



BCTF

British Columbia Teachers' Federation A Union of Professionals
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September 7, 2018

Honourable Rob Fleming
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Fleming:

On behalf of the 43,000 members of the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF), I am writing to request that the provincial government ensure that the necessary funds and political direction are in place for teacher-led mentorship initiatives to flourish in all school districts across BC.

We hope to work with you to build a provincially co-ordinated and provincially supported plan to somehow address this significant need. The lack of mentorship programs in school districts, coupled with the lack of comprehensive in-service to address the many needs facing teachers, means that we risk continuing to lose many new teachers within their first five years in the profession—and that students' experience in school might not be what it could be.

As discussed in previous meetings, we can't stress enough the crucial need for teacher-led mentorship initiatives that are:

- responsive to the diversity and distinctiveness of district cultures and practices in all regions of BC.
- responsive to the diversity of teaching positions and of teachers' identities.
- non-evaluative and non-remedial.
- voluntary on the part of participants.
- available in all school districts.
- inclusive of release time, training, co-ordination time, and other supports for all participants.
- supportive of teachers at all stages in their careers.
- supportive of teachers of French as a first or working language.
- provided in conjunction with funding and support for other initiatives such as the BCTF Teacher Inquiry Program, action research, in-service, and a wide variety of professional development opportunities.

A strong mentoring program to fill gaps in support and create a range of opportunities for teacher mentors and mentees will be a valuable investment, as it will help early career teachers address complex classrooms and respond to the unique needs of the school community. I look forward to discussing this further with you.

Sincerely,

Glen Hansman
President

GH/l/teu

pc: Scott MacDonald, Deputy Minister of Education
Tom Longridge, President, BC School Superintendents Association
Gordon Swan, President, British Columbia School Trustees Association