



Introduction, study design, and response rate

Margaret White, MIR
Senior Research Analyst, BCTF Research

Charlie Naylor, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher, BCTF Research

This report is one of a series documenting the findings of the *Worklife of BC Teachers: 2009* survey.
For additional information, see www.bctf.ca/TeacherWorklife.aspx.

**WORKLIFE OF
BC TEACHERS**
2009



Introduction

Welcome to *The Worklife of British Columbia Teachers in 2009* study. This study was conducted in the spring of 2009, eight years after the previous BCTF research project on the worklife of BC teachers, done in 2001. In both studies, BCTF Research staff designed and administered the survey instrument to a random sample of BC's public-school teachers. In both studies, data analysis was conducted by BCTF staff, and a series of reports produced; the 2001 reports were published both on the BCTF web site¹ and in hard copy².

While there are some similarities between the 2001 and the 2009 studies in terms of data collected, the 2009 survey³ was structured in four sections:

A. Background information

Demographics, leaves and illness, type of contract, enrolling and non-enrolling subject/work area(s), grade(s) taught, education and professional development

B. Workload issues

Hours worked, report cards, summer break

C. Views on working conditions and sources of stress

Work-related stress, job satisfaction, changes over the past five years

D. Effects of stress and possible solutions

As a part of the 2001 study, a literature review was compiled that focused on existing literature in terms of teacher workload, with the goal of comparing the BC findings to research in other jurisdictions. At that time, there appeared to be remarkable similarity in terms of the findings such as the long hours worked, and considerable stress attributable to various demands, frequently-changing expectations, and limited support for diverse student populations. A collection of current teacher worklife research from [BCTF](#), [Canadian](#), and [international](#) sources has been compiled for the 2009 study.

The 2009 BCTF study format and dissemination

Results of the 2009 study are being shared with BCTF members and locals in the following reports:

Executive Summary

Introduction, study design, and response rate

Chapter 1: Demographic and employment characteristics of teachers in the survey

Chapter 2: Teachers' education and professional development: Experiences and perspectives

Chapter 3: Workload issues for BC teachers

Chapter 4: How teachers spent their summer break

Chapter 5: BC teachers talk about satisfaction and stress in their work: A qualitative study

¹ *Worklife of BC Teachers in 2001*. <http://www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=5648>

² Naylor, C., & Schaefer, A. (2003). *Worklife of BC Teachers: A compilation of BCTF research reports on working and learning conditions in 2001*. Vancouver: BC Teachers' Federation. Available through the BCTF Research Department.

³ *Worklife of BC Teachers: 2009 survey*, <http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Issues/WorklifeWorkload/2009/survey.pdf>

- Chapter 6: Sources of work-related stress and changes in stress, workload, and job satisfaction
- Chapter 7: Teachers' perceptions of the effects of stress
- Chapter 8: Inclusive education: The work of learning specialist teachers, and the perspectives of all teachers
- Chapter 9: Teachers' priority areas for BCTF bargaining and advocacy
- Chapter 10: Implications and discussion

Study implementation and response rate

The Research Department of the BC Teachers' Federation conducted a survey of public school teachers to assess working and learning conditions in BC schools. The *Worklife of BC Teachers: 2009 survey* collected information from teachers about demographic and employment characteristics, education and professional development, workload issues, summer break, job satisfaction and stress, if and why they were considering leaving the teaching profession, and teachers' priority areas for BCTF bargaining and advocacy to improve working and learning conditions.

Recruitment method

The survey was conducted in the spring of 2009. Survey participants with a contact e-mail address were informed about the online survey by e-mail (60% of sample) and provided with a link to the survey. The remaining participants were mailed a survey package. Survey participants whose e-mail message was returned as "undeliverable" were sent a survey package by regular mail. A reminder letter about the survey was sent to all survey participants within four weeks of the initial contact.

Selection of the survey sample

As of December 15, 2008, the size of the member population of active teachers eligible for the survey was 38,764 members. A random sample of 2,502 active members of the BC Teachers' Federation was drawn from the member database. To achieve results that would fall within a five-percent margin of error and 95% confidence intervals for a random sample, 380 responses to the survey were required⁴.

Response rate

The survey yielded 563 valid responses with completed surveys received from 54 of 60 school districts in BC. Two districts, Arrow Lakes and Stikine, had no teachers selected in the randomly-drawn sample. Four districts (Central Coast, Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte, Prince Rupert, and Gulf Islands), where teachers were randomly selected, had no teachers respond to the survey.

The overall response to the survey was 23% of the 2,502 teachers included in the random sample. Table 1 shows the response for each school district as a percentage of the total survey population and as a percentage of the total sample.

⁴ See Custom Insight. Survey Random Sample Calculator, available at: <http://www.custominsight.com/articles/random-sample-calculator.asp>.

A comparison of the response rate of each district to the overall response rate for the survey reveals which districts are over-represented or under-represented. In some districts, mostly rural, at least 40% of teachers completed a survey. These include Powell River (58%), Peace River North (40%), Alberni (44%), Nechako Lakes (48%), and Nisga'a (50%). Districts with a response rate well below the sample response rate include Kootenay Lake (12%), Howe Sound (12%), Sooke (12%), Vancouver Island North (10%), Bulkley Valley (8%), Okanagan Similkameen (6%), and Conseil scolaire francophone (4%).

Table 1: Survey sample compared to random sample drawn from the BCTF membership, by school district

	District	Random sample: # of teachers	Random sample: % of the total	Number of survey responses	Survey sample: % of the total	Response rate for each district
5	Southeast Kootenay	28	1.1%	6	1.1%	21%
6	Rocky Mountain	15	0.6%	4	0.7%	27%
8	Kootenay Lake	17	0.7%	2	0.4%	12%
10	Arrow Lakes	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0%
19	Revelstoke	6	0.2%	1	0.2%	17%
20	Kootenay-Columbia	19	0.8%	7	1.2%	37%
22	Vernon	38	1.5%	5	0.9%	13%
23	Central Okanagan	94	3.8%	25	4.4%	27%
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	20	0.8%	7	1.2%	35%
28	Quesnel	16	0.6%	4	0.7%	25%
33	Chilliwack	46	1.8%	9	1.6%	20%
34	Abbotsford	87	3.5%	12	2.1%	14%
35	Langley	74	3.0%	12	2.1%	16%
36	Surrey	257	10.3%	46	8.2%	18%
37	Delta	69	2.8%	12	2.1%	17%
38	Richmond	97	3.9%	20	3.6%	21%
39	Vancouver	288	11.5%	70	12.4%	24%
40	New Westminster	31	1.2%	6	1.1%	19%
41	Burnaby	123	4.9%	26	4.6%	21%
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	59	2.4%	11	2.0%	19%
43	Coquitlam	160	6.4%	37	6.6%	23%
44	North Vancouver	81	3.2%	18	3.2%	22%
45	West Vancouver	32	1.3%	8	1.4%	25%
46	Sunshine Coast	22	0.9%	8	1.4%	36%
47	Powell River	12	0.5%	7	1.2%	58%
48	Howe Sound	17	0.7%	2	0.4%	12%
49	Central Coast	3	0.1%	0	0.0%	0%
50	Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte	6	0.2%	0	0.0%	0%
51	Boundary	8	0.3%	3	0.5%	38%
52	Prince Rupert	11	0.4%	0	0.0%	0%
53	Okanagan Similkameen	16	0.6%	1	0.2%	6%
54	Bulkley Valley	12	0.5%	1	0.2%	8%

	District	Random sample: # of teachers	Random sample: % of the total	Number of survey responses		Survey sample: % of the total	Response rate for each district
57	Prince George	67	2.7%	16		2.8%	24%
58	Nicola-Similkameen	12	0.5%	3		0.5%	25%
59	Peace River South	9	0.4%	2		0.4%	22%
60	Peace River North	10	0.4%	4		0.7%	40%
61	Greater Victoria	89	3.6%	19		3.4%	21%
62	Sooke	41	1.6%	5		0.9%	12%
63	Saanich	39	1.6%	12		2.1%	31%
64	Gulf Islands	5	0.2%	0		0.0%	0%
67	Okanagan Skaha	29	1.2%	8		1.4%	28%
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	62	2.5%	11		2.0%	18%
69	Qualicum	20	0.8%	5		0.9%	25%
70	Alberni	16	0.6%	7		1.2%	44%
71	Comox Valley	52	2.1%	13		2.3%	25%
72	Campbell River	19	0.8%	5		0.9%	26%
73	Kamloops/Thompson	69	2.8%	23		4.1%	33%
74	Gold Trail	11	0.4%	3		0.5%	27%
75	Mission	31	1.2%	10		1.8%	32%
78	Fraser-Cascade	7	0.3%	2		0.4%	29%
79	Cowichan Valley	28	1.1%	6		1.1%	21%
81	Fort Nelson	7	0.3%	1		0.2%	14%
82	Coast Mountains	23	0.9%	6		1.1%	26%
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	28	1.1%	11		2.0%	39%
84	Vancouver Island West	5	0.2%	1		0.2%	20%
85	Vancouver Island North	10	0.4%	1		0.2%	10%
87	Stikine	0	0.0%	0		0.0%	0%
91	Nechako Lakes	23	0.9%	11		2.0%	48%
92	Nisga'a	2	0.1%	1		0.2%	50%
93	Conseil scolaire francophone	24	1.0%	1		0.2%	4%
				No answer	6	1.1%	
	TOTAL	2,502	100.0%	100.00%			23%

For more information on this study, contact BCTF Research, at researchteam@bctf.ca.

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