



British Columbia Teachers' Federation

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The impact of Bills 27/28 and Bill 33, and potential impact of Bill 22, on working and learning conditions in BC public schools

Bills 27/28 (2002)

Bills 27/28 stripped the collective agreement of restrictions on class sizes, class composition, ratios of specialist teachers (teacher-librarians, counsellors, special education teachers, and ESL teachers) to students, and workload. This legislation resulted in drastic cuts to teaching positions in 2002-03, immediately after Bills 27/28 were imposed.

Loss of FTE teachers after Bills 27/28 were imposed (2001/02 to 2002/03)

An immediate loss of almost 2,000 FTE teachers (1,976 FTE), including:

A loss of 1,292 FTE teaching positions previously protected in the collective agreements to meet the established ratios for specialist teachers (PCA trust).

A loss of 684 FTE teaching positions outside of the PCA trust

Long-term impact of Bills 27-28 on specialist teachers (2001/02 to 2010/11)

A loss of 1,459 FTE specialist teachers since 2001/02

277 fewer Teacher-librarians (FTE)

105 fewer Counsellors (FTE)

738 fewer Special Education teachers (FTE)

328 fewer ESL teachers (FTE)

12 fewer Aboriginal Education teachers (FTE)

Bill 33 (2006)

Bill 33, passed by the provincial legislature in May 2006, amended the School Act to limit class-size for Grades 4 to 12 to 30 students, and limit class-composition to a maximum of 3 students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) per class. Yet, ministry statistics show that thousands of students in BC public schools are still in classes which exceed the legislated requirements.

Impact on class-size limits

In 2007–08: 3,179 Grade 4 to 12 classes had a class size greater than 30 students.

In 2010–11: 3,627 Grade 4 to 12 classes had a class size greater than 30 students.

Impact on class composition

In 2006–07: 9,559 classes exceeded the legislated limit of 3 students with an IEP.

In 2010–11: 12,240 classes exceeded the legislated limit of 3 students with an IEP.

References

BCTF Research analysis of Ministry of Education Form 1530 staffing data: 2001/02, 2002/03 (figures rounded).

BC Teachers' Federation. *Education Funding: A brief to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services*, September 15, 2011, p. 3, 5, and 6.

Bill 22 (2012)

Potential impact on class size and composition, teacher salaries, and professional rights

1. Removes right to negotiate class size, class composition and workloads until 2013.

2. Eliminates Bill 33 provisions

- Teachers do not need to be consulted on suitability of classes exceeding 30 students.
- Ministry can designate types of classes that will be exempt from class size limits
- Teacher may receive compensation rather than reduced class size
- Removes limits on class composition

Potential impact

- Increase in the number of classes exceeding class size limits
- Increase in the number of designated special needs students within a class room
- Increase in the number of classes with more than three designated special needs students

3. Learning Improvement Fund

- Establishes a LIF to be dispersed to districts – Year 1: \$30 mil. (\$165 over 3 years)

Potential impact

- Increase the number of Education Assistants (CUPE settlement allocates \$7.5 million of the LIF per year for EAs)
- Unclear what the impact will be on staffing levels of specialist teachers

4. Imposes Net Zero mandate

- Terms of reference restricts mediator to work within a net zero mandate

Potential impact

- No improvement in salary over 2 years
- Loss of purchasing power (in current and subsequent years)
- BC teacher salaries fall further behind other provinces
- Lower teacher morale
- Makes teaching less attractive as an occupation

5. Terms of reference include concessions on teachers' professional rights

The minister will appoint a mediator with terms of reference regarding:

- “effective feedback and evaluation of teachers”
- “alignment of professional development with teaching needs”
- “scheduling and selection of teachers suited to student needs”

Potential impact

- Teachers may be dealt with unfairly without the protections of existing collective agreement provisions on job assignments.
- Teacher would lose the autonomy to design their own professional development.