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Issue 5

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

BC College of Teachers Strategy – What's Next?

At the BCTF Representative Assembly (RA) on November 7 – 8, 2003, the following motion was overwhelmingly passed:

“That the Representative Assembly recommend to members that a BCTF Democratic College Fund be established and that members be encouraged to act collectively to achieve a democratic college of teachers by refusing to pay the College of Teachers fee to the college and instead contributing \$90.00 each to the BCTF Democratic College Fund.”

Should members agree with the motion, after a province-wide vote, any monies paid into the BCTF Democratic College Fund will be held in trust until such time as a democratic college is achieved. The BCTF is proposing amendments (on the back of this newsletter) to the Teaching Profession Act that would accomplish this goal.

The DTA will conduct a secret ballot vote of members on November 14 and 18 at SDSS, DSS, NDSS, Seaquam and Delview. Staff Reps will provide full details to you on Thursday, November 13. The provincial vote count will be announced by the BCTF on November 20. If members vote to support the fund, Cheque In week will be November 24 – 28 and Staff Reps will collect your cheques during that time. The DTA will ensure that the cheques reach the BCTF by November 30.

If thousands of teachers refuse to pay their dues unless changes are made, will Boards actually fire them? Remember the Day of Protest last January? The first strike I participated in took place in 1971 when teachers stood up for their retiring colleagues in protesting pensions. No teacher lost his or her job in either 1970 or 2002. Of course there is some risk involved in this strategy, but not likely before 2004 at the earliest and collective action now may bring a resolution well before then.

*For various reasons, some teachers have paid the college fee or had their fee deducted. **The DTA is urging all teachers, whether they have paid the fee or not, to support this action with a strong YES vote.** Every member needs to have had the opportunity to vote. We are requesting our Board not to interfere in this dispute between teachers and government.*

The RA was very clear when it passed the following motion:

“That if any BCTF member’s employment is terminated as a result of participating in the BCTF collective action to oppose changes in the BCCT, no member will report to work until that member is reinstated and made whole.”

There is strength in numbers. There is strength in collective action. There is strength in unity.

Please vote YES!

**Amendments to the Teaching Profession Act
Adopted by the BCTF Executive Committee
October 22-23, 2003**

That the BCTF lobby the provincial opposition party, other provincial political parties, the provincial education partner organizations and the B.C. Deans of Education to support amendments to the Teaching Profession Act:

- a. To provide for two-thirds of the members of the BCCT Council to be elected in a democratic manner by practicing members of the college.
- b. To remove Section 27.1 in order to protect teachers constitutional freedom of association and freedom of expression under the Labour Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- c. To limit the interference of the provincial government in the operation of the B.C. College of Teachers.
- d. To ensure that discipline citations are initiated only by a college discipline committee that has a majority of elected council members.
- e. To replace the provisions of the public complaints with the process contained in the Teaching Profession Act prior to Bill 51.
- f. To eliminate Section 21.h of the Teaching Profession Act, which provides for the college to establish and maintain a system of continuing teacher education.