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 provide quality education to students in a safe and nurturing environment 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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IN THIS ISSUE

EXPLORE

4 INSPIRING KINDNESS
Real Acts of Caring promotes altruism among BC students

FEATURES

6 THE DUTY TO REPORT
Protecting the safety of children and youth

9 GET TO KNOW BC'S EDUCATION PARTNERS
Profiles of the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

12 AN EDUCATOR'S JOURNEY
In Profile: Educator Naryn Searcy reflects on incorporating Aboriginal content and pedagogy

IN EVERY ISSUE

8 TRB NEWS

IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

14 A CASE STUDY ON THE STANDARDS
15 DISCIPLINE CASE SUMMARIES

ON THE COVER

Educator Harriette Chang – Central Community Elementary School, Port Coquitlam
Photographer: Hamid Attie
Real Acts of Caring promotes altruism among BC students

Imagine that you’re in line to buy a coffee and a young student offers to pay for your drink. Or that you’re at work doing your job and a student hands you a flower and tells you to have a nice day.

These are just some of the random acts of kindness that you might experience thanks to an initiative that has been growing province-wide over the past 11 years. In December 2005, Harriette Chang read a story to her Grade 4/5 class at Central Community Elementary School in Port Coquitlam about doing something kind without expecting anything in return. That simple action has since inspired thousands of students across BC to get involved in Real Acts of Caring (RAC) within their school and community.
“The students in that first class were so excited about the idea of doing something kind for others,” says Chang. “They loved the idea of performing kind and caring acts in our class, and also within our school and our city. I was thrilled by their enthusiasm and positive energy, but I wanted this to be student-driven, so I just kept asking them how they would make it happen.”

The students had many ideas, including taping posters to Chang’s van and having her drive around town to advertise the idea. With Chang’s support and coaching, they launched a kindness week at the school and then lobbied the mayor of Port Coquitlam to pass a proclamation making RAC a recognized event across the city.

The positive energy and awareness generated by that first year of RAC has fuelled its ongoing growth. On the first day of the 2006-2007 school year, Nicole Dziarmaga, one of the students who had been involved with RAC, came into Chang’s office and said she wanted RAC to expand across the province. With passion, enthusiasm and persistence, she and her fellow students, including Cassandra Stepien, promoted RAC beyond Port Coquitlam. Their initiative resulted in Premier Gordon Campbell passing a provincial proclamation in 2007 declaring a RAC week. RAC Week is now an annual event and will be held in 2017 from February 12 to 18.

Over the past decade, RAC has continued to evolve. In the Port Coquitlam school district, for example, students use RAC week to raise awareness of the initiative, but, as Chang says “we RAC all year long.”

At Maple Creek Middle School in Port Coquitlam – where Chang was a counsellor – over 100 students are involved in RAC initiatives throughout the year. Students choose the activities they want to do, from making weekly visits to a seniors’ care home to handing out flowers or baking treats for teachers or neighbours.

A RAC steering committee – which includes school staff, current students, Dziarmaga and Stepien and two other students from that first group in 2005 – meet monthly to strategize, make decisions and connect with educators and students across the province who are interested in bringing RAC to their schools. The group has received some funding in awards and grants, and many businesses provide items at cost or match RAC fundraising dollar for dollar.

RAC’s success can be assessed on many levels – from tangible legacies like the garden students planted at a seniors’ centre to the boost in confidence for students who learn firsthand the power of making a positive difference.

“As a school counsellor I’ve found I am able to make better connections with some of my students through RAC than would have been possible by pulling them out of their classes for one-on-one counselling sessions,” says Chang. “This is a terrific way to support our students in building their self-esteem and confidence.”

And that, in turn, contributes to a more welcoming school environment. “This program has made our schools safer, happier and friendlier places,” says Chang, who also adds that RAC can play an important role in promoting the new curriculum. Through RAC, students learn to work collaboratively, develop their communication skills, deepen their personal and social competency abilities and connect with the community. ✓

For more information about RAC and how to get involved, please visit realactsofcaring.org. You can share your RAC images and stories on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

LEARN MORE
To read more about the new curriculum, please visit BC’s New Curriculum.
THE DUTY TO REPORT
A shared responsibility to protect the safety of children and youth

We all share responsibility for protecting the safety of children and youth. That’s true of us as individuals, families, communities and members of the education system.

In BC, this responsibility means that if you have reason to believe that a child needs protection as described in the Child, Family and Community Service Act, you must report your concern directly to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

“Sometimes people working in the education system think they need to go to their school administrator first if they are concerned about a child,” says Cory Heavener, Provincial Director of Child Welfare and the Assistant Deputy Minister of Children and Family Development.

“But really, any person who has reason to believe a child needs protection has the legal duty to directly report that concern to the Ministry.”

Heavener clarifies that this applies to anyone who has reason to believe that a child or youth under the age of 19 is in need of protection under Section 13(1) of the Child, Family and Community Service Act because the child or youth has been or is likely to be abused or neglected and the parent is unwilling or unable to protect them. This concern must be reported to the Ministry.

“‘Reason to believe’ simply means that with what you’ve seen or the information you have, you believe that the child may be at risk,” Heavener explains. “You don’t need to be certain and you don’t need proof. We’d rather that you call if you are not sure than wait until you are more certain.”

When does a child need protection?

The Child, Family and Community Service Act states that you must report to the Ministry if you have reason to believe a child needs protection under the following circumstances, which are described in section 13(1) of the Act:

(a) if the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed by the child’s parent;
(b) if the child has been, or is likely to be, sexually abused or exploited by the child’s parent;
(c) if the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited by another person and if the child’s parent is unwilling or unable to protect the child;
(d) if the child has been, or is likely to be, physically harmed because of neglect by the child’s parent;
(e) if the child is emotionally harmed by
   (i) the parent’s conduct, or
   (ii) living in a situation where there is domestic violence by or towards a person with whom the child resides;
(f) if the child is deprived of necessary health care;
(g) if the child’s development is likely to be seriously impaired by a treatable condition and the child’s parent refuses to provide or consent to treatment;
(h) if the child’s parent is unable or unwilling to care for the child and has not made adequate provision for the child’s care;
(i) if the child is or has been absent from home in circumstances that endanger the child’s safety or well-being;
(j) if the child’s parent is dead and adequate provision has not been made for the child’s care;
(k) if the child has been abandoned and adequate provision has not been made for the child’s care;
(l) if the child is in the care of a director or another person by agreement and the child’s parent is unwilling or unable to resume care when the agreement is no longer in force.

Warning signs of abuse or neglect

Keeping children and youth safe means that we need to watch for the warning signs of abuse or neglect. Sometimes a child or youth may tell you directly that they are being physically abused, emotionally harmed, sexually abused or exploited, or neglected. However,
they may also tell you this indirectly, by asking questions or describing their own experience as that of a third party, such as by stating that a “friend’s” parents are abusive. You may also notice signs of abuse or neglect from the child’s physical appearance or behaviour that lead you to think something is not quite right. This could include bruising, welts or burns, age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, severe depression or anxiety, or poor school attendance. These warning signs do not, on their own, necessarily suggest that a child is in an unsafe situation. But if there is a cluster of indicators that lead you to believe that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected, it is your legal duty to report your concern.

**How to report suspected abuse or neglect**

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, phone 911. If the child is not in immediate danger, you can phone the Ministry of Children and Family Development 24 hours a day, at 1 800 663-9122. Your call will be answered by a child welfare worker who will ask you a series of questions to assess the situation and gather the information they need about the child. Although you can report your concern anonymously, it is helpful to let the child welfare worker know your name, phone number and relationship to the child or youth. This can be particularly important when you are calling in your role as an educator of the child, as the child welfare worker may want to follow up with you to gather additional information.

**What happens after you call**

“When we receive a call, we review all of the information and any other history we may have with the child or family,” says Heavener. “Depending on the situation, we may contact the family or others to clarify information and then determine the most appropriate response. Our goal is to take the least disruptive measures possible and to support the child to stay in their home or in a safe place with others.”

If the child is in immediate danger, the child welfare worker will take immediate action. If there is no immediate risk of harm, the child welfare worker may offer support services such as counselling or parenting programs or refer the family or child to a community agency. The Ministry can also conduct an investigation if the child welfare worker believes the youth is at risk and that providing support services is not sufficient to protect the child’s safety. The investigation can include interviewing the child and family, and gathering additional information from service providers, including those in health care, law enforcement and education.

**Educators are essential partners**

Heavener says that educators play a very significant role when it comes to keeping children safe because of the impact they have on the lives of children and youth. “Educators are involved with kids, day after day,” says Heavener. “This puts them in a unique and trusted position to observe children and to detect changes in students’ physical well-being or emotional behaviour. We rely on their expertise and the mutual sharing of information so that we can gather as much information as possible about children at risk, make an assessment and decide on the most appropriate response given the situation.”

**Reporting a concern**

If you have reason to believe that a child under the age of 19 has been or is likely to be abused or neglected, you must report the suspected abuse or neglect to the Ministry of Children and Family Development by calling 1 800 663-9122. If the child is in immediate danger, call 911. Failing to report that a child is in need of protection is a criminal offence.

**LEARN MORE**

The [B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect for Service Providers](#) is a useful resource for those who interact with children and youth in their professional roles, including educators. It describes roles and responsibilities, how to identify child abuse or neglect, and the steps to follow to respond to suspected abuse or neglect.
NEWS + NOTICES
FROM THE TRB

REQUIREMENT FOR 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 certificate holders fulfilling this requirement by collecting the authorization for a criminal record 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. Once certificate holders have authorized the check, some certificate holders may need to also provide fingerprints. If this is the case, the Criminal Records Review Program will contact you with instructions on how to proceed. Note that there may be wait times for processing authorizations and/or fingerprint submissions. Therefore, if your next authorization is due, it is important that you authorize your check through the TRB immediately and then complete any fingerprinting requirement well in advance of the deadline. Certificate holders who fail to authorize a check or provide fingerprints as required will have their teaching certificates suspended and eventually cancelled.

To submit your authorization now, please visit the Criminal Record Check section under the Certificate Services tab on the TRB website 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.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS’ COUNCIL MEETING DATES

The British Columbia Teachers’ Council meetings are open to the public and are held at the TRB 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 February 2 and 3, 2017. Visit the TRB website to learn more about the Standards for Educators in BC and the mandate, composition and future meetings of the Council.

CERTIFICATE HOLDERS, PLEASE MAINTAIN THE ACCURACY OF YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Your up-to-date contact information allows us to inform you of changes to standards or regulations and ensures you receive notices and news that could affect you as a BC educator. Updating your contact information is easy. Log in to the Certificate Holders’ Area of the TRB website and edit your profile. Remember to save your changes and log out when you have finished.

You can find more services for certificate holders on the TRB website.
GET TO KNOW BC’S EDUCATION PARTNERS

BC’s education system is strengthened by the significant contributions of our many education partner groups. In this new ongoing feature, we’ll profile BC’s education partners to learn about the work they do to enhance education throughout the province.

In this issue, we spoke with Joe Pierre, vice-president of the First Nations Education Steering Committee, and John Bird, president of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils.

First Nations Education Steering Committee

**FOUNDED** The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) was founded in 1992 by participants at a provincial First Nations education conference at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre.

**MEMBERS** FNESC is directed by a board of 116 First Nations community representatives from across BC.

**PROFILE** The organization’s mandate is to “facilitate discussion about education matters affecting First Nations in BC by disseminating information and soliciting input from First Nations. The primary goal is to promote and support the provision of quality education to First Nations learners in BC.” FNESC does this by working at the provincial level to provide services in the areas of research, communications, information dissemination, advocacy, program administration and networking. Through a formal protocol, First Nations leadership bodies have recognized FNESC’s commitment in advancing quality education for all First Nations students in BC.

**WEBSITE** fnesc.ca

**PHONE** 1 877 422-3672

Learn spoke with Joe Pierre, vice-president of FNESC.

**What does FNESC do?**

We make sure that the education issues that impact First Nations learners are understood by different levels of government, and we provide a voice for First Nations education. A big piece of our work is building partnerships, both with provincial and federal governments and with First Nations across BC, as well as with other education groups. Our work also encompasses research, communication, information-sharing and advocacy.

**What are some important milestones or successes in the history of FNESC?**

We achieved legal recognition of our authority to be decision-makers in the education of our children, protected in federal legislation (in 2006) and provincial legislation (in 2007). Although there have been issues with the realization of the initiative, this legal recognition was significant in recognizing First Nations jurisdiction over education.

The signing of the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement in 2012 was an important milestone that aimed to improve achievement rates for First Nations students. FNESC worked with the First Nations Schools Association and the provincial and federal governments on this agreement, which provides for a flexible funding model for on-reserve schools.

Another success has been our work with the BC Ministry of Education to develop the English 12 First Peoples course in 2008. The province’s post-secondary institutions recognize this course as equivalent to English 12. In 2010, we were instrumental in developing English 10 and 11 First Peoples.
Why is it crucial that FNESC be involved as an education partner?

For a long time, First Nations were not involved as partners in the education system, and others had ideas about how we should be educated. There is a quote I like from Diogenes: “The foundation of every state is the education of its youth.” We were literally blocked from building our foundation, and the education of our children was being influenced by outside ideas and ideologies.

Education is integral to self-government and to the realization of rebuilding First Nations communities. Providing a voice for First Nations students is important not just for Aboriginal students – it’s also important that FNESC have a voice in the education of all the families who have come to live with us in our territories. The Harvard Institute has published many studies showing that initiatives that are good for the local First Nations population generally benefit the region as well (the opposite is not always true). Recent changes to the curricula to bring in First Nations content, for example, are good for First Nations and non-First Nations students alike.

What are the most significant challenges facing students? How does FNESC contribute to finding solutions?

Over the last decade, we’ve seen a rise in completion rates for First Nations students across the province, although much work remains to be done as First Nations students are still not graduating at the same level as others. When you look more closely at the numbers, we can see that outcomes for on-reserve students are significantly lower than for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the public system. So there’s a challenge that needs to be addressed.

Continuing to build better relationships between local school districts and local communities is a start. We’re also partnering with the First Nations Leadership Council to make recommendations to the province about developing legal requirements for annual reporting between the on-reserve school and public system.

On this and other issues, we’ll continue to do what we’ve done: taking a leadership role to work for the change that is needed.

Anything else you want to add?

So many elders and mentors worked extremely hard in the past to build relationships, to start these conversations and to get a place at the table. I see a good future for First Nations education. Although much progress has been made and we see a strong future, we can’t rest. There’s still a lot of work to do.

BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

**Founded** The first official parent organizations were founded in 1915; in 1922, a provincial organization was created.

**Members** Regular membership is made up of the Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) and District Parent Advisory Councils (DPACs) of BC.

**Profile** BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) is a charitable organization that represents the parents of children attending public schools in British Columbia. BCCPAC is the parent voice on provincial committees dealing with a wide range of issues and provides feedback and advice to the Ministry of Education.

**Website** bccpac.bc.ca

**Phone** 1 866 529-4397

Learn spoke with John Bird, president of BCCPAC.

**What does BCCPAC do?**

BCCPAC represents the parent voice in BC education. This involves keeping parents up to date, gathering information to determine parents’ top issues, running an annual conference and an AGM that provide learning opportunities and allow members to pass resolutions,
and advocating for changes to the education system with the Ministry of Education. Our advocacy work helps parents, PACs or DPACs ensure that their voices are heard and that the issues they face are resolved.

Can you tell us more about how BCCPAC advocates for parents?

Well, there’s individual advocacy when we can help a parent who has encountered a difficulty and feels that their child is not getting the services they need. And there’s also systemic advocacy, where we see a role for parents on the ground floor, advocating for change. This is about more than consultation – it’s about actually having a voice at the table.

One area we’re interested in, for example, is reporting progress under the new curriculum. As partners in the educational system, we want to see the perspective of parent leaders included when initiatives like this are being developed.

Why is parent involvement in education important?

Parents are the first educators of their children, and children are successful when parents and teachers are on board with each other and support student development. Young people see education as important when their parents are directly involved – not just in their own education, but in caring about the whole school community.

What are the most significant challenges facing students? How does BCCPAC contribute to finding solutions?

There are two very significant challenges for students.

• The first challenge they face is preparing for a world that is constantly changing and developing. They need to be able to process the vast amounts of information available at their fingertips and decide what is important for their future.

• The second challenge is actually a challenge for the education system and that is to create a learning environment and learning opportunities that build on the strengths, passions and creativity that our children inherently possess.

Many students struggle to stay engaged in their learning and need more opportunities to be creative. Historically, our system was designed to teach basic skills and pass on information. We are now moving to a time where information is everywhere. Students must learn how to determine what is important and how this information can be used to shape their future.

Transforming our education system to meet these needs is proving to be quite a challenge. We do see changes in individual classes and schools, but the system as a whole is like a giant freightliner that is hard to steer in a new direction.

One of our primary advocacy goals at BCCPAC is to make sure the system is providing the services and support that each student needs, treating each child as unique and capable. We are not interested in anything less than success for every student.

BCCPAC wants parents to be more involved in problem-solving because as parents we have expertise that no one else has. I’ve rarely seen a situation that couldn’t be resolved when the parents and teachers problem-solve together. Without parental involvement, there will always be something missing. And we want to bring this parental involvement to each level: the student, the classroom and the educational system.

But, even more importantly, parents need to play a role in the development of initiatives designed to improve our education system and the learning outcomes for our children.

What do you wish more people knew about BCCPAC?

BCCPAC is about parent leadership and advocacy for our children. We are advocating for thoughtful, deliberate systemic change that is focused on success for every student. I wish more people understood the potential of parent leadership to have a positive impact on our education system. I want to see parents engaged in important education issues at the school, district and provincial levels. I want to see the combined expertise of educators, parents and the students themselves utilized for the continuous improvement of our education system.
The revised BC curriculum calls for a new focus on both Aboriginal content and ways of learning. Naryn Searcy, a helping teacher on the Aboriginal Education Team in the Okanagan Skaha school district, says that while educators are excited about bringing new content and pedagogy into their classrooms, many have questions about how to do so in authentic and accurate ways.

Searcy’s own journey as an educator provides some answers to these questions. After more than 10 years as a Senior English teacher, she began teaching the English First Peoples curriculum at Princess Margaret Secondary School in Penticton in 2013. “It was a steep learning curve, but I had the support of people such as our District Principal of Aboriginal Education, Anne Tenning, who emphasized the importance of non-Aboriginal educators stepping up and taking on this challenge.”
Searcy says that incorporating indigenous pedagogy into her classroom was transformative. “Although I had used some of these approaches in my English and Home Economics classes, I was much more deliberate about incorporating them in my English First Peoples courses. So I consistently tried to create a holistic learning environment that emphasized contextualized learning connected to each student’s life or identity – an environment where learning is understood to be rooted in the community and the land, is collaborative and focuses on relationships.”

One of the tools she started with was the talking circle. “Students told me that one of the most meaningful aspects of the course was our use of the talking circle to share responses, reflect on an activity or simply check in with each other,” she says. “They appreciated the connections it created, and it strikes me on reflection how rare it is for teenagers to hear every single person’s voice in the class and formally respect that voice as their equal.”

The place-conscious focus of indigenous learning was also central to Searcy’s approach. “Start with where you are,” she advises. “This makes learning more relevant and real to students. It means learning about the original inhabitants of the land, and it also means engaging in the history of your location, of getting out of the school and into the world beyond books and desks. For my classes, this took the form of partnering activities with the local elementary school, hiking to pictograph sites and doing creative writing activities outside and reflecting on the landscape we live in.”

Searcy says her students have told her how much better they feel about school when their classes take place out of the classroom. “I was in a session at a conference led by Syilx (Okanagan) Language and Culture teacher Arnold Baptiste and he commented that classrooms are designed for teaching, but that we should be thinking about creating environments designed for learning. He commented that when they’re outside, students feel things they can’t feel in class. They can feel the earth and the air. They are happier out of doors. And in terms of teacher health, when we’re outside and doing things, I know I feel better too.”

A willingness to be guided by the students and their interests led to many significant and memorable learning opportunities. This included a Remembrance Day ceremony where students performed a choral reading of a slam poem by an Aboriginal poet that Searcy says respectfully presented perspectives not often heard. It also included the opportunity for students to watch two classmates skin a deer.

“This was one of those entirely unplanned lessons that everyone still talks about,” she says. “We were discussing hunting and one of my Grade 12 students offered to show us how to skin a deer. His fellow classmate agreed to help, and my two classes were able to witness the deer-skinning skills of their classmates, learn about Aboriginal hunting protocols and culture from the father of one of the students, and then, the next day, taste some of the smoked deer meat prepared by the students.”

In September 2016, Searcy took on a new full-time position at the district level to help other educators bring indigenous content and perspectives into their classrooms. “This is the history of BC and these are perspectives that we all need to recognize,” she says. “Aboriginal content and perspectives are woven throughout the curriculum, and the First Peoples Principles of Learning are really the pedagogical foundation of the revised curriculum. These shifts in our practice will make our education system stronger and better.”
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. This case study is based on a compilation of cases and does not reflect a particular case that has come before the Commissioner.

Scenario
A Grade 7 teacher asked her students to work on group projects for a social studies unit. Students were allowed a significant amount of flexibility in choosing their projects. However, the teacher’s outline and instructions were unclear. The principal observed some students working on their project in the school’s hallway, and noted that the content was not in line with the Grade 7 social studies curriculum. The principal spoke to the teacher and provided feedback on how to monitor student progress and ensure students met the learning standards for the unit. The principal repeatedly observed similar scenarios and spoke to the teacher about ensuring students were meeting the learning standards. The principal also assigned a mentor. Subsequently, the teacher invited the principal to attend the student presentations on projects they’d been working on. The projects varied in scope and many groups presented work that was inconsistent with the intended lesson.

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?
- In your view, have the Standards been breached? If so, which ones?
- What consequences, if any, do you think are appropriate?

It is important to note that typically employers only submit a report to the Commissioner about a scenario, such as that described above, after the matter becomes an ongoing concern that breaches the Standards and it is in the public interest to make a report. However, they can use their discretion to submit a report even after a single incident. It is also possible that another educator, parent or member of the public could make a complaint against the teacher, which would initiate a process where the Commissioner would review the matter.

Factors the Commissioner may consider when evaluating this case
The Commissioner’s decision about how to proceed could be based on the answers to the following questions:
- After the principal met with the teacher, did the teacher adjust her approach to monitoring student progress?
- Did the teacher make any changes to her lesson plan?
- Did the teacher provide students with more information on the expectations for their projects and how they would be marked?
- Had the teacher previously been involved in any similar incidents related to lesson planning and communicating expectations to students?
- Did the school require the teacher to complete any remedial training or professional development?

After reviewing the matter, the Commissioner may do one of the following:
- take no further action, determining that the matter was dealt with appropriately at the employer level,
- initiate an investigation,
- make or accept a proposal for a consent resolution agreement, or
- issue a citation, which could lead to a hearing.

When considering how to proceed, the Commissioner would examine the certificate holder’s actions to determine if the Standards were breached. Standard 6 (Educators have a broad knowledge base and understand the subject areas they teach) may be taken into account.

If the certificate holder is found to have breached the professional standards and the matter is resolved through the consent resolution process or a formal disciplinary hearing, there are several options available, including placing limits or conditions on a certificate; requiring remedial training; issuing a reprimand, suspension or cancellation of a certificate; or banning the issuance of a new certificate for a period of time.
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR TEACHER REGULATION: DISCIPLINE 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 that all educators are fit and competent for the important role that they play and that students have a safe and nurturing learning environment. By publishing the outcomes of discipline cases, we enhance the transparency of the processes and decisions made 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 appear in full on the TRB website. The summaries do not contain all the details, which may include discipline imposed by the employer, that are provided in the published outcomes. The Standards for educators in British Columbia can be found on the TRB website and on the last page of this issue of Learn.

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 Shane Lawrence Bilodeau
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 2
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In December 2014, a district made a report about Mr. Bilodeau’s conduct between 2010 and 2014. Mr. Bilodeau made inappropriate comments to female teaching assistants, including comments about their appearance, which they reported made them feel uncomfortable. In 2015, Mr. Bilodeau completed a course on workplace communications and a course on professional identity and boundaries. On June 14, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Bilodeau agreed to a reprimand.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Craig Steven Didmon
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct and Conduct Unbecoming/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for two weeks/Certificate holder to complete a course

In February 2014, the Commissioner received a letter from a private citizen about Mr. Didmon, and in October 2014, a district made a report about him under section 16 of the School Act. Mr. Didmon taught and coached hockey at a district school, in addition to being part of the coaching staff for a junior hockey team. On multiple occasions between September 7, 2012, and February 14, 2014, Mr. Didmon was absent from school during instructional time and preparation blocks without the district’s knowledge or permission to attend practices, games and other events involving the team. Many of the players on the team were underage and, on more than one occasion, the coaching staff, which included Mr. Didmon, consumed alcohol and provided underage players with alcohol. In May 2015, the district made another report about Mr. Didmon. On November 27, 2014, Mr. Didmon also attended a meeting and made representations on behalf of the district, which he was not authorized to make. On March 7, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Didmon agreed to a two-week suspension of his certificate and to complete a course on applied ethics.
CERTIFICATE HOLDER Anthony Albert Drolet
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct and Conduct Unbecoming/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Director of Certification will never issue a teaching certificate or letter of permission

In June 2013, a district made a report about Mr. Drolet under section 16(2) of the School Act. After a female student taught by Mr. Drolet graduated in June 2012, the student followed Mr. Drolet on his Twitter account. In May 2013, Mr. Drolet contacted her using Twitter and, over approximately three weeks, sent her numerous inappropriate messages of a sexual nature, including references to having sex with her, using Twitter and text messaging. On June 7, 2013, Mr. Drolet called in sick to work. However, he was not sick but had gone to Seattle for a party and, over that weekend, had sent numerous inappropriate messages to his former student. On July 24, 2013, Mr. Drolet signed an undertaking not to practice and subsequently relinquished his certificate on October 27, 2014. On March 22, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Drolet agreed that he will never apply for, and that the Director of Certification will never issue to him, a certificate of qualification, an independent school teaching certificate or a letter of permission.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Wolfgang Ehebald
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standards 1, 2, 3 and 5
DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for three months

In November 2013, a district made a report about Mr. Ehebald under section 16(6) of the School Act. On May 15, 2013, while employed as a teacher on call, Mr. Ehebald did not properly supervise two students with special needs but instead worked on a crossword puzzle. On September 16, 2013, he left two students in the intermediate remedial program unsupervised in the hallway when he returned to the classroom to get a key to the gym. The two students required constant supervision because their behaviour occasionally created a safety risk to themselves or others. In January 2014, the district made another report under section 16(2). On October 24, 28 and 29, 2013, Mr. Ehebald did not follow the teacher’s day plan and did not provide adequate instruction to students. He read a newspaper during class time, interacted with students in a negative manner, made a derogatory comment to the Student Support Assistant (SSA) about a student, and made an unwelcome personal comment to a female SSA. In June 2014, the district made another report under section 16(2). On May 5, 2014, Mr. Ehebald did not follow the day plan, did not deliver adequate instruction, read a newspaper during class time, and made several phone calls during instructional time. In December 2015, the district made another report under section 16(3). On November 6, 2015, Mr. Ehebald was instructed to stay in the library to supervise a student. Mr. Ehebald had minimal interaction with the student. The student sought assistance from the teacher-librarian, who assigned him some school work and later permitted him to leave the library to go to his locker and the washroom. When another teacher asked where the student was, Mr. Ehebald responded that the student was not there and said words to the effect of “I think he’s in the bathroom.” When the other teacher could not locate the student in the bathroom, she directed Mr. Ehebald to go upstairs to check if the student was in his class. Mr. Ehebald went upstairs, although he did not know what grade or classroom the student was in. In the afternoon, when assigned to work with two teachers teaching the Grade 6 and 7 classes for art, Mr. Ehebald used this time to make his own drawing. On May 11, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Ehebald agreed to a three-month suspension of his certificate of qualification.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Karl Roderich Emde
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Certificate suspended for five days

In April 2014, a district made a report about Mr. Emde under section 16 of the School Act. The following events occurred when Mr. Emde was teaching a Grade 8 Material Explorations class. On February 11, 2014, Mr. Emde observed a student using a sander; the student told Mr. Emde that she had taken the required safety training in previous years. Mr. Emde allowed the student to use the sander before she completed the sander-specific safety assessment for the 2013-2014 school year. At no time did Mr. Emde advise the student to remove her scarf and tie back her hair. The student was injured when the scarf she was wearing became caught in the sanding machine. Before this incident, at least one other student had been allowed to use the sander before receiving safety training and completing the safety assessment. In October 2014, the district made a second report about Mr. Emde under section 16(2) of the School Act. Mr. Emde occasionally used inappropriate and profane language with students in his Grade 6/7 Material Explorations class. On February 1, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Emde agreed to a five-day suspension of his certificate.
CERTIFICATE HOLDER Jonathan Charles Fast  
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1  
DISPOSITION Reprimand

In March 2015, a district made a report about Mr. Fast under section 16 of the School Act. Mr. Fast was the coach of a Grade 8 boys’ basketball team when the following events occurred in the 2014-2015 school year. In December 2014, a student left his gym shoes behind after a practice. When Mr. Fast returned the shoes, he slapped the student in the face in front of the team. The student described the slap as a 4/10 in terms of intensity. On January 13, 2015, Mr. Fast asked two students to remove their shirts in front of teammates after they admitted to forgetting to pick up permission forms. Mr. Fast said “this is what you get when you forget a form” and then slapped each of them on their bare backs, hurting them and leaving marks. On the same day, another student told Mr. Fast that he wanted to take a three-point shot, and that if he missed, Mr. Fast could slap his back. The student missed and lifted his shirt. Mr. Fast slapped his bare back, which left red marks. Mr. Fast had also struck Grade 8 boys he coached during the previous school year. Specifically, he struck boys on the back during practice if they missed free throws. On March 18, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Fast agreed to a reprimand.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Elizabeth Martinson  
AGREEMENT Professional Incompetence/Standard 1  
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder to complete a course

In June 2015, a district made a report about Ms. Martinson under section 16(3) of the School Act. Ms. Martinson was a teacher on call for a Grade 1/2 class when the following events occurred on May 11, 2015. Ms. Martinson saw a Grade 1 student leave the classroom unattended. She assumed, but did not confirm, that the student was leaving to attend a program elsewhere in the school, and she did not follow up to determine where the student had gone. A school employee found the student playing by herself outside. On February 1, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Ms. Martinson agreed to a reprimand and to complete a course on creating a positive learning environment.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Lorne William Platt  
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1  
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder to complete a course

In March 2014, a district made a report about Mr. Platt under section 16 of the School Act. The following events occurred on January 23, 2014, when Mr. Platt was teaching a kindergarten class. When his class was going to the school library, Mr. Platt loudly yelled at a five-year-old student to “stop pushing.” His voice was loud enough for adults in a nearby classroom to hear. The student stepped back and appeared frightened. On the same day, when the school was being evacuated because of a fire, Mr. Platt left a child behind in the classroom. He initially reported that all students were present and accounted for, but the principal performed a final sweep of the school and found a child screaming and cowering in Mr. Platt’s classroom. Mr. Platt had been unaware that the child was missing. On February 23, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Platt agreed to a reprimand and to complete a course on creating a positive learning environment.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER T-AB-2016  
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1  
DISPOSITION Certificates cancelled/Director of Certification will never issue a teaching certificate or letter of permission

In 2013, a district made a report about a teacher to the Commissioner under section 16 of the School Act. The teacher drove a 15-year-old student to his home on two occasions, where he touched the student in a sexually inappropriate manner. On one of these occasions, the student consumed wine from the teacher’s fridge. In 2013, the district suspended the teacher, and the teacher resigned his employment in 2015. On February 16, 2016, the teacher entered into a consent resolution agreement with the Commissioner. The teacher agreed to a cancellation of his teaching certificates and that he will never apply for, and the Director of Certification will never issue to him, a certificate of qualification, an independent school teaching certificate or a letter of permission.
CERTIFICATE HOLDER James Hugh Tracey
FINDING Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Former certificate holder will not apply for a teaching certificate or letter of permission for 10 years

In the 2005-2006 school year, Mr. Tracey took a leave of absence from a district to teach in another province. In September 2011, Mr. Tracey self-reported that he had been charged with two counts of sexual exploitation. The charges were stayed on April 15, 2013. In September 2011, a district made a report about Mr. Tracey. While he was teaching outside of British Columbia, Mr. Tracey allowed a number of students to come to his home to “hang out.” Some students arrived intoxicated. During this time, Mr. Tracey also formed an inappropriately close relationship with two female students from the school who were then aged 15 and 17. Mr. Tracey’s certificate was cancelled on November 1, 2012, for non-payment of fees. On June 14, 2016, Mr. Tracey entered into a consent resolution agreement with the Commissioner in which Mr. Tracey agreed that he will not apply for, and the Director of Certification will not be required to issue to him, a certificate of qualification, an independent school teaching certificate or a letter of permission for a minimum of 10 years.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Glenn Edward Usselman
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder to complete a course

In January 2014, a district made a report about Mr. Usselman under section 16(6) of the School Act. The following events occurred when Mr. Usselman was teaching two separate Grade 11 math classes at a school. He often appeared agitated to students and, on a few occasions, told the class to “shut up” and frequently used profanity in the classroom. On a few occasions when students asked him a question, prior to providing an answer, his responses included “you should have learned it last year,” “you should know this,” or “this is Grade 3 math.” In March 2014, the district made another report. In November 2013, Mr. Usselman attended a meeting with school administrators after a student reported that he refused to help her during tutorial time. Mr. Usselman returned to his classroom to administer make-up exams but, before he entered, he spoke to another teacher in the hallway and yelled and swore loudly enough that the students in his class overheard him. When he entered the classroom, he muttered to himself loudly. Students reported that Mr. Usselman’s behaviour was upsetting and had a negative impact on the environment in which they were writing their exams. On March 31, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Usselman agreed to a reprimand and to complete a course on conflict resolution.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Lee Sansen Vendiola
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct/Standard 1
DISPOSITION Reprimand/Certificate holder to complete a course

In June 2015, a district made a report about Mr. Vendiola under section 16(3)(a) of the School Act. During the 2014-2015 school year, Mr. Vendiola made inappropriate comments to students in his Grade 10 science class. His comments included pointing out who the smarter students were and sometimes saying words to the effect of “let’s ask [Student A] first, because they are smart.” He asked a student “you’re my Japanese student, aren’t you?” and “you are Chinese, aren’t you?” although he had been told repeatedly that the student was Korean. He told his class that Asians have a good work ethic and that students who go to UBC are Asian because they have dedication and a work ethic. While discussing the formation of a new species and in response to specific questions from students, Mr. Vendiola told his class that he saw a link on Facebook about a YouTube video showing a woman having sexual intercourse with a horse. On May 2, 2016, the Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement in which Mr. Vendiola agreed to a reprimand and to complete a course on boundaries.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER Robin James Wait
AGREEMENT Professional Misconduct and Conduct Unbecoming/Standards 1 and 2
DISPOSITION Former certificate holder will not apply for a teaching certificate or letter of permission

In November 2011, a district made a report about Mr. Wait under section 16 of the School Act. Between 2006 and 2011, Mr. Wait used the computer provided to him by the district for improper purposes. He used it to write, store and access six pornographic stories, store 19 pornographic images, access pornographic images and videos on the Internet, engage in online conversations of a sexually explicit nature, access social media sites primarily targeted to and used by teenage girls, and store two images of a teenage girl, one partially dressed and
one naked. The computer records showed that these materials were often accessed during school hours when Mr. Wait should have been teaching students. In December 2013, Mr. Wait touched the upper back thigh of a woman on an escalator in a public place. On April 30, 2014, he pleaded guilty to a charge of assault under section 266 of the Criminal Code for touching the buttocks of a female minor in a public place. Mr. Wait was granted a 12-month conditional discharge. On November 2, 2014, his certificate was cancelled for non-payment of fees. The Commissioner executed a consent resolution agreement on June 14, 2016, in which Mr. Wait agreed that he will never apply for, nor will the Director of Certification be required to issue to him, a certificate of qualification, an independent school teaching certificate or a letter of permission.

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**Hearing Decisions**

**CERTIFICATE HOLDER** Cheryl Ann Gosse  
**FINDING** Professional Misconduct/Standards 1, 3 and 5  
**DECISION** Certificate suspended for one week/Limitation/Certificate holder to complete a course

In November 2014, a hearing panel considered allegations set out in a citation issued on April 29, 2013, and amended on September 23, 2014. On May 28, 2015, the hearing panel issued its findings and determined that Ms. Gosse breached Standards 1, 3 and 5 and that her conduct constituted professional misconduct. The conduct included frequently yelling at kindergarten students, inappropriately criticizing their work and disposing of it in the presence of other students, and yelling at and reprimanding a student in an insensitive manner. On April 1, 2016, the panel ordered that Ms. Gosse’s teaching certificate be suspended for one week. The panel also ordered that the Director of Certification place a limitation on the certificate prohibiting Ms. Gosse from teaching kindergarten to Grade 1 for the next two school years (2016-2017 and 2017-2018) and that Ms. Gosse have peer mentorship for the first school year. In addition, the panel ordered that Ms. Gosse complete a course on creating a positive learning environment.

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**CERTIFICATE HOLDER** Darren Lea Hankey  
**FINDING** Professional Misconduct/Standards 1, 2 and 5  
**DECISION** Reprimand/Two-year prohibition on application for a certificate or letter of permission

In November 2015, a hearing panel considered allegations set out in a citation issued on February 26, 2015. On February 16, 2016, the hearing panel issued its findings and found Mr. Hankey guilty of professional misconduct. The panel found that Mr. Hankey forged the signature of the school principal on four report cards and dishonestly claimed sick leave. He also took a laptop, owned by the district and issued to another teacher, without the teacher’s knowledge and used it to access inappropriate websites with sexual content. He entered the school late at night to make phone calls to sexual “chat lines” and on some occasions used the school phone, and used his own district-issued laptop to store and access explicit sexual images of himself and others. He also lied when he said the laptop had been stolen from his car, when it was in his possession. On November 1, 2014, Mr. Hankey ceased to hold a certificate of qualification. On June 16, 2016, the panel ordered a reprimand and a two-year prohibition on application for a teaching certificate or letter of permission.

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**CERTIFICATE HOLDER** Violet Lorraine Nielsen  
**FINDING** Professional Misconduct/Standards 1, 3 and 5  
**DECISION** Certificate suspended for three weeks

In May 2015, a hearing panel considered allegations set out in a citation issued on August 12, 2014. On December 22, 2015, the hearing panel issued its findings decision and found Ms. Nielsen guilty of professional misconduct. The panel found that Ms. Nielsen failed to implement the Individual Education Plan for a student in her Grade 6 class during the 2010-2011 school year. The student had been diagnosed with absence seizures and a mild form of epilepsy. The panel also found that Ms. Nielsen interacted with the student in an unprofessional and disrespectful way when, in front of others, she repeatedly instructed the student to pick items up off the floor using words to the effect of “pick that up now,” and when she ignored the student when he asked her about his homework. On April 20, 2016, the panel ordered that Ms. Nielsen’s certificate of qualification be suspended for three weeks.
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, aesthetic, 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 impact 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.

The Standards for Educators communicate to certificate holders, letter of permission holders and the public a description of the work of educators – what they know, what they are able to do and how they conduct themselves as they serve the public. The Standards provide the foundation and stability on which educators can grow, articulating both the values and characteristics that distinguish their work. Read about the BC Teachers’ Council and the Independent School Teaching Certificate Standards Committee that establish these standards on the TRB website.