

British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT)

“Government grants to professions the right to self-regulation in the public interest. Professionals are individuals who have agreed to accept a designation and its resulting privileges in exchange for responsibilities and duties that uphold the core value of protecting the interests of those whom they serve.

In essence, upon admission to a profession, a professional such as an educator, lawyer, doctor or accountant promises to abide by certain rules of ethical conduct, the standards of which are far higher than those applied to the general public.”

BC College of Teachers

“The College of Teachers: has the duty to establish and apply standards of fitness and qualifications governing admission to the teaching profession. The specific duties of the Council of the College are to approve, for certification purposes, teacher education programs established by provincial Faculties of Education, to define bylaws and policies related to the academic and professional qualifications of teachers, to issue teaching credentials, to investigate allegations of professional misconduct and, if necessary, to exercise professional judgment in disciplining its members. The College has the responsibility for encouraging and facilitating programs of continuing teacher education, professional development and inservice designed to ensure general teacher competence, and to improve the quality of teaching in provincial schools.”

BC Ministry of Education, Statement of Education Policy Order, 1989

The College of Teachers is the professional body that sets the standards for teacher education, professional conduct and competence for the majority of educators in BC. Established under the Teaching Profession Act, the college is required to operate and regulate the teaching profession in the public interest.

The college, governed by a 20-member council, also sets out the standards for admission to the college and issues teaching certificates. School districts are required to ensure that the educators they hire are members of the college. Teachers, vice-principals, principals, assistant superintendents and superintendents are members of the college.

The Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in BC are the education profession’s way of describing to its members and the public:

- what they know
- what they are able to do
- how they conduct themselves as they serve the public.

Under the *Teaching Profession Act*, a member of the college has a duty to report the professional misconduct of another member to the college.



■ **The Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators are available on the college website at www.bcct.ca**

A member of the college who has reason to believe that another member is guilty of professional misconduct toward a student that involves physical harm, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation or significant emotional harm must promptly provide a written and signed report to the college registrar.

Complaints against members

Adapted from Speaking Up! A parent guide to advocating for students in public school

Members of the public can make a complaint about the action or behaviour (conduct) of a member of the BC College of Teachers. Teachers, vice-principals, principals, assistant superintendents and superintendents are members of the college. To check whether someone is a member, call the college or check their website at www.bcct.ca.

The college has its own process to review complaints from the public. Once a complaint is made, it “belongs” to the college. The college will advise you of the status of the complaint as it proceeds through their processes. While you will learn whether your complaint will be acted on, you will not be involved unless the college decides to investigate and wants more information from you.

Before you decide to complain to the college about the action or behaviour of someone in the teaching profession, you need to think about:

- How the action or behaviour of the member breaches the standards for professional conduct.
- How and whether you have worked through your district’s complaints process and noted your actions and the responses you have received, where possible. The college will ask about that.
- The suggestions, if any, that were offered to solve the problem and why they did not satisfy you.

If you decide to make a complaint to the college without first trying to use your district complaints process, be prepared to explain the reasons why you feel it is not in your, or your child’s, best interests to deal with your complaint locally.



■ For more information about the Person Complaints process, please visit the BCCT website at www.bcct.ca or call the Intake Officer at 604-731-8170 or 1-800-555-3684.