

**2014-07** October 6, 2014

## Teachers' Pay for September 2014

September 19 was designated by BCPSEA and the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF), under the terms of the agreed-to Return to Work Plan, as the first day back to work for the vast majority of teachers following their strike, even though students did not return to class until Monday, September 22.

The local teachers' union in School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) has taken the public position that teachers in the Coquitlam School District were not paid for the work day on September 19.

The position taken by the union, and reported by various media, is incorrect. Teachers in the Coquitlam School District were paid for all the days worked in September, including September 19, in accordance with their local collective agreement language.

When a teacher does not work a full month for any reason, there is collective agreement language — agreed-to by both the school district and the union — that specifically sets out how the teacher is paid. This collective agreement language varies throughout the province's 60 public school districts — there is no standard language covering all 60 school districts.

This collective agreement language has been in place for many years and has been used on thousands of occasions to determine the pay of individual teachers who have not worked a full month for any number of reasons. It is also this language that determines how teachers were paid in each school district for the month of September 2014 when teachers missed 13 school/work days due to their strike.

BCPSEA has on numerous occasions attempted to bargain standard common provincial language for such practices. On almost every occasion, standardization of language has been opposed by the BCTF, which favours previously established local language. **However, the varied local language is being properly applied by school districts in this situation.**

Media Report	BCPSEA Response
<p>"It all stems from the first day teachers went back to school, prepping and cleaning classrooms. Most teachers were paid for that day across BC. Those in Coquitlam though, were not." <i>[Global BC News Hour, Sunday, October 5, 2014, 18:03]</i></p>	<p><b>Teachers in the majority of school districts are paid their annual salary districts at a rate of 10% per month over the 10 months of the school year. They are not generally paid for the number of days actually worked in a month; e.g., a teacher making \$80,000 per year would normally be paid \$8,000 per month gross regardless of the number of school days/work days in the month.</b></p> <p>For salary purposes, each work day is generally considered to represent 1/200<sup>th</sup> of a teacher's work year (although a typical school year contains approximately 195 teacher work days). One month in the 10-month school year represents</p>

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	<p>10% of the year, which therefore equals 20 working days or 20/200<sup>th</sup> of the teacher's work year. For example, a teacher who earns an annual salary of \$80,000 is paid 20/200ths of that salary per month, which is equal to 10% of their yearly salary or \$8,000.</p> <p><b>The number of school days/teacher work days in a month varies, but teacher pay generally does not vary.</b> For example, a teacher will be paid 10% of their annual salary each month in December and March, even though there are fewer than 20 working days in those months due to statutory holidays/school vacation periods — a teacher is paid 10% of their annual salary in the month of March even though there is often a two-week spring break and the number of teacher work days in the month may be as few as 10.</p>
<p>"She's one of hundreds of Coquitlam teachers who say they were shorted on their September paycheques. Instead of being paid for 8 working days, School District 43 only paid teachers for 7."</p> <p><i>[Global BC News Hour, Sunday, October 5, 2014, 18:30]</i></p>	<p><b>When teachers do not work a full month for any reason, there is collective agreement language — agreed-to both both the school district and the union — that specifically sets out how teachers are paid.</b> This collective agreement language varies throughout the province's 60 public school districts — there is no standard language covering all 60 school districts.</p> <p>This collective agreement language has been in place for many years and has been used on thousands of occasions to determine the pay of individual teachers who have not worked a full month for any number of reasons. <b>It is also this language that determines how teachers are paid in each school district for the month of September 2014 when the majority of teachers missed 13 school/work days due to their strike.</b></p> <p>The collective agreement in many school districts indicates that teachers should be deducted 1/200<sup>th</sup> of their yearly salary for each day not worked in a month. A full time teacher on strike this year would have missed 13 school/work days and therefore would have been deducted 13/200ths of their yearly salary for the work time missed; e.g., a teacher paid 10% of their \$80,000 yearly salary per month would lose 13/200ths or 13 days pay this September due to their strike action: \$8,000 – 13/200ths = revised pay for this September.</p> <p>This fall, a teacher would be deducted 13 days' pay from the usual 20/200ths pay for the month (20 – 13 = 7 days pay for September), or in reverse terms they would receive the equivalent of 7/200ths of their yearly salary for this September.</p> <p>In other school districts that may have different local collective agreement language, a teacher who does not work a full month is paid according to the number of days actually worked. This September there were 21 school/work days for</p>

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	<p>most teachers (this is unusual, as most often September has 20 or fewer school days depending upon where Labour Day falls in the month). In these districts, teachers would be paid for the 8 days worked in September or 8/200ths of their yearly salary; e.g., 21 – 13 = 8 days still actually worked.</p> <p>Adding to the complexity, many districts have local versions of <b>both</b> of these types of language in their collective agreement and therefore must determine which language to apply based on their local past practice as well as the specific wording of the local language as it applies to teachers in varying circumstances.</p>

It remains BCPSEA’s advice that school districts follow their local collective agreement language to determine the correct and agreed-upon approach to teacher pay for this September. The BCTF was previously provided a copy of BCPSEA’s advice to school districts

The result of the variances in collective agreement language and practice is that teachers in one school district may be paid differently for working part of a month than teachers in another school district. Both approaches are correct based on the local collective agreement language and both result in teachers being paid for September 19, even though the approach to calculation for the September pay may be different.