



Back to School Action Plan

Goal

The goal of the *Back to School Action Plan* is to have all BC public school students start their 2014-2015 school year on time.

Objectives

1. A negotiated agreement with the BC Teachers' Federation by August 31, 2014.
2. Teachers, support staff and administrators in schools to welcome students and parents on September 2, 2014.
3. Schools sites are clean, safe and equipped to receive students by September 2.
4. Harmonious relationships are restored with teachers, support staff and administrators.
5. A commitment by all education partners and government to work collaboratively to strengthen BC's public education system.

Background

Boards of Education are deeply concerned about the impact of the ongoing bargaining impasse on students, families, staff, and the reputation of BC's public education system. In many districts, summer programs for BC and international students have been cancelled or constrained. Parents are growing increasingly worried about the uncertainty of school start-up in September. Summer maintenance and repairs in many schools have been hampered. The lives of our teachers, support staff and administrators have been significantly impacted, and most critically, our students may lose their chance to start the school year on time.

BC school trustees are fully aware of the complexities of the current bargaining impasse. As the governors of BC's local school districts and employers of staff who make our schools successful, BC school trustees know that a balance must be found between the bargaining objectives of the BC Teachers' Federation and the economic mandate established by the provincial government. We believe that such a balance can be found.

We urge teachers to modify the increases they are seeking including their benefit requests so that the overall compensation package falls within the range that was accepted by other public sector unions. We ask government to put all of the savings from the strike and lockout into the

Learning Improvement Fund (LIF) to support students, student learning, and class size and composition. We believe that our students have been the most affected by the strike/lockout and would benefit from the enhancement to the Learning Improvement Fund where local decisions can be made to support their learning needs. These two recommendations could bring a negotiated settlement within reach that would then allow schools to open on time.

There is much work to be done to ensure that the world class achievement of BC's public education system is sustained and strengthened in the years to come. With our students and the long-term prosperity of our future citizens in mind, we must commit to working together to build a strong public education system that is student-centered, collegial and appropriately funded. We are committed to have our schools open on September 2.

Actions

1. BCSTA's trustee representatives at the bargaining table will work towards a negotiated settlement that falls within the economic mandate set by the provincial government and makes improvements to class size and composition.
2. BCSTA will advocate that all savings resulting from the strike and lockout stay within the public school system to benefit students.
3. BCSTA will ensure that member Boards of Education are kept informed through increased conference calls with BCPSEA, the BCSTA Bargaining Advisory Committee, the Bargaining Representative Council, and Board Chairs.
4. BCSTA will work with BCCPAC to keep parents informed.
5. BCSTA will work with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) to ensure that funding for Aboriginal students is not negatively affected due to the strike/lockout.
6. BCSTA will advance this action plan by advocacy to government and raising public awareness through general and social media.
7. BCSTA will establish a productive co-governance relationship with the Ministry of Education.
8. BCSTA will work with all education partners to establish a new bargaining and labour relations structure as per the recommendations identified in BCSTA's October 2013 [*Bargaining Structure Task Force Report*](#).