



TODAY

Issue # 9

April 4, 2007

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

If the old saying about March weather “coming in like a lion and leaving like a lamb” was applied to recent government legislative actions respecting education, March ended with a loud roar from the government lion. During the last week of March, three pieces of education legislation were introduced in the house. In the weeks and months to come, it is likely there will be much in the government's legislative program for teachers to focus upon. Even though March is gone, the lion in Victoria is still making its presence known.

Bill 20, an omnibus bill targeting public education, tabled on March 26th, amends the School Act. It creates “*superintendents of achievement*”, empowered to inspect board records, enter schools, and to interview Board employees and students. The bill also establishes “*boards of education*” with a mandate to prepare “*achievement contracts*”, formerly known as “*accountability contracts*”, concerned with student performance, and plans for improving student achievement, early learning programs, and literacy. Bill 20 also empowers parents who are dissatisfied with a board ruling to appeal directly to the superintendents of achievement, effectively bypassing school boards.

Bill 21, introduced on March 27th, consists of amendments to the *School Act* and the *Teaching Profession Act*. It requires the BC College of Teachers to establish a *public registry of teacher employment and discipline*. The registry will contain a teacher's personal information including name, certification status, and record of any certificate cancellations or suspensions. While reprimands may be removed from the registry after five years, there is no provision in Bill 21 for

removal of suspensions or cancellations. An *employers' registry* listing the names of teachers and their employers, with information made available to all boards of education, is also established.

Bill 22, introduced to the house on March 29th directs every school to have a ministry-approved code of conduct for students. The bill gives government direct access to teachers through the BC College of Teachers. Bill 22 also provides for government to reimburse students directly for expenses incurred for educational activities, “if the student or child demonstrates a standard of achievement, satisfactory to the minister.” Does this provision resemble a modified “voucher-system” of education?

Significantly, all three pieces of government legislation clearly demonstrate the continuing willingness of this government to interfere with the work of teachers, schools and school boards, and to ignore the class size and composition issues that we identify as probably the two most significant factors affecting student learning that government could be doing something about if they wanted to.

Now that March has passed, what will April showers bring – flowers, or floods?

DTA Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

4:00 pm

Seaquam Secondary

Daycare upon Request

This is the first call for nominations.

The PD Perspective

Jacque Schierer, PD Chairperson



There continues to be a wide variety of great workshops and conferences being offered now through to June. Keep your eyes open for one that fits your needs and be sure to apply to the DTA for funding. Schools are finding it difficult to cover the TOC costs which are now \$285.56 a day but don't let that deter you from pursuing your professional development. If there isn't a conference that looks good, consider an observation in a colleague's classroom.

Remember: *"Teachers can help one another to grow, learn, and change through honest, professional dialogue, during which they talk, listen, and challenge one another's ideas in an atmosphere of respect and support."* (Angela Jagger – "Teacher as Learner" article).



TEACHERS ON CALL MEETING & WORKSHOP

The next TOC meeting will be held **Wednesday, April 25th** at the DTA Office, #210 – 5000 Bridge Street. The workshop *"TOC – Raising Health and Safety Awareness"* has been booked. **Please RSVP by phone (604 946-0391) or e-mail (deltateachers@telus.net).**



Thinking of Retiring? Planning a Leave of Absence?

Once you have made your decision, please inform Human Resources at the Board and submit your paper work ASAP. This will be helpful for next years staffing needs.

BC College of Teachers' Report

Kelly Shields, BC College of Teachers' Councillor for Zone 9 (Surrey/Delta), has written a comprehensive report about issues the college has been dealing with in the last few months. The greatest concern is the Trade, Investment, Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA), a secretly negotiated agreement between B.C. and Alberta. This agreement will, among other concerns, permit Alberta teachers to teach in B.C. with four-year university degrees. Kelly's complete report has been printed separately and will accompany this newsletter. Look for it in your staff room!



"TAD" BOYES SCHOLARSHIP

Application forms are available from the DTA office for the Tad Boyes Scholarship. Applicants must be the son or daughter (graduating from a public school in BC) of a Delta teacher. The scholarship is \$750.00 and the criteria is based on academic excellence. **Deadline is June 20th.**

Mark Your Calendars! THE ANNUAL DTA GOLF TOURNAMENT

Will be held on
Friday, June 1st at the
Tsawwassen Golf Course
(Details to follow)



Anti-Homophobia Workshops in Schools

School bullying has been noted as a pervasive problem in schools- however what is often not discussed is that one of the main reasons students are bullied in schools is because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. In order to help make schools a safer place, Gab Youth Services offers **PrideSpeaks**, an interactive workshop by youth about homophobia, bullying in schools, and issues of discrimination.

The goal of the workshop is to provide accurate and non-judgmental information about sexual orientation and gender identity and to look at ways of increasing safety in schools by having lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual, queer, questioning and allied youth facilitate various interactive exercises.

PrideSpeaks can be delivered to students at both the elementary and high school levels and for teachers as well. Workshops are offered on an honoraria basis and can be free of charge. Please contact Gab Youth Services at 604-684-4901 or at youthcoordinator@lgbtcentrevancouver.com for more information!!

JOB SHARE POSITION

Looking for a job share partner who wants to work 80% (4 days a week) in a primary grade in the North end. Contact Lori Drysdale at ldrysdale@deltasd.bc.ca.



Happy Easter

