

Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)

It is expected that activity opposing the FSA by the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and BCTF locals will increase in the coming months. Several locals have published information on their websites related to meetings/votes regarding the FSA. Some of the information we have received indicates that the BCTF will be holding a province-wide vote in December on the preparation, administration and marking of the FSA. At this point, we do not know the exact nature of the question being put to a vote. We understand that the BCTF will make a decision as to what action it will direct its members to take once it has assessed the outcome of that vote.

Notwithstanding the vote, the expectation is that the BCTF will continue with its public campaign against the FSA. The campaign will likely involve the distribution of pamphlets and other information opposing the FSA through a variety of means. It may also include the use of other tactics such as encouraging teachers not to mark the FSA or distribute FSA marks.

Each tactic that the BCTF adopts has the potential of generating questions as to the appropriateness of the action. Some of the issues that have arisen in the past include:

- Sending pamphlets home through students
- Use of e-mail for messaging
- Posting material on district facilities
- Distributing material directly to parents either on or off district property
- Buttons, and
- Using school mailing lists.

These are complex issues containing many variables (e.g., the nature of the message, method of distribution) and each tactic needs to be assessed to determine the appropriate response. This assessment will need to be conducted within the context of the collective agreement and parameters established through previous court and arbitral decisions.

We will provide up to date advice on the issue as it becomes available. Should an issue arise in relation to the campaign against the FSA by the BCTF, please contact your BCPSEA labour relations liaison.