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Letter to the Editor

Teachers Want a Deal Not a Fight!

Teachers have been forced into job action by this government due to British Columbia's longstanding neglect in not funding public education comparably to the rest of Canada, and due to their illegal actions in 2002 that removed our class size and class composition language from teachers' collective agreements. All children and all students in British Columbia have been shortchanged ever since in not receiving the quality of education to which they are entitled. This gap has grown to be a \$1000 per student shortfall in funding here in BC when compared with the Canadian average for K-12 schools. This is a disgrace.

We hope that Premier Clark will intervene in this bargaining and direct her ministers to settle our dispute as she did in the Vancouver Port Authority strike, after which she said:

"You shouldn't have a fight if you can get a deal. We got a deal instead. We're delighted about it."

Let's hope she follows her own advice instead of intentionally trying to provoke further job action to enable her government to introduce wholesale changes to education; to legislatively impose a contract; and to force us back to work under the threat of massive fines, as was recently proven in the courts.

Teachers want a negotiated deal, not a fight.

Thank you for your continued understanding and support!

Respectfully submitted,

Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

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