

BCPSEA Responses to BCTF and Local Teachers' Association Statements

**BCTF President Jinny Sims joins Jon McComb
CKNW, The World Today, 3:36 pm, June 6, 2006**

BCTF Statement	BCPSEA Response
<p>Sims: "Well, when the employer placed a serious settlement offer they made a little move, the BC teachers have made a move and we realize we still have a way to go, both sides, and we're going to be at the table trying to move and to get to a negotiated settlement."</p>	<p>The employers' offer of May 15, which included an improved salary offer, is comparable to the vast majority of settlements in other areas of the public sector. For example, after three days of round the clock bargaining, three support staff unions in the K-12 sector reached a Framework Agreement with BCPSEA which provides a salary increase of 8% over 4 years.</p> <p>In addition, BCPSEA's offer to the BCTF includes recruitment and retention allowances for teachers in remote school districts, including allowances for teachers in difficult to fill specialty areas; and \$129 million for the one-time early settlement incentive if an agreement is concluded by June 30.</p> <p>The BCTF tabled a counter offer on June 5. The counter offer is essentially the same as the package of proposals the BCTF already had on the table: a 3 year term with the same 24% (26% compounded) salary increase (with the timing of the wage increases structured slightly differently) and the same double digit increase to benefits and other cost items within the collective agreement.</p> <p>The BCTF characterizes this counter offer as providing a significant savings over their previous package of proposals. In reality, the same ongoing costs appear in this most recent proposal.</p>
<p>McComb: "Tell me how much.... I'm curious about how much money the government can save by paying...if they paid you 24 percent or whatever the raise is.... How much money are they going to save by paying you in six instalments instead of three?"</p> <p>Sims: "Just about 20 percent of what their salary proposal was."</p> <p>McComb: "So that's a fair whack of change."</p> <p>Sims: "Oh, yeah."</p>	<p>Instead of 8% increases on July 1 of each contract year as the BCTF previously proposed, the BCTF are now proposing their 24% (26% compounded) wage demand be implemented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ July 1, 2006: 8% ▪ July 1, 2007: 4% ▪ January 1, 2008: 4% ▪ July 1, 2008: 4% ▪ January 1, 2009: 4% <p>While this staggered implementation would</p>

	<p>represent minor savings to school boards in the relevant years, with compounding the staggered increases will actually slightly increase the ongoing cost of the BCTF salary proposal by 0.37%.</p> <p>The BCTF continues to publicly question our costing of their proposals; however, despite our repeated requests at the bargaining table and in public, they have so far refused to provide their costing of their proposals.</p>
<p>Sims: “Our members, once again, are taking part in a strike vote to show this government that we are very serious about getting a negotiated settlement at the table, and that’s where we’re going to focus our energies. We are going to work 24/7 to ensure we have a negotiated settlement by the end of June.”</p>	<p>We hope that the BCTF comes to the table prepared to be realistic and engage in some hard bargaining if we are going to reach a deal by June 30. Teachers will lose the \$129 million for the incentive if they don’t reach a deal by June 30. Every other part of the public sector has been able to reach an agreement. There’s no reason why these parties can’t also reach an agreement.</p> <p>The BC Public School Employers’ Association, after three days of round the clock bargaining on the May long weekend, reached an agreement with support staff unions in the K-12 sector. That deal includes increases of 8% over four years. That’s the kind of effort it takes to reach a deal. We’re prepared to do it, and we need to see the BCTF getting realistic and being prepared to do it, too.</p>