
MAPLE RIDGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Special Election Bulletin || October 2020

THE WHEN-WHERE-WHO'S OF VOTING IN THE BC GENERAL ELECTION

First of all, make sure you are registered to vote, and that Elections BC has your current address details, so your voter card is received at your door in the mail. If you have any registration concerns know that registration online and by mail is *now closed*.

However: you can still register or update your information when you vote in person or by mail.

If you are wondering what you need in order to vote see this page:

<https://elections.bc.ca/voting/voter-id/>

When do I vote?

- *If voting by mail*, it is recommended that you order your package through Elections BC by **October 17th**. Your vote must be received in the mail by **October 24th**, at 8pm
If you'd like to order your vote-by-mail package visit
<https://eregister.electionsbc.gov.bc.ca/ovr/welcome.aspx#> or phone 1-800-661-8683
- *If voting by advanced ballot* you can do so in-person October 15th to October 21st, 8am to 8pm each day. See below for where this is locally available.
- *If voting on election day* you can do so in-person October 24th, 8am to 8pm

Where do I vote, if I am not voting by mail?

If you are unsure of what electoral district / riding you live in, to confirm you can check out this tool online: <https://maps.gov.bc.ca/ess/hm/bcede/>

- *If voting in advanced balloting*, there are only a few select locations per voting district.
For Mission - Maple Ridge:
Maple Ridge Lawn Bowling Club, Mission DEO* Office, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
For Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows:
Golden Ears United Church, Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows DEO* Office
For other voting districts, and specific addresses look them up in this document:
<https://elections.bc.ca/docs/advance-voting-places.pdf>
*** DEO in this case stands for "District Electoral Office" (not Education)**

→ *If voting on election day* you can go to your neighbourhood, and find a valid location using the “Where to Vote” App from Elections BC: <https://wheretovote.elections.bc.ca>

Who do I vote for? What are my options?

The two major parties that have a candidate in every riding are the BC Liberals and the BC NDP. In many ridings there are the Green Party of BC and the BC Conservative Party, as well as independent candidates.

→ *For Maple Ridge - Mission the options are:*

Bob D'Eith	BC NDP
Chelsa Meadus	BC Liberal Party
Matt Trenholm	Green Party of BC

→ *For Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows the options are:*

Cheryl Ashlie	BC Liberal Party
Lisa Beare	BC NDP

If you live in another riding in BC, you can look up your candidate choices here: <https://elections.bc.ca/provincial-elections/provincial-candidates/candidate-list/>

All information in this article resource was investigated with information found at: <https://elections.bc.ca> Visit them for News Updates and further information not provided here. They have a handy search bar for the website for specific inquiries.



A RUBRIC FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION WITHIN OUR PROFESSION

By Mark Girard, MRTA Local Election Contact

“Our world will not be destroyed by evil people, but by the good people who watch them without doing anything”- (Albert Einstein)

Category #1 – Understanding the political spectrum

Not yet meeting expectations:

Is unaware of the political spectrum. Does not vote. Uses the excuse that their vote is “too small to count” as a way to justify their apathy.

*“A great deal of intelligence can be invested in ignorance if the need for illusion is deep”
-(Saul Bellow)*

Approaching expectations:

Is aware of the political spectrum* but is unaware of their position on the political spectrum. Has no awareness of how their place on the political spectrum is being affected by external factors. Takes little or no desire to engage in political activities that support any position on the political spectrum.

“One of the penalties for not engaging in politics is that you will soon find yourself governed by your inferiors” -(Plato)

Minimally meeting expectations:

Has awareness of the external factors that influence their position on the political spectrum but has no appreciation for engaging in activities that influence other positions on the political spectrum. Does not engage in strategic voting*.

“Politics is not a game but a serious business” -(Winston Churchill)

Exceeding Expectations:

Has an appreciation of the importance of engaging in political activities and is keenly aware of the many dimensions within the political spectrum. Engages in extra-curricular activities within the political sphere (Staff Committee, Teacher’s association, riding association, labor council engagement).

“Politics ought to be the part time profession of every citizen who would protect their rights and privileges and preserve what is good and fruitful” -(Dwight D. Eisenhower)

Category #2 Political Engagement

Not yet meeting expectations:

Does not vote, is not interested in engaging in the political sphere. Believes that “all politicians are crooked and liars” and that “government is bad”. Engages only when forced to (strike and labour tension, war).

“Anyone who says that they are not interested in Politics is like a drowning man who insists that they are not interested in water” -(Mahatma Ghandi)

Approaching Expectations:

Votes because they feel that they are “supposed to”. Does not seek out clear information and their actions are guided by vulgar propaganda (will passively consume political media). Does not appreciate that their personal opportunities have origins within the political process. Derides the efforts and risks of those who do engage.

“Politics is the art of the ‘next best’ ”-(Otto Von Bismarck)

Meeting Expectations:

Understands the deeper political nature of media consumption. Will participate in small activities that further their community’s political needs (passive campaign support and low scale participation). But does not appreciate the need for a more robust and active participation. Does not make time to support the candidates/party on their side of the political spectrum.

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek” -(Barak Obama)



Exceeding Expectations:

Is in contact with the political players that support themselves and their community. Is acutely aware of the propaganda perpetuated by all facets within the political spectrum (even the propaganda of their own community). Will engage in robust participation and support (campaign help, time and monetary support).

“I am a great believer in luck, and I find that the harder I work, the more of it I have”

-(Thomas Jefferson)

***The Political Spectrum and Strategic Voting**

“There are two groups that divide our country – those of Conservatism and those of Innovation. They are very old and have disputed the possessions of the world ever since it was made”

-(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Under our current election system, the person with the most votes in a riding wins their seat in the legislature. The party with the majority of seats in the legislature is able to create and pass the laws that govern our lives.

A problem arises when there are two candidates on one side of the political spectrum (Green and NDP for example) and only one on the other side (Liberal). In some areas, the Liberal candidate will win with less than 50% of the vote (sometimes only about 35%). This is because the two people on one side will “split the vote” on their side of the political spectrum. What might be a 60%-40% win for the NDP in a bilateral election might turn into a 35%-25%-40% in a trilateral race. This means, for example, that the Liberal candidate will earn their party a seat in the legislature while being a minority representative on their region’s political spectrum.

So when *W.C Fields* says that he *“never votes for anyone, but always votes against”*. He is saying that he votes “strategically”. Meaning that he pays attention to where the parties and candidates are on the political spectrum and who has the best chance of supporting his community’s position within the political spectrum.

WHAT DOES THE HISTORY OF POLITICS IN BC HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT HANDLING AND VALUE OF K-12 EDUCATION?

By Martin Dmitrieff, MRTA 1st Vice President

I fully recognize that teachers are of many political stripes and backgrounds. When it comes to the facts on how education has been handled by the current and past government however, there are many stories that can be told. Some of the most significant issues can be found looking at investments in education, legislation, policies and associated legal actions, and the bargaining history. There have been significant political histories that can be highlighted that interconnect when looking into these topics. The Education portfolio in BC has seen significant shifts in the way each government has handled these issues. First, here is a snapshot of who was in power and in effect controlled the path of Education in BC:

May 28th 1996 - May 16th 2001	BC NDP Government
May 16th 2001 - May 9th 2017	BC Liberal Government
June 29th 2017* - October 24th 2020	BC NDP (with support of BC Green Party)

* Recall that although the Liberals did not maintain a majority of seats during the May 9th 2017 election, it was not until The BC Liberals, under Christy Clark's leadership lost a confidence vote at the end of June of the same year that the "confidence and supply" agreement that the BC Green Party provided to the BC NDP brought them to power.

While we have had our fair share of ups and downs with our current relationship with the BC Government, I have chosen to take a broader historical perspective. The present is currently front of mind, but it's important to get a deeper understanding of where we have been in the past as well.

[A look at the Teacher Bargaining History with BC Governments](#)

Our bargained Collective Agreement has seen some changes over time, and many agree not enough changes that we would like to see. To get a sense of an overview of Bargaining history teachers have experienced, here is an interesting perspective from the BCTF Online Museum of Bargaining History: <https://bctf.ca/history/rooms/bargaining.aspx>. For those not as familiar, you may want to look closely at the "Contract Stripping of 2002":

<https://bctf.ca/history/rooms/BargainingDetail.aspx?id=39409>

This set the stage for a 15 year fight to return the ability to negotiate Class Size and Composition Language back to the Collective Agreement (further links to milestones on this journey are found on this website).

A closer look at Class Size and Composition:

There is a close connection to classroom conditions, funding of schools and history of Bargaining with the government. After the stripping of the Teacher Collective Agreement in 2002, a pattern can be seen in what Teacher classrooms looked like. During this period of time there was a history of school closures in the Province, a steady incline in size of classes, and concentration of large numbers of students with IEPs in classes. For the data documenting this, take a look at this report:

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/FactSheets/PublicSchoolsCSC.pdf>

A History of Education Funding in BC:

With a reduction in needing to fund as many schools and classes, and a further drop in specialized Grants to BC School Districts to help maintain other services and programs to our schools, the overall budget for Education in BC stagnated. It was not until the Class Size and Composition language was restored in 2016 that you see a strong funding spike. You can see how this occurred by looking at this report on the funding of Schools in BC over time:

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/FactSheets/EducationFunding.pdf>

Legislative Change in BC Education:

Around the time of the 2002 Contract Stripping, which was carried out through Government legislation, was a period of time that saw a dramatic series of Education reforms legislated through to 2008. For an overview of this period of Education reform see this reference document:

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Advocacy/Campaigns/ChronologyOfLegislation/ChronologyOfLegislation.pdf>

After the substantial changes of this period the next reforms of significant note fell under Bill 22 that was passed during the 2011/12 year. A summary of its effects can be seen here:

<https://www.bctf.ca/BargainingAndContracts.aspx?id=25978>

The Future of Education in BC

The directions that we will take in the Education sector within our Province remains to be seen. There is a lot of work left to do to ensure we maintain what we have and build up its foundations to achieve a better system that works for all Children and Teachers.

What path should future BC Governments take? That may vary some from teacher to teacher in opinion, but many of you may find it interesting to see what our parent-body, the BCTF lays out as their priorities, in the document “Priorities for Public Education”:

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/Briefs/Priorities%20for%20Public%20Education%20Brief%20to%20the%20Ministry%20of%20Education.pdf>

When advocating for advancements in what we'd like to see with any local politician is a good starting point for discussing how Education in BC can become better.

