



## **BC CONFEDERATION OF PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS**

Suite 202, 1545 West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 1T5  
Tel: 604-687-4433 Fax: 604-687-4488 Email: info@bccpac.bc.ca

September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005

Mr. Mark Brown, Chairman of the Board  
BC Labour Relations Board (BCLRB)  
Suite 600, Ocean Plaza  
1066 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC V6E 3X1

Dear Mr. Brown:

This letter is to advise you of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils' concerns regarding the potential disruption of our children's education in this school year, 2005–2006. We have shared our concerns and comments with both the BCTF and BCPSEA, and wish to do the same with the Labour Relations Board.

BCCPAC members have shared with us their concern about how job action/strike will affect their children's education. Without knowing the definition of "essential service" that will be decided on by your board, we felt that it is important for you to hear our voice prior to making that decision.

Our members feel that any disruption to the positive relationship between students and teachers is detrimental to children's well-being and educational achievement, both short and long term. The effect on many school communities is still being felt from the last job action of 2000–2001.

Our members have been advocating that education be an essential service since 1993. In 2000, our members both reaffirmed and strengthened their original motion with:

### **Resolution 2000.4**

"That the BCCPAC lobby the Government of BC to amend the Labour Relations Code (Bill 84), Part 6, Section 72 to include 'education' wherever the phrase 'healthy, safety, or welfare of residents of British Columbia' is stated."

BCCPAC believes that education is equally essential as health, safety, and welfare to the residents of BC. Although in recent feedback on the topic of essential service, parents expressed diverse views from district to district, the majority state that they do not want any disruption to their children's education.


Parents value the role that teachers and all educators have in the academic and social development of our children and therefore we stand firm in our belief that children need ongoing and regular instruction without disruptions. Daily positive relationships in our schools, with the welfare of the 'whole' child at the centre, are critical for our children's success.

Parents have a significant stake in the educational decisions made during labour negotiations, as they are directly affected by any decision made during their children's K – 12 education. The decision that you make should not adversely affect the daily operations of healthy and supportive school communities or the educational outcomes for students. BCCPAC believes that students need to be in school on a regular schedule without disruptions.

BCCPAC has serious concerns about maintaining the safety of students across the province if our schools are allowed to close. In many families, both parents work and currently only make arrangements for before and after school care. Given the sheer numbers of students that would require supervision during the day, we believe that the safety and supervision of students would be at risk if schools are closed.

BCCPAC welcomes the opportunity to be part of the discussion on what constitutes “essential service”. On behalf of our provincial membership, thank you for the taking the time to hear the voice of parents.

Respectfully,



Kim Howland, President  
BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils

CC. BCCPAC Members  
Minister of Education  
BCTF  
BCPSEA  
BCSTA  
BCSSA  
BCPVPA  
BCCT