

# QUESTIONS FOR 2019 BCTF EC CANDIDATES

## Table Officers

### 1. What specific strengths would you bring to the Executive table at the BCTF?

#### **PRESIDENT**

##### **Teri Mooring:**

My experience as a classroom teacher, local president, member at large, and table officer inform my leadership and decision-making, and is something I see as a key strength. I'm also a strong believer in collaborative decision-making as a way to ensure broad based input.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

##### **Clint Johnston:**

Experience & Knowledge, Ability to Synthesize Information and Issues, Articulate Advocacy

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

##### **Carole Gordon (Central Okanagan):**

My union, labour and political involvement is broad and has provided me with a perspective and skillset particularly well for the work at the Executive table, both as a Member-at-Large for the past 5 years and going forward as a Table Officer. I am an articulate speaker who can represent the BCTF well to our membership and other organizations, including the employer and the Ministry. I work well in a collaborative team setting, an important aspect of the FTTO leadership and effective decision-making.

##### **Rae Figursky (Burnaby):**

I'm someone who anticipates and solves problems, actively listens to others, and effectively advocates for teachers and students. I am a teacher because I love the job and have great respect for my colleagues. It is important that every teacher feels supported and represented by the Executive. I have a proven track record as both a supportive colleague and effective mentor and leader in Burnaby. Over the past three years, I believe that I have demonstrated the same supportive leadership skills when working with BCTF members in my role as an Executive member. I've been told I'm a hard worker. I would never ask others to do anything I'm not willing to do.

### 2. Describe a specific action, initiated by you, that resulted in a positive change for your Local/BCTF.

#### **PRESIDENT**

##### **Teri Mooring:**

As a local president I led negotiations to achieve an employment equity agreement. At the time there were very few such agreements, and this was a significant accomplishment.

As a table officer I work as a part of a team with the other table officers and the EC, so our accomplishments are very much as a result of shared leadership. Some of the positive changes we have achieved in the last few years have been modernizing and improving our pension plan, the negotiations to restore our language after our Supreme Court Victory, and moving forward on equity initiatives, including the Women in Negotiations cohort, and the inclusive changes to the structure of provincial executive committee.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

##### **Clint Johnston:**

I was instrumental in initiating having an Aboriginal Chair on the Chilliwack Teachers Association Executive, a position which previously did not exist.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

##### **Carole Gordon (Central Okanagan):**

As a released officer in my local, I recognized the long-standing failure of the employer to meet the Employment Standards Act in allowing members to take their full 52 weeks of pregnancy leave without losing their teaching positions. As we remedied this practice and the employer moved to compliance, we also discovered other related discrepancies in medical leave and maintaining benefits.

### **Rae Figursky (Burnaby):**

\* Over the past three years, I've consistently worked to ensure that all of the Executive's decisions and recommendations focus on the needs of our members. I'm proud of the advocacy I have done for the TTOC and the Working & Learning Conditions/Bargaining provincial Advisory Committees, and of the many times I have been able to ensure that Executive decisions are grounded in the needs of teachers and students.

\* Three years ago, it was my local that brought to the BCTF Annual General Meeting the resolution about the BCTF Executive composition being amended to be more equitably representative of our membership and more inclusive with respect to gender, Indigenous representation and race. I am proud of the work we did to convince the AGM to vote in favour in 2015. In 2016, I am proud of the work we did on the Executive to create a set of recommendations to create space for a more diverse and representative union leadership, and of the two designated seats which the AGM approved. In recent months, it has been my pleasure to be on the Executive as we created the recommendations coming to this year's AGM which further our equity goals. I am excited about how they create space for a more representative union leadership.

\* For more than 20 years, I've been one of the elected teacher reps on our Joint Leave of Absence Committee. I'm proud of our success in upholding Burnaby's leave clauses, even during the most difficult years when a former Human Resources Director tried to ignore and misread our contract. Despite her best attempts, our 50 Leave clauses are still supporting our members when they need time off.

\* During my first term as local president (1994-96), I successfully led and supported our school ProD contacts to regain primary control of the District ProD day from the Board. More than 20 years later, this annual Burnaby event is still controlled and organized by teachers, for teachers.

\* I am also proud to have been our Summer Strike Coordinator and of our local decision to continue visible job action over the summer of 2014. Our members' presence on highly visible weekly picket lines, at our info booth at the local farmers' market, and through regular postcards to MLAs we kept the public's attention on our issues over that summer. Our membership was actively engaged in advocating for our students and our working conditions. Through our Strike Benevolent Fund, we were also able to financially support struggling members.

### **3. If elected, what will be your top three priorities and how will you deal with them?**

#### **PRESIDENT**

##### **Teri Mooring:**

The top priority is to achieve a negotiated deal at the bargaining table that reflects the priorities of our members. The Bargaining Conference set our objectives, identified key priorities, and the provincial table has opened. There are significant expectations for this round, as there should be considering we have a new government that is more pro-education.

Another priority is the proposed changes to the funding formula for K-12 education. We are working with the other education stakeholders to find common ground, and to ensure our concerns are addressed.

A third priority is achieving significant supports and resources for the revised curriculum; and outlining our concerns regarding the provincial assessments with government. Based on our curriculum survey, we have identified two key areas members are particularly concerned about, resources for the inclusion of aboriginal history, culture and ways of knowing and updated materials for the sexual health curriculum. Government has indicated an interest in working with us on these two areas as a beginning. We also have deep concerns regarding the decision to maintain the FSAs and to implement the high-stakes secondary assessments.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

##### **Clint Johnston:**

1. Preventing Funding changes that are Destructive to our Collective Agreement provisions: by working with the Executive, and particularly the other FTTOs, to collectively advocate at all levels of government and with our public education partners to prevent changes.

2. Achieve a Collective Agreement before the expiry of the current one: again, acknowledging the collective nature of all our work, work within our governance structures and provide articulate public advocacy when required to maintain public support toward a fair deal.

3. Improve Communication and Working Relationship with the current government/Ministry: this is work that is often particular to the FTTOs, and I would continue the political advocacy and lobbying to achieve changes where necessary that would facilitate better relations that would support members needs.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

### **Carole Gordon (Central Okanagan):**

1. Violence in Schools – As the Health & Safety Chair released 20% in my local, I am encouraging and supporting our membership in reporting the increased incidence of violence. We need to create strong and effective district policies, educate members on the established processes and their worker rights, and use WorkSafe when necessary to force employers to put in the necessary supports. Those supports don't come without advocating for adequate funding to address both student needs and worker safety at the Ministry level.
2. Bargaining - The intention is to have ratified a collective agreement by June 30th so I will continue to support the Executive and bargaining team through effective and responsive decision-making at the Executive table in my current member-at-large role and as 2nd VP-elect. The process of ratification and implementation of a new collective agreement will require leadership that can effectively communicate with locals, members and labour management.
3. Leadership – It is important that there be a smooth transition to a new leadership team. This is accomplished through collaboration, respect and trust. Not only is important to support the team but also the Executive as a whole. Effective leaders also ensure that others are encouraged and prepared to become leaders at all levels.

### **Rae Figursky (Burnaby):**

1. We've set our bargaining objectives and now it's time to work to achieve them. As a member of the Executive, I see my role as one of leadership and support of our provincial Bargaining Team, and as support to all the local bargaining teams. We need to continue to put pressure on BCPSEA, trustees, and government to bargain with us in good faith, and with adequate funds to meet our needs and those of our students. We need to continue to enlist the support of parents, the public, and other unions to help us improve our public education system through improvements to teacher recruitment, retention, and a significant increase to resources and supports.
2. The BCTF must continue to advocate for public education funding for the resources, safe buildings, and time we need to better meet our students' needs. The government's newly announced budget does not adequately address the many years of cuts and underfunding that have drained the public education system. We know that the public understands the importance of class size and composition and the need for resources to go with curriculum change. We need to ensure that we have our allies with us as we pressure government to do the right things for students. We also need to have strong locals continuing to push their Boards and DPACs to advocate for public education. Trustees and parents are leaders who need to pressure government to provide the funding our students deserve. We need to work together to ensure that both the budget and the funding model itself actually address the needs of our students and our schools.
3. Within the BCTF, it is important for us to strengthen our existing democratic structures. Our newest members need to be welcomed and educated about our organization; all our members need to have their views respected and considered. Our members and our locals must continue to be supported in the defense of our collective agreement rights as well as in bargaining itself. We need to ensure that our leadership reflects the diversity of our membership. Our structures allow for many voices and views, and we need to ensure all members feel included. We need to continue to provide a full spectrum of resources to our members (from ProD to Health & Wellness to Social Justice supports). We must continue to strengthen our connections to each other and to other teachers and unions.

## **4. How do you plan to support the BCTF with the potential changes to the funding formula?**

## **PRESIDENT**

### **Teri Mooring:**

The changes to the funding formula pose a significant challenge for our Federation. Particularly troubling are the mixed messages we are receiving from government regarding the status of the recommendations. Due to our advocacy, we have a year to inform government, and work with the education stakeholders, around our concerns with some of the recommendations. The prevalence model is extremely problematic and cannot be used to undermine our Collective Agreement language.

## **1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

### **Clint Johnston:**

As alluded to previously, I believe this is a priority and will continue to collect research-supported information-- including from other Canadian jurisdictions through the CTF--that will enable us to lobby broadly with Members of the Legislative Assembly to make them aware of the impacts to both public education and their own political party should the detrimental parts of the recommendations be implemented.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

### **Carole Gordon (Central Okanagan):**

At every opportunity, we need to challenge the idea that our collective agreement is a barrier to meeting students' needs and improving student learning. Identifying and targeting funding for the actual needs of students has a greater impact than a prevalence model which is more about the needs of districts. Our research department has provided a good analysis of the intention versus the impact of the panel's recommendations and we should continue to promote the facts about inequities in their plan.

### **Rae Figursky (Burnaby):**

The recently released Funding Model Review was written from the very limited perspective of Secretary-Treasurers and Superintendents. It is a suggested model for education funding that can be edited, corrected, or largely re-written between now and the 2020-21 school year when the funding formula model is scheduled to be changed. We need to both individually and collectively use our 43,000 voices to make it clear that the funding model cannot be used to strip away our hard-won and recently regained class size and composition language, nor our specialist teacher ratios, nor other vital supports we have for our students. We need to use our collective expertise to address these issues with the Ministry, school boards, and the public.

Any change to the funding model must ensure equity of supports everywhere in this province that address the learning needs of every student. We also need to ensure that we have our allies with us as we pressure government to do the right things for students. We must strengthen our relationships with parents, community leaders and other unions to emphasize the importance of funding the resources to support our students' needs, as well as all the curriculum changes. Our labour union family understands the need for proper training and tools, and we need to do more to invite their voices to join ours in our call for resources.

## **QUESTIONS FOR 2019 BCTF EC CANDIDATES** **MEMBERS-AT-LARGE – DESIGNATED RACIALIZED MEMBER**

### **1. That specific strengths would you bring to the Executive table at the BCTF?**

**Susan Trabant (Prince George):**

- View and think through multiple lenses- Metis, LGBT, female, plus size, from the north
- Value public education -Embrace equity and inclusion
- Public speaking/speaking at the mic -I listen to people and what their concerns are and will bring them up at the executive table
- I am willing to travel to my zone (or any zone) who requests for an executive member to visit
- I work as an independent -Concerned and aware of the colonialism that continues to exist in our practice, structures, and province (working to make changes)
- Building strong relationships
- Compassionate
- Out spoken and not afraid to stand up for what is right and just -Embrace democracy and solidarity
- Empower others

### **2. Describe a specific action, initiated by you, that resulted in a positive change for your Local/BCTF.**

**Susan Trabant (Prince George):**

I fought for three years for our SOGI (Sexual Orientation Gender Identity) policy in PG, and was finally able to achieve it (pulled all sorts of shenanigans and made many compelling presentations). I work as the SOGI representative for the North and in my SD, and I help to support northern communities in their SOGI initiatives. Now we have SOGI work being done in almost all of our school districts across the province. I strive for safe and inclusive school for every student and every teacher across the province.

### **3. If elected, what will be your top three priorities and how will you deal with them?**

**Susan Trabant (Prince George):**

1. Challenge colonial thinking and structures within our schools and province- listening, being aware of our recommendations to truth and reconciliation, and to implement/think about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in my life, professional practice, and while at the EC table
2. Building relationships, honouring diversity, advancing equity, and challenging oppression in all its forms- I will do this by thinking through multiple lenses, participating in discussion, recommendations and motions, and listening to concerns from around the province
3. Continuing to strive for member engagement as we go through the bargaining process and implementation of our new contract (positive thinking!)- listening, asking questions, reaching out, social media presence (and sharing our newest commercial and advertising), promote and support local bargaining, and working hard at the EC table to hear, process, and vote as we go forth with bargaining

### **4. What do you see as the three most important bargaining objectives for 2019 and why?**

**Susan Trabant (Prince George):**

As a union, our social media presence put pressure on our government to listen. They ended up putting off the implementation for a year. This now gives us more time to continue to put pressure on them for change. They are adamant right now that they are going forth with it, but we have time to work with them. I will be present at any table I am able to be at, I have listened to what the concerns are about this funding model across the province as well as in my own local, and I will continue to strive for a funding model that supports our students and fully funded public education. I have a vote, a voice, and knowledge that I will use at every turn to be able fight against these proposed changes.

## QUESTIONS FOR 2019 BCTF EC CANDIDATES MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

### **1. What specific strengths would you bring to the Executive table at the BCTF?**

#### **Violette Baillargeon (Surrey):**

I would bring over 15 years of BCTF engagement in various locals (Kelowna Vernon, and Surrey) in roles such as Local Representative, Bargaining Committee co-chair, International Solidarity committee member and co-chair, FIT workshop facilitator, Peer Support Consultant, Internal Mediator, Cross Border Conference organizer, school Staff Representative (for 13 years), school Staff Committee chair, Spanish revised curriculum team member, and strike picket captain. The breadth of my experience has taught me that an issue can be perceived from many lenses with just as much conviction and that open dialogue makes us better.

I am passionate about the rights of teachers and a strong advocate for kids. I see the struggle for teacher autonomy and fair compensation in teaching as central to the broader fight for an accessible and well-funded education system and to social and economic democracy as a whole. My experience as a child 'in care' and as a parent of four has made this work all the more important and meaningful. I tend to see no alternative to meaningful involvement and courageous action. To this end, I have a long history of respectful debate at AGM's and Rep Assemblies, I am unafraid to lend my voice to an issue, and I am eager to encourage new members to share their perspectives and engage in union activism.

#### **Karen Edwards (Tumbler Ridge):**

Strategic Skills:

- Research
- Critical Analysis
- Synthesizing
- Connections and Correlations

Relational Skills:

- Collaborating
- Listening
- Appreciation of different perspectives
- Making room for others as well as myself in dialogue
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#### **Shawn Gough (Vancouver Island North):**

I work very well in a collaborative format, but am not afraid to ask tough questions (I try to do so with kindness and humour when possible). I approach everything with an open mind and will listen intently to whomever is speaking.

#### **Carolyn Pena (North Vancouver):**

\*Big picture thinking but also an eye for details.

\*Lots of local experience with grievances and arbitrations and the importance of contract language.

\*Willingness to listen to various points of view or experiences to gather all necessary information to make decisions.

\*Logical, systematic decision maker

**Jody Polukoshko (Vancouver Elementary):**

I believe that I bring a few strengths to the EC table - I have a solid understanding of the democratic structures of the BCTF as well as a strong knowledge about our policies and processes. Using these structures and processes to make informed, sustainable decisions is something that is very important to me, as it not only ensures that I am representing the needs of the entire province in my role on Executive Committee, but also because it supports a transparent, democratic structure on which our members can rely. This can mean working through our advisory committees or reaching out to the membership to assist with determining the path forward or helping to build local capacity to ensure that decisions made reflect the lived experience of members in each of our diverse locals.

I also have a strong background and a passion for collective bargaining, which I have brought to my role on the provincial bargaining team. I believe in transparency and actions that are based in values and principled positions, and I hope that this will lend itself to a round of bargaining that accurately reflects member voices and priorities, while at the same time, identifying and working to ameliorate inequities within our current Collective Agreement.

**Jacque Shelemey (Sunshine Coast):**

- Collaborative
- Hardworking
- Committed
- good listener
- objective
- reasonable

**Katherine Trepanier (Prince George):**

I've been teaching for 25 years, so I bring on-the-ground current teaching experience. I have been very involved locally for many years (staff rep, LR, currently VP, long-time member of the bargaining committee, and member of our bargaining team for the last 3 rounds.) I would bring a primary, French Immersion, female perspective to the table. (There's currently nobody on the Executive who is a primary or a French Immersion teacher.) I'm an excellent listener, and an independent thinker. I believe in supporting great ideas, and I'm open to changing my opinion when I learn more about an issue.

**2. Describe a specific action, initiated by you, that resulted in a positive change for your Local/BCTF.**

**Violette Baillarger (Surrey):**

I am reluctant to claim sole credit for any initiatives in my local as most changes come from much discussion and collaboration, and most importantly, significant changes takes time. Having said that, there are initiatives that I felt strongly about and that have become practices more frequently adopted in my local and by our provincial association. For example, it was my hope to decentralize bargaining after having listened to Karen Lewis, past president of the Chicago Teachers' Union, speak about the importance of involving all members in a process that often can lead to them feeling alienated. Towards this aim and in my role of Bargaining co-chair, our committee decided to hold a bargaining 'Open-house' one evening to educate and solicit ideas from all members. This resulted in many teachers who do not typically engage with union structures attending and feeling heard. In addition, we developed a Bargaining workshop locally for school staff reps a full year before bargaining commenced.

To continue this work, I wrote three resolutions that aimed to decentralize provincial bargaining and brought them to that winter's Rep Assembly where they were debated on the floor; two were carried and led to positive changes to how we engage members in the broader bargaining process.

**Karen Edwards (Tumbler Ridge):**

One of the pieces I have initiated is one-to-one weekly walk and talks. In our sub-local all of the Executive Committee positions are held by full-time teachers including the role of the President. As such, in order to keep lines of communication open and relationships strong I initiated these weekly walks.

**Shawn Gough (Vancouver Island North):**

I have brought many suggestions to the EC table, but the one that I'm most pleased with is lobbying the government to do an equity scan between and amongst districts in order to get the Ministry to understand the inequities students face in their educational opportunities throughout the province. Coming from a small, rural local, this is of utmost importance to me.

Locally, I have successfully negotiated a two week spring break with some key concessions from the employer including the Board paying for AGM delegate leave, and TTOC pay for certain Pro-D and in-service activities.

**Carolyn Pena (North Vancouver):**

As PD Chair in my local, I led an overhaul of our PD policy that made access to PD funds more equitable to all members, including TTOCs.

**Jody Polukoshko (Vancouver Elementary):**

As a current member of the Executive Committee, I take my role as liaison very seriously. Whether it's attending local meetings and supporting new teacher inductions, or bringing bargaining updates to a local General Meeting, the chance to hear from members about concerns, local issues and priorities is an important part of my work. I am also a liaison to the BCTF Adult Education Advisory Committee, and I believe that my support with that committee and knowledge of multiple Collective Agreements and BCTF processes helped raise the profile of the work of Adult Educators throughout BC. The work of Adult Educators has not been well understood throughout the province, and I feel that the collaboration on that committee, with my support, has raised the inequities Adult Educators face to the awareness of the broader membership. I value the work of BCTF Advisory Committees, ad-hoc committees and zone meetings, and work hard to ensure that the voices and the work of the members are respected, promoted and amplified. A strong representative democracy requires trust, support and clear, transparent processes. Ensuring these aspects are in place is a priority for me.

**Jacque Shelemey (Sunshine Coast):**

Locally, I was the bargaining chair on the team that redesigned and negotiated new post and fill guidelines to address the era of declining of student enrolment and reduced teacher FTE while honouring seniority and experience of teachers. It served our members very well through those difficult years and now that we are on the increase with teachers and students we will be looking for changes and a new design during this round of local bargaining.

As Vice-President and Staff Rep at my school last year I guided our staff through the staff committee process to address a senior management error in their interpretation of the restored language. This action successfully led to a change in hiring practice in the district ( and an admission of error) which resulted in increased FTE for our local.

**Katherine Trepanier (Prince George):**

I established a social committee as a sub-committee of our local executive. The goal of this is to build member engagement, with a focus on new members. We have planned events throughout the year, to encourage members to connect with each other, build community, and have fun together. I believe strongly in the importance of maintaining a healthy work/life balance. At my school level, I have organized and promoted a weekly yoga class for teachers, that takes place at our school. This has been going on for many years now.

### **3. If elected, what will be your top three priorities and how will you deal with them?**

#### **Violette Baillargeon (Surrey):**

In the last few years, I have come to look at all union processes in terms of whether they decentralize power, decision-making, and funding or whether they further centralize our structures. For example, I have tended to support policy that increasingly supports, trains, and engages school staff representatives and the members they support. In contrast, when a resolution calls to give more power or funding to those already at the center of decision making, I seek to find ways to include more people of varying backgrounds and experiences.

My work with students, their families, and our communities, has taught me that teachers hold a privileged position in public discourse. Some people focus on how teachers are critiqued in the public sphere, but my experiences have shown me otherwise. Parents and members of the community trust teachers and value what they think, and they are quick to look to teachers to lead when there is a lack of leadership in the public domain. This has inspired me to wish for all of us to engage more fully and to take a progressive stance when one is needed.

Finally, I have been deeply inspired by the teachers' movements sweeping the US and the resulting success they have experienced both in bargaining and in engaging entire communities and cities to activate and stand along with them when it was most needed. I am eager to learn all that can be learned from our colleagues and to broaden the conversation from what is typically considered 'teachers' concerns' to one that takes into account the fact that those concerns are in fact societal concerns that form the bedrock of a strong and functional democracy.

#### **Karen Edwards (Tumbler Ridge):**

**Bargaining:** We need a strong collective agreement that meets the needs of members and the issues that are currently faced by them. As such, it is essential that we are transparent and responsive. Critical to this is being available, communicating with local presidents and the membership, and ensuring that members have a voice in decision making.

**The funding model:** The prevalence model prioritizes numbers over names and does not adequately enable the members to respond fully to student needs. In this case, alliance and advocacy, clear and consistent messaging, and the sharing of the issues that teacher will face within a prevalence model will be a strong basis from which to begin.

**Recruitment and retention:** A strong collective agreement is the first step towards recruitment and retention. Additionally, a robust mentoring program to engage and support members new to profession, district or role. Within all three of the above. Swift response re: Local President's requests for support and information as they respond to their members and their contexts.

#### **Shawn Gough (Vancouver Island North):**

1. Representing the small and rural locals at the EC table – I always keep this in the forefront of my mind when dealing with any issue.
2. Improving equity and inclusion in our union – this has been on my agenda the past two years, and I continue to work on addressing the systemic barriers faced by equity seeking groups.
3. Implementing a new Collective Agreement – first we have to get one, and the Executive has paid very careful attention to the proposals we table, then we have to make sure that the implementation goes smoothly. This will require patience and understanding of the differences in locals, and the ability to work cooperatively with the employer (something I do well).

**Carolyn Pena (North Vancouver):**

- 1) Improvements for members through bargaining - Provide support of EC to bargaining team as needed; public and private advocacy for improvements; continued (or if needed increased) support for BCTF advertising campaign; strategic decision-making as needed; close communication with locals.
- 2) Maintain superior provisions through bargaining - Public campaigns if necessary; clear process around maintaining existing provisions.
- 3) Advocating for increased funding for public education - Using specific areas such as mental health and violence in schools to highlight systemic needs for more resources to address student needs; general advocacy of public education as a public good and the central importance of a strong education system to a strong democratic and just society.

**Jody Polukoshko (Vancouver Elementary):**

My top three priorities for the next two years are the following: building a strong membership, strengthening our democratic and representative structures, and expanding opportunities to build solidarity within our own organization and with allies. How I think these priorities will play out over the next two years are in ensuring that the membership is involved, informed about the current round of bargaining and is knowledgeable about the steps we take along the way, and that the application and implementation of our next Collective Agreement is well understood by the membership going forward. In terms of how they apply to current issues teachers are facing, I'd like to apply them to the funding review, the teacher shortage, and collective bargaining.

I think my values will be important during the ongoing advocacy regarding the funding formula review. Responding to the inaccuracies contained by the recommendations so far and ensuring that teacher voices are shared will be paramount. We will need to speak with a united voice, loud and clear in opposition to any new formula that threatens our working conditions, and to act in solidarity with our colleagues, other unions and parent groups to fight back against any changes that threaten dedicated funding to students and needs based support in schools.

Recruitment and retention is a serious issue, both for our current membership as well as for our future members. The impact of failure to fill situations in schools is profound. Classroom teachers, non-enrolling teachers, students are all bearing the cost of the teacher shortage, whether it manifests through non-certified teachers in classrooms or teacher-librarians being pulled to cover classes. This is an issue that requires many responses – continued pressure at grievance and arbitration tables, advocacy with the provincial government, work in partnership with universities and an overall effort to improve the perception of the profession. I believe Collective Bargaining will be part of the solution to this problem, given the national sub-par status of our salary and working conditions.

Lastly, I believe that as we continue to use our newly won full bargaining rights, it will be essential that we keep building local capacity at our negotiation tables, as well as ensuring that we have effective mechanisms in place to respond to current and future challenges to our restored and new language. I believe in supporting locals through grants, training, opportunities for networking and full representation of all locals and sublocals in our decision-making structures.

**Jacquie Shelemey (Sunshine Coast):**

If I am elected to the BCTF EC my priorities would be;

To advocate for improved working conditions for all teachers in the Province: There are many locals that have not seen improvements to their working conditions from the restored language and it's important that this be addressed at the bargaining table. Providing feedback to the Provincial Bargaining team, and supporting any of the locals I am assigned to by gathering feedback as to what their needs are and communicating this back to the EC table.

Maintain Professional Autonomy and Professional Development Rights: Bill 11 has not gone anywhere and while it has not been acted on as of yet, we cannot ignore that it still exists. Being on guard for any attempts to erode our professional autonomy will be important through his round of bargaining.

Social Justice: I am so proud of the stand our Federation takes when it comes to local and global social justice issues. At the EC table a priority would be to continue our work on equity an inclusion. We have made many gains but there is still much work to be done. Supporting global initiatives with teacher unions around the world is work that I feel is important to maintain.

**Katherine Trepanier (Prince George):**

- 1) If bargaining is still happening, my top priority would be that we maintain focus on our top two bargaining goals. If bargaining is finished by the time my term would start, then my top priority would be to make sure class composition issues are addressed and that teachers and students are getting the support they need in their schools. I would do this by bringing forward concerns and situations that teachers are facing at the table. Teachers believe in inclusion, but it must be properly supported.
- 2) Mental health and wellness of members - we need to make sure our members know that it's OK to get help when they need it. I would work on building awareness around this issue, and promoting services available to members. Teaching is stressful, and members need to learn to recognize when they need help, and know how to access it.
- 3) Violence in the classrooms - this is a growing problem, and our teachers need help. It's not OK for anybody to be threatened or assaulted at work. Again, I would bring these concerns, with examples from the ground, to the table.

**4. How do you plan to support the BCTF with the potential changes to the funding formula?**

**Violette Baillargeon (Surrey):**

I plan to continue to work in collaboration with my colleagues, concerned parents, and advocacy groups who are showing leadership in this area. I intend to continue to advocate on behalf of members who are concerned that the proposed changes to the funding formula did not seek the involvement of teachers or the BCTF in its revision process, that the revisions are intended to cut costs rather than to increase services to our most vulnerable students, and that the formula in fact conflates a desire for meaningful inclusion with the reality that complex needs are only increasing in our student populations. My aim is to increase awareness around the changes to the formula among the women I know, our neighbours, family members, and friends and to utilize a variety of methods to encourage them to have their concerns heard also.

**Karen Edwards (Tumbler Ridge):**

Informing and educating the public

Keeping the conversation going re: government

Collection and collation of data to refute and counter prevalence model

Continued highlighting of the impact of the prevalence model on our members in addition to the impact on their students

**Shawn Gough (Vancouver Island North):**

There are two parts to this answer depending on the way things unfold.

I have already been very vocal with the Minister, both in writing letters and when he came to the Executive meeting in January, about the potential impacts this report would have on rural school districts should it be implemented. I look forward to continuing that advocacy as well as impressing upon the Minister the essential nature of our Supreme Court Win and the restoration of our language.

I also anticipate we will be able to make some changes at the bargaining table that will improve the situation for the locals that do not have the class size and composition language that others do, and I will work with locals to implement that.

**Carolyn Pena (North Vancouver):**

I have already been involved with advocacy of our local NDP MLA and all school trustees. I would bring my successful strategies to the EC to continue this advocacy provincially to ensure that parents, trustees and MLAs across the province understand the underlying implications of the proposed changes and how it will negatively affect services to all students.

**Jody Polukoshko (Vancouver Elementary):**

The challenges presented by the Funding Formula Review are multi-fold, as are so many aspects of our work. The position of the Federation throughout this process has been strong, unwavering, and has kept the focus on support for students and our Charter rights to collective bargaining. In my view, we need to keep the messaging consistent and continue to generate and earn media about the cost of the prevalence model in terms of equity, access and classroom conditions. Bargaining will be one way we will respond to this threat, but our long standing work with public education activists and parent groups will continue to be important as we work to expose the way that the prevalence model undermines both our understanding of student needs and the way we practice inclusion itself.

**Jacque Shelemey (Sunshine Coast):**

The opposition to the funding model review will need to be well organized and strong. Mobilizing our membership to speak out loudly and clearly to MLA's and parents and in turn supporting parents in getting their voices heard by the Minister of Education. I will work very hard on any campaign or strategy adopted by the EC to ensure that the proposed changes do not come to fruition.

**Katherine Trepanier (Prince George):**

All members can do their part to share our concerns with other members, parents, trustees, MLAs, etc. I share information on Facebook and Twitter regularly. As a member of the WLC/BAC, I created a motion at our last meeting, to request that a simple document (one page, speaking of the effects this will have on students) be created by the BCTF so that members can use it when talking to others about our concerns around the proposed funding model.