

Report on Employers' Association Governance Consultations

November 29, 2017



PSEC

Public Sector
Employers' Council
Secretariat

Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat

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Introduction

As per the Minister's September 1, 2017 letter (appendix A), the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat (PSEC Secretariat) recently engaged in targeted consultations with the employers' associations' (EA) board chairs, CEOs, and relevant stakeholder groups about potential governance structure changes intended to ensure:

- board size and composition reflects current governance best practices;
- boards have strong lines of sight, through advisory structures and subject matter experts, to current operational realities and the technical labour relations and compensation issues faced by their member-employers;
- clear roles and focus among the member-employers to achieve their association's statutory mandate;
- bylaws are modernized to take advantage of the additional flexibility offered through the new Societies Act; and
- consistent, collaborative approaches across EAs, in line with B.C.'s statutory framework for coordinating public sector employers, while maintaining the flexibility necessary to accommodate each sector's unique factors and context.

The consultations were to help Government determine a course of action for all EAs in advance of the next BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) scheduled for January 25-26, 2018.

PSEC Secretariat engaged in 10 meetings and consulted with approximately 22 individual board members, senior staff, and other stakeholders associated with the four EAs that serve as bargaining agents for their respective sectors (BCPSEA, Health Employers' Association of BC, Community Social Services Employers' Association, Post-Secondary Employers' Association). To facilitate the discussions, PSEC Secretariat forwarded topics and questions in advance of the in-person discussions (appendix B).

Specific to the matter of BCPSEA governance, PSEC Secretariat met with the board chair and senior representatives from the British Columbia School Trustees' Association (BCSTA), presented to school trustees at their provincial council meeting, and subsequently received 30 written submissions from boards of education and trustees. Initially, the BCSTA Board chose not to provide any written recommendations to the PSEC Secretariat on potential governance options. Instead, the BCSTA submitted an executive summary (appendix C) and the 30 submissions they received from school districts based on a BCSTA questionnaire that differed from the questions and themes used by the PSEC Secretariat. Subsequent meetings were held with the BCSTA to discuss their member input and explore potential governance changes. These consultations resulted in a set of recommendations from the BCSTA Board conveyed to the PSEC Secretariat via letter on November 27, 2017 (appendix D).

Through the course of the consultations, it was clear that the context and set of challenges differs across the EAs. However, some consistent themes and common perspectives have emerged on best practices and potential areas for governance structure changes:

Theme #1: Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout the consultations, a recurring theme was that the specific governance structures are only a part of good governance. The EAs' bylaws and board policies are foundations, but strong governance comes from clarity of roles and responsibilities that the directors, members, line ministries, and PSEC Secretariat staff are expected to uphold in keeping with the PSEC model. There is a strong consensus that there needs to be more formal onboarding, reference materials, and ongoing member outreach and board development to ensure all participants have a better understanding of the EAs' statutory mandate and how to support the technical and specialized services they were established to deliver. Few participants identified any meaningful opportunities to clarify or enhance roles and responsibilities through amendments to the constitution or bylaws themselves.

Several conversations identified the challenge of "wearing two hats," meaning that it is difficult for some directors to put aside the interests of their own employer/organization and focus solely on the fiduciary obligation to the EA and its overarching statutory mandate. This challenge elicited a number of different potential responses, and there was significant overlap with the other themes noted below.

The boards of education generally reported that the roles and responsibilities of the new BCPSEA Board should mirror those of the previous board. Another common theme that the board should reflect the general wishes of boards of education as the employer and several submissions said that BCPSEA's role is to "advocate" for boards of education. A number of boards of education are of the position that BCPSEA represents a different type of employer than do the other EAs in that its board typically includes elected trustees. Accordingly, they posit that BCPSEA should not be bound to follow governance structures applicable to appointed boards controlled directly by government. It was noted by the BCSTA that *"It is unclear as to the extent that boards considered the Public Sector Employers' Act in determining their suggested roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for the new BCPSEA board. This is noted as some of the suggestions may not be consistent with the current requirements under the Act."*

Theme #2: Sector Advisory Committees

There was general acknowledgement that effective advisory structures are essential to providing the EA boards with strong lines of sight to the technical and practical labour relations and human resource issues faced by their members. More importantly, particularly among EA staff, strong advisory structures were viewed as essential to supporting the day-to-day working relationships between EA staff and the public sector employers. In other words, while providing advice to the board is important, their greater impact and relevance was seen to be in assisting the EA CEOs and staff to develop, implement and coordinate cross-sector programs and strategies.

Apart from the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA), where it was consistently noted that the "sector panels" are being used in effective manner, there was general recognition that

the advisory structures for the other three EAs could benefit from being modernized and/or reinvigorated. There was general agreement advisory structures should not be too rigid and the board should be responsible for providing overall direction on the priorities and objectives tasked to the advisory bodies. There were also several comments that effective advisory structures rely on logistics support from EA staff and active coordination through the EA CEOs.

The BCSTA Board recommended the establishment of a technical advisory committee to advise both the association operations and the BCPSEA Board. The majority of the submissions by boards of education also favoured the creation of a technical advisory committee to BCPSEA.

Theme #3: Board Size and Composition

The consultations did not support the argument that there should be a standard board size applied to all the EAs. With the exception of comments regarding the previous BCPSEA board, which was seen to be larger than necessary, there were no strong views or compelling arguments to alter the size of the other three EA boards. When pressed, most believed it would be slightly preferable to reduce rather than increase the current size of the boards.

The general consensus was that while the EA boards benefit from having government appointees, the quality and level of engagement from these individuals can vary widely. In general, the feedback is that government appointees should be comprised of senior executives (DM or ADM level) from the related ministries and that their service to the EA boards should be included in their job descriptions/performance accountabilities.

Specific to BCPSEA, the in-person consultation revealed generally positive comments about the BCPSEA School District and Government Advisory Committee, which was established in 2014 by the BCPSEA Public Administrator to engage school trustees and government representatives on BCPSEA governance matters. Specifically, it was noted how the committee's "regional" structure improved the quality of trustee engagement on BCSPSEA governance and business matters relative to what occurred prior to the appointment of the Public Administrator. School trustees are nominated and appointed to represent seven regions, based largely on the BCSTA chapter groupings. The consequence is that this forced the trustees to establish communications structures to actively and regularly canvas their colleagues before the committee meetings as well as report out following the meeting. In essence, this regional structure required the representative trustees to consider and speak on behalf of a wider range of interests, not just the interest of their specific board.

The BCSTA Board recommended that trustee directors be elected on a regional basis. In terms of the written submissions from the boards of education, however, there was no clear consensus as to the merits of a regional approach to trustee representation on the board. While a variety of approaches to the election process were suggested, no single process was favoured by a majority of boards. However, there was acknowledgment that trustee representation should reflect school districts of differing sizes and contexts, regardless of how the trustees may be elected. As to the number of trustees on the board, the most common suggestion was seven trustees.

A significant majority of the boards favoured the election – as opposed to appointment – of trustee representatives. The BCSTA’s central recommendation is that new BCPSEA Board be comprised of a majority of elected trustees in combination with appointed government representatives. The development of a suggested skillset for all BCPSEA Board Directors was seen as advantageous by a number of boards, as was the provision of specific learning opportunities for members of the new board. However, these desired competencies should not limit or prevent trustees from running for election to the BCPSEA Board.

On another matter specific to BCPSEA, the former board structure required a representative of the BC School Superintendents Association and a representative of the BC Association of School Business Officials to sit as non-voting directors. Several comments pointed out inherent challenges for senior school district officials to sit on the same board as their employers (school trustees). It is difficult for school district officials to fully exercise their fiduciary duty to the BCPSEA Board if that means speaking freely or taking positions contrary to those taken by the school trustees on the BCPSEA Board. While the BCPSEA Board will need access to the advice and perspectives of senior school officials, including superintendents, the view is that this should be pursued through technical advisory structures.

Specific to the Post-Secondary Employers’ Association (PSEA), representatives of institutions and teaching universities expressed some concern that the current board structure is dominated by representation from colleges and, as such, the board does not sufficiently consider the differing needs of the other two sub-sectors. The BC Association of Institutes and Universities has proposed bylaw amendment to delineate and create a balance between the two subsectors at both the board representation and membership voting level. Discussions also mentioned that the current board tends to be heavily represented by the presidents of the post-secondary institutions and that it may be beneficial to see a mix drawn from a range of positions, such as VPs academic, human resources, and/or operations.

Specific to the Health Employers’ Association of BC (HEABC), while there is general support for the current board composition, there were comments that the board needs to consider how it might better reflect the voice of mental health service providers. As well, while it is very important to have health authority CEOs on the HEABC Board, it is not necessary to require the participation of every health authority CEO; a mix of other senior executives may be more beneficial and effective.

Theme #4: Independent Board Chair

The governance structure of HEABC requires an independent board chair. Selected by the HEABC Board of Directors, the board chair must have knowledge of the health sector but must be independent of any of the member employers. The concept of an independent chair was canvassed across the consultations, including with HEABC who confirmed that they see value in maintaining the independent board chair model as it helps to moderate the impact of other directors coming to the board table “wearing two hats.”

There is general agreement that, free from day-to-day influence of having to manage or be directly tied to a specific employer in the sector, the independent board chair would be in a stronger position to

ensure the board remains focussed on the technical and statutory purpose of the association. There was also general agreement that an independent chair would be well positioned to broker competing perspectives and interests, including sub-sectors dynamics.

However, there were also concerns associated with the concept that varied by sector. In the health sector, where an independent chair is already in place, the main concern is about succession planning for the next chair. The desired attributes of the board chair need to be clearly articulated and appropriate remuneration available to attract candidates with the necessary skills and experience.

For the CSSEA, PSEA and BCPSEA sectors, while the participants appreciated the potential benefits of an independent board chair, they also indicated that careful consideration must be given to the selection criteria/desired attributes, and how the nomination and appointment process would work. For example, would it be the Minister who appoints a board chair or the board itself? What role do the directors or the association's membership have in nominating or vetting prospective board chair candidates?

With respect to CSSEA, while the merits were noted, the prevailing view was that the current board structure is working well for the sector; participants expressed concern that implementing an independent chair may disrupt the current positive dynamic. Some participants indicated the independent board chair might be able to better unite the PSEA Board, and the PSEA Board as a whole agreed to give the concept further consideration. The BCSTA, for its part, indicated that the preference of trustees would be to have a school trustee elected by the membership as the BCPSEA Board Chair but there might be broader acceptance if the Minister required a different approach that was applied equally across all four EAs. The written submissions from the boards of education were virtually silent on the matter.

Theme #5: Length and Stagger of Director Terms / Board Development / Evaluations

For both PSEA and BCPSEA, it was noted that annual elections for all trustees creates unnecessary instability. There was general consensus that directors should serve for three year terms and, to the extent possible, the terms should be staggered so that only about 1/3 of the board is up for renewal in any given year. This would ensure board continuity and allow for the mentoring/development of new directors. Specific to BCPSEA, the bylaws would need to consider how to maintain a stagger while dealing with unexpected departures due to the four-year municipal election cycle. The BCSTA Board recommended the BCPSEA Board Directors be elected to staggered, multi-year terms and written submissions from the boards of education also favored two or three year staggered terms

In addition, there was general recognition that all boards need to engage in annual board evaluation processes as a standard matter of good practice. There were some comments that, to ensure an inflow of fresh insights and perspectives, an individual should not serve more than two consecutive terms (i.e., six years) before being required to sit out at least one term before seeking to return to the board.

Other Comments

The general perspective was that EA boards should aim to meet four to six times per year (quarterly at minimum or once every two months). The business that members are expected to conduct at their respective AGMs is relatively narrow and consistent across the four EAs. There were no significant reasons to expand or contract the official business to be conducted as part of the AGMs. However, several participants noted that there are opportunities to better leverage the AGM as a platform for cross-sector training and/or professional development (e.g. seminars and presentations). Most participants value the AGM as an opportunity to network and connect with other participants. As such, none felt that moving to an electronic or deemed AGM would be advisable or well received.

All participants were asked their views on possible additional safeguards to ensure that EA boards are actively pursuing the organization's statutory purpose (e.g. ability of the Minister to appoint a special advisor, appoint additional government directors, or provide weighted voting for government members). Most participants felt that the existing statutory provision that allows the Minister to dismiss the board and appoint a public administrator is the appropriate measure. It is seen as a necessarily high threshold. The general view was that there is currently a healthy tension between the views of employers and government; measures to give the Minister/Government more influence over the boards – even if the powers are not utilized -- would be counterproductive and serve only to erode employer engagement and the perceived relevance of the EAs to the respective sectors.



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Christina Zacharuk, President and CEO
Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat
Suite 210, 880 Douglas St
Victoria BC V8W 2B7

Dear Ms. Zacharuk:

As you are aware, pursuant to s. 9.1 of the *Public Sector Employers Act*, a Public Administrator has been fulfilling the function of the Board of Directors for the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) since July 2013. Over this period, the BCPSEA membership – the Province's 60 public boards of education – have brought forward and passed several resolutions calling on the Minister of Finance to release the Association from the direction of the Public Administrator and reinstate trustee directors to the BCPSEA Board of Directors.

The advent of a new government presents an opportunity to wind down the Public Administrator responsibilities and transition to a structure that continues to deliver good governance consistent with BCPSEA's statutory mandate while restoring a more direct role for elected school trustees. More broadly, this also presents government with an opportunity to examine other potential enhancements to the governance structure for BCPSEA as well as for the other major public sector employers' associations: the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA), the Post-Secondary Employers' Association (PSEA), and the Health Employers' Association of BC (HEABC). This exploration is particularly timely given the individual associations are each in the midst of considering, as part the transition to the new *Societies Act*, various updates to their respective constitutions and bylaws.

I want to ensure government is prepared to deliver a coordinated and informed response to these related matters. As such, I ask that the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat engage in targeted consultations with the employers' associations' board chairs, CEOs, and relevant stakeholder groups about potential governance structure changes intended to ensure:

- board size and composition reflects current governance best practices;
- boards have strong lines of sight, through advisory structures and subject matter experts, to current operational realities and the technical labour relations and compensation issues faced by their member-employers;
- clear roles and focus among the member-employers to achieve their association's statutory mandate;

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- bylaws are modernized to take advantage of the additional flexibility offered through the new *Societies Act*; and
- consistent, collaborative approaches across employers' associations, in line with B.C.'s statutory framework for coordinating public sector employers, while maintaining the flexibility necessary to accommodate each sector's unique factors and context.

I trust these consultations will be invaluable to government in assessing the best course of action for all employers' associations as we move to restore a more direct role for school trustees in BCPSEA's governance in advance of the next BCPSEA Annual General Meeting scheduled for January 2018.

Sincerely,



Carole James

Minister responsible for the *Public Sector Employers Act*

cc: Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Education
Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health
Honourable Judy Darcy, Minister of Mental Health & Addictions
Honourable Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development & Poverty Reduction
Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children & Family Development
Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills & Training

Public Sector Employers' Association Governance: Consultation Themes

Board composition:

- Does the board have the right mix of individuals/skills/experience? What skillsets/experience would benefit your board the most? Is the director nomination/selection process aligned to what the board needs?
- Does your board evaluate board and director performance? Is there a succession plan to ensure board composition is a mix of experienced and new/developing directors?
- Currently, boards are structured in a manner that attempts to capture the views of different employer sub-groups across the sector. Is this approach working, does your board adequately reflect employer diversity?
- Does the board have strong line-of-sight into the technical and operational challenges faced by their members? Does the association have strong links to technical staff in their member organizations?
- Does the board currently use formal advisory bodies to inform their decision-making? Is there strong board-led coordination of these bodies?

Alignment with statutory mandate:

- Are there changes to the constitution and bylaws that would help put a stronger focus on the association's technical and statutory purpose? Does the association's constitution adequately reflect the scope of service delivery to members? Could it better highlight their service as an extension of the employers' technical expertise and labour relations functions?
- Do the bylaws adequately capture the obligations of members to the association? What formal governance role should we expect the member-employers to play (i.e. what are the special and ordinary resolutions they should vote on)? Should it be broader or narrower?
- Are there additional measures that can be written into the bylaws to ensure alignment with the statutory mandate?

Process Modernization:

- Is the board the right size? Could the governance workload be better shared/lightened through board committees or board advisory bodies?



- Does the board meet quarterly or does it need to meet more/less frequently? Does the board take advantage of videoconference/electronic meetings?
- Are there changes to processes or roles/responsibilities that would streamline board meetings?
- How frequently does the association bring together or call a meeting of the membership? Does the membership need to come together more/less frequently? Do the bylaws provide for electronic general meetings and voting?



Dear Board Chairs and Chief Executive Officers,

As you will know, pursuant to s. 9.1 of the *Public Sector Employers Act*, a Public Administrator has been fulfilling the function of the Board of Directors for the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) since July 2013. While a key objective is to wind down the role of the BCPSEA Public Administrator and ensure the BCPSEA board is positioned for success, this also presents an opportunity for all the boards to review their respective constitution and bylaws for opportunities to modernize if needed and share best practices.

Starting in September, the Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat (PSEC Secretariat) will begin a targeted consultation with key stakeholders on opportunities for bylaw changes to improve alignment with current governance best practices and the PSEC statutory framework, while maintaining the governance flexibility necessary to accommodate each sector's unique needs and dynamics.

This note and attachments are to advise that the Minister of Finance has asked the PSEC Secretariat to engage in targeted consultations with the board chairs, CEOs, and other relevant stakeholder groups to ensure governance best practices.

To be clear, this is not about changing the statutory mandate of the employer associations, the conduct of public sector bargaining, or membership criteria for employers. This is more narrowly focussed on potential modernizations and adjustments to the associations' constitution and bylaws and board policies to ensure every board continues to provide good governance in the achievement of its statutory purpose.

Given the desire to resolve BCPSEA's governance by their next AGM in January 2018, I am working to conclude consultations and provide recommendations to the Minister of Finance within the next few months.

Attached you will find some the themes that we will explore through our consultations. Please do not take the questions as prescriptive, merely illustrative of the dialogue that we will engage in and conclude over the coming weeks.

My office will work to organize individual meetings with you.

In advance, I want to thank you for attention to this matter and look forward to our consultations in the coming days.

Christina Zacharuk
President and CEO
Public Sector Employers' Council Secretariat
gov.bc.ca/PSEC

Attachments:

Minister's letter to PSEC Secretariat CEO
Themes for consultation

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY –
BCSTA MEMBER INPUT TO PSEC CONSULTATION ON BCPSEA GOVERNANCE**

The Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC) requested BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) co-ordinate the process of providing input from individual Boards of Education to the question of appropriate governance for the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA), including the planned return of a governing board (with elected trustee participation) in proximity to the January 2018 BCPSEA Annual General Meeting.

While individual boards were able to provide any and all input they saw fit, BCSTA provided ten general questions to help guide local discussions and potential recommendations. The submitted feedback from individual boards of education is summarized below under each of the original questions, but an overview of the additional input received is also included.

A full, inclusive listing of all individual submissions follows the executive summary. The key message that is consistent throughout the submissions, though, is support of the return of elected trustees to the governance of BCPSEA. Without exception, submissions for boards of education supported the concept of school trustees as part of the governing board of their employers' association.

1. Should the trustee representatives to the new BCPSEA board be elected or appointed to the board? If elected, through what process?

Although not unanimously, a significant majority of boards of education favoured the election of trustee representatives to a new BCPSEA board (as opposed to the appointment of trustees to the board). A variety of approaches to the election process were suggested, including election by BCPSEA trustee representatives, regional elections based on BCSTA branch structures, an election process similar to that for the BCSTA board of directors, election by all trustees, and weighted voting by district student population. No single process was favoured by a majority of boards, but the most common answer was the election of trustees to the board by BCPSEA trustee representatives.

2. What is the appropriate number of trustees on the board (knowing there will likely also be some appointed government representatives)?

While a variety of answers were provided to this question, the most common suggestion was for seven trustee members of the new board. The second most common recommendation was for nine trustees. A number of other suggestions were also included in answers to this question, including the number of appointed government representatives to the board, the balance of elected trustees to government appointees, the overall size of the board, the inclusion of management partner group representatives, and who should be the chair of the new board. A significant majority of these additional submissions favoured an elected trustee majority on the board as well as the inclusion of government-appointed members to the board (but as a minority of the total).

3. Should there be required regional representation by trustees on the new BCPSEA board? If yes, based on what?

There was no clear majority direction regarding this question. While a number of boards favour election of trustees on an 'at-large' basis, many others favour the election of trustees on a regional basis. Likewise, there were a number of varied suggestions as to how the regional representation might be broken down, including by BCSTA branch structure, similar to health regions, by student population, and by the current zone structure of the BCPSEA Advisory Committee.

APPENDIX C

A general theme that did emerge, however, was the need for trustee representation from throughout the province reflecting school districts of differing sizes and context, regardless of how the trustees were elected to the new BCPSEA board.

4. Should there be longer terms for directors (e.g. three years), or one-year terms only?

A significant majority of boards favoured multi-year terms for members of the BCPSEA board, with the most common suggestions being either two or three-year terms. A significant number of boards also noted a preference for staggered terms (i.e. trustee elections to the board being staggered so that there was always a blend of current and newly elected trustees on the board at any time).

It is important to note, however, that some boards did favour one-year terms (as per current BCSTA practice for our board of directors).

5. Should the start date of all trustee terms to the BCPSEA board be the same, or should they be staggered in some way?

While not all boards addressed this specific question, a significant number noted a preference for staggered terms / staggered election of trustee representatives to the BCPSEA board. There was no common direction, however, as to how the staggering might work or be achieved. Although some suggestions as to how the staggering of terms might initially be introduced, the final answer to this question appears to be directly connected to an individual board's preference as to the length of term. For this reason, any consideration of staggering of terms would need to be made in conjunction with consideration of the length of terms and the number of trustees elected to the board.

6. What commonalities or considerations for structure and governance should be shared by all four employer association boards under PSEC?

Feedback on this question was somewhat limited. A number of boards did note their belief that BCPSEA is somewhat different from the other public employers' associations in that its board should include elected trustees (and not just government appointees) and therefore should not be bound by common expectations or standards. In short, BCPSEA represents a different type of employer and therefore should not be bound to follow governance structures applicable to appointed boards controlled directly by government.

While the board of BCPSEA will share some common responsibilities, policies and processes with other public employer associations under PSEC, there must be some latitude to recognize the unique nature of the public education system and its elected trustee structure.

7. Consistent with the Public Sector Employers Act, what should the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for the new BCPSEA Board be? (i.e. what do you see as their role and core responsibilities?)

The most common answer to this question was that the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the new BCPSEA board should be the same as the previous board. A variety of answers to this question, however, were submitted including reference to advocacy, who should chair the board, existing BCPSEA bylaws, governance, and key roles such as bargaining. A common theme, however, is that the board should reflect the general wishes and direction of boards of education as the employer.

APPENDIX C

It is unclear as to the extent that boards considered the Public Sector Employers' Act in determining their suggested roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for the new BCPSEA board. This is noted as some of the suggestions may not be consistent with the current requirements under the Act.

8. Should a desired skill set for director candidates be developed (by PSEC)? If yes, what could the list include?

Although a majority of boards recognize the advantage of trustee members of the BCPSEA board having specific competencies, there should be no limitation on who runs for and is ultimately elected to the board. In short, there should be no competency requirement or experience standard that limits which trustees may run for election to the BCPSEA board.

The development of a suggested skill set for all members of the BCPSEA board was seen as advantageous by a number of boards. The intent would be to indicate the scope of knowledge and experience that might be helpful to a trustee (or appointed board member) in fulfilling their role on the board.

Likewise, the provision of specific professional learning opportunities for all members of the new board would be appropriate. There is a general recognition that all members of the board should have a wide scope of knowledge of labour relations and human resource issues in order to effectively fulfil their mandate. Although not specifically noted, it would seem appropriate that BCPSEA, PSEC and BCSTA would work cooperatively to provide such professional learning opportunities to the new board.

9. Should BCPSEA also maintain a technical advisory committee (reporting to the CEO) comprised of senior district staff representatives and sector experts?

The majority of responding boards favoured the creation of a technical advisory committee to BCPSEA. A variety of suggestions were made as to the composition of the committee, and how it might operate. A common theme that can be drawn from the suggestions was the need for clear definitions of roles and responsibilities between the BCPSEA board and the technical advisory committee.

It is suggested that the formation of any technical advisory committee consider most of the same questions being asked regarding the formation of the new BCPSEA board. It may, in fact, be an appropriate early agenda item for the new board in the spring of 2018.

10. That other questions or considerations does your board feel are important?

A number of individual questions and suggestions were put forward by individual boards, but there was no significant commonality to the input. It is suggested that PSEC, BCPEA and the newly formed board review the questions and suggestions as part of the process of establishing the new board and its responsibilities.



British Columbia
School Trustees
Association

November 27, 2017

Christina Zacharuk

Chief Executive Officer

Public Sector Employers' Council

P.O. Box 9400, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8W 9V1

Dear Ms. Zacharuk,

Re: BCSTA recommendations regarding BCPSEA future governance

Thank you for the opportunity for a follow-up meeting regarding our member input to the question of appropriate future governance of the BC Public Schools Employers Association (BCPSEA). Our discussion last week helped to clarify the importance of specific recommendations needed to form your final submission to the Minister of Finance. We are also cognizant of the tight timeline required to begin implementing changes this January for both BCPSEA and the other three public sector employers' associations.

Let me begin by emphasizing that the most important consideration for Boards of Education is the return of elected trustee representation to the board of BCPSEA. While we will offer a number of recommendations to you, the return of an elected trustees to our employers' association board as soon as possible is viewed as extremely positive.

While there should be a degree of consistency across the governance structures of all four of the public sector employers' association, it must also be recognized that public education is unique by the inclusion of elected trustees. There must be some allowance for this important difference to be reflected in the governance structures of BCPSEA.

Additionally, BCSTA would like to put forward several other recommendations to you for consideration in your final submission to the Minister of Finance. We recommend that:

1. The new board of BCPSEA be comprised of a majority of elected trustees in combination with appointed government representatives, with consideration of inclusion from the Ministry of Education, PSEC, as well as others as appropriate.
2. All members of the new BCPSEA board be elected (or appointed in the case of government representatives) to staggered, multi-year terms.
3. Trustee members of the board be elected on a regional basis (the same regions as, or similar to, the current BCPSEA trustee advisory committee), but through a process that allows all eligible members the opportunity to vote for all trustee representatives to the board.

APPENDIX D

4. The chair of the new BCPSEA board to be elected by the members of the board from within its direct membership, but also with consideration of consistency with the other employers' association.
5. All four public employer association boards be provided with regular mandatory governance and technical training directed at an identified skill and knowledge set appropriate to such board members.
6. The board be provided with the opportunity to interact formally with the other public sector employers' association boards and senior staff on a regular basis. This should include re-establishing regular meetings of the Public Sector Employers' Council.
7. Establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of sector and affiliated experts to advise both the association operations and the board as appropriate.

We understand that there may be numerous details or related decisions that would need to accompany the above recommendations should they be implemented. BCSTA remains committed to working with you to establish and implement all of the decisions and processes necessary to re-establish trustee governance at BCPSEA.

In closing, I would like to emphasize once again that our most important goal is the return of elected trustees to the governance of BCPSEA. While there may be a variety of opinions and numerous options as to how the elected representatives are chosen, the most important goal for us is the timely return of an elected board to the governance of BCPSEA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G B Swan'.

Gordon Swan

President

BC School Trustees Association

cc: Renzo del Negro – CEO, BCPSEA
Scott MacDonald – Deputy Minister of Education