



Leading

BCPVPA

A Welcome from the President

Brian Leonard, Coquitlam (SD43)
2022-2024 President

Greetings colleagues,

No matter your role, the beginning of the school year is a time of optimism and excitement. As a school leader, you have the unique opportunity to manage and shape the success stories of the students and communities you lead. The research is clear: the influence of a Principal or Vice-Principal on their school community is significant, and great schools are led by great school leaders.

The Principals and Vice-Principals in BC's public schools are responsible for leading 49,000 teachers and 37,000 support staff in almost 1,600 school sites for more than 572,000 students. It is not an understatement to say that this is an immense responsibility, and it is important to know that you are not alone in this mighty endeavour.

The BCPVPA exists to support you in the work of school leadership through advocacy, representation, and leadership development and support. To paraphrase our Constitution, the BCPVPA is funded *by members for the benefit of members*. As a member, you are part of a network of more than 2,700 leaders from every district and every part of this immense and diverse province. The BCPVPA represents 94% of the Principals and Vice-Principals in BC's K-12 public education system; as a member, you are definitely not alone.

Over the first year of my presidency, I appreciated the opportunity to visit our members in their schools, Chapters, and communities around the province. It afforded me the opportunity to connect with members



on a local level, and to hear about the challenges and successes they were experiencing. It also provided me with greater insight on where and how our Association can continue to support you in the ever-changing and evolving role of school leadership.

These visits were also important as they provided me with first-hand examples to illustrate and support our Association's ongoing advocacy and representation of the work of Principals and Vice-Principals and our sector. I look forward to continuing my Chapter visits as the second year of my term begins.

So, in my travels and discussions over the past year,



"These tables will be tasked to identify and advise government on staff recruitment and retention strategies, and suggest ways to address this escalating situation."

what has emerged as the greatest concern facing members, what is being done to address this concern, and how is the BCPVPA involved?

At the top of the list for members in nearly every part of the province, the concern relates to K-12 workforce recruitment and retention challenges, and the impact in schools for staff, students, families, and Principals and Vice-Principals.

To address the K-12 workforce challenge, BCPSEA (BC Public School Employers' Association) and the Ministry of Education and Child Care – with support from other related government ministries, including Finance, Labour, and Post-Secondary – have invited the BCPVPA and our sector partner groups to be part of a series of Working Groups. These tables will be tasked to identify and advise government on staff recruitment and retention strategies, and suggest ways to address this escalating situation.

Some support will take the form of urgent and immediate solutions where budget dollars have already been allocated, such as targeted dollars for

moving allowances or pre-employment incentives. For the more immediate solutions, the Working Group will prioritize spending to address the greatest needs for September. For the medium and long-term solutions, some Working Groups are examining regulatory, policy, or recruitment impediments, while others are discussing system changes with a longer window for implementation.

The Working Groups launched in the spring, and will continue into the fall. Members of the BCPVPA Board and myself, along with some BCPVPA senior staff, will represent the Association in every aspect of this work, and we are feeling optimistic about the outcomes of this collaborative effort.

My sense of optimism for the coming year has taken shape in two additional ways.

Hiring is one of the most important decisions a Board can make. For a Board of Education, it is hiring a Superintendent; for the BCPVPA Board of Directors, it is hiring the Executive Director. Late last spring, the BCPVPA Board was excited to announce that Scott

Robinson would be our new Executive Director. With this new school year, we embark on a new era as an Association with Scott as our ED. His breadth of experience in the sector as a school, Chapter, and district leader, combined with his dedication, professional skill set, and personal contacts within our sector and beyond, will provide the BCPVPA with the continued exemplary leadership that our members expect.

The second most important decision of any Board is establishing and adopting the strategic direction for the organization. After gathering feedback from members through our committees and Chapter Council meetings, your Board decided last spring to pause the final step in the development and adoption of our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. As we would be hiring a new Executive Director, and as an integral part of their portfolio is operationalization of the Strategic Plan, we wanted that individual to be part of the development process.

The Board looks forward to sharing the new Strategic Plan with our members soon; it is an important roadmap that outlines the Association's priorities and how we are supporting your work, so that you can focus on the most important objective of every Principal or Vice-Principal – helping students achieve success.

As educators, we are uniquely privileged to see the passage of our students as they mature and develop socially, emotionally, and academically. We don't always recognize the impact that each of us has on the success and growth of the students in our care. Never underestimate the power and influence of your school leadership in making a positive difference for the students and communities you lead.

Your school community is waiting for you to lead and inspire them, and the BCPVPA is here to support you. Go forth and lead.

Have a great year ahead!

Brian bleonard@bcpvpa.bc.ca

  @bcpvpapresident

"... it is an important roadmap that outlines the Association's priorities and how we are supporting your work, so that you can focus on the most important objective of every Principal or Vice-Principal – helping students achieve success."