

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

A History of the **BC Principals' & Vice-Principals Association**: 1959 -1995



BCRPVPA

A Project of the BC Retired Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association

This history is told largely through the words of the people who lived it, as many key players shared their aspirations, work, and plans with BCPVPA members through the Association's first magazine, *Adminfo*.

A great deal of the early period of the Association was documented in a major paper by Seija Tyllinen for her studies at Simon Fraser University, and extensive quotes have been drawn from this invaluable record. References have also been made to material from the BC Teachers' Federation's online archives of newsletters and magazines, and to judgements from the Courts of British Columbia database.

We gratefully acknowledge the participation of three former presidents — Dean Paravantes, Nick Parker-Jervis, and Gordon Wallington — who enthusiastically shared their thoughts and reflections in conversations held in 2020.

April 2022

THE BEGINNING

The BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association (BCPVPA) was formed in 1959 as a Provincial Specialist Association (PSA) of the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF). PSAs were "channels for members to exchange ideas on research, teaching strategies, curriculum development, and other shared interests" within the BCTF structure, and were first formed in the late 1950s. For almost 30 years, the BCPVPA existed within that framework as part of the BCTF.

While the early relationship between the parent organization and the subordinate BCPVPA was not marred by any memorable public disagreements, a 1973 document prepared by BCPVPA member Len Fowles, and entitled *The Report of the Committee on the Status of the British Columbia Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association within the British Columbia Teachers' Federation*, suggested that some administrators were concerned that their position as Principals and educators within the BCTF had weakened due to the lack of consultation on matters concerning administration. Others "stated that, because they must act as both teacher and manager" their roles were unique and deserving of "special considerations."



Divisions Start To Form

Two years later, an article in the *BCTF Newsletter* with the headline “Executive nearly censured: Too easy on Principals say members”, documented the fallout from the BCPVPA’s presentation of an unauthorized brief to government. Members of the BCTF’s Representative Assembly moved that the BCTF Executive Committee of 1974-1975 must be censured “for failing to thump the PVPA hard enough when they submitted an unauthorized brief to government. A second part of the motion sought to freeze the BCPVPA association funds.”

As the BCTF evolved, additional challenges and disagreements arose. The BCTF understanding that “a teacher is a teacher is a teacher,” compounded the complexities around the role-specific duties of teachers, Principals, and Vice-Principals.

In late December 1981, the BCPVPA President of the time, Gordon Moffat, acted on behalf of some BCPVPA members in taking a stand which was contrary to a previously-articulated BCTF position on newly mandated Grades 9 and 10 Consumer Education programs. Swift and repressive action by the BCTF meant the Public Service Agency (PSA) was compelled to recognize ‘an error in procedure’, and the BCTF issued a public statement to clarify that the Ministry did not have the support of Principals and Vice-Principals.

Over the next 18 months, BCPVPA members continued to bristle at their inability to speak as individual professionals on issues for which they were legally responsible. In 1983, the BCPVPA produced *A Time for Change*, a document which outlined a host of philosophical, policy, and member welfare concerns.

The unique roles and responsibilities assigned to

Principals and Vice-Principals came into sharper focus in early November 1983 when — along with other unions, in a movement known as Operation Solidarity — the BCTF joined a three-day province-wide strike to protest 26 bills introduced as part of a Restraint Budget by Bill Bennett’s recently-elected Social Credit government.

The return to school after the Solidarity strike brought divisions between the two organizations to the forefront.

Principals and Vice-Principals were disillusioned by their inability to meet their duties as mandated by legislation. They were equally dissatisfied with the BCTF’s dues structure, which assessed dues based on income rather than a fee for service.

By mid-June of 1984, Gordon Moffat established a separate, short-lived, organization called the BC School Administrators’ Association as a fallback.

BCTF Reassesses Principal & Vice-Principal Roles & Responsibilities

In the fall of 1984, then BCPVPA President Gerry Powlik spoke to the BCTF Representative Assembly to address a six-point position paper prepared by the PSA. *The Role and Responsibility of Principals and Vice-Principals in the BCTF* addressed unresolved items such as responsibility, job action, teacher evaluation, and organizational status.

In January 1985, Norman Robinson, an Associate Professor of Educational Administration at Simon Fraser University, framed the relationship problems between teachers and Principals in a document called *Principals and the BCTF: Time for a New Marriage*

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Contract, drawing on the six points originally outlined in the Powlik paper.

Soon thereafter, the BCTF created a Task Force which completed its report in May 1986, and addressed areas such as responsibility, job action, and teacher evaluation, but did not address organizational status or fee structure. At the 1987 AGM of the BCTF, several policies were adopted which allowed for some school attendance by Principals during strike action, along with a reaffirmation that “all principal teachers are teachers first; thus, their primary responsibility lies with the teaching profession, as does that of any teacher,” and, “the differential between the salaries of teachers, including administrative and other responsibility allowances, should be much smaller.” The AGM also rejected a resolution to enable local associations to recommend to the BCTF executive that Principals be able to form separate local associations when local members agree to such proposals.

Principals & Vice-Principals Removed From BCTF

By the spring of 1987, Anthony Brummet — Minister of Education in Bill Vander Zalm’s Social Credit government — introduced Bills 19 and 20. Under Bill 19, known as *The Industrial Relations Reform Act*, 1987, teachers would be included under the Labour Code, and have the right to form a union, apply for certification, and to bargain collectively. Bill 20, known *The Teaching Profession Act*, established the College of Teachers as a certifying and disciplining body, removed the requirement for teachers to belong to the BCTF as a condition of employment, and designated Principals and Vice-Principals as administrative officers with individual contracts negotiated with their hiring school board.

At a special general meeting of the BCTF on October 10, 1987, a resolution was passed amending its by-laws and expelling Principals and Vice-Principals from membership.

Bills 19 and 20 passed final reading on May 21, 1987, and came into effect January 1, 1988.

1987-1988

Dean Paravantes was President of the PSA at the time of its expulsion from the BCTF, and he continued in that position for the first year of the Association as an autonomous organization.

When the BC government introduced Bills 19 and 20, Dean and the executive committee were in Montreal. “We had a quick meeting,” he recalls, “we decided we had to start an organization, to hire staff.”

The BCPVPA was rapidly built from the ground up. Davis & Company LLP were engaged on a promise of payment to come. Office space was secured in North Vancouver. Gordon Moffat was hired, followed by Jurd Kirby, followed by an accountant. Principals and Vice-Principals across the province were asked to join. Some districts — among them Kamloops, Coquitlam, and Surrey — quickly paid \$100 per member, and many individuals across the province signed up.

At the Association’s first AGM as an autonomous organization, Dean said, “Less than 12 months ago we were notified, by a reporter, that the government had introduced Bills 19 and 20. In May, the executive decided to register under the Societies Act. In June, the executive decided to advertise for a General Secretary. In early July, the appointment of the General Secretary was made. We had no members, no money. With the General Secretary, the executive undertook to look for office space, equipment and clerical staff. In the meantime, we participated in

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- Dean Paraventes

two conferences on “The New Rules” and “New Relationships.” In the fall, we held our own bargaining conference. I believe that even though we were not yet strongly organized, we influenced considerably the overall climate in the province with regards to AO (Administrative Officer) contract development. We did it, as I have said many times, through capitalizing on our skills of persuasion and influence. In addition ... we intervened in several districts where we felt our members were not being treated fairly. Throughout the fall, we offered our services to administrators throughout the province, whether or not they were members of the BCPVPA. Oh, and by the way: we were able to pay our staff in October.”

1988-1990

The Association was still in its infancy when George Buckley became President. The focus, as George wrote at the time, was on, “contract improvements, emphasizing benefits and the security of our positions; membership emphasis, concentrating on increasing the active involvement of all members and attracting more administrators into the Association; liaison with government and stakeholder groups, to enhance our relationship with them; maintaining our fiscal responsibility to members, and refining the structures and operating procedures of the Association.”

George also took the lead on the lengthy BCPVPA *Claim for Assets*, a legal action (1988-1996) to claim compensation from the BCTF, following expulsion from the Federation.

A major developmental milestone came to fruition during George’s tenure, with the completion of a five-year effort to develop a *Code of Professional Practice*, which identified standards of professional conduct and practice in nine areas of knowledge and skill, including setting goals and objectives,

providing instructional leadership, interpreting and implementing curriculum, and pursuing professional growth and development.

During this period, the Association also launched its first leadership center, and developed a conflict resolution workshop.

The Association developed its first *Policies and Procedures* manual, of which George wrote, “The Policies and Procedures Committee, led by Gordon Wallington, has reviewed all policies, redrafted some for clarification, and organized a policies and procedures manual. ... The aim has been to establish policy where it is needed while at the same time avoiding the generation of policy where it is not needed.”

In March of 1990, the Supreme Court ruled the BCPVPA *Claim for Assets* against the BCTF could continue. Mr. Justice Frank Maczko wrote, “The BCTF argued that the members of a society do not have a proprietary or pecuniary interest to be protected ... I do not agree with that proposition. Over the years the members of the society contribute to its operation and to the accumulation of assets. The members have a very important and direct interest in how those assets are used, particularly since membership was compulsory and members were compelled to pay dues. If those assets are misused or some members are deprived of access to those assets, the members so deprived must be entitled to some form of redress. ... I think it would be wrong to deprive the petitioners of an opportunity to prove their case.”

As George’s term drew to a close, he reflected on what had been accomplished and looked to the future. “I don’t know how many of you have stopped to think of the thousands of hours required to establish our Association effectively, while immediately being required to provide all of the services for

members which they had previously enjoyed before as members of a professional organization which had existed for over 50 years. ... Now that our Association is firmly established, our task is to look ahead, to strengthen our leadership skills to meet the demands of educational change we face, and to apply those skills in instructional leadership for the benefit of all our students.”

1990-1992

Stanley French assumed the President’s role on July 1, 1990. Stanley’s tenure saw the Association continue numerous significant legal challenges, including the *Claim for Assets* and efforts to establish legal precedents for contracts and conditions for Principals and Vice-Principals.

The first major legal victory was the Tony Rainbow case. The case was initially heard in the Supreme

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- George Buckley

Court of BC with a judgment delivered in 1988. The BCPVPA appealed that decision and there was a hearing in the Court of Appeal, with judgment delivered on September 21, 1990. Justices Taggart, Wallace, and Legg set aside the earlier decision and ordered that, “the Board must give the plaintiff reasons for its decision not to renew his contract. After the reasons have been given, arrangements should be made for the plaintiff to meet with the Board in order that he may respond to the reasons given and have an opportunity to persuade the Board to alter its decision.”

Stanley’s determination to build effective communication networks was an early focus. He wrote, “During the first three years of our existence as a separate Association, a lot of hard work has been done to establish a credible position for BCPVPA within the education community. As President, it will be an important task for me and our Board to maintain and build upon the outstanding reputation we have earned. However, I also intend to turn my attention to developing stronger internal networks within our Association. Membership is voluntary. For me this is entirely appropriate. However, it provides a great challenge to those of us who have become involved in the operation of the Association. I would like to see much more contact at the local level between and among Chapters. I have asked our directors to begin by taking responsibility for a group of Chapters. I have asked them to begin making contact with the Chapters in whatever ways seem most appropriate.”

Student Leadership and the work of Denny Grisdale was also earmarked. Stanley wrote, “One of my other main objectives is to initiate activities and programs in student leadership. Again, I feel a sense of achievement. This is based not on my efforts but those of Denny Grisdale, supported by Gordon Moffat, and our professional development staff. In October we co-sponsored a National Conference for 600 high school students from across Canada. ...

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Denny has also put together a committee, consisting mostly of students, who are rapidly developing ideas of the kinds of programs and activities they feel they need. Our professional association will stay close to our students. This is a sure way to keep us personally and professionally refreshed.”

Ron Taylor, a BCPVPADirector, reflected in BCPVPA’s *Adminfo* magazine that contract negotiations that had taken place in many districts were, “taking countless hours and days away from trustees’ and educators’ time and important educational responsibilities, reinventing the wheel time and time again, only to result in soured relationships, strikes/lockouts and other significant job actions.” Moreover, he raised the financial implications of lawyers’ fees, substitute costs, and mediation payments. “Another important consideration involved with the present circumstances of local bargaining,” he wrote, “is the potential divisive effect local negotiations can have on Administrative Officer-teacher relations. This may become a more and more evident consideration as

we become more experienced with strike or lock-out situations,” and ended with a question that lingers today, “Do doctors negotiate locally? Do nurses or other professionals?”

At this time the Association experienced some success in working with government to ensure that continuing contracts were a possibility for Principals and Vice-Principals. In an unsigned *Adminfo* article, members were advised, “During the life of the (Ministry of Education’s) Education Policy Advisory Committee, the Association was able to make significant recommendations to government regarding the role and responsibilities of school administrators for inclusion in the Policy Statements and the revised *School Act* from the Ministry of Education. The early drafts of these documents had overlooked the critical roles of administrators. ... The Association, through direct representation was able to remove the ‘term contract’ provision and have Section 21.1 (1) retained in Bill 67. This section now reads, “A board may appoint a person as an administrative officer to perform the duties and have the powers set out in the regulations.” The effect of this clause is to provide for the opportunity for a continuing contract for every administrative office in the province.”

Professional development specific to the roles and responsibilities of BC’s Principals and Vice-Principals was being fine-tuned under the direction of Donna Palmer. Following the retirement of UBC’s Dr. Jamie Wallin, the Association began to assume a more active role in the planning and presentation of what was then simply known as the UBC Summer Short Course for Principals and Vice-Principals. Professional development included continuation of the ‘third annual summer institute Solutions’, and ‘Countdowns’ (the BCPVPA’s annual conference launched in 1977, a precursor to the current Connecting Leaders Conference) and spring conferences were hosted.

In March 1992, the BC Court of Appeal rejected a BCTF appeal that the BCPVPA *Claim for Assets* seeking compensation for its expulsion from BCTF membership be dismissed. Mr. Justices Lambert, Legg, and Hollinrake wrote that the action could continue, as it presented the best opportunity to resolve the issue ‘justly, fairly and appropriately.’ The Justices also dismissed a second BCTF appeal that George Buckley was not the appropriate person to be proceeding with the action. Three months later, on June 11, the Supreme Court dismissed a BCTF application that there be a full trial to resolve the issue. Siding with BCPVPA Counsel who had argued, “that the issues, as stated, are very simple; whether the petitioners were expelled from the respondent and if so, what is the effect thereof [... and that] to order a full trial would result in further delays and much unnecessary expense”, Mr. Justice Hood ruled that, “A full trial would certainly cause much further delay. The petitioners should be entitled to proceed in the summary way.”

1992-1994

When Nick Parker-Jervis assumed the President’s role in July 1992, contract issues continued to dominate the minds of members. As Nick wrote early in his term, “Our members have told us time and again that [the economic security of our members] is priority number one. In particular we need to more clearly define, in contract or statute, the process of terminating Administrative Officer contracts so our members are protected from capricious or unfair actions by their employers, and the Association is free from continual and costly legal contests over similar incidents.”

But the costs of doing business were challenging, and some members began to question the expenditures. Nick addressed this issue and wrote to members,

“Some members have expressed concern that fees are continually increasing and that the BCPVPA may be building a bureaucracy. ... I believe our rising fees are the result of inflation and our innocence about the true costs of providing the services our members demand ... The time has come to stop comparing ourselves with a much larger organization to which membership is compulsory.”

Another milestone was reached in the BCPVPA's *Claim for Assets* when in late November 1992, in the Supreme Court of BC, Justice Hardinge said, “There seems to me to be no principled reason on which it could be said that the expulsion without compensation of the Principals from the BCTF was not unfairly prejudicial to them. The history of their membership and participation in the affairs of the BCTF entitled them to expect that if they were expelled and, in consequence, had to form a new organization of their own to advance their common interests (as they have done) they would be fairly compensated by their former associates.” He ruled, “The petitioners will have an order declaring their entitlement to compensation.” Towards the end of Nick’s tenure, the Court of Appeal dismissed the BCTF’s appeal to overturn this order. Justices Carrothers, Gibbs, and Goldie dismissed the appeal and wrote, “The trial judge did not err in holding that the Principals and Vice-Principals were unfairly prejudiced by their expulsion from their membership in the BCTF without compensation.”

Nick was President when the government released its *Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector* on July 9, 1993, after a 16-month long enquiry led by Judi Korbin. This report led to the formation, less than three weeks later, of the Public Sector Employers’ Council (PSEC) which, within a year, led to the BC Public School Employers’ Association (BCPSEA) being established as the “accredited bargaining agent for all school boards and the BCTF as the certified

bargaining agent for all public school teachers in the province.”

Nick wrote at the time, “We are entering unknown territory, as provincial bargaining for teachers and provincial standards for executive compensation indicate a centralizing of power in education. Clearly there are new roles for the BCPVPA. We will be included as an important component of the employers’ side of the table in provincial bargaining for teachers. However, what will be the role as ‘chief bargainer’ for Principals and Vice-Principals with the Education Employers’ Association? Will the BCPVPA take an active role in setting standards for the credentialing of school administrators? If we don’t, who will? Will the playing field change the extent that we may even consider a management union?”

The Association long-championed First Nations awareness, most notably through Board Member Denny Grisdale, First Nations Education District Principal in SD 70. In an issue of *Adminfo*, Maureen MacDonald wrote that Denny was “a tireless advocate for ‘walking hand in hand’ with First Nations. He brings this message to most Board meetings. During Denny’s four-year term he has travelled to many districts throughout the province. True to form, at our last meeting, Denny shared a student-prepared community booklet from Tatla Lake that featured some of their Elders.”

In the same article, Maureen wrote about a First Nations Symposium held in Prince Rupert to explore how the public school system could assist a First Nations group in achieving its goals for education. “The February symposium, organized in part by Principal Dawn Hilborn, had a powerful effect ... and the event suggested a successful method for exploring a variety of culturally and linguistically relevant learning experiences for administrators and students.” Equally important, Maureen continued, was the work of Principal Ernie Hill at Hartley Bay

Elementary Secondary who had recently, “worked with 50 students from first year to grade 10 and the group performed traditional Tsimshian dances as well as a legend involving storytelling, music and dance. Mr. Hill is a Tsimshian and has been totally involved in ensuring that all the students in Hartley Bay develop a pride in their heritage, skills in their music and dance, and knowledge of their past. Mr. Hill concluded the evening by telling of his uncle attending school, spending eight years in grade three because Indians weren’t allowed to go beyond grade three; of going to the Totem Theatre in Prince Rupert with his grandfather and learning that he was not allowed to sit in the centre of the theatre, that the left side was where Indians had to sit, and of sitting in restaurants watching family after family being served while his family was ignored. He spoke of the traditional education of the children and the resulting tragic effect residential schools had on the basic threads of family life ... and concluded with an excerpt from the First Nations Awareness Document, a project developed by the BCPVPA: ‘First Nations learners currently stand at a crossroad in education. Behind is a pattern of paternalistic behaviour which repressed language and culture, and imposed the prevailing system of values and beliefs. Ahead lies the promise of child-centred, culturally relevant curriculum, and community involvement’.”

In November 1993, another legal precedent was established when the Court of Appeal dismissed a School Board appeal of a 1992 judgment. In that judgment, “The Board’s decision to remove Mr. Watkins as Principal was not ... based upon a fair and impartial evaluation, which would have been dictated by the public duty to act fairly.” The Appeal Justices dismissed the appeal and added “the Board would obviously benefit from an independent evaluation of the respondent’s performance in order now to proceed fairly in the matter.”

With the BCPVPA’s ongoing *Claim for Assets* against

the BCTF gathering momentum, the BCTF waged another attack against Principals and Vice-Principals in a BCTF *Issue Alert* published on January 4, 1994. “In a nutshell,” Nick wrote, “the BCTF asserts that there is an over-expenditure on administration at the expense of instruction and implies that part of the funding problem could be alleviated by reducing spending on administration.”

While his attention was pulled in many directions, Nick’s focus on students never wavered. In *Adminfo* he wrote, “Since the transition of our association from a PSA into a separate professional organization, it has been a matter of principle that, while attending to the many needs of members, we have kept the well-being of students in the forefront of our activities. We have cooperated with the Ministry of Education in providing student representation on the Education Advisory Council. We have supported the hosting of a national conference for students and student advisors. ... For the past three years BCPVPA Student Scholarships have been presented at Chapter Council.”

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- Nick Parker-Jervis

Nick also addressed the Association’s mounting legal bills. Admitting that legal costs were unpredictable and were in fact \$200,000 over budget, he wrote, “We make no excuses or apologies for legal expenses we have incurred. We believe our lawyers’ costs are well justified. Legal decisions such as Rainbow in the Central Okanagan, or Watkins in the Armstrong districts, have established precedents crucial to ensuring all our members are treated appropriately.” That said, Nick warned, “we must understand that our current fee does not cover the services the Association provides to its members.”

With deficit financing looming, service cuts were contemplated, but as Nick noted: “If we were to cut services, which services would we cut? At what saving, and perhaps more significantly, at what expense?” At a Special General Meeting held in May of 1994, membership met that challenge by supporting a significant fee increase to provide the Association with adequate funds to deliver services.

Nick also introduced the concept that the time had come for the Association to fund a full-time president, writing in *Adminfo*, “the BCPVPA has long prided itself on its ability to use volunteers to fill many demanding roles. However, the position of president has changed over the past few years and it is increasingly difficult for the president to perform both Association tasks and school duties. The time commitment to Association business alone precludes a president from outside the Lower Mainland. For this and many other reasons, I believe the time has come for us to consider a full-time president.”

1994-1996

Gord Wallington assumed the role of President in July 1994. Professional development was entrenched as a core value of the Association; communications, sped

along by the arrival of internet, was being reshaped; and contract and legal assistance was robust (as much by necessity as design). The relationship with the BCTF continued on rocky footing, in part because of the managerial/teacher split and in part because the *Claim for Assets* was working towards a conclusion. In particular, the high costs of ongoing legal fees, which were difficult to predict, continued to challenge Association budgeting.

To deliver the expected and necessary services was challenging for an organization of fewer than 2,500 voluntary members. Gord recalls, “One of the selling points when the BCP started out was that the Association could provide members with the same kind of protection and coverage, and all that sort of stuff, as the BCTF did, but we could do it much cheaper. But after the first year or so, we found out that we couldn’t offer everything for \$650 a year or whatever the first fees were. It became part of the issue around the Board table that legal fees were quote ‘out of control.’ We understood the necessity, and saw the value, but the cost was substantial. It was the biggest part of our budget by far ... and we struggled with how to balance those things. Eventually, we had to go out and sell an increase. In fact, Nick had to go out and sell an increase in the middle of a year when he was President. We just didn’t have enough money to maintain what we had to do with professional development, with benefits, and with the legal stuff.”

Early in Gord’s mandate, contract discussions taking place around the province concentrated on issues such as:

- the meaning of due process: an individual providing quality service for a school board has earned a certain status and standard of living, and is justified in believing that they can continue in that position;
- a duty of fairness: in cases of reassignment,

non-renewal, or termination of an administrative officer’s contract, the school board, before it makes a decision, is required to give the administrative officer reasonable notice of intention to make a decision;

- an opportunity to meet with the board accompanied by another person, who can respond to the reason and make representation: the school board is then obligated to give serious consideration to that person’s input before a decision is made;
- whether contracts should be continuing or term: while the BCPVPA advocated for continuing appointments, fewer than 20 districts had successfully established them;
- Good Faith clauses: stating the intentions of both parties to act in good faith toward each other in situations where discretion is necessary in applying the terms of the contract.

Communication with Chapters and schools accelerated when Gordon introduced a weekly fax newsletter to all Chapters. “That was something that I really believed was necessary,” Gord says. “You need to communicate with people, you need to let them know what’s going on — members wanted to know what was going on, to be informed, to feel part of the team.”

Another broadside from the BCTF arrived in a report that proposed educational reforms. Gord wrote that the report recommended, “the involvement of staff committees in the selection and removal of Principals and the direct election of Principals for one-year terms. This last recommendation would involve lobbying by BCTF to have the government change legislation to remove the union exempt position of administrative officer (and return us to the Federation).” Gord continued, “We are confident that the most radical of these recommendations will not

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- Gord Wallington

receive a favourable hearing in Victoria. Still, we are monitoring the situation and developing a response strategy which will depend on the actions taken by the BCTF.”

In January of 1995, Gord wrote to members, “Looking back on 1994 one can’t help but remember the attack on administration and the effect it had in some districts. Administrative time was reduced and, in some cases, administrative positions were eliminated. However, we can relish the fact that the Association, Chapters and individual members, blunted that attack in many districts. The legal battles that we fought and continue to fight on behalf of our members will benefit us all in the future.”

Gord was also President at the dawning of mass online access. In February 1995 he wrote, “Fax machines sing a love song to each other. Cellular phones seem attached to the ears of people hurrying down the street. Computers store, file, and process millions of pieces of information in the time it takes my two fingers to type a single word. ... It is a special challenge for schools to offer relevant programs to all students, whether they are technologically illiterate

or able to write programs, access bulletin boards, and even use the Internet. ... We are now starting to address the issue of technological change, a challenge that is more rapid, exciting, and widespread than any other we have faced. If history is a study of the successes and failures of managing change, I'm confident that future scholars will conclude that we were successful."

Email launched: the BCPVPA did not have its own domain for the first year, and instead used the Community Learning Network (CLN) domain, a Ministry of Education initiative to promote online access and learning. Funding for CLN was discontinued in 2003. Later that year, the BC government called on school districts to develop three-year technology plans with the goal of having one computer for every three secondary students and one computer for every six elementary students.

The BC Student Voice logo was created by Tim Paul, an internationally renowned artist from the Nuuchahnulth Nation. The logo depicts a meeting circle or nest where elders and young people meet for open discussion. The bird is the messenger representing the positive and good of this coming together. The nest is the place where young people are invited to participate, ask questions, and have a voice where their opinions are valued.

Gord made use of his relief stipend as president to work from the BCPVPA office one or two days a week, in recognition of the challenges faced by presidents to balance Association and school demands with financial responsibility to members. As his term as president was nearing its end, he, like Nick before him, wrote to members outlining the pros and cons of members funding a full-time seconded president and calling for the matter to be voted on at the upcoming Chapter Council.

"Concern has been expressed during the past year or so that having a practicing school administrator as president may no longer be practical," he wrote. The Board of Directors, he said, had discussed the issue and recommended that the Association move to a full-time seconded president, but the decision was up to members. Gord identified three questions to consider: do we want a full-time president?; do we need a full-time president?; and — if yes — how would the position be funded? He acknowledged that Chapter Council could choose to pass, defeat, amend, or refer/table the board recommendation. They might also decide to support the idea but delay implementation to a future date, or to phase in a full-time president. The motion that the presidency of the Association be a full-time seconded position was defeated at that May Chapter Council meeting. Bob Mang became the Association's first full-time president during the second year of his term, beginning July 1997.

During Gord's term, the Association drafted a mission statement, which was revised and passed at the May 1995 Chapter Council: "The mission of the BCPVPA is to support members in providing quality leadership in public education," and the BCPVPA established the BC Student Leadership Foundation with Denny Grisdale, president and Peter Haines, vice-president.

The *Claim for Assets* to secure compensation from the BCTF was settled in a judgment dated April 26, 1996. Final legal proceedings involved determining the value of surplus BCTF assets; the percentage that was due to the Principals' and Vice-Principals' association; interest owing; and the number of members on which to base the payment. Resolution came in the form of a cheque dated June 19, 1996 for \$3.9-million. The settlement paved the way for the Association to fund a student scholarship legacy and to construct its own headquarters on West 10th Avenue in Vancouver and to continue to build on its impressive first decade of achievements.

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BCPVPA

**In Their Own Words:
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is a project of the
BC Retired Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association

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The BC Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association
is a voluntary professional association representing school leaders employed as
Principals and Vice-Principals in BC's public education system.

The BCPVPA provides its members with the professional services and
supports they need to provide exemplary leadership in public education.

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