



October 30, 2003

Issue #4

## NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

### President's Column

#### *Special General Meeting/BC College of Teachers*

Many Delta teachers attended the Special General Meeting on October 14, 2003 at Seaquam. BCTF 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Jinny Sims was the guest speaker. After a discussion on options about the BC College of Teachers fee, the following motion passed unanimously: That the DTA recommend the trust fund option to the BCTF Representative Assembly, providing that it is a legally viable option as determined by the BCTF. This is the position that Delta Local Reps, Colin Vint, Paul Steer and I will be taking to the BCTF Representative Assembly (RA) November 7 – 8.

The RA will recommend one option to the membership that may well result in a vote in every local. Delta Staff Reps will meet on November 12 to receive an update on the College issue and finalize plans for that vote which will take place later that week and into the early part of the following week. Reps will be asked to share that information with their colleagues in special school-based DTA meetings. Plans call for the BCTF to announce the vote count provincially on November 21. **Members are urged to resist the pressure to submit College fees and await the outcome of the vote on November 21.**

**Patti McLaughlin, Plan Administrator of the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP)** attended the Staff Rep meeting on October 27 to provide information on the status of the SIP fund and to outline the criteria for teachers to access and remain on SIP benefits. When the actuary met with the Income Security committee in January of 2000, the plan had a surplus of \$92 million. Because of the surplus, the BCTF AGM lowered the contribution from 1.4% of actual salary to 1.2%. Due to the decline in market investments, the increase in claims and the aging teaching force, over the subsequent years, the actuary now reports that the fund has a surplus of only \$16 million. A surplus of \$25 million is recommended.

The short-term SIP benefit is 50% of gross income, income tax free for 120 teaching days or up to 20 months if the teacher is working part-time. Great West Life Insurance Company administers long-term SIP; the benefit provides for 65% of the first \$25 000 of gross annual salary, plus 50% of the next \$40 000 and 40% of the balance. The teacher's pension contribution is made in both cases.

To qualify for short-term SIP, the teacher must be prevented by illness or injury from performing his/her normal employment duties. Once into long-term disability, a teacher may receive benefits for up to a year, being disabled from their "own occupation" – ie. Primary teacher. After the first year, the teacher must be suffering from a mental or physical disability that prevents his/her performing the duties of any gainful employment and is designated as being disabled from "all occupations." Teachers may be required to submit to independent medical examinations.

The 2% of actual salary that teachers are now paying into the SIP is divided; 0.4% goes into short-term and 1.6% goes into long-term. It is the long-term portion that increased 0.8%. This fee went up because claims have increased and teachers are remaining on claim longer than anticipated. Teachers who have adequate sick leave and have reached factor 88 can apply to withdraw from the long-term contribution. (See October 9 Newsletter.)

Last year's BCTF AGM not only approved the fee increase, it also directed the Income Security division to take a close look at the plan and report to the Executive Committee with recommendations. This issue will be on the agenda of the BCTF AGM in March, 2004. Your input will be sought.

For more detailed information, ask your school Staff Rep to give you a copy of the materials.



## "HELLO HEALTH"

Welcome to our new Occupational Health & Safety information corner. My monthly bulletin will be called "Hello Health" because our main goal is to maintain the health of our members. This month, I have two items for you to consider: **Handwashing:** Do you have proper facilities and supplies in place at your school to prevent the spread of disease? The issue of warm water, soap and paper towels is a big one in many schools across the province. Remember to wash your hands frequently to help to prevent the spread of germs. The **BCTF Wash Your Hands** poster, which was distributed to elementary schools a couple of years ago, is available and can be downloaded in English or French at [www.bctf.ca/education/health](http://www.bctf.ca/education/health)

**Fall Tours:** If it's fall, it must be time for farm tours. Teachers and tour organizers need to remember that un-pasteurized fruit juices and ciders, although normally safe, may sometimes carry harmful bacteria, and that young children are among the groups most vulnerable. There's more information about this and other health issues on the Health Canada website: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-ailment/mh-dm/mhe-dme/e\\_fightbac.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-ailment/mh-dm/mhe-dme/e_fightbac.html)

**Reminders:** Report all injuries and near misses. Prevention is vital! Have a healthy autumn.  
*Jeanie Lucas, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP and OH&S Chair*



## Committee Vacancies

Want to get more involved in the union? Consider joining one of the following committees:

### **Social Justice**

- 2 Members at Large

### **Bargaining**

- 1 elementary
- 1 secondary

### **Professional Development**

- 1 Adult Educator
- 3 Members at Large

### **Health and Safety**

- 5 Members at Large

### **Public Education Advocacy Committee**

- 3 Members at Large

For dates and times of these committee meetings, please contact Jan Eastman at the DTA office at 604. 946-0391 or email [vp-dta@telus.net](mailto:vp-dta@telus.net)

## **Joint Educational Change Committee**

**Needed:** 4 DTA members

This committee is composed of equal numbers of DTA and Board members. It meets three times a year with release time provided for the meetings. This committee provides advice on the planning for and implementation of educational change in the district. Members are appointed by the DTA. A short curriculum vitae form is available from the DTA office.

### **Next Beginning Teacher Workshop**

November 13, 2003

## **Induction/Social/ Celebration**

**December 4, 2003**

New Members will be inducted into the DTA and the BCTF at a special event on December 4, 2003, at the Resource Centre beginning at 4:00 p.m. One of the most important undertakings of any local is to welcome and induct new members, and to support their early years in the teaching profession. A second undertaking of equal importance is to honour and acknowledge the contributions of our retiring colleagues which we will do in June.

## **NEW TEACHERS' CONFERENCE February 20, 21, 2004**

The BCTF is once again sponsoring a conference for new teachers (first 5 years). The conference provides participants with a range of excellent workshops as well as many opportunities to meet other new teachers, share experiences, and build supportive networks. The conference program will be available online at [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca) in December. The DTA PD fund and the school PD fund will support your attendance at this conference. Release codes are at a premium for February 20<sup>th</sup>. *Get yours early!*



**Have a safe and fun Hallowe'en**