



# BC SCHOOL SPORTS

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## President's Communiqué # 1

**To:** All BC School Sports Member Schools  
Administrators, Athletic Directors and Coaches

**From:** Raj Puri, President, BC School Sports

**Date:** January 19, 2012

On behalf of the Board of Directors of BC School Sports, I would like to wish all of you the very best in 2012. I would like to start by congratulating all the coaches, volunteers and student athletes on a very successful fall season of play that culminated in outstanding championship tournaments. The winter season is well underway again after the winter break and we expect great competition in the weeks to come. Thank you to all of our teacher coaches for maintaining a high level of support for school athletics during a difficult and challenging teacher strike year.

The BC School Sports landscape is quickly evolving and there is potential for significant changes in the near future. For this reason I felt that it was timely to send the membership a brief update. Please find listed below a summary of the initiatives/issues that the organization is currently addressing:

- **Needs Assessment** -In an effort to identify and better meet the needs of the organization we have conducted a needs assessment using a survey instrument. We received close to 700 responses from coaches, athletic directors and administrators representing the entire province. Once the raw data is collated it will be presented to the Board of Directors and the membership. Initial observations identify and reflect the diversity that exists within the province and highlight the different needs of each region. Also identified are the challenges associated with trying to find the balance between competition and participation under the current rules and regulations. The results of the needs assessment will be available for the new Board to use in defining the Strategic Plan for the organization.
- **Organizational Review** -The province's new BC Sports Agency is currently in the process of conducting organizational reviews of all groups in the provincial sports sector. After we (management committee) complete a self-assessment, the sports agency task force will review the entire operations of the organization and provide us with recommendations. The goal of the sports agency is to simplify the sport sector in a new consolidated delivery model to deliver inclusive, efficient and effective sport programs and services. For multi-sport organizations like BCSS the hope is to identify efficiencies and improvements to services and structure that will result in a simpler, more effective sector. What this translates into is that the BC Sports Agency will make recommendation to BCSS.



These recommendations may redefine the current structure and operations of BCSS and may include possible amalgamation of services with other provincial sports bodies. In any case, recommendations from the BC Sports Agency will be presented to the entire membership and the membership will need to vote on resolutions that result from those recommendations.

- **Executive Director's Position** -Due to the pending organizational review and potential for significant structural changes coupled with current financial constraints, the board in discussions and mutual agreement with the current ED will not be renewing the executive director's contract which expires at the end of this school year.
- **Legal Funds** -BCSS plays a significant role as the regulatory body of high school sports. In that role it is important to remember that the Executive Director, President or even the Board of Directors do not have the authority to create, modify or delete the rules and regulations that govern the organization. We are a membership driven and self-regulating body. Only the membership can define the rules and regulations through resolutions at the AGM. This year a number of eligibility appeals and a case where a sports commission failed to follow due-process resulted in the organization needing the services of our legal counsel. This incurred expenses totaling well over twenty five thousand dollars. When your own member schools are taking legal action against the organization, it again highlights the issue that we should only have rules that we can enforce and ones that we are all prepared to honour.
- **Competitive Rules and Regulations** -A committee led by Sue Thorne has been working to bring forward recommendations in the form of resolutions for the AGM. These resolutions are intended to reflect and address a number of competitive issues that have surfaced this year as a result of the application of existing rules.
- **Eligibility Officer** -We are pleased to announce the appointment of Andy Gilbert as the new eligibility officer to replace Don Wallace who will be retiring this year.

One can easily conclude that it has been a very busy time for BCSS and that there are many changes upcoming. The membership will play a critical role in defining the future of BCSS. For this reason, I hope that you take full advantage of the opportunities available for you to provide your input. I encourage you to actively participate in the AGM which will also be webcast this year. Initial AGM information packages have already been e-mailed to schools.

I wish you continued success in the rest of the school year and thank you for your support. If you have any views or thoughts you would like to share with me, please contact me at (604) 581-4433 or at Puri\_R@sd36.bc.ca

Sincerely,

Raj P. Puri  
President, BC School Sports