TURNING A SCHOOL AROUND

SHIFTS IN ELL PRACTICE
STORYTELLING APP SUPPORTS MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS
AN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS
CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND ANGER MANAGEMENT
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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ON THE COVER
Leslie Lee, Principal
George Jay Elementary, Victoria
George Jay Elementary is a vibrant, diverse and multicultural K-5 elementary school where the majority of students are meeting benchmark expectations in literacy and numeracy, students have access to rich and varied technology, and innovative teaching practices contribute to a caring academic community that strives to meet the needs of all learners.

It’s also located in the postal code with the highest number of children living in poverty in Victoria. Almost half of its students speak a language other than English at home, approximately one-third are of Aboriginal ancestry and over 12 percent of students have a special education designation.

Educators at George Jay have worked diligently to alter misconceptions about the school. “When new parents ask me about the school community, I say ‘Don’t judge us by our postal code but by the work we are doing, and what our parent community is saying,’” says Leslie Lee, who is now in her fifth year as principal and who is one of the recipients of the 2014 Canada’s Outstanding Principals award from The Learning Partnership.

She says that when she came to George Jay in the fall of 2009, she spent many months observing what was going on, listening to her teaching staff and identifying areas for change. “I arrived to a building that was often very busy and could be unsettling for the children and their parents, as well as staff. We worked to establish trust by taking care of the emotional and social culture of our school. And we created a shared vision to guide our development based on the motto ‘Learning to care, caring to learn’ – with everything else coming from that moral imperative.”

With a shared vision and values in place, Lee focused on her first priority: making sure the school of 255 students was a calm and safe environment. She and her team revised the school’s code of conduct to clarify expectations for student behaviour, and they began using a restitution-based and restorative justice approach to address unwanted behaviour.
The school’s full-time youth and family counsellor offers programs to all students focused on social skills development and self-regulation, and she provides targeted support to specific students as needed. George Jay’s family liaison counsellor, working out of a designated parent room at the school, offers parenting courses and distributes donated food and clothing to families in need. An outreach centre at nearby Quadra Village Community Centre also maintains and builds connections with families. The result of this support network is that Lee now addresses approximately 75 percent fewer behaviour referrals annually than when she first began.

School satisfaction surveys also show that students now perceive George Jay as being a safer and more inclusive community. In 2013/2014, only three percent of students surveyed said they had been bullied, teased or picked on “many times” or “all the time” at school, compared to 14 percent in 2009/2010. Eighty-seven percent said they knew how they were expected to behave at school compared to 66 percent in 2009/2010, and 94 percent of students said they respected people who were different from them, compared to just 77 percent in the earlier survey.

Lee says that once the school was on its way to becoming a safer and more respectful environment, she and her team turned their focus to academics. “We looked at the data collectively and determined there was room for improvement in numeracy, literacy and reading. What we were doing was simply not working.”

So the staff implemented school-wide targets in specific areas to improve the number of students meeting or exceeding expectations. Teachers were involved in collaborative planning and adopted common strategies, such as the picture word inductive model and sheltered instruction observation protocol, strategies often used to support ELL students. School-wide assessment is used to guide instruction.

Vice-principal Terri Smith says that George Jay’s teachers, by necessity, must become experts at using differentiated instructional strategies. “There are multiple levels of learning happening in each class, with the added layer of addressing the often complex social and emotional needs of our students and the fact that we have a large and growing population of ELL students.”

With a targeted goal to improve students’ non-fiction writing, the administration scheduled school-wide writing days three times a year to gather data that could be used as a starting point for conversations about what was working and where changes needed to be made. Smith, Lee and resource teacher Marcy O’Keefe have also coordinated their scheduling so that three teachers at a time can work collaboratively and develop more effective approaches to improving students’ non-fiction writing.

In math, George Jay introduced the JUMP Math curriculum, and while it’s not the only approach used to teach math, it provides a baseline foundation that ensures specific skills are taught at each grade level. Smith says that the incremental and repetitive approach of JUMP, where concepts and skills are revisited often, has been instrumental in improving achievement levels in math. “Many of our students have gaps in their learning, so the JUMP approach – which breaks concepts down into small and manageable increments – consolidates their deeper understanding of the material.”

The Foundation Skills Assessment is another source of data that Lee and her team use to measure achievement. They are very heartened by the definite upward trend: last year, 77, 75 and 65 percent of grade four students met or exceeded expectations in reading, writing and numeracy, respectively, compared to 25, 44 and 26 percent in 2013 and 43, 18 and 14 percent in 2010 when Lee first arrived.

As Lee and Smith talk about their passion for the school and their work, both educators return to the saying “it takes a village to raise a child.” Lee is very grateful for the strong and lasting partnerships between the school and the many local community organizations and businesses that have helped with everything from building a new playground to volunteering with the school’s breakfast program.

Smith extols the contributions of the small and passionate group of parents involved in the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). Last year, for example, the PAC president obtained the rights to develop a play based on the popular animated television series Raven Tales, and she and a playwright friend wrote the script for a school play called The Flood. The parent secured free rehearsal and performance space for students at the Belfry Theatre, another parent made all the costumes, a school district resource teacher taught Aboriginal drumming and dance to the students and countless others donated time to the production.
Requirement for a Criminal Record Check

The Criminal Records Review Act requires that all Ministry of Education teaching certificate holders undergo a criminal record check, which includes a vulnerable sector check, every five years. The Teacher Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Education facilitates this requirement by collecting the authorization for a check and submitting it to the Criminal Records Review Program of the Ministry of Justice, which performs the check.

If you are a certificate holder and have not authorized a criminal record check in the last five years through the former BC College of Teachers, the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools or the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB), you are required to give your authorization for a check by completing a form and submitting it to the TRB before December 31, 2014. To submit your authorization now, please visit the TRB website, click on the Certificate Services tab, choose Criminal Record Check in the menu and follow the instructions. If you are unsure when your next authorization is due, you can confirm the date by logging in to the Certificate Holders’ Area on the TRB website.

BC Teachers’ Council Meeting Dates

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. The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for January 22 and 23, 2015. Visit the TRB website to learn more about the mandate, composition and future meetings of the Council.

Six BC Principals Recognized for Outstanding Work

Six BC administrators were recognized earlier this year by The Learning Partnership as some of Canada’s outstanding principals for 2014. Leslie Lee of George Jay Elementary School in Victoria, John McMahon of École George Pringle Elementary in West Kelowna, Paul McNaughton of CABE Secondary School in Coquitlam, Dan Miles of J.V. Humphries Elementary and Secondary School in Kaslo, Sean Nosek of Thomas Haney Secondary School in Maple Ridge, and Jamie Robinson of Glenrosa Middle School in West Kelowna received the award along with 34 other educators from across Canada. The Learning Partnership is a national not-for-profit organization that champions public education.

Learn is Online Only

The TRB has changed the format of Learn magazine. Starting with the winter 2014 issue, Learn will be an online-only magazine. It will no longer be printed and will no longer carry advertising. Moving to an online-only version of the magazine is beneficial from an environmental and cost-saving perspective. Certificate holders will receive an email when each issue is available on the TRB’s website.
ELL at a glance

- More than 25 percent of BC residents have a mother tongue other than English or French. This varies from community to community – in Metro Vancouver, for example, almost half the population has a mother tongue other than English.

- The Ministry of Education has replaced the term ESL (English as a Second Language) with ELL (English Language Learning) to acknowledge the fact that many students come to BC knowing more than two languages before learning English.

- ELL also encompasses ESD (English as a Second Dialect) students – those students who have dialectical difficulties and require support to improve their acquisition of standard English.

- Approximately 65,000 students are designated as ELL in BC’s public and independent schools – just over 10 percent of the student population.

- In 2013/2014, the Ministry of Education reported that of the top 10 languages spoken at home, English is spoken in 76 percent of homes, a Chinese language in 7.1 percent, Punjabi in 5.1 percent and Tagalog in 1.6 percent.

- ELL programs are provided in 25 school districts.
It is rather telling that, in the midst of being interviewed about English language learners, principal Jenny Rankin found out that a Nigerian family who had just moved to Prince George would be enrolling their three children at her school, Southridge Elementary, this fall.

The family from Nigeria is just one of many families who are moving to British Columbia to pursue a new life and new opportunities. These three children will join the 40 to 60 other students at Southridge who receive support in English Language Learning (ELL). The school of 350 students is home to many children who have recently moved to Prince George from around the world – and who often arrive with varying degrees of English fluency.

Moving to a new country is a major event, particularly when it involves immersion in a new language and culture. As children from families who do not speak English enroll in school, educators are asking how they can best help students make a successful transition to their new home.

Historically, many schools used a pull-out model of ELL instruction. Mudi Zhao, now a Grade 12 student at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary in Vancouver, says she was often frustrated by the pull-out instruction she received in the first five years of her education after her family moved to Vancouver from Shanghai when she was four.

“Pull-out activities made you feel like the odd one out – everyone knew you were not great at English and it made you feel down. Instead of doing art or other classes, you would be pulled out for English language instruction with other kids. When you’re older, especially, you just wanted to stay with your friends in the regular class. It would have been nice if the teachers could have had the ESL students just do a different activity in the class itself or maybe worked with them after school or at lunch.”

With some exceptions, there’s been a shift away from the pull-out model experienced by students like Zhao towards a model based on in-class support. This approach varies from school to school, but generally involves a learning assistance or ELL teacher working alongside the classroom teacher with a targeted group of children.
“We’ve found that in-class support works well,” says Rankin. “The child can stay in the classroom and they don’t have that anxiety that they are doing different things from the rest of the class. One-on-one instruction still happens, but it happens in class and is supported with real and authentic work.”

She notes that Southridge’s part-time ELL teacher often works with a group of students who may not actually be identified as ELL or in need of learning assistance but who require additional learning support in one or more areas. This blended model allows for greater flexibility, helping meet the specific learning needs of a larger group of students.

Darlene Shandola is the principal of Richmond’s Spul’u’kwuks Elementary School, where more than half of the 410 students receive designated ELL support.

Specialist teachers are part of the school’s resource team, moving from class to class to work with individual students or groups of students. Shandola says that for older students assessed as requiring Level 1 support (those who have minimal English skills), a pull-out class is appropriate, whereas a Level 1 kindergarten student can generally function very well within the oral-language environment of the regular classroom.

She also points out that with her school’s high number of ELL students, “all of our teachers see themselves as language instructors, and they have adopted teaching strategies that help all learners – not just English language learners.”

These strategies include extensive use of visuals, which she says helps children who are visual learners as well as those who are picking up new vocabulary. Small group work is also frequently used, so that students are surrounded by the verbal language of their peers. And differentiated learning activities allow ELL students to demonstrate their learning at a level appropriate for them – such as through a picture and brief explanatory text, while others might be asked to produce a two-page essay with diagrams.

Both Shandola and Rankin say that schools have a responsibility to ELL students that extends beyond language support to include introducing them to Canadian culture. The two principals also acknowledge the significant contributions of ELL students, who bring a mix of perspectives and cultural experiences to the classroom.

“We have an Aboriginal education worker in our school who supports our work on Aboriginal culture,” says Rankin, “and we try and integrate the cultural background of our ELL students in a similar way.”

ELL students often straddle two cultures – the world at home and the world at school – and schools strive to acknowledge the cultural perspectives that ELL students bring to the classroom while helping them make the transition into Canadian society.

Vivian Lee is a Grade 12 Vancouver International Baccalaureate student in Vancouver who came to Canada from Taiwan when she was in Grade 3. Her personal experience underlines how important it is for educators to be both respectful of students’ cultural backgrounds while at the same time supporting them to move out of their comfort zones. For example, Lee says that students who have spent time in Asian education systems may not be as confident speaking up in class or voicing opinions.

“It’s hard to be comfortable giving presentations. I struggled with pronunciation problems for a while and I would also get laughed at, which was very embarrassing.”

A lot of hard work helped her smooth out her spoken English, and she says that the encouraging atmosphere of the enrichment program she attended in grades eight and nine “helped get me out of my shell and made me more comfortable speaking with other people and giving public presentations.”

Lee notes that each ELL student’s journey to English fluency is unique. “It was harder for my older sister who was in Grade 9 when we moved here,” says Ms. Lee. “My younger sister, on the other hand, started school in Canada when she was five and she is much more assimilated into western culture.”
Thanks to a new app developed by two education professors at Simon Fraser University, students now have a free and useful digital tool that allows them to write and illustrate stories in multiple languages.

The idea for ScribJab came from work that SFU professor Kelleen Toohey was doing with a teacher in Surrey in 2010. The teacher asked her students to interview their grandparents about their lives, and to then write the life stories in both English and Punjabi so that the grandparents could more easily read alongside their grandchildren.

“The books were so interesting and the response was so positive that we really saw the need to provide kids with easily accessible tools for creating multilingual books,” says SFU education professor Diane Dagenais, who, like Toohey, has conducted extensive research into language and literacy in multilingual students.

With a grant from Canadian Heritage to develop a website and iPad app, the two worked alongside web developers at SFU and launched the free book-creating app in January 2014. ScribJab is not a translation tool or a grammar checker. Rather, it allows students to write stories in English or French and one additional language so that they can then easily share them with others. Students can also create visuals to accompany the story and record an audio file of themselves reading what they’ve written. Stories are saved online, where others can read or listen to the stories, as well as post comments and feedback.

Although the two researchers originally intended the app for students between the ages of 10 and 13, they have been delighted to learn that it is being used by those much younger and much older.

“An ESL teacher told us that she used ScribJab when working with a teenage boy studying sedimentary rocks in science. He used ScribJab to illustrate his knowledge of the topic, labelling the illustrations he developed in both his first language and English,” says Dagenais.

Through their work on multilingual literacy, Toohey and Dagenais saw great value in having a tool that allows students to make meaning and express themselves through text, images and audio.

The response has been excellent, with the app enthusiastically welcomed by students and teachers around the world. At latest count, more than 100 stories were posted online in over 20 languages. A new research grant is now enabling the two professors to delve more deeply into the data and explore the many ways in which their app is being used.

“It’s been really exciting to see the interest from teachers, administrators, parents and students, and to read the stories and listen to the voices of people reading their stories in their heritage languages,” says Dagenais.

To find out more, visit scribjab.com.
Kristjen Hull says his students are so keen to be in school that they often complain that holidays and professional development days interfere with their learning. “Many of them – particularly the girls – have never had the opportunity to attend school before and they are just so eager to be here.”

Hull is a teacher with the Bridge Program, which is part of Surrey’s innovative Welcome Centre. The centrally located resource centre is operated jointly by the school district and the Government of Canada to provide resources and settlement support to new immigrants and their children in Surrey.

Now in its fifth year, the Bridge Program targets at-risk youth between the ages of 15 and 19. Most are refugees who have experienced war, conflict or trauma; other students in the program often come from rural areas and have had little, if any, formal education.

“We’re trying to soften their landing in high school,” says Hull, who explains that without the support offered by the Bridge Program, the culture shock of being dropped into a typical classroom would simply be overwhelming for students.

The Bridge Program operates on a continuous intake and outtake cycle. There are usually around 15 students in the program at a time, and Hull says most students stay with the program for two or three months before they are placed in an English Language Learning (ELL) program in a local secondary school.

Hull helps his students improve their conversational English by introducing them to Canadian life and culture. “If you grew up in a refugee camp or remote rural area, a supermarket is a completely foreign concept,” he says. Field trips on public transit to grocery stores and malls, recreation centres and skating rinks are typical – and guest speakers introduce students to other facets of life in Canada, such as recycling.

His team includes a settlement worker and multicultural worker, and he frequently draws on the expertise of the Welcome Centre’s 50 staff members (who come from diverse cultural backgrounds and together speak more than 30 languages), including a counsellor and psychologist.

Ongoing assessment of how well the student is transitioning to Canadian life determines when the student is ready to move into a high school. “If we see that they are used to Canadian schooling, adapting well to the new culture, picking things up quickly and completing their homework, then we’ll look for an appropriate placement for them within the Surrey school district,” says Hull.

He maintains contact with the students, visiting them at their new school to make sure they are doing well. If there are any issues, the students can always go back to the Bridge Program until they are ready to return to the larger high school environment.

Hull says it’s a very rewarding job – one that enables him to work with students as they gain confidence, succeed in school, make friends, start their first jobs and integrate into Canadian society. He also speaks of the important work of sharing the Canadian ideals of justice, equality and opportunity for all with his students.

It’s not always easy. He notes that culture clashes can sometimes lead to tension between students. This can occur, for instance, when students come from countries that have been in conflict with each other or if students hold prejudices against those from different races or backgrounds. Hull and his colleagues take the time to work with the students so that they can appreciate the common values they share and broaden their worldview.

“As a group, we also model that there is a better way. Our 50 staff members represent dozens of different languages and cultures, and the students constantly see us working together as a team and witness how we interact with each other with respect.”

Surrey’s Welcome Centre

Centrally located in downtown Surrey, the Welcome Centre takes a holistic approach to helping newcomers to the community. In addition to providing ELL assessment and instruction to students, the Centre offers services that support the whole family. “We believe that a settled family helps ensure settled students,” says Assistant Manager Meredith Verma.

A team of settlement and multicultural workers connect with families and help them navigate the world of housing, banking, transportation, shopping and more. Multicultural workers also introduce families to the staff at their children’s school and inform them about school-based expectations and the values of the Canadian education system.

You can learn more at welcomecentre.sd36.bc.ca.

Kristjen Hull works with immigrant students at the Welcome Centre
PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT ADVISORY:
Conflict resolution and anger management

By the Honourable Bruce Preston, Commissioner for Teacher Regulation

A significant number of complaints from members of the public and reports from school boards arise from situations in which teachers lose their temper. Dealing with these complaints and reports has impressed on me the challenges that teachers face in today’s classroom compared to the distant past when I was a student. Today’s students are more assertive than I recall, which may be interpreted by teachers as being confrontational, whether or not that is the students’ intent. In the situations that I am alerted to, the most common flashpoints arise in less structured school situations. For instance, difficulties are more likely to arise outside the classroom in hallways or in music and shop classes than in math or English classes.

Often, incidents that lead to complaints or reports arise from misperceptions or misunderstandings. In the lower elementary grades, a student’s misunderstanding of a teacher’s instructions can lead to physical or verbal incidents. In the upper grades, students who react inappropriately when dealing with authority may intentionally or unintentionally provoke incidents. An intemperate reaction by a teacher may constitute misconduct and have disciplinary consequences.

Incidents of serious or repeated misconduct – that is, misconduct that represents a marked departure from the conduct to be expected of a reasonable teacher in the circumstances – can have a profound effect on both the teacher and the student. Every teacher should be equipped to deal effectively with conflict in the school setting. Teachers who feel that they are not equipped to manage certain situations may want to have a dialogue with another teacher, a mentor, a master teacher or an administrator for guidance. It is important that teachers build relationships with their colleagues and seek assistance before any lines are crossed.

Usually, in the course of the discipline process, teachers who have lost control and committed acts of misconduct will be required, as part of the consent resolution process, to take anger management programs offered by the Justice Institute or, when those programs are not practically available, counselling on anger management from private psychologists or counsellors. One of the counsellors practising in this area described the goals of his counselling as follows: “In helping individuals who have anger issues, my goal is to help clients identify internal emotional states, know their triggers and create a ‘fire drill plan’ – the ability to notice the physiological signs of upset and self-manage before things get out of control.”

The course outline from the Justice Institute course on anger management reads, in part:

The course … presents theory, skills and approaches for managing one’s own angry feelings and responding to anger in others. Angry, hostile or resistant feelings and behaviours are commonly generated in conflict situations. Efforts to resolve the conflict may be ineffective if these feelings are ignored or denied. Topics such as anger triggers, self-management, defusing skills, the origins of personal expressions of anger and disengaging from angry encounters are explored.

Today’s schools are increasingly placing a premium on the development of interpersonal skills by teachers. Conflict management skills should be part of every teacher’s repertoire.
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.

Consent Resolution Agreements

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Martin Gerard Philip Careen
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Certificate cancelled/Former certificate holder will not apply for a teaching certificate or letter of permission

In July 2009, the BC College of Teachers (College) received a report from a school that employed Mr. Careen. He had been charged with sexual exploitation and luring under sections 153(1)(b) and 172.1(1) of the Criminal Code in relation to a student he taught. On July 13, 2011, Mr. Careen was convicted of sexual exploitation. The count of luring was stayed. Mr. Careen’s employment was terminated, and his certificate was cancelled on January 7, 2012 under section 91(1)(b) of the Teachers Act. On March 27, 2014, Mr. Careen entered into a consent resolution agreement in which he 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 at any time in the future. 

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Sean Jeffrey Carter
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In May 2011, the College received a district report indicating that Mr. Carter failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students and staff. His conduct included rubbing or squeezing the shoulders of female students, calling female students “honey” or “hon,” and on one occasion commenting to a colleague that a female staff person was “sexy” and “hot.” The district suspended Mr. Carter without pay for one day, in view of his taking a boundaries course, accepting reassignment to another school and writing letters of apology to those impacted by his conduct. On January 14, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Carter agreed to a reprimand. 

Ensuring that concerns about the competence and conduct of certificate holders are addressed independently, fairly, expeditiously and in the public interest.
CERTIFICATE HOLDER Andrew Russell Coates
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for two weeks/Certificate holder will complete anger management counselling

In November 2012, the Commissioner received a district report indicating that Mr. Coates used physical force on a male Grade 9 student by placing his hands on the student’s chest and shoving him. He later apologized to the student. Mr. Coates was charged with assault under section 266 of the Criminal Code, and the district suspended him without pay. Mr. Coates pleaded guilty to assault and was given an absolute discharge and required to pay a victim fine surcharge of $100. The district suspended Mr. Coates without pay for one month. On March 21, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Coates agreed to a two-week suspension of his certificate, to complete anger management counselling and to provide a written report from a counselling psychologist that states his anger management issues have been appropriately addressed.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Mary Lois Allison Gair
AGREEMENT Conduct Unbecoming and/or Incompetence/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Limitations

In September and October 2013, the TRB received district reports indicating that Ms. Gair failed to comply with a medical monitoring agreement between herself and the district and took steps to hide her lack of compliance. The district suspended her without pay for 60 working days and required her to sign a Return to Work Agreement with the district including monitoring provisions. On March 31, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Ms. Gair agreed to a reprimand and to limitations on her certificate. Prior to her return to teaching, Ms. Gair agreed to attend a medical re-evaluation, to provide a report that she is continuing to comply with the treatment plan and is fit to teach, and to follow the treatment plan.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER James Alexander Gordon
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will complete courses

In May 2012, the Commissioner received a district report indicating that Mr. Gordon physically restrained two male students, pushing one toward lockers and pinning the other against a locker. Mr. Gordon met with one of the students and the student’s father regarding the incident, during which Mr. Gordon apologized for his conduct. The district issued a letter of reprimand. On January 30, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Gordon agreed to a reprimand and to complete conflict resolution and anger management courses.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER David Burdette Haynes
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In July 2013, the TRB received a district report indicating that Mr. Haynes inappropriately used sick leave when he called in sick but travelled out of the province. Mr. Haynes denied misusing the leave despite his having submitted a request to the district in 2012, which was denied, for professional development funds to attend an Expo in Las Vegas around the time he called in sick. The district issued a letter of discipline and deducted five days of salary from Mr. Haynes. He subsequently retired from teaching. On January 21, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Haynes agreed to a reprimand.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Murray Charles Howes
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In April and June 2013, the TRB received two district reports regarding Mr. Howes. He rented the school’s weight room for the month of July 2012 to run a CrossFit program but failed to pay for the room rental until he received a notice of investigation from the district. Mr. Howes
also removed weight room equipment without authorization after he opened his own CrossFit business and new equipment did not arrive. He later returned the school’s equipment and apologized. In addition, he used the school’s website to advertise his business. The district suspended Mr. Howes without pay for two days. In April 2013, Mr. Howes applied for professional development leave to volunteer at a CrossFit regional competition as a judge on June 7, 2013. The request was denied. On June 6, 2013, Mr. Howes claimed he would be unable to work on June 7 because of illness, and he attended the CrossFit competition, later admitting to wrongdoing. The district suspended Mr. Howes without pay for two weeks. On April 1, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Howes agreed to a reprimand. 

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Michael Robert Jones
AGREEMENT Incompetence/Standards 3 and 5
DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for three months retroactively/Conditions

In May 2010, the College received a district report indicating that Mr. Jones had been dismissed as a result of three less than satisfactory teaching evaluations. He took a leave of absence from September 1, 2011 through June 30, 2014 and was not eligible to return to active duties during that time. On February 6, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Jones agreed to a three-month retroactive suspension starting July 1, 2010 and that a condition be placed on his certificate. When he returns to teaching, Mr. Jones will advise the TRB and, after he has been employed as a classroom teacher for at least 10 months, he agreed that his principal or vice-principal will report to the Commissioner on his work and the learning situation in his class. 

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Manjit Kaur Khun Khuna
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In April 2012, the TRB received a district report indicating that Ms. Khun Khuna engaged in inappropriate conduct, including yelling and clapping her hands to get the attention of her Grade 6 students and using language that may have made her students uncomfortable. The district issued a written reprimand. On January 6, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Ms. Khun Khuna agreed to a reprimand. 

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Sylvia Marie Louise Pawluk
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will complete a conflict resolution course

In March 2012, the TRB received a district report indicating that Ms. Pawluk used inappropriate physical force with a Grade 5 female student by grabbing the hood of the student’s coat and using force to pull the student into a classroom. The zipper of the coat left a red mark on the student’s neck. The incident occurred in the presence of other students. The district suspended Ms. Pawluk for two months without pay, and she resigned. On January 21, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Ms. Pawluk agreed to a reprimand and to successfully complete a course on conflict resolution. 

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Victor Arthur Penner
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will complete the TRB’s workshop on professional identity and boundaries

In July 2010, the College received a district report indicating that Mr. Penner had made inappropriate and sexually suggestive comments to students. The district issued a written reprimand and required Mr. Penner to attend a Boundaries/Professional Issues Workshop offered through the BC Teachers’ Federation. The district later issued a verbal warning to Mr. Penner after he admitted to and apologized for making derogatory statements to a colleague in front of students. Mr. Penner agreed to transfer to another assignment in the district. On March 6, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Penner agreed to a reprimand and to complete the TRB’s workshop on professional identity and boundaries.
CERTIFICATE HOLDER Stephen Kenneth Ridenour
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder will complete the TRB’s workshop on professional identity and boundaries

In September 2012, the TRB received a complaint from the parents of a female Grade 9 student. Mr. Ridenour made inappropriate comments to a Grade 9 physical education class, which some students interpreted as being sexual references. Some of the comments were directed at the female student. The district issued a letter of expectation. On February 27, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Ridenour agreed to a reprimand and to complete the TRB’s workshop on professional identity and boundaries.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Sukhbinder Kaur Sahota
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In November 2013, the TRB received a district report indicating that Ms. Sahota failed to take reasonable measures to ensure that confidential information was not distributed and she breached the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act when she prepared a work package for her class that mistakenly contained a student’s medical information. The district issued a letter of discipline and suspended Ms. Sahota for five days without pay. On March 10, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Ms. Sahota agreed to a reprimand.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Edward Anthony Sponza
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for two months/Certificate holder will complete the TRB’s workshop on professional identity and boundaries

In June 2012, the TRB received a district report regarding Mr. Sponza. Although he is a certified counsellor, he was hired as a teacher. Mr. Sponza had inappropriate interactions with a female student in her Grade 11 and 12 school years that included providing her with counselling services, having inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature and encouraging her to hug him. He also proposed private counselling services to her and her family outside school hours, contrary to district policy, which she declined. At the end of the school year, Mr. Sponza wrote inappropriate comments in her journal and, after she graduated, sent her inappropriate text messages. In addition, Mr. Sponza displayed inappropriate behaviour with a new teacher when his interactions suggested he was her superior and when he used language with sexual overtones. The district issued a reprimand and directed Mr. Sponza to stop misrepresenting his importance and responsibilities to others, to behave in a professional manner and to develop a plan for improvement. On March 27, 2014, the Commissioner executed the consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Sponza agreed to a two-month suspension of his certificate and to complete the TRB’s workshop on professional identity and boundaries.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER TCR-AD-2014
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

The summary is published without names under section 54(3)(a) of the Teachers Act and in accordance with an order made under section 486.4 of the Criminal Code. In 2011, the former certificate holder engaged in inappropriate conduct and communication with a 17-year-old female student, who was in one of his classes and whom he had taught in previous years. The district suspended him, and his certificate was subsequently cancelled for non-payment of the annual practice fee. In 2014, the former certificate holder entered into a consent resolution agreement in which he 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.
Hearing Decisions

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Michel Brisebois
FINDING Professional Misconduct/Standards 1, 3 and 5
DECISION Reprimand

In December 2013, the hearing panel considered allegations set out in the citation that between September 1, 2010 and December 31, 2012, Mr. Brisebois engaged in inappropriate behaviour directed towards students. On January 22, 2014, the hearing panel issued its findings and determined that Mr. Brisebois breached Standards 1, 3 and 5 and that his conduct constituted professional misconduct. His misconduct included locking his classroom door to prevent late students from entering the class, responding inappropriately to a student who attempted to let late students into the class, and speaking to students in a belittling, sarcastic and disrespectful manner. On April 22, 2014, the panel issued its decision that a reprimand was the appropriate penalty in this case since Mr. Brisebois has retired from teaching and relinquished his certificate in August 2013.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Sharon Gail Freeman
FINDING Conduct does not warrant a finding
DECISION Citation dismissed

In January 2014, the hearing panel considered the allegation set out in the citation that, during a November 2011 public meeting, Ms. Freeman engaged in professional misconduct and/or conduct unbecoming a teacher when she spoke to a child in a disrespectful and/or admonishing way. On February 6, 2014, the hearing panel found that Ms. Freeman's conduct did not amount to a marked departure from the conduct expected of teachers and that it was not serious enough to warrant a finding of professional misconduct or conduct unbecoming a teacher. The panel dismissed the citation.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Mukhtiar Singh Panghali
FINDING Conduct Unbecoming a Teacher
DECISION Certificate cancelled for non-payment of fees/Reprimand/Director of Certification will not issue a certificate for 25 years

In June 2013, the hearing panel inquired into whether the conduct of Mr. Panghali, which resulted in his conviction in the BC Supreme Court in February 2011 of second degree murder and indecent interference with the remains in 2006, leads to a determination that he is guilty of professional misconduct or conduct unbecoming a teacher. On August 6, 2013, the hearing panel issued its findings and determined that the criminal convictions constitute conduct unbecoming a teacher. On January 20, 2014, the panel issued its decision that Mr. Panghali's actions are entirely inconsistent with the standards expected of teachers. It issued a reprimand and ordered that the Director of Certification not issue a certificate to Mr. Panghali for 25 years. His certificate was cancelled in November 2009 for non-payment of fees.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Debra Irene Punshon
FINDING Certificate holder breached Standard 2
DECISION Citation dismissed

In October 2013, the hearing panel considered the allegation set out in the citation that Ms. Punshon engaged in professional misconduct and/or conduct unbecoming a teacher when she was absent from work without proper authorization from the school district. She requested leave for 10 working days and was granted leave for only five; she was then absent from work for five additional days. However, she ensured that her actions did not result in any negative impact on her students or the operation of the school. On December 18, 2013, the hearing panel issued its findings and determined that Ms. Punshon breached Standard 2 but that her conduct was not serious enough to warrant a finding of professional misconduct. The Commissioner had previously conceded that Ms. Punshon's conduct was not conduct unbecoming a teacher. The panel dismissed the citation.
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.