

**DRAFT (not yet approved by Roundtable)**

**Learning Roundtable  
Minutes  
December 5, 2005**

**1. Introduction**

- Co-Chairpersons
  - Premier Gordon Campbell
  - Minister Shirley Bond
- Regrets – Harry Janzen, BCSSA
- Introductions – Larry Kuehn, BCTF

**2. Approval of agenda**

- Sheila Rooney suggests that the class size and class composition data technical overview be considered first, prior to presentation of proposals.
- Jinny Sims requests that presentations of proposals be undertaken first.
- Premier Campbell agrees presentations first and then complete the technical briefing on class size and composition data, followed by consideration of the education reinvestment strategy.
- The agenda was modified to follow that order of events.

**3. Approval of minutes**

- Minutes of Oct. 24 approved for posting.
- Minutes of Nov. 14 approved for posting with corrections.

**4. Presentations from Roundtable members**

- Minister clarifies that each group will give a brief overview of the proposals from their organization.
- Penny Tees, presented a proposal on behalf of BCSTA (attachment).
  - Discussion follows
- Kim Howland, presenting on behalf of BCCPAC:
  - BCCPAC has not yet prepared a position; their position will be presented at a future meeting. A submission will be prepared and made following the public release of data.
- Tom Hierck, presenting on behalf of BCPVPA:
  - BCPVPA is preparing a paper studying the class size data more fully. The paper will emphasize the need for flexibility and will support the provision of differentiated resources. We have to avoid extreme situations that call for extreme measures. Short term should resolve some of this. If we need to do something in the short term, let's not use that as the blueprint forever.

- Jinny Sims, presented a proposal (attached) on behalf of the BCTF.
  - Discussion follows
- Premier Campbell commented that the discussion will take time and we should not rush too quickly to solutions that may have unintended consequences. He noted he was hearing some areas of agreement around the table. The goal is to get to a place where can solve problems and as result optimize choice, achievement results, individual attention for students, job satisfaction while using resources wisely.

**12:25 PM Adjourned for lunch**

**12:55 PM Reconvened**

- Sheila Rooney, presented the views of BCSSA (attachment)
- Discussion followed.

**5. Reports and data**

- The Roundtable considered what is to be reported and the format of the reports.
- BCTF
  - Suggests that students with special needs be aggregated and reported as the number of students with special needs in a class, not disaggregated as in first report draft.
- Premier Campbell comments that the data does not show all the supports in today's inclusive classrooms. Public reports should be made available as early in January as possible. (Note: A second run of the reports, with some data errors corrected, will result in slightly different reports.) Reports should include:
  - total number of students in the class
  - number of students with special needs excluding gifted
  - number of ESL/ESD students
  - number of gifted students
- Roundtable reaches consensus regarding the report content outlined by the Premier.
- Minister Bond:
  - The access to and application of the information in the reports will be monitored, but we need to make sure the public is fully informed of the learning conditions issue if we are to have an informed public debate.
  - Need to consider gathering data on other supports assigned to classrooms such as non-enrolling staffing.

## **6. Public Education Reinvestment Strategy**

- Premier Campbell provides an overview of commitments for expenditure of savings resulting from the illegal strike. \$20M is committed to funding service improvements following the Vince Ready recommendations, \$66M is not now committed and can be used to either pay down provincial debt or reinvest in education as long as it is spent before March 31, 2006, the end of government's fiscal year. He notes that the cost of the proposals from school districts to help students make up the lost time, particularly in preparation for graduation program exams, would come out of the \$66M.
- Minister Bond provides an overview of the purpose of the allocation of the \$20M as agreed with the BCTF:
  - The goals for use of the \$20M were agreed between government and the BCTF, and the overview was provided for information to the Roundtable.
  - The resources must be used to improve learning conditions.
  - The fund will be distributed to school districts as an equal, per-pupil allocation based on district enrolment.
  - Each board and local teacher union will create a plan for expenditure.
  - The plan will be signed off by the local and the board and forwarded to the Minister and the BCTF.
  - Reports may be required on the impact of the allocation and the benefit to classrooms.
  - The allocation seeks to make a difference to class size and class composition pressures.
- BCTF confirms understanding the purpose and process of allocation and expenditure. It confirms that the BCTF is pleased with this announcement and approach and looks forward to more opportunities like this in the future.
- Minister Bond highlights the short timelines. The plan must be developed and returned to the Ministry by December 16, 2005. The resources should be in the classrooms as quickly as possible, and the \$20M must be expended by June 30, 2006.
- Premier Campbell asks that attention now be directed to the plan for the expenditure of the \$66M remaining available.
- Minister Bond:
  - Expects the "lost-time proposals" coming in from school districts to be just under \$3M. About \$63M remains available for distribution.
  - This \$63M is one-time funding and must be expended within this fiscal year.
  - Focus on further improving class size and class composition, thereby improving learning conditions for students.
  - Textbooks and learning resources could be a worthy target.

- Premier Campbell notes that several school districts have not yet reported the status of the textbooks supply, but government continues to hear about shortages. He states that with this resource available, there should be no remaining problem with supply of textbooks.
- All at the Roundtable brainstorm possible areas for expenditure:

**7. Adjourned 3:00 PM**