



TODAY

Issue # 5

December 9, 2004

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

Teachers' List of Things to Do in December

- Distribute report cards
- Conduct parent/teacher interviews
- Practice for the Christmas/holiday concert
- Continue to teach, assess and evaluate until December 17, 2004 then,
- Take time with family and friends to relax over the holidays!

All of us at the DTA office wish you a very happy holiday and all the best for 2005!



BC Federation of Labour Convention

Over 1200 members of various unions attended the BC Fed Convention in Vancouver from November 29 – December 3, 2004. While many important motions were dealt with at the meeting and President Jim Sinclair was re-elected, the underlying message of the convention was the need for union members to get involved in the next provincial election. Union after union stood at the microphones and told their stories about how Liberal government changes have impacted their members. Teachers are angry with the Liberal government and what it has done to public education in this province. We need to get out and tell our stories to the public, reminding them who is to blame for the deterioration in students' learning conditions – the Liberals. Teachers continue to do their best to minimize the impact of education changes on their students who, thanks to their teachers' efforts, continue to do well in spite of the cuts. How much longer can teachers continue to prop up the system at the expense of their health and pocketbooks?

If you intend to make any purchases over the holidays, please support unionized businesses. Unlike the provincial government, let's help keep decent paying jobs in B.C!

Provincial Bargaining

The BCTF provincial bargaining team will have met three times by the time you receive this newsletter. While no language has been tabled, protocols are being developed and both teams are talking. The local office has received a Draft copy of bargaining language, which we will share with members in January.

Grade 10 Exams

Each BCTF member will receive an Issue Alert outlining "The case against Grade 10 and 11 provincial exams." Through legislation, graduation requirements have now been increased for all students. Many teachers of grade 10 students work hard to keep students who may be marginalized, in school until grade 12. The addition of six mandatory courses, three of which now have government exams that must be passed before a student can graduate, has the potential to increase the dropout rate. The English 10 exam is more difficult than the Communications 12 exam as is Science 10 more challenging than Science and Tech 11. Teachers of grade 10 students are being asked to not mark Grade 10 exams unless ordered to do so and if so ordered, they are asked to provide the administrator with a copy of the **BCTF Statement of Professional Principles** and comply with the order under protest. The last thing teachers want to do is to see students driven from schools because they are unable to pass grade 10 courses.

So, is there any good news to share? On November 22, the DTA welcomed 14 teachers into the profession in an Induction ceremony. Irene Lanzinger, First Vice-President of the BCTF brought greetings on behalf of the teachers of B.C. On Tuesday, December 07, the following headline appeared on the front page of the Vancouver Sun 2004 "BC Students Among World's Best in Reading, Math and Science." Teachers in this province are obviously doing something right!

DISCRETIONARY DAY AND PERSONAL LEAVE DAY

Although the discretionary day and personal leave day has been part of the collective agreement for several years, questions do arise from time to time.

Discretionary Day:

- ✦ Every continuing teacher (full-time or part-time) is entitled to one discretionary day per year;
 - ✦ These days do not accumulate from one year to the next;
 - ✦ The discretionary day can be taken for **any** purpose and can be taken at **any** time during the year;
 - ✦ You do not need to apply for the discretionary day. Use the same process you would use if you were calling in sick, except key into the SEM System the reason for your absence is your discretionary day (reason#2). (It is helpful to the Board if you give as much advance notice as possible);
- You receive full salary and benefits when you take your discretionary day.

Personal Leave Day:

- ✦ You must apply to the Personnel Office for this day. Application forms are in your school. Make your application as far in advance as possible;
 - ✦ You receive your full salary less the cost of a teacher-on-call for the day;
 - ✦ This day **cannot** be attached to Christmas Break or Spring break. Also, it **cannot** be attached to a discretionary day, which is attached to Christmas break or Spring break;
- SEM System Reason: #7 Leave at TOC cost.

Have you paid your 2004-05 college fee?

BCTF members voted to pay the 2004-05 annual BC College of Teachers' fee.

The BCTF is advising all members to pay the 2004-05 BCCT fee before the deadline of December 31, 2004. The members include teachers-on-call, full-time and part-time teachers, and all teachers on any type of leave of absence.

Reminder: If you need information on counselling services, please call Interlock 604.431-8200.



SFU Professional Development Opportunity
A graduate diploma in Exploring Mathematical Literacy for Grade K-10 Educators.

Beginning Spring 2005
Provides a 5th or 6th year.
Opportunity to extend to a masters degree
For more information email Larry Wiebe at wiebe@sfu.ca and ask for a package.

Collect your used postage stamps this Christmas!
Keep them out of the landfills!



Remove the stamps from the envelopes by cutting 1/4" or 5cm around the stamp.

Send to or drop off at:

Burns Bog Conservation Society

*#202 - 11961 88th Ave. Delta BC
V4C 3C9 by Jan. 15, 2005*



Have a safe,
healthy, **restful** holiday.
Jeanie Lucas, 2nd VP, DTA