Bargaining Dynamics and Shaping Our Future

October 15, 2026



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Do not edit
How to change the design

Join at slido.com
#1647939

ⓘ The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido

Do not edit
How to change the design



If you were an animal, which animal would you like to be? (pick 3)

ⓘ The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido

Do not edit
How to change the design



If you had a superpower, what would it be (pick 3)

ⓘ The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido

Do not edit
How to change the design



How interested would you be in participating on future CSSEA bargaining teams?

ⓘ The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido

Panel

Our panelists:

- **Adam Calvert** – Gathering The Circle Society (formerly La Societé de les Enfants Michif/Métis Family Services)
- **Karen Hansen** – Shuswap Association for Community Living
- **Darius Maze** – Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
- **Vanessa Wong** – Manager, HRLR, CSSEA
- **Mark Slobin** – Executive Director, HRLR, CSSEA

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Discussion Items

How did we get here? Understanding the bargaining context

- A Brief History
- The pace of change – some case examples
- Bargaining influences and dynamics

-- Break --



Where are we going? Future sector priorities…

- What should future CSSEA bargaining teams focus on?

Out of scope: management and operational funding issues

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

A Brief History

9 rounds to date:

- 1999 to 2003 – standardization / comparability aspirations
- 2003 to 2006 – cutbacks and concessions



- 2006 to 2010 – Olympics



- 2010 to 2012 – austerity – Net Zero
- 2012 to 2014 – austerity – Cooperative Gains (0)
- 2014 to 2019 – austerity – avg 1% + share in growth



- 2019 to 2022 – 2% + wage comparability



- 2022 to 2025 – post-pandemic and inflation
- 2025 to 2029 – 3% after public service strike

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Comparability – Wages – <u>Joint Interest</u>

- 1999 – Munroe settlement – the idea: wage and benefit "parity over time" with community health
- 2003 – 2006 – reductions; move to 4 step wage grid; health sector reductions; parapro rates still up to 56% less
- 2010 to 2019 – austerity; some progress to bridge gaps
- 2019 to 2022 – more progress - $60M
- 2022 to 2025 – comparability at top step
- 2025 to 2029 – delete step 1; 3 step wage grid = CH

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Advancing Reconciliation (IS) – <u>Joint Interest</u>

- What does this mean in bargaining context?
  - Equity, “decolonizing” language, building relationships
- Progress made over the past 3 rounds:
- **Equity** (with public service/MCFD)
  - Wage rate equity - new ISJEP
  - Benefit equity
    - SEB plan
    - Retention incentive benefit
    - Education Fund similar to Pacific Leaders
    - Paid special leaves – challenging for IS

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Advancing Reconciliation (IS) – Joint Interest (cont'd)

- **Decolonization**
  - cultural competence - new factor in selection process
  - Enhanced cultural leaves - incrementally
  - Greater prominence of Indigenous dispute resolution instead of grievance and harassment procedures

- **Relationship Building**
  - Joint committee (service sustainability) – prepare recommendations in advance of bargaining
  - Establish "Gathering Protocols" on how to relate

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Selection Process – Opposing Interests

- 2003 to 2006 – merit based for all postings
  - Abilities and qualifications; seniority is tie-breaker only
- 2006 to 2010
  - Lateral – requisite qualifications and abilities; seniority is tie-breaker only
  - Promotions – qualifications, abilities, and seniority; seniority is also tie-breaker
- 2010 to 2012
  - Lateral – requisite qualifications, abilities, performance, and seniority; seniority is also tie-breaker
  - Promotions – qualifications, abilities, performance, and seniority; seniority is also tie-breaker

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Selection Process – Opposing Interests

- 2014 to 2019
  - Lateral – relevant qualifications, abilities, performance, and seniority; seniority is also tie-breaker
  - Promotions – relevant qualifications, abilities, performance, and seniority (to play a lesser role); seniority is also tie-breaker
- 2019 to 2022
  - Promotions – relevant qualifications, abilities, performance ~~and seniority (to play a lesser role)~~; seniority used as tie-breaker only

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Layoff and Bumping – Opposing Interests

- 2003 to 2006
  - Bumping options restricted to least senior employees in equivalent positions
- 2006 to 2010
  - First employee laid off could bump any more junior ee
- 2010 to 2012
  - First employee + next 2 employees in bumping chain could bump any more junior employee
- 2025 to 2029
  - Avoid bumping by offering placement in vacancies and bypass selection process

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

Case Studies

Pay for Union Bargaining Committee – <u>Opposing Interests</u>

- 2010 to 2012
  - CSSEA pays 250 days for union representatives to sit on bargaining committee
- 2012 to 2014
  - Reduced to 125 days
- 2022 to 2025
  - Eliminated

Pay 50% of Cost for Printing the Collective Agreements – <u>Opposing Interests</u>

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

The Pace of Change

- **Why Does It Take So Long to Make Changes?**



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

- BC Public Sector

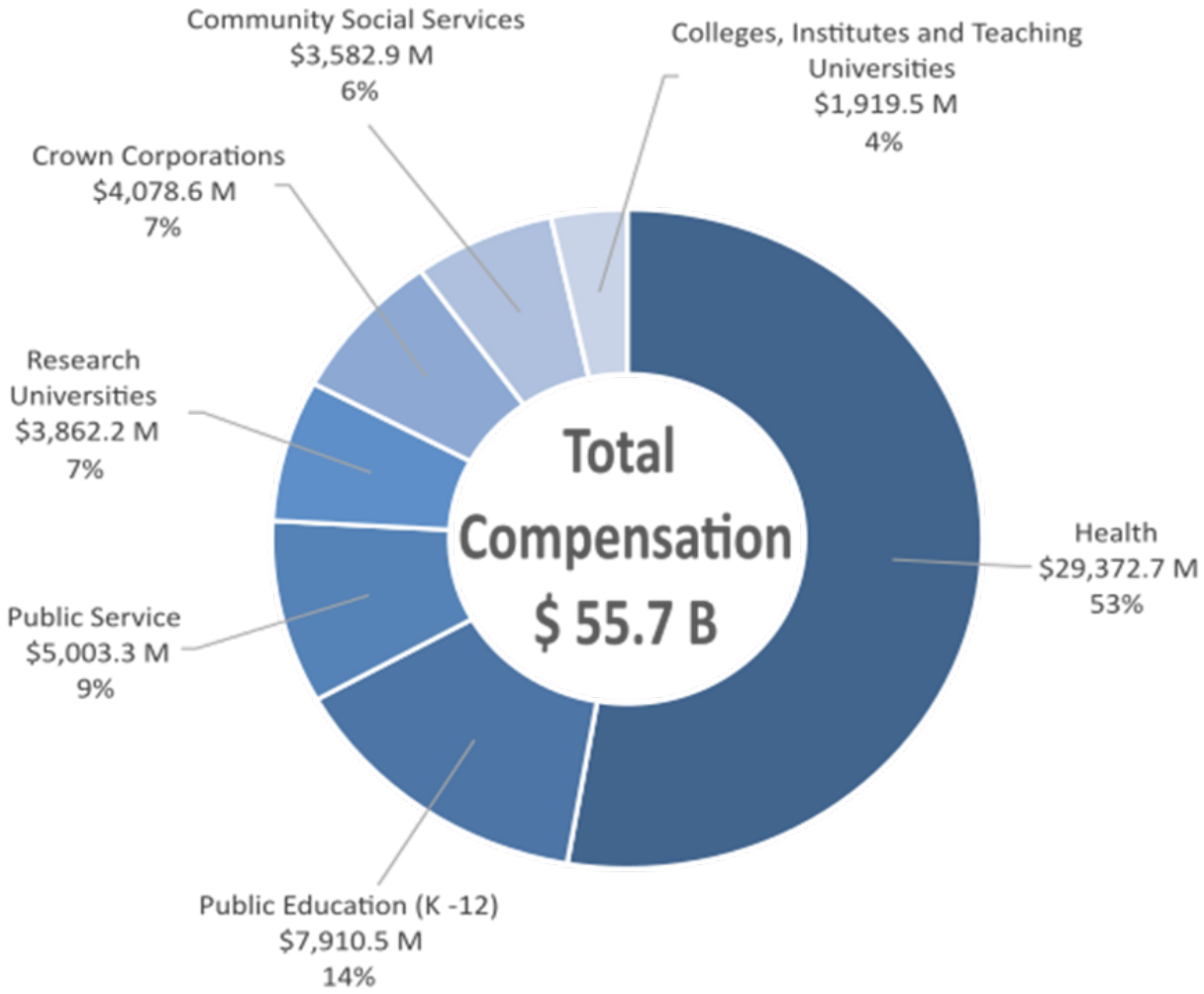
BC public sector bargaining environment

- BC government revenue close to $90B
  - 60% spent on public sector wages and benefits
- Almost 600,000 total personnel
- 450,000 are bargaining unit employees (45% of revenue)
- CSSEA = 6%

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

- BC Public Sector



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

- BC Public Sector

Mandate Development and Timing

- After government decides on compensation increases available across the public sector, we receive our CSS mandate;
- Since 2014, CSS received “differentiated” mandate for LWR
- Sometimes a little extra “flexibility” funding
- How these amounts are proposed to be spent are based on members’ objectives
- Sometimes incents early settlements and improvements (eg. 2014 and 2018) but typically CSS can’t secure deals until pattern established
- We wait but we also avoid job action based on mandate

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS’ ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

- CSSEA Members

CSSEA Member Uniformity

- Strong community of interest and consensus on some matters (comparability; recruitment/retention)
- Diverse views on others
- Practices can be diverse too - challenges responding to stories conveyed in bargaining
- Stories = leverage; brings challenges to life and promotes better understanding
- Importance of employer data to inform affordability/funding

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

- CSSEA Bargaining Team

CSSEA Bargaining Team Uniformity

- Microcosm of the membership
  - Strong community of interest and consensus on some matters (comparability; recruitment/retention)
  - But diverse views on others
- Have intensive opportunity to discuss issues in detail
- Reaching consensus can take awhile – but invariably get there

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

- CSSBA Bargaining Team

Union Uniformity

- 10 unions represented
- Mainly BCGEU, CUPE, HSA, and HEU
- 35 representatives
- Caucusing and re-caucusing – meet together and separately
- A single “no” can derail agreement even where majority support
- Since 2010, collaborative approach taken
  - “Articles of Association” – Big Union + 1
- Sometimes questioned where the unions’ interests lie

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS’ ASSOCIATION OF BC

Bargaining Influences and Dynamics

General Rule:

- **If can't find or create common interest to improve provisions, there is no chance of securing agreements**
- Exceptions: finding leverage and incentives
  - Ie. Trade-offs; money; job action; government intervention; dispute resolution

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Shaping the Future

-- BREAK --

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Key Challenges + Objectives



Points to ponder when prioritizing key objectives:

- What is your vision of service delivery and employee engagement for your agency?
- What collective agreement changes would improve your vision of service delivery and employee engagement?
- Is building staffing capacity (via recruitment, retention, and effective deployment of existing staff) still a key strategy for realizing your vision?

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Top 4 Priorities Identified Before the Session

1. Improve recruitment and retention strategies
2. Redesign the grievance process
3. Improve union leave management
4. Improve union relations

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC

Do not edit
How to change the design

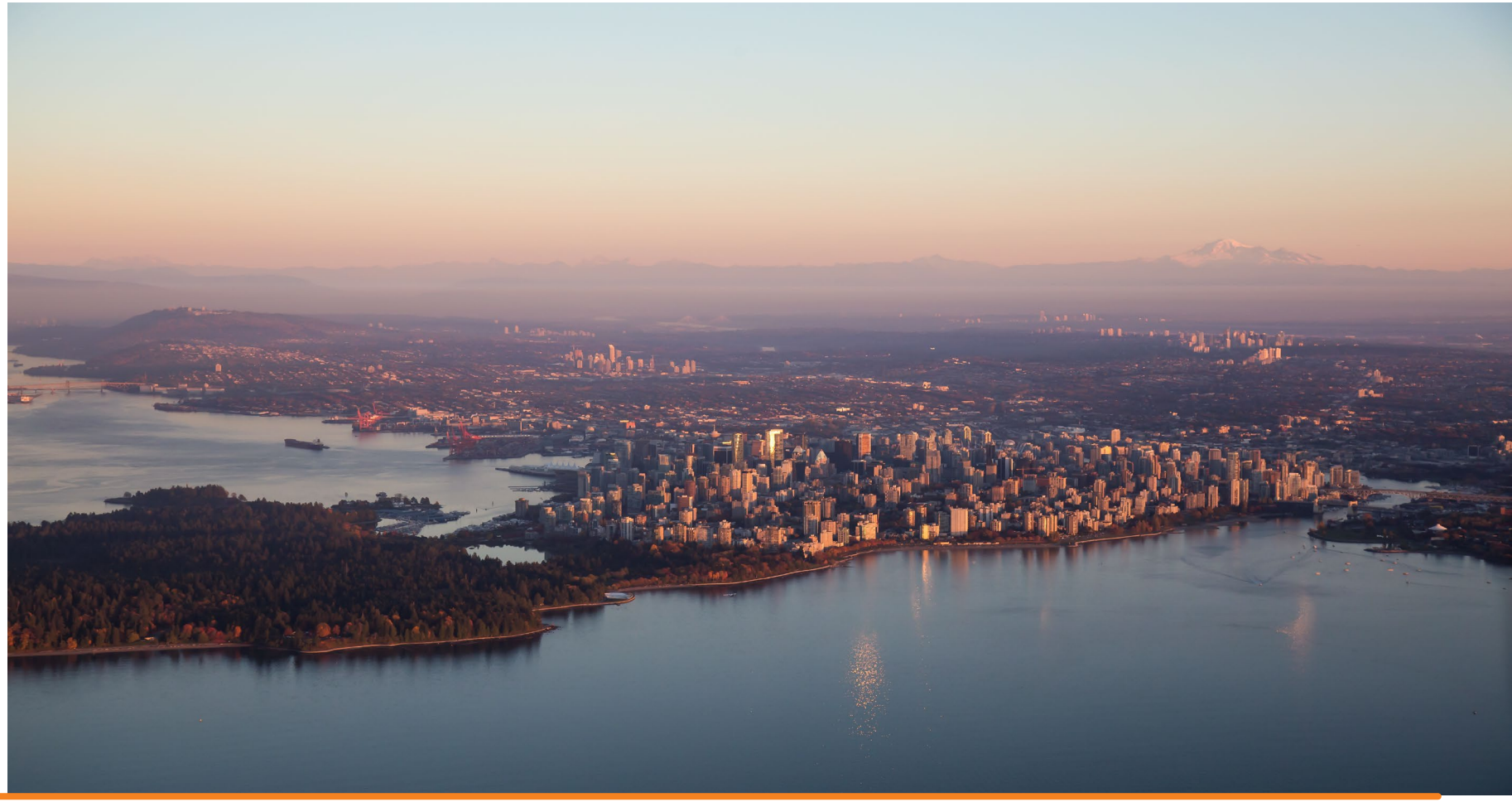


Key Objectives (pick top 3):

ⓘ The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido

Discussions



COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES
CSSEA
EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION OF BC