

Circular

March 15, 1967.

Personal

Mr. Andrew Soles,
Principal,
Selkirk College,
Castlegar, B. C.

Dear Andy:

First let me congratulate you on your new appointment as principal of Selkirk College. May you have as much success in this position as you had with the principalship of Trail Senior Secondary School.

The matter which I wish to place before you is the possibility of the organizing of a provincial association of regional and school district college faculty members in affiliation with the BCTF.

Frankly we attempted last year to get such an organization going around a Vancouver City College nucleus but our efforts in this regard came to naught. In the beginning those who had been BCTF members in Vancouver Secondary Schools wanted to retain their connection with the Federation after appointment to the College Staff. Most of them, in fact, did take out Associate Membership in the Federation. In the second place it was not long before the teachers in the King Edward center of City College ran into problems in the area of pensions, salaries, tenure, medical insurance coverages, etc., which they had to deal with collectively. For this purpose they formed a King Edward staff association. The BCTF on occasion supplied advisory services.

You will know that Vancouver City College is really a complex unit with one director of the King Edward Center, the Vancouver School of Art and the Vancouver Vocational School. Teachers and instructors at all three work for the same employer, the Vancouver School Board. The Art School teachers and the Vocational School staff had their own separate organizations pre-existing the establishment of City College. Complicating matters further the Vocational people are certified as a union under the Labor Act. The Executives of the three staff organizations did work together last year as an informal council. They got so involved with local problems they could not think in terms of a provincial organization.

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There is a difficulty for the BCTF in that its constitution requires that active members hold teaching certificates. Certification, on the other hand, is not required of College teachers. Any organization of College teachers logically should be all-inclusive. It would therefore not be appropriate for the BCTF to offer direct membership to some College people and exclude others. This is how the idea of a separately organized College staff association affiliated with the BCTF arose. The College association would pay to the BCTF a per capita affiliation fee, amount to be negotiated, and the BCTF would not have to concern itself with the question of certification. *

It is taken for granted that College staff will see a need for organization sooner or later. In time there will be a significant number of colleges in various parts of the province so a provincial organization should be considered from the beginning. City College teachers here in Vancouver might find it easier to identify with a provincial organization with a Castlegar nucleus than to start one themselves.

I understand that the Canadian Association of University Professors has voted to deny membership to College people. Affiliation with an established organization like the BCTF may appear to be more attractive because of this. It may be significant, too, that some faculty members at Simon Fraser are asking about the possibility of establishing some sort of tie-in with the Federation.

If I can get any encouragement at all from you, I would like to come to Castlegar after Easter for a full discussion of the whole matter with you and your staff. Please let me have your frank reactions.

The need for continuous education seems now to be well established. Within 20 years college level education will likely become almost as common as secondary school education is today. Perhaps we should start now to bring all educators within the same professional organization.

Yours sincerely,

C. D. Ovans,
General Secretary.