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LTA member - to - member communications

From the Editor: A Focus on Bargaining - David Sandquist



By the time of publication of this edition of our Local Link, the Bargaining Teams (both Provincial and Local) have already begun working on a new Collective Bargaining Agreement, and by all accounts it has been a refreshingly productive and respectful start to negotiations (an update on local bargaining can be found in this issue, and Provincial updates are available on the BCTF Member Portal). With all the struggles we have faced in our classrooms since our contract was first stripped by the newly elected Liberal government in 2002, and even more recently since the Supreme Court restored our stripped language, it is good to be back at the table working to improve our working conditions and our students learning conditions. There is reason to be optimistic about the negotiations this time around.

With 16 years of Liberal governments who had been quick to use the legislative hammer instead of negotiating in good faith, it is not hard to see why many teachers may be skeptical and even worried about negotiations. Yet, so far, every indication would lead one to believe that getting a deal done by June 30 is a real possibility. What does that mean for teachers? What can we expect from this round of bargaining? What improvements, if any, can we hope to gain in our Collective Bargaining Agreement? If the Supreme Court's reversal of the Liberal's contract stripping did anything, it was to highlight the tremendous inequity in our collective agreements across the province. Many locals celebrated the return of their contract language on class size and composition and specialist teacher caseloads, while other locals realized that they were no better off, as their own collective agreements did not have such language. The pursuit of parity in our collective agreements is a primary objective to this round of negotiations, both provincially and locally.

Another big issue facing Districts is the chronic teacher shortage (created by the loss of teachers over the last 17 years through increased class sizes (fewer teaching jobs), and losses to other Provinces where salaries and working conditions (and respect of the teaching profession) were higher. While the current teacher shortage means more jobs for new teachers and teachers teaching on call who wish for permanent full-time work, it creates added stress for all teachers who are now asked to cover classrooms during their prep time, or who might be recalled from a professional development or in-service workshop due to a lack of TTOCs. It has also made it challenging for School Districts to meet the terms of our Collective Agreement and forced them to pay out hundreds of thousands of dollars in "remedy" funds for violations to those terms. The obvious solution to the teacher shortage is to attract and retain more teachers in Langley, something this District has historically struggled with given its close proximity to Surrey, the largest School District in the province, and a juggernaut when it comes to teacher recruitment. One of our bargaining objectives in this round has to be improvements in our CBA that will attract teachers to BC in general and to Langley specifically. While salary is a big factor when it comes to attracting teachers from other provinces, it is in our local language that we can make improvements that might make teachers choose Langley and not Surrey.

Finally, although it is beyond the scope of our bargaining mandate, one final piece to the puzzle lies in the government's funding of whatever agreement to which the BCTF and BCPSEA might come to. We have all seen what happens when the government fails to fund a salary increase for teachers (as the BC Liberals did in 2002 in their first legislated contract), and we have seen what happens when the funding of Education is well below the needs of the Districts. Programs are cut, schools are closed, and the class size and composition limits are exceeded, to the detriment of the student's learning conditions. While we cannot bargain education funding, we can make ourselves aware of the government's plans and let them know what we think proper education funding should look like. It is a good time to be a teacher, the outlook is not exactly rosy, but we have every reason to be optimistic about this round of bargaining.

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Message from the BCTF re Teacher Satisfaction Surveys: You may be aware that the Ministry of Education has continued with its satisfaction surveys on public education. **Teachers are encouraged NOT to participate in the "teacher" satisfaction survey.**

Students may choose to participate in the "student" satisfaction survey, but teachers are not required to complete the "teacher" satisfaction survey.

These types of surveys have never resulted in any increased funding for public education.

Working & Learning Conditions Survey

In order to meet the needs of our members the W&LC Committee has developed a survey to be completed by April 5, 2019@ 4PM.

The survey can now be accessed online at the this link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VNT2NC8>

Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the sudoku puzzle and return to the LTA for a chance to win a \$50.00 gift card to **Browns Socialhouse**

Deadline: April 12, 2019.
 Winner will be announced in the LTA News.

Winter 2018 Winner - **Cheryl Chambers, Langley Fundamental Elementary.**
 Congratulations!

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Haven't we been bargaining all along? . . .

W. Cook, LTA President

Since 2016 and the Supreme Court Win, we have been bargaining. First to reinstate the language with Priority Measure Funds, temporarily "fixing" the situation by hiring more teachers. The efforts to spend this money in a timely fashion were hampered by invisible barriers from the school board office. There was understanding that this fund would carry over until the 2017/2018 year. We would be able to hire a Gifted Coordinator, additional Teacher Librarian (Learning Commons), increase the number of Elementary counsellors. . . things were finally falling into place. Instead we were left with just shy of \$900,000 unspent, money that disappeared into the quagmire of politics and proposals.

There was new hope in 2017 once the MOA was in place the talks began, meetings and discussions with the District leadership Team to follow the agreement, the how's and what's of what we had achieved after the years of "battle". The meetings had a genuine feel of moving forward, learning the language that had long since been forgotten, but the detours started . . . space, lack of funds, lack of teachers and many other signs that were pointing in the wrong direction. The clarity that we were finally there, and we were all understanding the language, was obscured by four party meetings, few resolutions, class lists that were not in compliance and the looming "Best Efforts" and Failure to Fill".

More meetings, more discussions and finally after September 30, 2017 grievances. Grievances that upheld the language and it was clear that the language was not being met. The evidence gathering by the members was instrumental in moving the grievances forward. The Additional caseload #'s, classes out of compliance, additional work and the list grew. The grievances became an avalanche that accumulated at the BCTF.

Part of the bargaining was the acceptance that there was little or no hope of having all classes in compliance by September 30, 2017. the talks to set up remedy commenced, three + choices and with a teacher shortage the fourth choice had to be creative. In the end remedy was established, the district hired a remedy office administrator to follow the minutes. Prep time was set up but was not ideal, side by side but not enough teachers and the additional non-enrolling? It was little wonder that a failure to fill grievance grew. Classroom teachers had chosen remedies, in order to support their students, but by the end of the year the district could not fulfill the requests. Remedy did not disappear, but a process had to be established for carry over. More discussion, more meetings and a plan for more resources and ProD, 1.1 million remedy dollars were transferred to the LTA in December 2018 for distribution. A process was established.

When September 2018 hit there was a supposition that the District and Ministry would have an idea on meeting the MOA, but it seemed remedy was easier, grievances were better and once again the year started with meetings, discussions, grievances and more meetings.

We have been bargaining since 2016, the Supreme Court win and the MOA gave us a solid start. The school visits to educate members on implementation renewed the understanding of the importance of working together. The engagement of the LTA members increased. This journey since the "win" has not been an easy one, but it has been worthwhile. The official bargaining started but it was the ground work that was done by the LTA members that has helped move us forward.



International Woman's Day Paint Party - March 8th



Editor: David Sandquist - Many thanks from the Communications Committee to the many talented and busy Langley teachers who have taken time to share their experiences, insights and interests with other members in the Link. We hope you all enjoy this latest edition of the Link and find food for thought in these pages. Local.Link welcomes letters and articles by LTA Members.

Submissions reflect authors' views rather than official policy of the Langley Teachers' Association. Submissions must be signed and may be edited. Advertisements will not be accepted. Email submissions to David Sandquist at mail@langleyteachers.com

Attention: New Teachers

The LTA will sponsor 2 New Teachers to attend the 2019 BCTF New Teacher Conference.

Please contact the LTA at vp@langleyteachers.com if you are interested.



2018 - 2019 LTA Executive



Front row (left to right): Anurita Dhiman, Hedy Miller, Nicole DeCambra, Christa Barberis, Jess Sutlow, Shannon Spence; middle row: Richard Obayashi, Wendy Cook, Linda Humphrey, Diane Courtney, Jennifer Robinson; back row: Gurb Mahil, Tanya Kerr, Dale Harrison, Ellen Bornowsky, Nicole Francis and David Sandquist. Missing: Darren Storsley, Brian Coleman, Laurence Greeff, Ashley Kunze, Janet Stromquist, and Graham Esplen

Bargaining Update

Tanya Kerr, LTA Vice President & Bargaining Chair

There is a correlation to the frequently asked questions to the Langley Teachers' Association, the relation to our collective agreement and the understanding by our members. Many of the questions we receive at the LTA could be answered by reading our collective agreement although members need to know where to look and some of the language is not as straight forward as it may seem. One of the objectives of bargaining is to clarify the language to ensure it is interpreted the same whether from human resources, LTA or school administration. Misinterpretation of the collective agreement leads to grievances and ultimately arbitration as in the case of many of our restored language grievances. Once we have copies of our new collective agreement, the LTA table officers and executive will walk members through important articles from our agreement during school visits.

Three (3) facts about local bargaining.

1. There are five (5) members on each bargaining team
 - In the last round of bargaining each team had four (4) members. The LTA bargaining team consisted of Gail Chaddock-Costello, Richard Beaudry, Yole Prosperi-Porta and Antonia Tsiolas. This round is vastly different; Wendy Cook and Tanya Kerr are consistently at the table, but we negotiated the other three (3)

to alternate from members on our bargaining council. This allows more members to be involved in the bargaining process and help reduce the amount of time members spend away from their classes.

2. Protocol agreement
 - The first bargaining session was spend establishing a protocol agreement which was signed at the beginning of the second bargaining session. The protocol agreement helps guide the bargaining teams on items such as what coloured paper our proposals will be on to setting the agenda for the next bargaining session.
3. Learning as we go
 - Some of the articles we wanted to table were considered provincial language with local provisions and we were unclear whether we could bargain at the local level but we were given the advice from the BCTF to try anyway. What we found out is provincial articles, articles found in appendix 1, can be bargained locally but require a four-party signature which means it has to be agreed to by the LTA, Board, BCTF and BCPSEA. Unfortunately, the board is not willing to look at any provincial language at this time.



If you are wondering why there's not more details on bargaining both from the provincial table or the local table it is because the information is confidential and can only be discussed in committee, (with members of the BCTF) as per our protocol agreements. This lovely Local Link you are reading can be accessed by anyone, so we can only give general updates. For more detailed information on provincial bargaining log in to the members portal on the BCTF and for local updates, talk with your bargaining contact person or staff rep at your school.

Getting past 2%, 2%, and 2% Bargaining for salary increases beyond the government's mandate

G. Hansman, BCTF President

Based on the agreements signed by other public sector unions like the BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU), the BC Nurses' Union (BCNU), and the Health Employees' Union (HEU) in the past six months, the BCTF has an opportunity to make meaningful gains in many areas.

However, there is one key area of obvious concern: the government's "Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate."

All of the public sector agreements reached to date have landed within this mandate, which unfortunately includes a "me too" salary clause. That means if any other union is able to get more than a general 2% per year increase, that additional increase is applied to all of the other agreements.

With BC teachers having some of the lowest salaries in Canada for teachers, we know 2% increases are not good enough. Add in the ongoing teacher shortage and serious recruitment and retention issues, and it's clear that the government needs to do better than a 6% increase over three years. But with that "me too" clause and the strict mandate, how do we get there?

We need to look closer at, and take advantage of, the openings and opportunities in the mandate.

What is the Sustainable Services Negotiating Mandate?

Here's how the government explains it: "Balancing the need for fair and reasonable wage increases with outcomes that are affordable and managed within the fiscal plan."

It includes:

- a three-year term
- general wage increases of 2% in each year
- the "ability to negotiate conditional and modest funding that can be used to drive tangible service improvements for British Columbians."

How does the "me too" clause work?

If any public sector employer, like the BC Public School Employers' Association

(BCPSEA), enters into a collective agreement that includes a general wage increase of more than 6%, the rest of the public sector agreements will be increased accordingly.

Importantly, though, the "me too" clause does not apply to:

- wage comparability adjustments
- targeted lower-wage redress adjustments
- labour market adjustments
- service improvement allocations.

In plain language, that means there are opportunities for salary increases beyond 2%, 2%, and 2% where there are recruitment and retention challenges, wage disparities between similar workers, labour shortages, and affordability issues.

Have any other unions made salary gains beyond 2%, 2%, and 2%?

The short answer is yes, almost all of them. They've also made gains on leaves, service levels, and benefits. But here are just a few clear examples that show how the BCTF can achieve salary improvements beyond the basic 2%, 2%, and 2%.

- The HEU achieved the elimination of three lower-wage grids, which allows many workers to move up faster. They also achieved improvements to evening, night, weekend, and on-call "differentials" and the isolation allowance.
- The BCNU was able to add three new steps to the top end of the salary grid for Licensed Practical Nurses. They also achieved premiums for shifts that are taken on short notice as well as extra time paid at the end of shifts.
- The BCGEU achieved significant gains for several components, including grid increases for targeted groups like sheriffs, correctional officers, child protection workers, and food safety inspectors.

The BCTF Bargaining Team has been hard at work analyzing these deals and looking at all available strategies to ensure teachers get a good salary increase and make meaningful gains in other priority areas like class-size and composition. Stay tuned for more updates!



Langley Teachers' Association

Boundary Issues: Teacher/Student Relationships in the classroom, coaching, tutoring and in the community.

Facilitator: Wendy Cook

Thursday, April 18, 2019

4pm - 6pm, LTA Office
#100, 5786 Glover Road, Langley
Dinner provided

Register by:

email: mail@langleyteachers.com

Registration Deadline: March 16, 2019

Periods might be tough to talk about sometimes, but they are just a fact of life. And monthly menstruation products are a necessity. But, if you're living in poverty - or vulnerable in other ways - access to products can be challenging.

Nobody should have to pick between feeding their family and being able to afford basic hygiene products.

Nearly 1 in 4 Canadian women has struggled to buy period products for themselves, or their children.

Period Promise is an easy way to help vulnerable people live with the dignity we all deserve.

Donate Product Today.

PeriodPromise.ca



period promise
A United Way campaign,
Taking action, providing product.

Langley Teachers' Association
is hosting a

Job Share Workshop Wednesday, April 10th, 2019

LTA Office, 4:00PM
(doors open 3:30pm light snacks)

Register by email
mail@langleyteachers.com

If you are interested in learning more about job sharing in the District, please attend this workshop.

Speakers include:
Wendy Cook & Tanya Kerr, LTA Officers
Barry Bunyan, SD#35



PLEASE POST

Collective agreement parity: It's a social justice issue

R. Willock, teacher & President, West Vancouver Teachers' Assoc.

In September, I attended my first school board meeting as Local President. I listened as our Associate Superintendent proudly announced that all but one class in the district were in compliance with class-size and composition language. Was this really a notable achievement? Except for the School Act cap of 30 students, there are no class-size limits for Grades 4-12 in West Vancouver. We also have no local language in our collective agreement regarding composition. I didn't celebrate the achievement. Instead, I spoke on behalf of teachers who were finding their class composition challenging and, in some cases, dangerous.

What is it like to teach in a district with no class-size and composition language? Imagine if the Supreme Court decision hadn't eliminated Grade 6/7 classes with 30 students and five IEPs in your district. Across the Capilano River in North Vancouver, an intermediate split class can have a maximum of 27 students with up to three designated students (and only one with extreme behavioural needs). Larger classes with more complexity make it difficult, if not impossible, for teachers to give timely feedback and meet their students' diverse needs. Teachers who have multiple students with extreme behaviours are struggling to keep everyone safe.

Paid maternity leave benefits have existed in Canada since 1971, yet West Vancouver teachers still find themselves asking, "Can I afford to take maternity leave?" Imagine the shock, disappointment, and panic of soon-to-be parents when they discover that for weeks 7-17 of their leaves, they will receive only 50% of their salary, compared with 95% across the Burrard Inlet in Vancouver. Maternity and parental leave is another area where our collective agreement falls short of neighbouring districts.

Now imagine being a Local President and trying to explain to your members why teachers in other districts have these things, and West Vancouver teachers do not. Class-size and composition, maternity and parental leave-these are not merely idiosyncrasies between collective agreements-these are social justice issues.

reprinted from *TEACHER MAGAZINE* March 2019
S. Croll, Teacher editor

Peace of mind Mood walks give students relief from anxiety

The Focus Program at Langley Secondary School provides an alternate educational setting to help students who are dealing with anxiety, depression, and other trauma-related issues. The students

On this perfect fall day, the air is crisp and clear, the sky the bluest of blues, and the sun glints off frost covering the ground, bushes, and trees. Fifteen Grade 10–12 students enrolled in the Focus Program at Langley Secondary School (LSS) are at the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Delta for a mood walk—a walk designed to help students dealing with anxiety and depression and other trauma-related issues. The students spend two blocks of individualized instruction per day with their teachers and support staff from the Focus Program. The students attend regular classes for elective subjects. In addition to funding from the school district, the Mood Walk Pilot Program receives funding and in-kind support from individuals and businesses in the community.



Focus Program teachers Laurence Greeff and Gwen Thornburn with some friendly blackbirds.

The visit is their fourth mood walk in a program endorsed by the Canadian Mental Health Association (BC and Ontario). Focus Program teachers Laurence Greeff and Gwen Thornburn are piloting the school-based program this school year and hope their students will not only learn to love the outdoors, but see walking and being in nature as a positive way to affect moods and feelings.

Most students have never visited the sanctuary before. In fact, nature isn't a big part of most of their lives. As one student comments, "I don't come to these kinds of places. It's not something me and my family do."

Each month Laurence and Gwen accompany their students on a nature walk. So far, they've visited Kanaka Creek in Maple Ridge, Minnehaha in Coquitlam, and Tynehead in Surrey. Sometimes a park interpreter comes with them and points out flora and fauna. One student tells me,

"I wouldn't know of any of these places if it wasn't for my class coming."

The trip journey is not all that long, but we continually stop to admire the stunning display of the ducks' green and turquoise feathers or to feed a swan or two. We share a chuckle as we watch the ducks slide on the ice formed on one of the ponds.

Someone nicknames them the "Jesus ducks." Considering we're kilometres away from roads, cars, and the buzz of the city, the honking ducks provide a different kind of musical landscape that lends a joyous note to the atmosphere. The students are laughing and taking photos of one another. Clearly, they are enjoying themselves.

Looking for an easy meal, gleaming blackbirds land on both students and teachers' hands and shoulders. The sanctuary offers specially selected bird seeds for sale—a deal these birds won't miss out on. Although all the students are excited to be at the sanctuary, some fear the hungry ducks that grab at their outstretched hands. "I want to feed them but I'm afraid I'll get bitten," comments another student, as ducks rush to get in on the feast as fast as their waddling bodies will allow.

One student tells me that this walk is her favourite so far. "Usually, we don't get to feed or pet birds. I like this walk for that. It's interactive."

Another student declares that this walk reminds him of the Beautiful BC ads that run on television. "I can't believe I get to experience a great place like this. I get to relax. It's so peaceful. And look at all of this beautiful scenery."

Nearly every one of the students I talk with echoes his comments. Three words come up repeatedly: relax, calm, and peaceful.

Many of the students are dealing with anxiety, depression, and trauma and are open about their challenges. They say the mood walks give them a break from their thoughts and feelings. As one student tells me, "Being out in nature gives me a chance to be distracted. The beauty of the place is a real break. I don't feel pressured. I'm not thinking about everything."

Mike Palichuk, a vice-principal at LSS joins the walk today. He explains that the mood walk is a natural fit for their urbanized/ suburbanized students. "Nature is a good alternative to getting consumed by all of the technologies in the world," he says. He applauds Laurence and Gwen for initiating the walks and hopes that the students will develop a lifelong love for the outdoors.

Gwen has taught in the Focus Program for the last two years. She says that anxiety and similar mental illnesses cause students to isolate themselves. "Due to the nature of what they're dealing with, and even though the students are in the same program, they tend to stay in their own heads and thoughts. They self-isolate. The mood walks give them a chance to walk and talk with each other."

All three educators hope that the mood walks provide a useful coping mechanism for their students. "We want them to make the connection that they felt good, calm, and relaxed when they were on a mood walk," Gwen says. "So if they're feeling anxious or sad they realize that going for a walk can help them deal with their feelings and moods instead of turning

to other maladaptive coping strategies."

In accordance with the Canadian Mental Health Association program, students track their moods before and after the walks.

They also reflect about the walk the next day in school. Recognizing the positive impact of the walks on their moods helps the students understand the effect walking and nature can have on their lives.

Laurence, along with teacher Anita McCarthy, founded the Focus Program 13 years ago. Too many students were falling through the cracks and the district proposed a new program. The Focus Program isn't Laurence's first assignment working with students dealing with mental health problems. His experience is wide-ranging, as he's worked with kids addicted to inhalants and other drugs. Laurence says that working with kids who have mental health, substance abuse, or addiction problems is a lifestyle—one that he thrives on and loves. "I had to become more facilitative and eliminate barriers to learning in my classroom," he says. He has learned and developed as a teacher as a result.

Students are typically referred to the Focus Program from other schools and must demonstrate that they are committed to learning. Laurence relates that they know students are changing and learning because they produce more work. "That kind of change is pretty self-evident." He and Gwen help students set goals for themselves. "Finding goals and then working on these goals often means that the students become less focused on their anxiety. Then they begin to feel good about themselves. When they feel good about themselves, then they begin to change."

We spot eagles and herons and are treated to expansive vistas of water and mountains. Our walk is nearly over, but it's not time to head home just yet. At the end of every mood walk the students eat lunch together. "Eating lunch with one another provides another connection, another sense of belonging with each other," Gwen says. "It's part of building well-being and community, and that is good for everyone's mental health."

New Proposed Funding Model for Education in BC: Why students in BC will be disadvantaged as a result.

B. Coleman, District Aboriginal teacher & VP Langley Teachers' Assoc.

Education – anywhere – depends on adequate, equitable, and comprehensive funding, but how are our public schools funded? Being informed about this important topic is especially relevant now, because the NDP government's Ministry of Education has embarked on a review of education funding and is considering some disturbing recommendations emerging from the Funding Review Panel (See page 8: *Report of the Funding Model Review: A Recipe for Inequity for Students*). Think about those who stand to gain or lose from a change in education funding. Consider students, parents, and teachers. The panel has not consulted any of these groups in a meaningful way. Considering the potential impact of changing Education funding, it is alarming that those most deeply impacted have been left out of the process. It is parents, teachers, and students, themselves, who know best what students need. I would suggest, then, that future changes in education include these stakeholders.

A strong education system is in everyone's interest. We are all impacted by our education system – whether you have children in school or not. As a parent of a student with Autism, I have had reason to investigate the funding. Since advocating for my son, I learned what funding he brings to his school. The current funding situation is convoluted, but the proposed "Prevalence Funding" model is, potentially, worse.

District staff has excused my son's lack of anticipated support. They have told me, "There are many students that don't get the support they need". Currently, much of the \$19,000.00 additional funding that an

autism diagnosis brings to a family is used to support other students. One of the issues is, that money provided to parents for their child's supports until the age of six, is transferred to school districts who decide how those funds will be allocated.

Under the current model of education funding in BC, per pupil, targeted funding drives services and supports to children so that their needs are met. It provides stakeholders clear parameters to work within. Quite simply, one knows how many dollars are being provided, which can be matched with the needs of specific students (and vice-versa). The Ministry of Education Review Panel is proposing "Prevalence" funding. The prevalence model proposes pulling away from "per student funding" and targeted funding and instead funding the district as a whole. "School districts would receive a pot of money based on a mix of demographic indicators rather than on data about specific student needs (Research report p 7)". "...the panel proposes leaving the total amount of funding entirely up to whatever the province decides it wants to spend on education, and leaving school districts to decide almost entirely what services are to be provided, with minimal direction from government (Research report p 3)". Under the prevalence funding system, districts are funded – not students. The result of the "equitable" Prevalence model is that if the "available funding" is inadequate, it shall be equitably inadequate. Parents will no longer be justified in questioning how targeted funding for their child is used, funding will be detached from individual students

For Teachers, assertions made by the Review Panel target collective agreement language restored by the Supreme Court of Canada and the Memorandum of Agreement between the Ministry of Education, BCPSEA, and the BCTF. Removing the link between designated students (having special needs, ELL learners, vulnerable students, adult education, etc.)

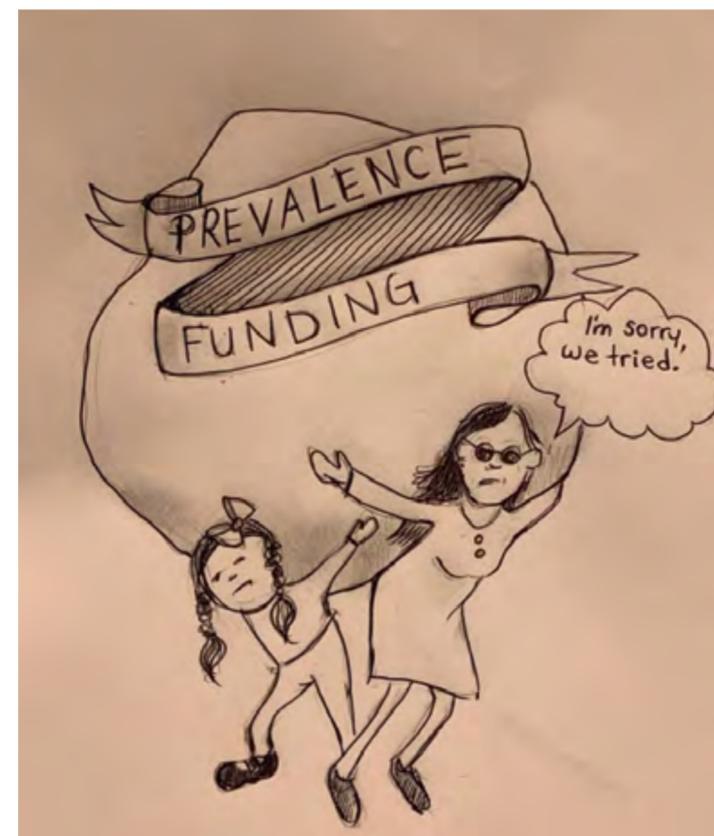


and the funding to support them, is contrary to the spirit of the Supreme Court decision. It was a long fight that cost students 100's of millions of lost funding and adequate support for over 16 years. The Highest court of Canada was clear, and it took them only 20 minutes to render their decision. The BC ministry of Education is charged with adhering to the reinstated collective agreement with its classroom size and composition limits. In theory, districts may no longer load classrooms with more than three students with special needs. Unfortunately, not every school district had class size and composition limits in their reinstated collective agreement. These districts have continued to overload classrooms. It's galling for the review panel to lay blame at the feet of the collective agreement as the barrier to properly funding students' education. In fact it has been the CEF (Classroom Enhancement Funds) agreement that has steered services and supports into the classrooms.

Blaming collective agreements for the perceived need to reallocate funds is an unreasonable diversion. As districts struggle to meet class size and composition contract language, the option to pay remedy money based on a formula has proven popular. Districts are forced to take this cheaper option, rather than implement the supports mandated by contract language. Again, the problem is not the current funding model, but a lack of overall funding. There is a perception among educators, that there is a shortage of specialist teachers, school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, etc. Many districts struggle to provide students timely assessments, interventions, and accommodations to support an identified disability. All students suffer in an under funded system. Prevalence funding does not absolve the ministry of their responsibility in having created a "prescriptive" and "highly administrative and complex, cost based funding process." (p. 25), which dismisses districts' legitimate concerns with "figure it out". We should all be concerned.

References:
BCTF Research Report. Report of the Funding Model Review: A Recipe for Inequity for Students. January 2019.

Improving Equity and Accountability: Report of the Funding Model Review Panel 2018



Kirsteen Cowan

