



## **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

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Dear Editor,

Recently, considerable attention has been given to both the BC Court of Appeal decision to uphold an arbitrator's ruling that allowed teachers to discuss politics during parent-teacher interviews, and the ensuing possibility of labour action on behalf of the BC Teachers' Federation. As such, many parents are not confident that when their child returns to school this fall, the focus of public education in British Columbia is going to be on the student.

For many parents, this is of considerable concern and there is a sense of helplessness to ensure that our schools do not become an arena for political dispute and retribution. The BCTF has stated that students are the priority and have made strong statements concerning parents, including, "We've never had a single complaint from a parent that teachers have been lecturing them at parent-teacher interviews." (CKNW interview with Irene Lanzinger, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of BCTF, August 4, 2005).

These comments are unsettling for the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) as they do not accurately reflect the concerns that we as an organization are hearing from our members. We would not presume to speak on behalf of teachers as this is not our position in the education system; in turn we would expect that the BCTF would not speak on behalf of parents. As the provincial voice of parents, we look forward to being consulted by the BCTF on concerns and complaints that have been expressed by parents in British Columbia, thus ensuring that they are accurately aware of the sentiments of parents when they enter into any discussion that impacts public education in BC.

Sincerely,

Kim Howland  
President  
BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils