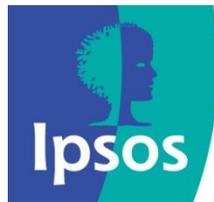


UPDATE ON BC TEACHERS CONTRACT DISPUTE

*BC Teachers (37%) Slightly Ahead of Provincial Government
(30%) in Being Fair and Reasonable*

Six-in-ten (62%) Oppose Full-Scale Strike Action



Ipsos Reid

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UPDATE ON BC TEACHERS CONTRACT DISPUTE

BC Teachers (37%) Slightly Ahead of Provincial Government (30%) in Being Fair and Reasonable

Six-in-ten (62%) Oppose Full-Scale Strike Action

Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos Reid poll shows that BC teachers have a slight public opinion advantage over the provincial government in terms of who is being more fair and reasonable in the contract dispute. The poll also shows that British Columbians generally oppose a full-scale strike action by teachers and are split on whether the provincial government should legislate an end to the dispute,

More Fair and Reasonable

At this point, BC teachers have a slight edge in public opinion as to which side in the dispute is being more fair and reasonable. Currently, 37% of British Columbians think BC teachers (represented by BCTF) have been more fair and reasonable in these contract negotiations (15% “strongly”, 22% “somewhat”). This is an increase of 6 points from an earlier Ipsos Reid poll taken in early February.

Three-in-ten residents (30%) think the provincial government (represented by BCPSEA) has been more fair and reasonable in these contract negotiations (14% “strongly”, 16% “somewhat”). This is a one point increase from early February.

More Fair and Reasonable

<i>As you may know, BC teachers (represented by the BC Teachers Federation, BCTF) and the provincial government (represented by the BC Public School Employers' Association, BCPSEA) have been participating in contract negotiations. Which side do you think has been more fair and reasonable in these contract negotiations?</i>	Feb 28-29 (n=1,030) %	Feb 1-5 (n=1,000) %
Strongly BC teachers (represented by BCTF)	15	15
Somewhat BC teachers (represented by BCTF)	22	16
Somewhat the provincial government (represented by BCPSEA)	16	16
Strongly the provincial government (represented by BCPSEA)	14	13
Neither	20	23
Both	2	2
Don't know	12	15
<i>Total BC Teachers (represented by BCTF)</i>	37	31
<i>Total Provincial Government (represented by BCPSEA)</i>	30	29

The remaining one-third (33%) of British Columbians do not view either side as being more fair and reasonable in these contract negotiations. Two-in-ten (20%, down 3 points) say “neither” side has been more fair and reasonable, 2% (unchanged) say “both” sides have been equally fair and reasonable, and 12% (down 3 points) are undecided.

By demographics:

- BC teachers (represented by BCTF) have their largest advantage among younger residents (45% BC teachers vs. 24% provincial government, among 18-34 years) and women (38% BC teachers vs. 22% provincial government).
- The provincial government (represented by BCPSEA) has a slight edge among older residents (35% provincial government vs. 32% BC teachers, among 55+ years) and men (38% provincial government vs. 36% BC teachers).

By past vote:

- 2009 NDP voters favour BC teachers (represented by BCTF) by a margin of 56% to 13%.
- 2009 BC Liberal voters favour the provincial government (represented by BCPSEA) by a margin of 52% to 19%.

Support for Full-Scale Strike Action

Only one-third (32%) of British Columbians say they support the idea of “teachers taking a full-scale strike action, such as withdrawing classroom instruction for four days a week, for two weeks”. Nearly twice as many British Columbians (62%, including 46% “strongly”) say they oppose a full-scale strike action.

Support for Full-Scale Strike Action

<i>Would you support or oppose each of the following? Teachers taking a full-scale strike action, such as withdrawing classroom instruction for four days a week, for two weeks.</i>	Feb 28-29 (n=1,030) %
Support strongly	13
Support somewhat	19
Oppose somewhat	16
Oppose strongly	46
Don't know	5
<i>Total Support</i>	32
<i>Total Oppose</i>	62

By demographics:

- Opposition to a strike is higher among older residents (70% among 55+ years).

By past vote:

- 2009 NDP voters are split on a full-scale strike (47% support vs. 45% oppose).
- 2009 BC Liberal voters are mostly opposed to a full-scale strike (82% oppose vs. 16% support).

Support for Legislating an End to Dispute

A slim majority (52%) of British Columbians say they oppose the idea of “the provincial government legislating an end to the contract dispute and imposing a contract on teachers” (36% “strongly”). Slightly more than four-in-ten (43%) say they support a legislated end and imposed contract (21% “strongly”).

Support for Legislating an End to Dispute

<i>Would you support or oppose each of the following? The provincial government legislating an end to the contract dispute and imposing a contract on teachers.</i>	Feb 28-29 (n=1,030) %
Support strongly	21
Support somewhat	22
Oppose somewhat	16
Oppose strongly	36
Don't know	5
<i>Total Support</i>	43
<i>Total Oppose</i>	52

By demographics:

- Support for a legislated end is higher among older residents (51% support vs. 47% oppose, among 55+ years).

By past vote:

- 2009 NDP voters oppose a legislated end (70% oppose vs. 23% support).
- 2009 BC Liberal voters support a legislated end (65% support vs. 32% oppose).

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll of 1,030 adult British Columbians conducted online using Ipsos Reid's national online household panel between February 28 and February 29, 2012. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error would be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 2006 Census data.

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