



BCSTA Motions



How to develop and prepare motions for submission to BCSTA's Annual General Meeting and Provincial Council

What is a motion?

A motion is a formal proposal for action presented by a BC School Trustees Association member for consideration at the annual general meeting (usually in April) or Provincial Council (October and February).

Who may submit a motion?

- Boards of education
- BCSTA Branches
- The Education Committee
- Aboriginal Education Committee
- Provincial Council
- The Board of Directors

What are the types of motions?

1. An **extraordinary motion** is submitted to change or add to BCSTA's Bylaws.

Example:

BE IT RESOLVED

That Section 19 of the Bylaws be amended by adding: In recognition of its province-wide status, trustees (directors) of the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF) have the ability to attend meetings of all branch associations on a non-voting basis, and the CSF has the ability to be a voting member of one branch, to be determined by agreement between the CSF and the branch.

2. A **substantive motion** can be either an *action* or a *policy* motion.

An *action* motion is submitted to call on BCSTA to take some action, i.e., advocacy

Example:

BE IT RESOLVED

That BCSTA urge the Minister of Education to introduce legislation requiring that membership of the BC College of Teachers Council include a school trustee, elected by the general assembly at the BCSTA annual general meeting.

A *policy* motion is submitted to define long-term objectives or positions/beliefs of the Association.

Example:

BE IT RESOLVED

That BCSTA adopt as policy: “BCSTA supports the *Draft Framework for Health Promoting Schools* produced jointly by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health Service.”

What are the criteria for submitting a motion?

- A motion must be concerned with, or have a direct effect, on the education system.
- It must be of provincial or national significance.
- An action motion should not repeat action resolutions – i.e., motions that have been carried – from the last two years.

Note: All submitted motions are reviewed by BCSTA’s Legislative Committee.

What is the format for submitting a motion?

A motion consists of two parts:

1. The *motion* itself, should contain a recommendation for action, e.g.:
 - “That BCSTA urge the Minister ... ”
 - That Bylaw 16c be amended by ...”
 - That BCSTA adopt as policy ...”
2. *Rationale* – briefly explains the background information and reasoning behind the motion. An effective rationale answers the questions *what* and *why*:
 - What is the issue?
 - Why is it an issue?
 - What benefit may be achieved by taking the action/position outlined in the motion?

How is an effective motion created?

An effective motion answers the questions who, what, how and when:

- **Who is being asked to take an action/position?** There is often more than one group or individual involved in an issue. It is valuable to be as specific as possible in describing who is being asked by whom to take what action/position.
- **What action/position is recommended?** It is important to be as specific as possible in describing what action is being requested.
- **How is the action to be taken?** Some resolutions call for a specific advocacy approach, such as writing a letter, forming an ad hoc committee, or requesting a meeting. It is also possible to leave the choice of means to another group or

individual within the organization, such as a standing committee or the board of directors.

- **What are the timelines?** If a matter is time sensitive, it can be valuable to include relevant dates, deadlines and timeframes in the resolution.

In preparing your motion, follow these steps:

1. Identify the issue.
 - What do you want to change?
 - What type of motion will this be?
2. Describe the reason the change is needed.
 - What is the background?
 - Why is this important?
3. List the actions you want BCSTA to take.
 - Be specific
 - Be realistic
4. Review and revise the motion as needed
 - Is it clear?
 - Is it concise?
5. Submit to BCSTA within the deadlines.
 - Extraordinary motions – 70 days before AGM
 - Substantive motions – 60 days before AGM
 - Motions *may* be accepted after the deadlines if they concern events taking place after the deadlines.
6. Identify who will move, second, and speak to the motion at AGM.

What happens once a motion is carried?

BCSTA refers to carried motions as *resolutions*. Resolutions are taken forward by the association as directed in the text. In addition, the BCSTA Board of Directors advises staff on what action to take to advance the intent of the resolutions as an issue evolves.

BCSTA reports to the membership on the progress of resolutions in a variety of ways, such as:

- BCSTA publications, including *eAlert* and *eDigest*
- tracking reports presented included in Provincial Council and AGM packages.

2008 Deadlines

The 2008 deadlines are: January 23 for *extraordinary* motions; February 1 for *substantive* motions.

Motion Template

MOTION TITLE:	A succinct phrase that indicates the main topic of the motion.
Submitted by:	School District Number and Name; or Committee Name; or Branch Name
Be it resolved:	That BCSTA
NOTES:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The motion should clearly indicate the action requested of BCSTA, rather than an action for some other body or organization. 2. Wording should be as succinct as possible. Do not use “Whereas” statements – provide the required background information in the rationale statement below.
Rationale:	A brief description of the need for the motion, and any relevant background information.

Motion Sample

GST EXEMPTION FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

Submitted by: Fraser Valley Branch

Be it resolved:

That BCSTA:

1. *Continue to work with the Canadian School Boards Association in the pursuit of an exemption from the Goods and Services Tax on all purchases made by school boards.*
2. *Contact all BC Members of Parliament and the federal Minister of Finance to ensure that they are aware of the need to exempt school boards from the payment of the Goods and Services Tax.*

Rationale:

Currently millions of dollars are being withheld from classrooms to pay the Goods and Services Tax. The collection of this tax is particularly objectionable as it is not levelled equally at all forms of local government. The federal government currently provides an exemption from the Goods and Services Tax to all municipalities. As another form of local government, this same exemption should be provided to school boards. This would place school boards on the same footing as municipalities.