



September 5, 2003

Issue #1

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

Welcome back! By the time you receive this newsletter, you will have already been in school more than a week because of Board imposed summer PD. The DTA is preparing a short survey for members to fill in regarding the three August PD days.

This school year, three issues have surfaced · Bill 37 - amendments to the Employment Standards Act that will allow students between the ages of 12 and 15 to work with only a letter of permission from their parents or guardians · Legislated changes to the BC College of Teachers. The expiration of our "contract" June 30, 2004 Staff Reps will receive information on the first two issues in tomorrow's school board mail.

The major issue facing teachers this September is the repressive nature of the BC College of Teachers. Consider the following:

- Of the 11 goals the College approved for the 2003 - 2004 school year; the first priority is establishing standards for the education, professional responsibilities and competence of its members
- The public (not just parents) can file complaints against teachers (not new) but the complaints automatically go to the discipline committee
- Teachers must report to the College registrar allegations of the professional misconduct of their colleagues (the snitch clause)
- The interim College consists of 20 government appointees, none of whom were endorsed by the BCTF
- The College will determine the fee and teachers will have to pay it
- The Minister of Education has the right to override any College bylaws and College appointees sit at the pleasure of the Minister of Education

As will other locals, the DTA is launching a cam-

aign encouraging Delta teachers to sign letters requesting that the Board not automatically deduct College fees from October 31st paychecks. The letters will be held in the DTA office pending the outcome of the campaign provincially. When the BCTF Executive determines there is a sufficient number of letters, locals will be advised to forward the letters to their Boards and the College. The financial security that the College currently enjoys will be shaken at the prospect of having to wait for teachers to submit their own fees. Instead of the College automatically receiving its funds from school districts by electronic transfer on October 31st, it will be faced with processing fees from over 40 000 teachers. Please note also that one of the first actions of the new College councilors was to approve per diem payments of \$250 (in addition to expenses) for service outside of the school year to those council members who are currently regularly employed in the school system.

While it may be inconvenient for teachers to eventually send their own fees to the College, this action is an effective way to make a political statement to the government about what teachers in this province think about the "College of Teachers".

The DTA EC, at its meeting August 27, requested legal advice on the implications of any members sending letters asking that their College fees not be remitted by the employer. BCTF reports that there is no negative precedent created by the letters. This is true for the following reasons:

1. The members are not revoking the application of a provision of the Collective Agreement.

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2. The dues deduction is a policy arrangement between the DTA and the Board - an arrangement which the DTA may request be ended
3. Writing the letters is a demonstration of support for a collective action endorsed by the union Members will be apprised of the development of this campaign.

The DTA Executive will be visiting schools from September 8 - 26 to share information with members. I urge you to consider signing the letter requesting that the Board not deduct College fees from your October pay.

September traditionally signals a new beginning for teachers and students. In spite of the antics of the Liberal government, teaching is still one of the most rewarding professions there is. Without a dedicated teaching force, educating all students to be active citizens able to participate in a democratic society is impossible. The work you do is important - you know it and so do your students and parents.

Have a good year!

Important Notice
Special General Meeting
October 14th 4:00 p.m.
Seaquam Secondary

Jinny Sims, BCTF 1st VP
Speaking on the College of Teachers.
Please Plan to Attend.

STOP PRESS!

The Board has agreed to the DTA request to deposit your advance salary for September 2003 on Friday, Sept 12th instead of the usual Monday, Sept. 15th.

TOC Corner

Have you updated your profile? Please contact the DTA or ask for a blank form from a Staff Rep at any school. If you were teaching last year you can update on line by going to www.bctf.bc/toc/updateform

In Memory of Don Brown and Ken Sotvedt

The DTA mourns the passing of two well known retired Delta teachers and administrators, Don Brown and Ken Sotvedt.

Don Brown died peacefully in his sleep on July 22, 2003 with his wife Jean by his side. Don's 34 years in education in Delta included a term as DTA President, from 1950 to 1955, and 28 years as principal of Richardson Elementary. Our condolences to Jean, and all the family. Donations may be made in Don's name to the Delta Hospital Foundation.

Ken Sotvedt died on July 28, 2003, surrounded by his family. Ken worked as a teacher and principal for 38 years, mainly in Delta. Ken will be missed by music enthusiasts of all ages. Our condolences to his wife Karen, and all the family. Donations may be made to "The Ken Sotvedt Memorial Music Scholarship" c/o Delta School District.