



March 2nd, 2012

Myles Kirvan
Deputy Minister and Deputy Attorney General
Department of Justice
284 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H8

Re: BC Teachers' Strike

Dear Mr Deputy Minister:

As you are no doubt aware, on Monday, March 5th, 2012, teachers across British Columbia will go on a three-day strike: <http://www.bctf.ca/NewsReleases.aspx?id=25777>. During this period, there will be a complete withdrawal of services.

Even though it is reported that schools are to remain open, it must be borne in mind that the staffing compliment will be skeletal, classes will not be held, and student supervision will be limited. In these circumstances, it is widely anticipated that many parents will feel safer keeping their children at home. This is understandable.

The effect of the strike on many of our BCRO members, as with the rest of the work-force in British Columbia, is likely to be severe. Despite best efforts, finding proper childcare in the next few days will be very difficult, perhaps impossible; for many, they will have no other choice than to stay at home.

We are therefore writing to express that the highest degree of latitude and flexibility be shown by the Department when considering requests under the LA collective agreement for family-related leave or alternative work arrangements.

Needless to say, the reasons for such requests are beyond the control of our members. It would therefore be unfair and unreasonable to deny them, or to require that members use vacation or other forms of earned compensatory leave so that they can look after their own while the teachers exercise their right to strike.

We would be pleased to discuss this matter at the earliest opportunity so that we may find agreement on the best contingency plan for our members, while recognizing that the Department has an obligation to ensure a continuity of its operations.

Yours truly,

Marco Mendicino
President