



NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

The recent proposal of the Board to change the school calendar next year is a good news / bad news proposition. On the positive side, the Board has recognized the value that Delta teachers place on not only controlling their own Professional Development but also locating the days within the school year. Also, the Board has asked the DTA to participate on a committee to discuss the issue of school calendars for years beyond 2005. On the negative side, the Board has once again embarked on a proposed change to our working lives without involving the DTA in the initial discussions. When the DTA met with the Superintendent on April 5, we heard about the proposed change for the first time. We requested and were provided with a printed copy of the proposal, later that day. While Delta teachers understand the financial constraints of the school board given the current provincial government, we would appreciate being consulted as partners in the district, not merely being asked for feedback.

The BCTF is opposed to school calendar changes that are designed to help school districts balance their budgets, an ongoing problem caused by the continued underfunding of the public education system by the provincial government. While the prospect of a long weekend in November and a two-week spring break in March are very enticing to tired teachers, the DTA has offered the following concerns to the Board:

- There is no evidence that closing schools for five days has any educational benefit for students.
- Teachers want to be reassured that there is no negative impact on working parents or any financial impact on CUPE staff if schools are closed.
- Teachers on Call in Delta, who are struggling to make ends meet, will be greatly affected by school closures as there will be no work for the five days of the closures and likely, beyond.

- Remembrance Day is not an occasion for a holiday weekend.
- How will the public respond to the idea of five more days of schools being closed?

The Board readily admits that the calendar change is being proposed strictly for financial reasons. The Delta School Board was elected to advocate on behalf of Delta students. It is not acceptable to the DTA that the school board propose to balance its budget by decreasing the number of school days in the school year.



DTA AGM & Executive Committee Elections

It is time to think about submitting your name for the DTA AGM. This is an opportunity to serve your colleagues and vote on issues that will affect you. If you are interested in letting your name stand, please e-mail caroldta@telus.net or call the DTA office.

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Seaquam Secondary

4:00 p.m. Daycare provided

RETIRING? TAKING A LEAVE NEXT YEAR?

If you know **for certain** that you are either retiring or taking a leave of absence for the 2004 – 2005 school year, please let the Human Resources Department know by **May 1st**. The Board is able to more accurately determine staffing numbers with the early submission of this information.



"HELLO HEALTH"

Only 44 days until exams ... and 52 until the last day luncheon ... here we go into the final frantic slide towards summer. For many teachers, this is a stressful time of year, intensified by Provincial exams, finding final library time to finish projects, and keeping students interested in learning while the weather is so beautiful. If you are finding the stress overwhelming, here are some options for you:

- **Interlock** Employee and Family Assistance Corp. of Canada (604) 431-8200 (free for Delta SD employees and their families.)
- **Hep B Notice:** If you have already received your first two Hep B shots your final shot of the series will be scheduled on May 5/6. You will receive a letter of notification from Laurie Stowe at the SBO.

Jeanie Lucas, 2nd VP and OH&S
Chair jlucas@deltasd.bc.ca

BCCT DUES AND INCOME TAX

If you were among the thousands of teachers who paid \$90 into the BCTF Democratic College of Teachers, you may not deduct the money as payment of your college dues. Those teachers who did not sign letters asking the Board to not deduct the fee will have received the information on their T4 forms.

BCCT DUES – DUE AGAIN?

Teachers who signed letters to the Board requesting that dues not be deducted received a letter from the Board indicating that Delta teachers are responsible for paying their own college fees. The BCTF AGM passed a motion that states in part: *That in the event that the outstanding college issues are not resolved, all members be encouraged to act collectively to achieve changes to the BCCT by refusing to pay the 2004 – 2005 BCCTF fee to the college and instead contributing the fee to the BCTF Democratic College Fund, until the conditions adopted by the January 22-23, 2004 R.A. have been achieved.* It's not too late to join the protest against the current changes the political appointees continue to make. If the current proposal about the fee receives government approval, members will be expected to pay next year's dues on May 31 of this year!

DTA BUILDING PURCHASE COMMITTEE

The DTA has been advised by the Staff Rep Assembly to strike a DTA Office Building Committee. This committee is expected to meet several times and to make recommendations on buying office space. If you are interested, please contact the DTA office at 604.946-0391 by May 7, 2004.



DTA SOCIAL EVENTS

- Volleyball, **May 7th** NDSS
- Golf Tournament, **June 4th**, Tsawwassen Golf Course

For more information, see your staff room bulletin board on these fun events, or contact the DTA office.

Date to Remember:

- April 22 at the Resource Centre 4:00 p.m. for Beginning Teachers. Boys, Girls & Learning workshop. Contact Shirley Werner at swerner@deltasd.bc.ca to register.

DTA Seeks Election Contact Person

As a result of BCTF AGM decisions, the DTA will endorse a local contact person to act as liaison in the next round of elections, provincial and otherwise. Training will be provided by the BCTF in May. There will be some release time provided.

The DTA Executive Committee will make the appointment at its meeting on May 4th. Please notify the DTA of your interest in this position. We will provide further information on request.

PD WORKSHOPS

Mark your calendar!

Check the PD bulletin board. We are offering a workshop on May 13th 1-4 p.m. and again on May 19th 4-6 p.m. on assessing needs and planning a great PD program for next year.