



TODAY

Issue # 2

September 19, 2005

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

If you are feeling confused by what is being reported in the media about the state of teacher bargaining and the upcoming strike vote, you are not alone. I have written this column three times in less than three days; the ground is undoubtedly shifting again as you are reading this newsletter!

I'd like to set the record straight on the information the media presented last week. Contrary to the employer's statement, the BCTF has not walked away from the bargaining table. The BCTF bargaining team is available continuously to meet with the employer to reach a negotiated settlement. When representatives from BCPSEA met with the media on Thursday, September 15th, they indicated they had costed the BCTF proposal and had determined it to be worth 35% of the total annual education costs. Their numbers included a salary increase of between 10 and 13%. This is simply not true. To date, the BCTF has not tabled a salary proposal. BCTF President, Jinny Sims said, "That is simply a fabricated number with no connection whatsoever to reality." Jinny supported her comments with the following example: "In the last round we tabled improvements to maternity leave. When BCPSEA calculated the cost, they assumed every single teacher of child-bearing age would become pregnant within the three-year life of the contract. It was absurd!"

Early in September, the BCTF received legal advice. Acting on that advice, the BCTF lifted from the bargaining table the language that the government stripped from our contract in 2002. Consequently, on Friday, September 16, 2005, the BCTF tabled "manner and consequences" language with BCPSEA. Justice Shaw clearly ruled that teachers were entitled to negotiate the manner in which school boards exercise their authority and the consequences that flow. Although not the stripped contract language, the BCTF believes that if negotiated successfully, manner and consequence language will help to address the issues

that concern teachers such as class size and composition and support for students with special needs.

Mike deJong, the Minister of Labour, asked both the BCTF and BCPSEA to meet with him at 3:30 pm on Monday, September 19, 2005. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the issues in bargaining and where to proceed from here. Representatives from the BCTF will continue to call upon government to meet with teachers to develop a process that will lead to a satisfactory, negotiated settlement.

Meanwhile, expect external forces to continue to misrepresent teachers' actual positions. Notice deliberate attempts to encourage anger among the public, anxiety among parents and fear within our own membership. Our response must show steadiness, cohesion and resolve. It is important for us to remain unified, to question statements and assumptions about our union that do not originate within our union, and to maintain our solidarity.

An overwhelming "YES" in the strike vote which will be taken this week says that we as professionals speak out for better learning and working conditions, that we as professionals exercise our legal rights to ensure the needs of students and teachers are met, and that we as professionals participate fully both in the creation and in the continuing life of our democracy. In the strike vote, I urge each of you to vote "YES" for your students, "YES" for yourselves and "YES" for public education.

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Strike Vote Wording
Are you in favour of a strike?
 Yes No

Reasons to Vote and to Vote “YES”

Voting YES:

1. clarifies our bargaining position.
2. sends a clear message of teacher determination and resolve.
3. signals teacher concerns about the issues.
4. is a public demonstration of unity.
5. asserts our right as professionals to speak up and take action.
6. indicates teachers do want a salary increase.
7. pressures government to be reasonable.
8. exercises our lawful right to support our bargaining position.
9. demonstrates our readiness to stand up for ourselves.
10. is a vote for teachers, students and public education.

Teachers Taking Strike Vote

- A Message to Share with Parents

Teachers:

- are bargaining for guaranteed improvements for students.
- are worried about the decline in quality of services and support for students.
- believe a solution is possible and call on the government to work toward a fair, /negotiated/ settlement.
- believe there should be limits to the size of classes
- require additional support for students with special needs.
- need adequate resources in classrooms.
- deserve a fair and reasonable salary increase – more than the government's zero, zero and zero.

STRIKE VOTE

Advance Poll, Sept. 20 – DTA Office Schools & DTA Sept. 21 & 22

SDSS

750 – 53rd Street

Location: Library Workroom (Enter from North parking lot)

Times: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Delta Secondary

4615 – 51st Street

Location: Main Entrance

Times: 7:15 am – 8:15 am 11:15 am – 11:45 am 2:45 pm – 5:00 pm

Seaquam

11584 Lyon Road

Location: Library

Times: 7:45 am – 8:25 am 11:15 – 12:40 pm
Wednesday: 2:45 pm – 4:30 pm Thursday: 2:45 pm – 4:00 pm

NDSS

11447 – 82nd Avenue

Location: Conference Room (opposite office)

Times: 8:00 – 8:50 am 11:30 am – 12:50 pm
Wednesday: 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm Thursday: 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

DTA

#210 – 5000 Bridge St

Ladner

September 20

Times: 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

September 21 Times: 8:00 am – 9:15 am 11:30 am – 5:00 pm

September 22 Times: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm