



## Backgrounder: The Foundation Skills Assessment

January 8, 2010

### The Anatomy of a Policy Dispute in a Labour Relations Context

The BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) 2010 opposition to the provincial Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) — annual testing in reading, writing, and numeracy for students in grades 4 and 7 — will take place against the backdrop of their previous actions and the arbitral jurisprudence that now sets the parameters for disputes of this nature in the workplace.

The BCTF and the provincial government have been at odds on a variety of education issues since the government came to power in 2002. The public education accountability construct adopted by the government is one of the areas of disagreement — another area in what can be characterized as a *philosophical divide* of sorts. When examining the written record, in general the BCTF objects to a system that emphasizes external accountability mechanisms. These mechanisms, the argument goes, understate the internal accountability that teachers assume as members of the teaching profession:

“An external accountability system implies that internal accountability does not exist or is not sufficient. External accountability models demonstrate a lack of trust in teachers and the teaching profession. Teachers in BC find this lack of trust unjustified and hard to accept.” (BCTF, 2006)

Further the BCTF argues that test results are inappropriately used as measures of school quality — parents inappropriately use them to select schools for their children, contributing to the movement of students, and therefore funding, away from schools in poorer neighborhoods. The BCTF characterizes the FSA as an American-style approach to testing. It encourages teachers not to mark the tests and encourages parents to withdraw their children from writing the FSA.

Although results of earlier provincial tests of this nature had been collected, the FSA became particularly controversial when the new freedom of information (FOI) legislation allowed third parties (such as the Fraser Institute<sup>1</sup>) to access the data. As Jerry Mussio, a senior official with the Ministry of Education until 2001, wrote:

---

<sup>1</sup> The Fraser Institute, founded in 1974 is an international research and educational organization with offices in Canada and the United States and active research ties with similar organizations in more than 70 countries around the world. Considered by some to be a *right wing think tank*, their stated philosophy is that “throughout our exploration of issues that affect citizens, we attempt to discuss complex economic subjects in a manner that can be easily understood by everyone”. The Institute’s stated mission is to measure, study and communicate the impact of competitive markets and government interventions on the welfare of individuals.

The introduction of FOI legislation enabled outside agencies — i.e., the Fraser Institute — to extract student testing data and produce new sets of statistics for the public, and influence public discussion. This pushed the Ministry to begin displaying school-by-school data on its website (Steffenhagen, Short history of standardized testing in BC, 2008).

The Fraser Institute published its first report card on BC's elementary schools in 2003 — a ranking of how the province's schools performed on the FSA.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this backgrounder is to provide information about the BCTF strategies to oppose the FSA and the employment implications in order to place the issues in context. A discussion of the efficacy, effectiveness and value of the FSA or like assessment instruments is more appropriately left to another forum.

### **FSA as an Employment Issue**

The dispute over the use, efficacy, and need for a testing vehicle such as the FSA is an educational policy matter. Policy matters generally are resolved by policy makers. How a policy matter is ultimately resolved may have implications for the workplace depending on the matters at issue and the nature of the resolution.

Since 2002 the *philosophical divide* between the BCTF and the provincial government has found its way into the workplace. The workplace and the rules that govern it — the collective agreement and the process used to resolve disputes that arise during an agreement's term (the grievance–arbitration process) — have become the venues used by the BCTF to pursue their objectives.

Why are aspects of this dispute playing out in an employment context; i.e., grievances and arbitration?

In 2004, the BCTF grieved the *School Act* — specifically, the class size provisions which, as of 2002, were made matters of public policy through the *School Act* and not a subject of collective bargaining codified in the collective agreement. The dispute was referred to Arbitrator Don Munroe.

A preliminary question had to be answered before the merits of the specific dispute could be dealt with: Could alleged violations of statutory provisions regarding class size be the subject of grievance–arbitration under the collective agreement?

Arbitrator Munroe agreed with BCPSEA that those matters could not be the subject of arbitration. The BCTF appealed the Munroe decision to the BC Court of Appeal.

In 2005, the BC Court of Appeal, in a 3-2 decision, found in favour of the BCTF, stating: “The point is that such a violation is closely connected in a contextual way to the interpretation, operations, and application of the collective agreement and directly affects it.”

The practical effect of the Court of Appeal decision was to place public policy matters found in legislation that have an employment connection — a contextual connection between the statute and the collective agreement— in the labour relations context of grievance-arbitration.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Minister of Education, BCSTA, BCSSA, BCCPAC, and other education partners have expressed their disagreement with the ranking of schools by the Fraser Institute.

Disputes arising out of the BCTF FSA opposition tactics would lead to a series of arbitrations. Arbitration decisions by arbitrators Kinzie and Hall subsequent to the BC Court of Appeal decision served to set a series of parameters for the communication of BCTF opposition to the FSA. All of these decisions serve to establish operating principles concerning the dispute and the workplace. These decisions resulted in many districts revisiting policies and practices with respect to the distribution of material by outside groups such as the BCTF.

## **FSA 2010**

The BCTF strategy to oppose the FSA has evolved over time — from refusal to administer the FSA, to claiming the FSA is harmful to students, to preparing pamphlets for distribution to parents encouraging them to withdraw their child from the FSA, to refusing to administer FSA unless the Ministry changed the FSA to a random sampling of students — to its current expanded focus on undermining the administration of the FSA by encouraging parents to withdraw their children. If the data become suspect, then the test — the argument goes — will be of limited utility.

### **The Protocol on Pamphlets**

As reported in BCPSEA @issue No. 2009-40 dated December 18, 2009 (on the BCPSEA website at <http://www.bcpsea.bc.ca/access/publications/aissue/aissue.html>), in the 2009-2010 school year, BCPSEA and the BCTF engaged in discussions regarding the information the BCTF and its locals wish to distribute, with a view to establishing a consistent approach across the sector and reduce disputes. As a foundation, the material in question in the first instance had to meet the Kinzie test of accuracy and source identification (labeled as authored by the BCTF):

...if the Employer had requested that the Union amend the provisions of the pamphlet...so that they accurately reflected the Ministry's guidelines and the Union had refused, I am of the view that the Employer would have been justified in restricting teachers from distributing the pamphlet...to parents." (page 51)

Arising from those discussions, BCPSEA and the BCTF entered into a one year protocol agreement regarding distribution of specific BCTF material about the FSA.

The protocol agreement is limited to three pamphlets:

- What Parents Need to Know
- What Parents Need to Know: Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)
- Testing? You Bet

The parties have agreed that the employer will not oppose the distribution of these three pamphlets. A number of union grievances were also withdrawn.

The distribution of the pamphlets is in no way an endorsement of the BCTF position on the FSA by BCPSEA or school districts. Put simply, it is an agreement between the parties to say that the three documents and the distribution process (sent home in a sealed envelope addressed to the parent and clearly marked as emanating from the BCTF) meet the arbitral test. For any other material, school districts should follow their usual policies and practices.

This agreement and the distribution of material as a result of this agreement should in no way affect the conduct of parent-teacher interviews. In addition, this agreement does not restrict

school districts' rights in terms of follow up with parents regarding ministry guidelines when receiving a parent request to excuse a child from writing FSA.

A December news article reported on this most recent development in the continuing dispute over FSA between the BCTF and the Ministry of Education. The article placed the protocol agreement in what the author believed would be the 2010 context:

"A campaign against standardized tests in B.C. public schools is expected to intensify in January as a result of a deal between the B.C. Teachers' Federation and school employers that allows teachers to send three union pamphlets home with students and hand them to parents on school grounds."<sup>3</sup>

While this at its root is a policy dispute concerning testing in public education, BCPSEA is concerned specifically with the employment implications of the BCTF campaign in opposition to the FSA. Given the arbitral jurisprudence establishing the parameters for distribution of such material:

The employers' association, which represents boards of education in labour matters, described the agreement as a practical solution to eliminate conflict in districts and end the grievances. "It's an attempt to formalize what the rules are," said chief executive officer Hugh Finlayson, noting there have been many years of litigation over the issue."<sup>4</sup>

### **BCTF: Getting to Parents — The Next Phase**

It was recently reported that:

The BCTF plans to extend its anti-FSA message in early 2010 with newspaper and radio advertisements in Punjabi, Cantonese and Mandarin for the first time in order to reach ethnic groups that are believed to be more supportive of standardized tests.<sup>5</sup>

This strategy was confirmed in the following report:

The B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF) is launching an advertising campaign it hopes will turn non-English-speaking parents against the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA). The ads will appear in Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi and Filipino publications as well as English-language newspapers that target those communities, the union said today. Ads will also run on five different radio stations in those languages.

It's a significant campaign — with daily ads on radio stations for two weeks and several three-quarter-page insertions in *Ming Pao* and *Sing Tao* as well as several full-page ads in South Asian papers. On Wednesday, the union has invited representatives from South Asian media to meet BCTF president Irene Lanzinger to discuss the campaign.

The union acknowledges it's had little success in persuading non-English parents to pull their children from the FSA and it hopes this campaign will change some minds before the testing starts Jan. 18.

---

<sup>3</sup> Steffenhagen, Janet. "Deal lets teachers send anti-test pamphlets home with students." *Vancouver Sun*, Tuesday, December 22, 2009, Page A9.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

*"If you want your child to succeed, this test isn't going to help them," is the headline on the print advertisement.*

*"Every year, your child's valuable time in the classroom is wasted on preparing for a test that won't help them learn - and won't improve their mark. As teachers, we believe in tests. We use them every day to help kids learn. But the Foundation Skills Assessment tests are not real tests.*

*These FSA tests are required every year for Grades 4 and 7, but they won't help your child succeed - and are only used to unfairly rank schools. They're wasting tax dollars and valuable learning time. Join the growing number of parents who are withdrawing their child from these meaningless tests.*

*"Sign the form - withdraw your child." (See the ads [here](#).)*

It's a simple message and not entirely truthful. Anyone who has glanced at the superintendents' reports on student achievement knows that results from these tests are used for more than the Fraser Institute's school rankings.<sup>6</sup>

This strategy at present is an advertising strategy. If the BCTF was to create translated pamphlets for distribution to parents through students, it is important to note that this would be inconsistent with the protocol agreement.

## What Are Others Saying?

Notwithstanding the fact that the *School Act* codifies the public policy imperative and there is a protocol addressing BCTF opposition pamphlets, there remain a variety of views on the process and content of the FSA. The views range from those of the BCTF to variants of the ones articulated in a recent editorial:<sup>7</sup>

*A moratorium on FSA testing would hurt our chances of improving the quality of education our children receive now and in the future.*

*Perhaps we can find a better way of monitoring progress in our schools so we can learn from successes and address problems. Exploring the options, with involvement from parents, teachers, administrators, academic and community representatives, makes sense. But that effort should go ahead while the tests continue.*

*A Greater Victoria school district committee is urging a two-year moratorium on the Foundation Skills Assessment tests that provide a snapshot of student performance in Grades 4 and 7. Trustees, who are to consider the recommendation, should say no.*

*FSA tests have been opposed by many teachers and some administrators and trustees from their introduction more than a decade ago. The tests are too narrow, critics say, as they only measure students' progress in basic reading, writing and numeracy. The results can be misused. They put pressure on young students and take class time.*

---

<sup>6</sup> Steffenhagen, Janet. "BCTF translates anti-FSA message for Asian parents." The Report Card, January 5, 2010, <http://communities.canada.com/vancouver/blogs/reportcard/archive/2010/01/05/bctf-translates-anti-fsa-message-for-asian-parents.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> "FSA tests help improve schools." *Victoria Times-Colonist*, Friday, January 8, 2010 Page A10.

*All true but not of sufficient concern to ignore the considerable benefits — real and potential — of the data.*

*Progress in basic skills is only one measure of educational effectiveness. But it is a critical one. Students need to be able to write, read and handle math skills with confidence. They are foundation skills.*

*The FSA tests provide a rough snapshot of individual students' progress compared with their peers. They also allow comparison of classes, schools and districts and analysis of performance based on a host of factors. No other such information is available.*

*Parents, teachers, administrators and trustees can compare the performances of classes, schools and districts. If one school has great results, while a neighbouring school with a comparable population in terms of family background, fares poorly, perhaps there are lessons to be learned. If an entire district is struggling, then government can be held accountable for finding ways to ensure those children get an equal chance in life.*

*The data can be invaluable. Researchers released a report on ways to improve academic success for aboriginal students, an area where progress has been dismal. They used the FSA results to identify districts and individual schools had made the greatest progress in closing the gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal students. They then dug deeper to find out how those schools were closing the gap and what lessons could be learned for districts making less progress. That's valuable and it would be impossible without the data.*

*A moratorium, without any plan for alternative assessment, would deprive everyone concerned with education of important information. Even if the tests, or something similar, resumed after the two-year break, there would be a destructive break in the data.*

*Part of the value lies in measuring changes over time — to assess, for example, whether the gap between the performance of boys and girls is being narrowed.*

*There is no crisis that demands rash action. Administering the tests is not time-consuming. Students ought to feel no stress. The tests are simply a chance to help see how they're doing.*

*And fears that tests are misused — a Fraser Institute school ranking report is the frequent target — are misplaced. Parents and the public are able to disregard shoddy use of the results.*

*Opponents of the tests deny their opposition is based on a desire to avoid accountability for educational performance. If that is so, then let all those with an interest work on developing a better way of measuring. In the meantime, the FSA tests are too valuable to simply eliminate.*

The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils has distributed “The BCCPAC FSA Information Kit for Parents.”

As reported in the *Vancouver Sun*:<sup>8</sup>

“Ann Whiteaker, president of the B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, said the pamphlet was produced to help parents who want straight answers but have been unable to find them during years of bickering over the basic-skills tests, which are delivered every year in Grades 4 and 7....

...The response to the pamphlet has been overwhelmingly positive, she added. The BCTF described the document as fair, saying the parent group made an effort to present both sides of the issue in an informative manner.”

*The BCCPAC FSA Information Kit* is attached for reference.

### **The Last Word...For Now...**

In the fog of media commentary, BCTF pamphlets, and competing views, clarity is important.

As we have stated previously, the reality is that whatever personal opinions school trustees, district staff, the BCTF, and teachers may hold with respect to the FSA (or any other educational initiative for that matter), the FSA is an initiative of the Ministry of Education and is required by the *School Act* and Regulations. Boards of education are obliged to ensure that the FSA proceeds as intended without disruption to the workplace.

BCPSEA has distributed a series of *@issue* bulletins on this matter; the most recent is No. 2009-03 dated January 14, 2009. All the *@issue* bulletins can be found on the BCPSEA public website at [www.bcpsea.bc.ca](http://www.bcpsea.bc.ca) under “Publications.”

Attachments:  
Background and Chronology  
BCPSEA References  
*BCCPAC FSA Information Kit for Parents*

---

<sup>8</sup> Steffenhagen, Janet. “Parent group hopes to quell FSA debate.” *Vancouver Sun*, Friday, January 8, 2010, page A4.

## Background and Chronology

Provincial tests in reading, writing and numeracy have been in place in British Columbia since the mid-1970s. However, prior to 1999, these tests were administered to a random sample of students in grades 4, 7 and 10 and were designed specifically to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum.

In 2000, the then-NDP provincial government introduced the FSA, a test of all grades 4, 7 and 10 (grade 10 was subsequently removed from FSA) students in the province that reports results on a student, classroom, and school and district level.

The FSA became a matter of active BCTF dispute in 2002. For ease of reference, following is a chronology of events. The chronology is followed by additional detail and a series of frequently asked questions.

**2002 The debate begins: is this teachers' work?** Following the provincial strike of 2002 and the legislated collective agreement, the BCTF instituted a work to rule campaign. Part of the campaign was a boycott of FSA. The Surrey school district made application to the Labour Relations Board (LRB) challenging the FSA component of the work to rule campaign. In April the LRB issued decision BCLRB No. 123/2002 concluding that supervising FSA tests is work that teachers were obligated to perform and ordered the BCTF to suspend its direction to members not to supervise the test.

The LRB stated:

“...it is clearly within the authority of the Ministry of Education to set this test as a provincial student learning assessment under the Ministry order. The Ministerial Order also allows school boards to designate teachers as the individuals responsible for supervising the FSA test.”

**2004** The BCTF grieved the *School Act* class size provisions and the matter was referred to Arbitrator Munroe. Could alleged violations of statutory provisions regarding class size be the subject of grievance–arbitration under the collective agreement? Arbitrator Munroe agreed with BCPSEA that those matters could not be the subject of arbitration. The BCTF appealed the Munroe decision to the BC Court of Appeal.

**2005** The BC Court of Appeal, in a 3-2 decision, found in favour of the BCTF, stating:

“The point is that such a violation is closely connected in a contextual way to the interpretation, operations, and application of the collective agreement and directly affects it.”

***The practical effect of the Court of Appeal decision was to place public policy matters found in legislation that have an employment connection in the labour relations context of grievance-arbitration.***

**2007 The BCTF campaign begins.** The BCTF launched a public relations campaign claiming that FSA testing was harmful to students. In April the BCTF provided local teachers' unions and members with a brochure about the FSA for teachers to distribute to parents, which recommended that parents withdraw their children from the FSA tests. However, the BCTF assertion that parents could withdraw their children from the FSA tests by writing a letter to the school principal was seen as not accurate and contrary to Ministry-established FSA requirements.

**2008 The first arbitration award (Kinzie) — content and parameters.** Part of the BCTF campaign was to send information home with students to parents. A school district refused to permit the distribution. This became the subject of the grievance-arbitration process. On May 2 arbitrator John Kinzie released an arbitration award concerning what became known as the *Students as Couriers* case — the decision of a school district not to permit teachers to send home with students a BCTF pamphlet opposing the use of the FSA tests in schools. The teachers proposed to send the pamphlet home in a sealed envelope addressed to parents.

The arbitrator concluded that schools have the right to control what information is sent home to parents from the school. He agreed that the BCTF pamphlet, titled “FSA testing can be harmful to students!” was “confusing and does not provide parents the whole story.”

However, the arbitrator determined that rather than instituting “an absolute ban” on teachers from sending home information with students, the Board of Education should have instead addressed concerns with the union about the accuracy and confusing nature of the pamphlet. If the union refused to correct the inaccuracies, then the Board would have been justified in restricting its teachers from sending the pamphlet home with students. As this process did not occur, the arbitrator ruled that the absolute ban on sending the pamphlet out to parents through students was not a reasonable limit demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society under section 1 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

This award set parameters for the BCTF distribution of FSA material. The award placed a restriction on the subject matter of the material that can be sent, required it to be accurate, and retained a process for employer control of what information is sent home.

**BCTF refusal.** On December 9-10 the BCTF held a province-wide vote of its membership on the FSA. Public school teachers were asked by their union to vote on the following question:

“Do you agree with the 2008 AGM decision that unless the Ministry of Education changes to a random sampling with neither schools nor student identified, teachers exercise their professional autonomy and not prepare for, administer, or mark the provincial FSAs?”

On December 11 the BCTF announced that 85% of the 22,397 ballots cast were in favour of taking the above-referenced action against the FSA.

Following the December 2008 vote of its members, BCTF president Irene Lanzinger wrote a letter to the Minister of Education stating that random sampling would “put an end to the unfair and inappropriate ranking of schools by the Fraser Institute,” and that the FSA:

“...does not help teachers teach, students learn, or parents understand the true nature of their child’s progress. The test takes valuable time and resources away from the classroom, narrows the curriculum, and reduces opportunities for other meaningful learning experiences.”

**2009 The second arbitration award (Hall) — relies on Kinzie reasoning.** On January 9, 2009 arbitrator John Hall released his decision on the distribution of FSA materials to parents through students in School District No. 39 (Vancouver). This expedited arbitration arose after a dispute between the district and its BCTF local “over a pamphlet

which the union had produced regarding FSA testing. The pamphlet had been provided to teachers to send home to parents through students.”

Although this expedited arbitration award was limited to the specific issue of the distribution and did not address the content of the BCTF FSA material, Arbitrator Hall's award made two important findings.

First, Arbitrator Hall relied on Arbitrator Kinzie's statement in his May 2, 2008 award that placing the FSA pamphlet in a sealed envelope addressed to the parents or guardians of students “constitutes a reasonable attempt” to address the concern that inserting students into the policy discussion causes them to feel “uncertain about two very important sets of people in their lives.”

“...if the Union wishes to distribute FSA material to parents via students, it must do so in a sealed envelope or in some other manner designed to prevent students from reading the contents of the material. This precautionary measure avoids the potential for harm to the students, and does not infringe the right of teachers to express their views about FSA testing to the students' parents.”

Second, with regard to the authority of the employer to control what is sent home from school, Arbitrator Hall stated that, in light of his October 15, 2008 Consent Award:

“...the Union must give the employer and/or principals advance notice of the method selected for distribution...any issue over the manner of distribution" of FSA material should be resolved before the material is sent home.

Arbitrator Hall also referred to Arbitrator Kinzie in saying that:

“...the Employer has the right to control what is sent home to parents through the medium of their children/students at its schools.”

**BCTF refusal addressed by LRB.** On February 2, 2009, the Labour Relations Board (LRB) issued a decision in support of the BCPSEA application to address the BCTF advice and direction to their members to refuse to perform work related to the FSA. The LRB Order was subsequently filed with the BC Supreme Court and is therefore an Order of the Court.

The Order of the Court states:

“I find that administering/supervising the FSA tests is prima facie work which teachers are obligated to perform. Consequently, BCTF is ordered, on an interim basis, to do the following:

1. Cancel its direction to members not to administer/supervise FSA tests and to take reasonable steps to communicate that cancellation to its members as soon as possible and no later than 4:00 pm on February 4, 2009; and
2. Cease and desist from authorizing or directing its members not to administer/supervise FSA tests.

...This order is intended to revert the parties to 'business as usual' as it existed prior to the BCTF direction.”

## BCPSEA References

**@issue bulletins** (available on the BCPSEA website at <http://www.bcpsea.bc.ca/access/publications/aissue/aissue.html>)

2009:

Dec. 18	No. 2009-40	One-Year Protocol Process and Procedures for Distribution of BC Teachers' Federation Material Regarding the Foundation Skills Assessment
April 30	No. 2009-15	Political Pamphlets in the News
April 16	No. 2009-14	Freedom of Expression: Distribution of Union/Political Materials on Educational Issues on School Property to Parents or Through Students
Feb. 9	No. 2009-12	Joint Communication: Foundation Skills Assessment BCPSEA-BCTF Joint Communication
Feb. 7	No. 2009-11	Applying the Order: Foundation Skills Assessment Letter: Labour Relations Board, February 7, 2009 BCPSEA-BCTF Joint Communication
Feb. 5	No. 2009-10	Distribution of FSA Union Materials to Parents Through Students BC Teachers' Federation Policy Grievance and Position
Feb. 4	No. 2009-09	Applying the Order: Foundation Skills Assessment
Feb. 2	No. 2009-07	Labour Relations Board Decision: BCTF Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) Campaign
Jan. 30	No. 2009-06	Labour Relations Board Application: Foundation Skills Assessment Campaign
Jan. 28	No. 2009-05	Labour Relations Board Application: Foundation Skills Assessment Campaign
Jan. 14	No. 2009-03	Foundation Skills Assessment: Labour Relations Implications
Jan. 9	No. 2009-02	Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA): Hall Expedited Arbitration Award
Jan. 14	No. 2009-03	Foundation Skills Assessment: Labour Relations Implications
Jan. 9	No. 2009-02	Foundation Skills Assessment: Hall Expedited Arbitration Award

2008:

Dec. 18	No. 2008-16	New BCTF FSA Pamphlet
Dec. 12	No. 2008-15	Foundation Skills Assessment: The Battle Over Testing
Nov. 24	No. 2008-15	Foundation Skills Assessment
Sept. 30	No. 2008-13	Freedom of Expression
May 5	No. 2008-10	Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA): Kinzie Arbitration Award – Students as Couriers
March 7	No. 2008-07	Distribution of Foundation Skills Assessment Results
March 3	No. 2008-06	Distribution of Foundation Skills Assessment Results
Jan. 30	No. 2008-04	From Pamphlets to Buttons: The BCTF FSA Opposition Campaign Continues
Jan. 24	No. 2008-03	Foundation Skills Assessment: BCTF Opposition Campaign

Jan. 21      No. 2008-02    BCTF Opposition Campaign to Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) Escalates  
Jan. 15      No. 2008-01    Foundation Skills Assessment

*2007:*

Nov. 27      No. 2007-09    Foundation Skills Assessment: BCTF Position  
Oct. 16      No. 2007-07    Foundation Skills Assessment: BCTF approaches, strategies, and tactics  
Sept. 25      No. 2007-06    Foundation Skills Assessment  
May 4        No. 2007-04    Foundation Skills Assessment: Approaches and Responses  
April 24      No. 2007-03    Foundation Skills Assessment: BCTF Action; FSA Requirements  
April 4        No. 2007-02    Foundation Skills Assessment: BCTF Communication

**Backgrounder:**

*2009:*

January 14    *Philosophy, Politics, or a Combination of Both: The Foundation Skills Assessment and the Battle Over Testing*  
(available on the BCPSEA website at:  
<http://www.bcpsea.bc.ca/access/media/backgrounder/backgrounder.html>)