

On their mark

By Jennifer Moreau, Burnaby Now January 13, 2012



Making a point: Patrik Parkes, a grievance officer with the Burnaby Teachers' Association, was part of a "mark-in" held recently in Brentwood Town Centre to raise public awareness about the extra work teachers do beyond the classroom. The teachers' association is holding another mark-in at Metropolis at Metrotown on Jan. 18. Photograph by: Kevin Hill, BURNABY NOW

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The Burnaby Teachers' Association is holding its second "mark-in" in hopes of raising public awareness about the work teachers do, while the labour dispute with the provincial government drags on.

"We want more opportunities to speak to the public and help inform people about our job action and what we are trying to do to improve public education and get a fair deal for teachers so that we can do the best work with students," said Patrik Parkes, a grievance officer with the Burnaby Teachers' Association. "We want the government to bargain with us, honestly, which they aren't doing."

The mark-in will be on Jan. 18, from 4 to 6 p.m., in the food court at Metropolis at Metrotown. Teachers will buy something to eat, sit down and pull out their pens and paper to make a point about the work they do in private. They will have information on hand about the ongoing job action, bargaining and education issues, and they are hoping the public will approach and ask questions.

According to the association, the average teacher works about 50 hours a week.

The first teachers' mark-in was at Brentwood Town Centre in early December and drew roughly 50 participants.

"It was quite a popular event," said Parkes. "The teachers who attended it thought it was a good way to make a statement."

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