

Background Information on How BCCT Proposal was Developed

Current legislation requires teachers and other professionals who have unsupervised access to children to undergo a mandatory Criminal Record check every five years.

The current legislation was created in large part due to a BCCPAC resolution that requested a three year cycle for teacher Criminal Record checks.

In May of 2008 the BC College of Teachers hosted a meeting of partner groups at which a number of concerns about the ineffectiveness of the current legislation in adding any measure of increased protection of the safety of children in BC's schools were identified and discussed.

Richard Walker Chair and Marie Crowther Registrar of the BC College of Teachers attended BCCPAC's June Board meeting to discuss this issue.

At the June BCCPAC Board meeting, attended by the BCCT Chair and Registrar, one director expressed a view that participating in this discussion may be perceived as working against the wishes of our members because of a resolution passed by our members which expresses a desire that teachers undergo a criminal record check every three years. That resolution has been acted on by government. Criminal record checks are required every five years. What were our members really asking for in that resolution? Is it that they really just want teachers to have regular criminal record checks? Or is it that they want to insure the safety of our children? The current legislation does not provide any greater level of protection or security for our children. In fact it provides a false sense of security, is costly, time consuming and ineffective. I believe that it is also insulting to the vast majority of our teaching professionals.

On February 25th the BCSTA Board of Directors passed the following motion "*That BCSTA support initiating discussions with the government based on the draft principles for criminal records check.* "

On March 2nd President Ron Broda attended a meeting on this issue between the Minister of Education and the BC college of Teachers Chair at the request of Mr. Walker. (Refer to President Broda's Representation Report of this meeting on BCCPAC's Members Only section of the web site) At that meeting the Minister expressed interest in this initiative and its potential to improve the level of safety to children. The Minister offered to expedite a meeting with the Solicitor General on this issue. It is anticipated that this meeting will take place before the end of March.

On March 12th the BCCPAC Board held a conference call meeting and considered a resolution to endorse this statement of principle. The Board was unable to reach a decision and tabled the resolution. At that meeting it was decided to forward the statement of principle to the BCCPAC membership for input.

On March 15th Richard Walker Chair of the BC College of Teachers, in his report to the BCTF AGM, reported on the discussion leading to this statement of principle. He also reported that the Boards of the BCSTA, BCTF and Federation of Independent Schools Association (FISA) have all endorsed this statement of principle.

BCCPAC President Ron Broda has actively participated in all three meetings related to this issue at the BCCT.