share information about domestic violence situations with other agencies.

The ultimate goal is to prevent domestic violence in the first place, and as with other



Dr. Sibylle Artz
School of Child & Youth Care
University of Victoria

prevention strategies, education is always the best place to start. Forty years ago, littering, not wearing a seatbelt and unthinkingly getting behind the wheel after having multiple drinks were all common occurrences. It’s different today, thanks to extensive public education campaigns and the tireless work of many advocates.

“Just as we now know that we must not expose children to second-hand smoke, we have studies showing that we must not expose children to violence in the family in any form,” says Artz. “My hope is that parents will find other ways to deal with negative emotions, knowing the devastating impact that witnessing violence can have on a child’s development. We no longer argue that we should smoke or drink and drive: let’s get to the same place with domestic violence.”

Many violence prevention programs are available within schools, from Seeds & Roots of Empathy (with its focus on encouraging children to develop greater empathy for others) to Be More than a Bystander, which encourages boys and men to speak out about violence against women.

Campbell argues that schools must constantly improve their connectedness strategies, teaching the importance of accepting difference and embedding social-emotional learning in all classes from kindergarten to Grade 12.

Porteous also says teachers are integral to creating safe homes and communities. “Teachers are a huge part of the solution – after all, teachers are connected to every family with kids in the province,” she says. “Imagine if the province’s teachers felt confident about taking action on these issues: that is a phenomenal change agent right there.” ←



Tracy Porteous
Executive Director
Ending Violence Association of BC

If you suspect a child is being neglected or abused, you must report this to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

24-Hour Helpline for Children: Toll-Free 310-1234 (no area code is required)

The resources below provide useful information to learn more about domestic violence and support your students and colleagues.

Domestic violence resource websites:

Children Who Witness Abuse program ■ Ending Violence Association of BC
Interagency Case Assessment Teams ■ BC Ministry of Justice – Help Starts Here

Educational resource websites:

erasebullying.ca ■ Healthy Schools BC
Canadian Red Cross Violence, Bullying and Abuse Prevention programs
The FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children

READING INTERVENTION PROGRAM HELPS STRUGGLING READERS SUCCEED

By Paul Pantaleo

When a Grade 5 student successfully reached grade-level reading after participating in my reading intervention program, he said to me, "Thank you for not giving up on me even though I wanted to give up on myself." Another student said "I like coming here because all we do is read!" – a comment that captures the heart of my intervention, as research shows that volume of reading is the single most important predictor of academic success.

Success for every student is possible and my commitment to this goal guided my work when I left a tri-district early literacy position in September 2011 to work at Sir James Douglas Elementary School in Victoria as a Learning Support teacher.

From September 2011 to December 2014, 69 students from Grades 1 to 5 (one-third with a Ministry designation) who were below grade level in reading successfully reached the average band of instruction. Over this period, every Grade 5 student at the school not on a totally modified literacy program ended the year reading at or above grade level.

Using a pull-out Learning Support intervention model, I work with three to six students. The learning for each student is differentiated, and by using a modified guided reading approach, students read hundreds of high-quality leveled books at their independent and instructional (just right) reading levels.

By constantly adapting for variations in reading levels, I ensure that students are progressing comfortably within their zone of proximal development. Instruction of word identification, comprehension and vocabulary strategies is contextualized within authentic text. I use Richard Allington's structure of "side-by-side" teaching extensively and, in each lesson, one or two volunteer students join the group, providing invaluable support to this community of learners.

Students receive a minimum of 30-minute lessons, four to five times a week, for at least 10-12 weeks, although some students require more than one term of support. During the 30-minute lessons,

students read continuous text for approximately 23 minutes and engage in intensive contextualized word work as a group for the remaining time. Classroom teachers use similar word identification and comprehension strategies, making the transferability between Learning Support and the classroom seamless.

After participating in this reading intervention for even a short time, students develop an efficient processing system and effectively use appropriate problem-solving strategies, thus making them more confident and independent readers. This directly contributes to students' self-efficacy and positive attitudes toward reading, which are interrelated with academic achievement.

The systemic support and encouragement I receive from the school district and school are crucial to the ultimate success of the intervention. Most important, however, is communicating to students that we believe they can succeed and developing interventions that ensure they do so. ←

The Reading Lesson Intervention Framework

My intervention model can be used by Learning Support, ELL or classroom teachers in either a pull-out or in-class model. It includes:

- Reading (independent and instructional level) (23 minutes)
- Contextualized Word Work (7 minutes)
- Home Reading (independent or instructional)

Paul Pantaleo is a Learning Support Teacher in the Victoria School District. A former Reading Recovery Trainer, he has worked as a District and School Learning Mentor, In-service Presenter, Vice-Principal and Sessional Instructor at the University of Victoria. For more information, please contact Paul at ppantaleo@sd61.bc.ca or view his presentation on his blog at ppantaleo.edublogs.org.



The Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB), part of the Ministry of Education, operationalizes the regulatory responsibility for the teaching profession in British Columbia on behalf of the regulatory entities: the Director of Certification, the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, the British Columbia Teachers' Council, the Disciplinary and Professional Conduct Board, and the Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee.



THE BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' COUNCIL – ITS ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the statutory decision-making entities of the teacher regulation system created under the legislation of the *Teachers Act* is the British Columbia Teachers' Council.

The Council is made up of 16 members: 15 who have been elected or appointed, and one non-voting representative who reports to the Minister of Education on the activity of the Council. Of the 15 members, three are appointed by the Minister after having been nominated by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), five are practising teachers elected from zones across the province, and seven are appointed by the Minister from various education partner groups, including the:

- Association of BC Deans of Education,
- BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils,
- BC Principals' and Vice Principals' Association,
- BC School Superintendents Association,
- BC School Trustees Association,
- Federation of Independent School Associations, and
- First Nations Education Steering Committee.

The non-voting member is appointed by the Minister.

The Council receives its mandate from the *Teachers Act* and is responsible for setting the standards for the teaching profession in the areas of teacher education and certification, conduct and competence, and for approving teacher education programs for certification purposes. Nine members of the Council, five of whom must be from partner groups other than the BCTF, sit on the Disciplinary and Professional Conduct Board from which disciplinary panels are formed.

All members of the Council are bound by oath, in accordance with section 11 of the *Teachers Act*, to represent the interests of the public over the interests of teachers or other stakeholders in the education system.

Appointments and Elections

In 2012, under section 9 of the *Teachers Act*, the Minister of Education allotted the 10 appointed Council members with terms varying from one to three years. Following these initial appointments, the term of office for Council members is three years. Appointments to the Council typically occur in April of each year.

Elections for the BC Teachers' Council are held every three years in each of the five election zones in the province: Fraser, Interior, Northern, Vancouver Coastal and Vancouver Island. To be eligible for nomination as a candidate and serve as zone representative, a person must be a resident in that zone, hold a valid BC teaching certificate, and be a practising teacher; that is, a certificate holder who, in the preceding two years in the course of his or her employment, has carried out one or more of the following duties:

- design, supervision and assessment of educational programs;
- instruction, assessment and evaluation of individual students and of groups of students.

A certificate holder must also be nominated by 10 certificate holders who have their principal residence in the election zone. To vote for an election candidate, certificate holders must vote by secret ballot and have their principal residence in the zone in which they are casting their ballot.

Elections for the Council are currently in progress. A notice of the call for nominations was emailed to certificate holders and made available on the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) website in December 2014. Ballots were distributed in February 2015. If you are a certificate holder with your principal residence in BC and have not yet mailed in your ballot, please ensure it reaches the TRB offices by the close of voting at 4:30 pm on March 20, 2015. The results of the elections will be made public on the TRB website. ←

You can read more about the regulatory structure, which includes the BC Teachers' Council, on the TRB website at bcteacherregulation.ca.

NEWS + NOTICES FROM THE TRB

2014 INCOME TAX RECEIPTS FOR CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

If you paid your annual fee directly to the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) in 2014, you will be able to download and print your 2014 tax receipt from the Certificate Holders' Area of the TRB website at bcteacherregulation.ca. If your employer deducted the annual fee from your pay in 2014, this amount will show on your T4 slip. In this case, you will not be able to download and print a tax receipt from the Certificate Holders' Area. ←

ANNUAL FEE FOR 2015-2016

For certificate holders to retain valid BC Ministry of Education certification, the annual fee of \$80 must be paid by May 31, 2015. Under the *Teachers Act*, boards of education and independent school authorities must deduct this fee from the pay of the certificate holders they employ. If you are a certificate holder employed in these systems, you do not need to submit a fee. If you are a certificate holder not employed in one of these systems, please see bcteacherregulation.ca/CertificateServices/FeeInformation.aspx for more information on how to pay the fee. ←

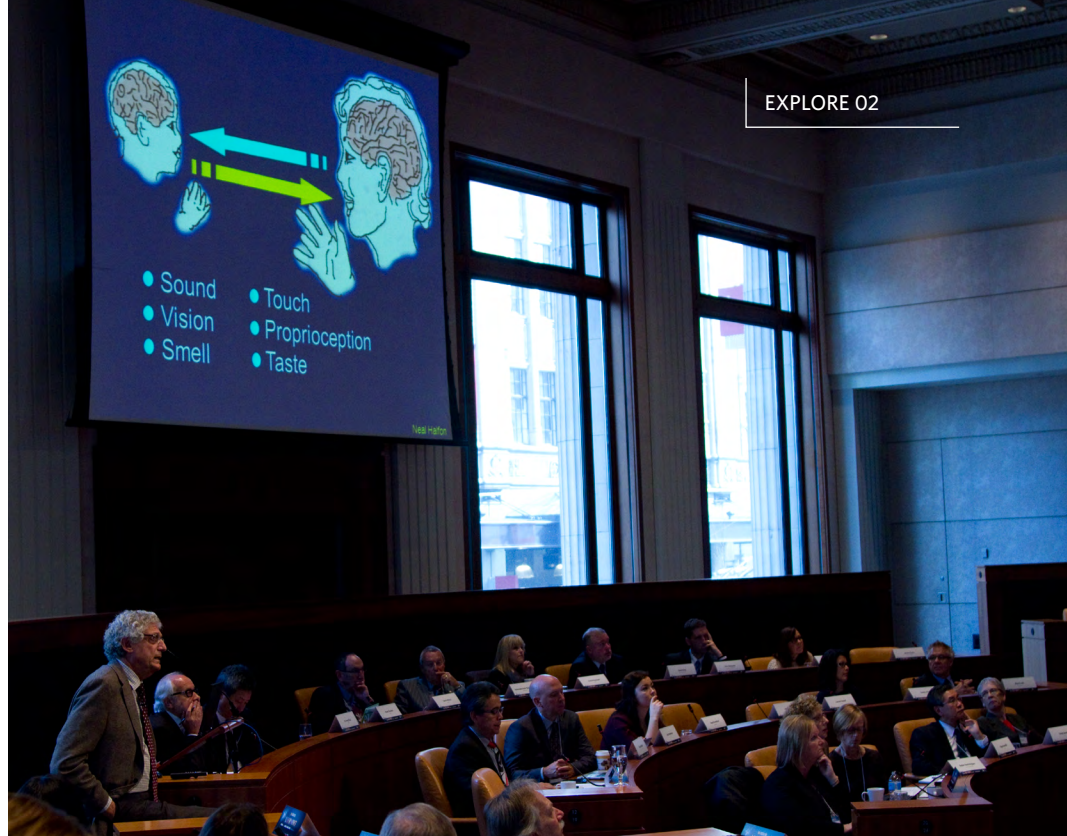
RETIRING OR RELINQUISHING YOUR CERTIFICATE

If you are a certificate holder, but you are retiring or no longer want to be certified, or you are not teaching and do not plan to return to teaching, you may choose not to pay your annual fee and have your certificate cancelled for non-payment of fees. Alternatively, you may choose to submit a notice of relinquishment that states you are surrendering your certificate. Both actions will discontinue your privilege to vote in BC Teachers' Council elections, cease delivery of Ministry correspondence and result in the cancellation of your certificate. If you have already paid your annual practice fee for the upcoming year, or if your annual fee has been payroll deducted by your employer, you may request a refund by submitting the request and Notice of Relinquishment form to the TRB by June 30. Requests received after June 30 cannot be considered. For more information on relinquishing your certificate, or on refunds for annual fees paid, please visit bcteacherregulation.ca/CertificateServices/RetirementRelocationRe-assignment.aspx. ←

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' COUNCIL MEETINGS

The British Columbia Teachers' Council meetings are open to the public and are held at the Teacher Regulation Branch office at 400-2025 West Broadway in Vancouver. The Council receives its mandate from the *Teachers Act*. It is responsible for setting standards for teachers in the areas of teacher education, certification, conduct and competence. Visit the TRB website to learn more about the mandate, composition and future meetings of the Council. ←

You can learn more about the Teacher Regulation Branch and the regulatory structure for the teaching profession in BC at bcteacherregulation.ca.



FOCUS ON LEARNING FORUM EXPLORES NEW PATHS IN EDUCATION

How can BC continue to have one of the best education models in the world? That question guided discussion at the Focus on Learning Forum held January 29 at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver. Five international education experts – led by Tony MacKay, the CEO at the Centre for Strategic Education in Australia – presented perspectives on learning transformation and personalized education with examples from jurisdictions spanning the globe. Participants included teachers, students, school administrators, and business and community leaders.

Andreas Schleicher, Special Advisor on Education Policy for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, spoke over Skype from Hong Kong. Schleicher believes education transformation should be driven by teachers with a real desire for professional development. He also stressed the importance business communities play in education. “It’s absolutely crucial that we have better ways of recognizing people’s talents and making sure that educational institutions have the eyes and ears that help them see how the world is changing.” For Schleicher, this means including professional institutions in education dialogue and using their input to structure learning outcomes around real-world skills.

Yong Zhao, an education scholar and author, echoed Schleicher’s sentiment, emphasizing the importance of moving away from a one-size-fits-all education model. He sees a system recognizing the valuable

talents and potential of every student. For teachers, this means letting students direct and personalize their own education journey. Still, Zhao said we can’t revitalize our current model by simply introducing new ideas to an old system.

David Albury, Director of the Innovation Unit in the UK, agrees with Zhao. He focused on the pockets of innovation happening across BC. Without growth and the sharing of these innovative practices, the education model won’t progress. “You’re not alone – actually, you’re farther along the journey than most people,” said Albury of BC’s desire for innovation, adding “We need to learn globally, but we need to make the solutions in BC.”

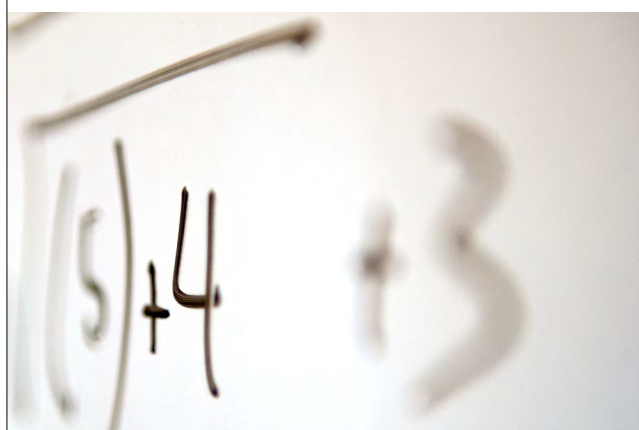
Stuart Shanker, professor of philosophy and psychology at York University, and Marc Kielburger, co-founder of Free the Children, rounded out the forum discussion. Shanker urged participants to consider neuroscience when developing effective teaching practices, while Kielburger reminded everyone that soft skills like compassion and courage need a place in the classroom.

MacKay summarized the forum simply. BC has a strong case for change and we are all part of the solution. ←

For more information on the Focus on Learning Forum and the presenters, and to watch an archived livestream of the event, visit bcedplan.ca.



Susan Robinson teaches math
at Gulf Islands Secondary School



ACTIVE MATH

EDUCATOR SUSAN ROBINSON BRINGS MOVEMENT INTO THE CLASSROOM TO ENGAGE LEARNERS

Susan Robinson is the first to admit that her math classes can look chaotic. Visitors will find students standing in groups around whiteboards, pens in hand as they explore solutions to math problems. Or the students might not be in the classroom at all – they could be with Robinson in the dance studio creating a performance that demonstrates their understanding of mathematical functions, or on the school's soccer field, moving into the shape of a quadratic equation's parabola.

A Grade 11 and 12 teacher at Gulf Islands Secondary School on Salt Spring Island, Robinson's approach to teaching is informed by her own wide-ranging experiences and interests – from talking with a colleague about the overlap between math and dance to reading about the success of new ways of organizing a classroom or observing how her own soccer coach runs drills and practices.

Her inspiration for bringing math into the dance studio came from listening to fellow teacher Sonia Langer talk about movement. "I noticed that when she was describing dance movements, she was using the language of transformation that I use in math class. My students often struggle with the concept of expanding and compressing functions, so I wondered if we could incorporate physical movement to help them understand the math."

Robinson and her colleague developed a two-hour workshop to get students using their bodies to map out functions. The teachers place a grid on the floor showing an x and y axis, and then ask students to move into the shape of a function, like $y = x^3$. Students will then be asked to move away from or toward an axis, expanding vertically by a factor of two, for example, to become the equation $y = 2x^3$.

"Historically, the hardest part of this particular unit for my students is making sense of the notation, so I don't want that to be the first thing they encounter. Instead,

by working with them in the dance studio, I am able to introduce the concept with ideas and language that they are familiar with, giving them a physical experience of the function. Then, when we go back to the class, we'll work with the notation and graphs and relate it to what's going on with the equation."

In addition to this more formal workshop, Robinson regularly integrates movement into her class, believing that it makes it easier – and more enjoyable – for students to learn math.

Another element of her pedagogy comes from the work of SFU associate professor Peter Liljedahl and others, who advocate the use of whiteboards in math education. Robinson brought white boards into her classroom last year and noticed the benefits immediately.

"The first time I had my students standing up at the whiteboard, I was overwhelmed by the difference it made – my classroom became a much more dynamic learning environment where the focus was solely on the kids doing math. It's no longer me in charge or me as the expert hovering over them to answer a question. It's about all of us having conversations about math."

Robinson is also experimenting with an approach from her soccer coach who runs drills with little instruction, getting the players to just "go and do." Within her class, Robinson might provide minimal direction when asking students to work through some problems. It's a teaching style that is not always welcomed by students. Many would rather listen to her, copy down the explanation and apply the concept to new problems. But for Robinson, this makes students passive rather than active learners.

"I want them to see that they can be creative in math, that they can come up with ideas on their own. My approaches to teaching allow me to do that." ←

THINKING ABOUT THE STANDARDS: A Case Study

Exploring a case study can help us better understand how the Standards apply to the practice of teaching and the work and conduct of educators. We encourage you to read the scenario below and reflect on the questions. Then, read the factors that the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation would consider when deciding how to address the scenario.

Scenario

A Grade 8 teacher downloads an adult video on his own laptop at home. When he opens up his computer the next morning at school, the video resumes playing and the soundtrack from the movie is audible to his students. No one sees the screen. The teacher quickly shuts down the video and immediately reports the incident to his principal.

Consider the following questions

- What are the possible implications of what has occurred?
- As the principal of this teacher, what factors would you consider when addressing this situation?
- What consequences, if any, do you think are appropriate in this situation?
- In your view, have the Standards been breached, and if so, which ones?

Factors the Commissioner would consider when evaluating this case

Boards of education and independent school authorities have a duty to report breaches of the Standards to the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation under section 16 of the *School Act* and sections 7 and 7.2 of the *Independent School Act*.

If the school principal reports this event to the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, the Commissioner will review the information and decide which process, as set out in the *Teachers Act*, is appropriate to address the report. It is important to note that there is no typical result for this type of case because each situation is unique.

The Commissioner's decision about how to proceed could be based on the answers to the following questions:

- Does the board or authority have a policy on the use of personal laptops at school?
- Was the video viewed by any of the students?
- What was the content of the adult video/soundtrack?
- Did the teacher self-report to the principal?
- Has the teacher ever been involved in any similar incidents related to exposing students to inappropriate material in the classroom?

After reviewing the report, the Commissioner may do one of the following:

- take no further action and provide reasons for this decision,
- initiate an investigation,
- make or accept a proposal for a consent resolution agreement or
- issue a citation, which would lead to a hearing.

When considering how to proceed, the certificate holder's actions will be examined through the lens of the Standards and whether any were breached. In this particular case, Standard 1 may be in question.

Standard 1: Educators value and care for all students and act in their best interests.

Educators are responsible for fostering the emotional, esthetic, intellectual, physical, social and vocational development of students. They are responsible for the emotional and physical safety of students. Educators treat students with respect and dignity. Educators respect the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities. Educators have a privileged position of power and trust. They respect confidentiality unless disclosure is required by law. Educators do not abuse or exploit students or minors for personal, sexual, ideological, material or other advantage.

If the matter is resolved through the consent resolution process or a formal disciplinary hearing, there are several options available if the certificate holder is found to have breached the professional standards. These include placing limits or conditions on a certificate; agreeing to, or ordering, remedial professional development courses; issuing a reprimand, suspension or cancellation of a certificate; or banning the issuance of a new certificate. ←

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT ADVISORY:

Teaching in Diverse Classrooms

By the Honourable Bruce Preston, Commissioner for Teacher Regulation

Inappropriate comments about ethnic minorities, religion and sexual orientation are a recurring theme in professional conduct reports. As the Commissioner for Teacher Regulation, I regularly deal with complaints that teachers have inappropriately shared their views on topics such as religion, race relations and sexuality.

These incidents vary: the teacher who is a member of a minority group and feels entitled to comment on general characteristics ascribed to that particular group; the teacher who openly discusses his or her views on a particular religion or religions; or the teacher who thinks that negative comments about a traditional majority group, such as white males, are acceptable. Complaints often arise in the context of what the teacher considers to be humour, or in the course of philosophical musings in which the teacher imparts his or her views on the characteristics of a particular minority group.

Canada is, proudly, a multicultural nation. We are a multicultural society. This reality is regularly the subject of comment in the media and it is noticeable in our day-to-day life. Our society's multicultural evolution embraces both a changing landscape of ethnicity and a recognition, acceptance and inclusion of the diverse range of sexual and gender identities. Change naturally brings with it a mosaic of views. Some of these views are arrived at after considerable reflection; some are ill thought out; some are clearly offensive. In a classroom setting there will be a wide range of views, many strongly held, among the students in the class and those views will be determined by a myriad of individual family backgrounds and influences.

The classroom is not the place for a teacher to expound on his or her views on the sensitive topics of ethnicity, religion, culture and identity. Those views may offend and demean students who perceive themselves to be within the group under discussion. They may implicitly give licence to students who hold offensive views to give voice to them. They may focus the class on division rather than social harmony. The teacher's views on these topics have no claim to correctness. Yet they may be given a patina of correctness because they are held by an important professional and authority figure.

The *Standards for the Education, Competence & Professional Conduct of Educators in British Columbia* require teachers to foster the emotional, intellectual and social development of students. The Standards state that educators treat students with respect and dignity. Educators respect the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities. Educators have a privileged position of power and trust.

There is no room in the modern classroom for philosophical digressions on the shortcomings of various races and how they got that way. Nor is there room for ethnic jokes. Sexual and/or gender identity must not be the subject of other than respectful comment. The religious views of the teacher are irrelevant.

When deciding whether to make a comment or share beliefs about issues of race, religion, ethnicity, language or sexual orientation in the classroom, a teacher must always put the best interest of the students first. Diversity provides opportunities for teaching and learning. The sensitive nature of the topic does not require that it be feared or avoided.

When making comments in this area, teachers should consider these questions:

- Does the comment serve an educational purpose outlined in the curriculum?
- Would you be comfortable if the comment was ascribed to you on the front page of the newspaper?
- If you feel that you have a personal experience worth sharing that touches on the issue of diversity, is there any aspect of it that may offend any of the students in your class or their families?

An unwavering respect for diversity of ethnic background, religious belief and sexual and gender identity will serve teachers well. It will avoid situations where their comments become the focus of complaints of professional misconduct. ←

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR TEACHER REGULATION: DISCIPLINE CASE OUTCOMES AND CASE SUMMARIES

The Commissioner for Teacher Regulation oversees the process by which reports or complaints about the conduct or competence of certificate holders in both the public and independent school systems are addressed. As the operational arm of the regulatory structure, the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) provides administrative support to the Commissioner.

Together, we are committed to ensuring a safe learning environment for students and that all educators are fit and competent for the important role that they play. By publishing the outcomes of discipline cases, we enhance the transparency of the processes and outcomes with respect to complaints and reports about educators. Publication is also a means of ensuring accountability for the educators involved, as well as articulating the standards expected of all certificate holders.

Discipline outcomes are summarized below and will appear in full on the TRB website at bcteacherregulation.ca/ProfessionalConduct/DisciplineDecisions.aspx.

The Standards for Educators in British Columbia can be found on the last page of this issue of Learn and on the TRB website at bcteacherregulation.ca/Standards/StandardsOverview.aspx.

Ensuring that concerns about the competence and conduct of certificate holders are addressed independently, fairly, expeditiously and in the public interest.

Consent Resolution Agreements (CRA)

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Joseph Guy Ambrosio

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will fulfil conditions

In March 2014, a district reported that, when Mr. Ambrosio took a sports team on out-of-town trips in the autumn of 2013, he failed to take adequate steps to protect students' safety while driving the multi-functional activity bus. He also failed to adequately supervise students on these trips. On June 17, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Ambrosio agreed to a reprimand and conditions on driving any vehicle carrying students on curricular or extracurricular school-related activities. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER John Edward Brennan

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1

DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for one month

In 2012, the Commissioner learned that, in early 2009, Mr. Brennan, a vice-principal, became aware of a sexually explicit text message received by a senior teacher on staff from an unidentified female. Although it occurred to Mr. Brennan that the text might involve a student at the school, he took no steps to investigate further or to report the incident to the school principal. In mid-2009, the police advised Mr. Brennan that the certificate holder had been reported to them for inappropriate text messages exchanged with a student at the school. Immediately upon request, Mr. Brennan cooperated with the police investigation. The other certificate holder was criminally charged and convicted of sexual exploitation. On June 17, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Brennan agreed to a one-month suspension of his certificate. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Tony Martin Dolinar

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 2

DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for one month

In January 2014, a district reported that Mr. Dolinar used his position as vice-principal to access a student's electronic records and, without authorization or advising teachers or other administrators, to increase the student's marks for three courses in 2012-2013 and for one course in 2013-2014. As a result, the student received an academic award. When a teacher raised a concern that the student's grade had been changed in her course, Mr. Dolinar indicated that he had not changed the grade. Mr. Dolinar later resigned from the district. On April 29, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Dolinar agreed to a one-month suspension of his certificate. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Jared Allan Easton

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Certificate cancelled for non-payment of the annual fee/Former certificate holder will not apply for a teaching certificate or letter of permission

In April 2013, a district reported that Mr. Easton engaged in inappropriate conduct that included requesting a back massage from students, sitting on a female student's lap and allowing students to play inappropriate music during instructional time. He did not respond promptly to directions from school administration and continued to engage in inappropriate conduct. The district dismissed him for cause. Mr. Easton's certificate was cancelled for non-payment of fees on November 1, 2013. On April 8, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Easton agreed that he will not apply for, nor will the Director of Certification be required to issue to him, a certificate or letter of permission for 10 years. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER John Keith Gilbert

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1

DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will complete the TRB's workshop on professional identity and boundaries

In October 2013, a district reported that Mr. Gilbert engaged in inappropriate behaviour that included disclosing his prior drug use to students, treating students disrespectfully and demonstrating intimidating behaviour, referring to a student as a "sociopath" to an administrator and education assistant, and making disparaging comments about an administrator to a colleague. On May 29, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Gilbert agreed to a reprimand and to complete the TRB's workshop on professional identity and boundaries. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Jeremy Adam Inscho

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct and Conduct Unbecoming/Standard 2

DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for three days

In May 2012, a district reported that on the morning of March 2, 2012, Mr. Inscho advised the principal he had an unspecified family emergency and had to leave the school. His wife was upset over not being able to register their daughter in French immersion kindergarten. In the afternoon, they visited the kindergarten, but Mr. Inscho did not tell his principal that the emergency was resolved or that he intended to visit the kindergarten. Mr. Inscho and a group of parents were involved in an angry confrontation with other parents who had been lining up since early morning for registration. The group also blocked building access to others, including the school's principal and an assistant superintendent. When the principal explained that priority would be given to those who had been in line since early morning, Mr. Inscho argued with him. The confrontation was reported on the local news. On April 17, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Inscho agreed to a three-day suspension of his certificate. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Joseph Lucien Christian (Chris) Murray

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Reprimand

In July 2013, a district reported that Mr. Murray, in an attempt to be humorous, used inappropriate language and conduct with a Grade 8 French class. He discussed that someone he knew believed his sunglasses were "pedophile glasses" and he commented on a student's school work, →→

which upset the student and was heard by other students. On April 1, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Murray agreed to a reprimand. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Lennard Ray Nikolai

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for eight months/Certificate holder to complete courses

In October 2012, a district reported that Mr. Nikolai yelled at students and used profanity. When a student hit Mr. Nikolai with a paper ball, he grabbed the student, forced him against the wall and lifted him so that the student was on his toes. Contrary to district policy, he also locked in his office replica guns confiscated from students. The district later reported that Mr. Nikolai made inappropriate comments, failed to assess student performance in an appropriate manner and appeared to be asleep during a guest speaker's presentation in his class. Mr. Nikolai resigned. On May 13, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Nikolai agreed to an eight-month suspension of his certificate and to complete the TRB's workshop on professional identity and boundaries, as well as conflict resolution and anger management courses. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Richard Andy George Roderick Payne

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1

DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will attend counselling focused on professional boundaries

In January 2014, a district reported that Mr. Payne was teaching a Grade 8 class when he grabbed a female student's face and blew on her nose, making her feel very uncomfortable. This followed previous inappropriate interactions when Mr. Payne participated in mock fighting with a student, breaking a meter stick over a student's back while "joking around," "poking" or mock "taser" students and hugging a student. On June 26, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Payne agreed to a reprimand and to attend four individual counselling sessions focused on professional boundaries. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Aleksandr Vladimirovich Plehanov

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct and Conduct Unbecoming/Standards 1 and 11 (2004), Standards 1, 2 and 5 (2008)

DISPOSITION Certificate cancelled/Former certificate holder will not apply for a teaching certificate or letter of permission for three years

In February 2010, a district reported on the suspension of Mr. Plehanov after an investigation into his touching female Grade 2 students at a school. In March 2010, the district suspended Mr. Plehanov after complaints about his touching students at another elementary school. As a result of an RCMP investigation, on March 18, 2010, Mr. Plehanov was charged with sexual interference, sexual exploitation and sexual assault. After an RCMP investigation into an allegation at a third elementary school, Mr. Plehanov was charged again on April 27, 2011 with sexual interference and sexual assault. He was also charged with criminal harassment. The BC College of Teachers suspended Mr. Plehanov's certificate and issued a citation on May 10, 2010, and Mr. Plehanov signed an undertaking not to teach effective July 1, 2011. On November 26, 2012, Mr. Plehanov was found not guilty of all charges instituted on April 27, 2011, and he was acquitted. In consideration of the incidents at the second and third elementary schools and Mr. Plehanov's failure to respect advice and directives regarding personal boundaries, the district terminated him. On May 3, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Plehanov agreed to a cancellation of his certificate and that he will not apply for, nor will the Director of Certification be required to issue to him, a certificate or letter of permission for three years. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Brian Allen Procter

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will complete the TRB's workshop on professional identity and boundaries

In March 2014, a district reported that Mr. Procter used inappropriate and disrespectful language towards students and used his phone to take pictures of students in class without their knowledge or consent. On June 24, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Procter agreed to a reprimand and to complete the TRB's workshop on professional identity and boundaries. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Richard Brian Thierbach

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Reprimand

In June 2012, a district reported that Mr. Thierbach booked a day off as sick leave to attend a doctor's appointment and to participate in curling. The following day, he arranged for another teacher to teach one of his classes and he cancelled another class to participate in a curling tournament. On another occasion, a student was throwing a basketball in an uncontrolled manner and Mr. Thierbach responded with intimidating and domineering behaviour. On April 23, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Thierbach agreed to a reprimand. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Jason Tod Tryssenaar

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 2

DISPOSITION Reprimand

In January 2014, a district reported that Mr. Tryssenaar misused sick leave for a personal matter. On May 1, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Mr. Tryssenaar agreed to a reprimand. ←

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Verena Colleen Joy Wilhelmson

AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct & Conduct Unbecoming/Standards 1 and 2

DISPOSITION Certificate cancelled for non-payment of the annual fee/Certificate suspended for 32 months

In February 2011, an independent school reported that Ms. Wilhelmson failed to use effective classroom management techniques with kindergarten and Grade 4 students. She also called a student a bully and stated that she refused to have the student in her class. In addition, Ms. Wilhelmson engaged in inappropriate and unprofessional off-duty conduct that included engaging in sexual activity on two occasions, in a manner where members of the community may have seen or subsequently learned of the events. On one of the occasions, the activity involved an 18-year-old male student from another school. Ms. Wilhelmson acknowledged she has medical conditions, including substance abuse, which affected her conduct. On November 1, 2013, her certificate was cancelled for non-payment of fees. On April 10, 2014, the Commissioner executed a CRA in which Ms. Wilhelmson agreed to a 32-month retroactive suspension. ←

Hearing Decisions

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Behroz Madadi

DECISION Supreme Court of BC Reasons for Judgment dated June 12, 2014

AGREEMENT BC College of Teachers decisions set aside

DISPOSITION No compensation or costs awarded

The BC College of Teachers pursued disciplinary action as a result of verbal interactions that occurred when Mr. Madadi worked as a teacher on call in 2001. In 2005, Mr. Madadi failed to pay his College fees, which led to the cancellation of his membership. When he applied for reinstatement in 2006, the College declined to process his application until the discipline matter was resolved. The matter did not proceed to a hearing until 2009 and 2010, and a decision on penalty was made in 2011. Mr. Madadi was prohibited from receiving a teaching certificate for one year from the date of the penalty decision. In 2012, Mr. Madadi filed a complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal (BCHRT) alleging that the TRB discriminated against him with respect to his membership on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin and religion. The BCHRT dismissed Mr. Madadi's complaint on October 30, 2012. In November 2011, Mr. Madadi filed an appeal to seek various remedies against the College. Among other items, the TRB consented to setting aside two disciplinary decisions, removing them from the website and posting the court's decision on the website. ←



STANDARDS for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in British Columbia

1. Educators value and care for all students and act in their best interests. Educators are responsible for fostering the emotional, esthetic, intellectual, physical, social and vocational development of students. They are responsible for the emotional and physical safety of students. Educators treat students with respect and dignity. Educators respect the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities. Educators have a privileged position of power and trust. They respect confidentiality unless disclosure is required by law. Educators do not abuse or exploit students or minors for personal, sexual, ideological, material or other advantage.

2. Educators are role models who act ethically and honestly. Educators act with integrity, maintaining the dignity and credibility of the profession. They understand that their individual conduct contributes to the perception of the profession as a whole. Educators are accountable for their conduct while on duty, as well as off duty, where that conduct has an effect on the education system. Educators have an understanding of the education system in BC and the law as it relates to their duties.

3. Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development. Educators are knowledgeable about how children develop as learners and as social beings, and demonstrate an understanding of individual learning differences and special needs. This knowledge is used to assist educators in making decisions about curriculum, instruction, assessment and classroom management.

4. Educators value the involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools. Educators understand, respect and support the role of parents and the community in the education of students. Educators communicate effectively and in a timely manner with parents and consider their advice on matters pertaining to their children.

5. Educators implement effective practices in areas of classroom management, planning, instruction, assessment, evaluation and reporting. Educators have the knowledge and skills to facilitate learning for all students and know when to seek additional support for their practice. Educators thoughtfully consider all aspects of teaching, from planning through reporting, and understand the relationships among them. Educators employ a variety of instructional and assessment strategies.

6. Educators have a broad knowledge base and understand the subject areas they teach. Educators understand the curricular, conceptual and methodological foundations of education and of the subject areas they teach. Educators must be able to communicate effectively in English or French. Educators teach students to understand relevant curricula in a Canadian, Aboriginal, and global context. Educators convey the values, beliefs and knowledge of our democratic society.

7. Educators engage in career-long learning. Educators engage in professional development and reflective practice, understanding that a hallmark of professionalism is the concept of professional growth over time. Educators develop and refine personal philosophies of education, teaching and learning that are informed by theory and practice. Educators identify their professional needs and work to meet those needs individually and collaboratively.

8. Educators contribute to the profession. Educators support, mentor or encourage other educators and those preparing to enter the profession. Educators contribute their expertise to activities offered by their schools, districts, professional organizations, post-secondary institutions or contribute in other ways.
