



Issue # 8

March 6, 2008

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

President's Column

FSA Saga Continues:

At the January 22, 2008 School Board meeting, the Delta Board of Education [Board] passed two motions related to FSAs:

1. Be it resolved that the [Board] will direct the Superintendent to examine ways in which the Delta School District can reduce its dependence on FSA data and to de-emphasize the test's significance within the district.
2. That the [Board] will write a letter to the Minister of Education asking it to adopt changes to the FSA testing policy to allow all parents the choice of opting their children out of the FSA tests should they desire.

The DTA congratulates the Delta Board of Education for passing these two motions. Delta's Achievement Contract does feature some letter grades which teachers know are a true reflection of student learning. Provincial Government exam results and FSA results are the other sources of data. Parental requests for their children to be withdrawn from FSA testing must be honoured without any additional need to explain or justify their decision to the school principal. Parents making such requests have already thought about the choice they are making for the good of their child.

The costs of FSA marking have been downloaded onto districts, including Delta. Delta received a little more than half of the money it needed to pay individuals to mark. While a few Delta teachers marked the FSA, the greater number of markers were retired teachers and principals and teachers from other districts.

BULLY

On February 27th many people wore pink to show their support for anti-bullying. On March 4, 2008, Vancouver based *Rockstar* released a new video game: **Bully: Scholarship Edition**. According to promotional materials, the game is intended to, ..."rid school yards of bullies." BCTF President, Irene Lanzinger, says "the video trivializes vicious bullying to an afternoon lark while stereotyping female students as either sexpot cheerleaders or overweight losers."

The American Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB), a non-regulatory industry rating group commented that both the 2006 version of *Bully* and the newest version *Bully: Scholarship Edition* depict scenes of violence, crude language, sexual themes, use of tobacco and alcohol and crude humor. The 2008 version warns parents that the game shows "animated blood".

In spite of the popularity of this interactive form of entertainment among children and youth, there is little government scrutiny or regulation of either video games or their content. B.C. was the first jurisdiction to pass legislation in April, 2001. The *Video Games Act* would have implemented a mandatory classification and regulatory system for video games. When the Liberal government took power in 2001, they withdrew the legislation. Teachers are staunchly opposed to this video, which condones bullying behaviour and the use of violence. We urge parents to refuse to purchase it and further to tell their local retailers why.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY **March 8, 2008**

Strong Women, Strong World

Canada's theme for International Women's Day / International Women's Week 2008 (IWD / IWW 2008) is **Strong Women, Strong World**.

This theme draws in part from one of the fundamental beliefs underlying the modern women's movement, that "a woman's place in society marks the level of civilization of that society." This refers not only to the empowerment of women as a means to bring about positive and fundamental social change but to the critical roles that women play as leaders, policy-makers, caregivers, educators and international peacemakers. The theme also draws from the fact that empowered women can, and do, play a fundamental role in current and future efforts to preserve and protect the world's natural environment.

As the IWD / IWW 2008 theme, **Strong Women, Strong World**, makes clear, when we empower women, we secure a brighter future for everyone.

Status of Women Canada

"I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a door mat." ~ Rebecca West (1913)



**Mark Your Calendars!
THE ANNUAL DTA GOLF
TOURNAMENT**

Will be held on
Friday, June 6th at the Tsaw-
wassen Golf Course
Details to follow

TOC Meeting & Workshop

Mark your calendars. The next TOC meeting is Wednesday, April 9th, 4:00 pm at the Resource Centre. The new workshop "Reality 101" has been booked. Please RSVP by phone, 604 946-0391, or email, deltateachers@telus.net.

**Paid Education Leave for
2008-2009**

Teachers interested in making application for Paid Education Leave (60%) for the 2008-2009 school year are instructed to contact the Human Resources Division to request the required application form.

Please review Article C14 of the Collective Agreement to ensure eligibility.

**Deadline for submission of completed application is
MARCH 31, 2008**



**NORTH DELTA SECONDARY
50TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION**

WINE & CHEESE – ALUMNI ONLY

Friday, May 2, 2008 – 6:00 pm

North Delta Secondary School
11447 82 Avenue, Delta, BC V4C 5J6
Phone: 604 596-7471 Fax: 604 596-6192

\$30.00

DINNER WITH GUESTS NIGHT

Saturday, May 3, 2008 – 6:00 pm

Sungod Arena
7825 – 112th, Delta, BC V4C 4V9

\$50.00

For up-to-date information and registration visit www.deltasd.bc.ca/nd2 and go to **50th Anniversary** link.

BC Medical Services Plan

Check with you spouse to determine whether you have dual coverage. Delta teachers pay 40% of the cost for BC Medical. There is no advantage to maintaining dual coverage and therefore you should cancel the BC Medical coverage where the cost sharing is the least beneficial to you. BC Medical coverage is a taxable benefit, so anything the employer pays towards the monthly premium is shown as a taxable benefit on your T4. The BC Medical Services Plan is the Provincial Government sponsored medical plan that pays hospital and doctor bills. It is not the extended health or dental coverage provided through Manulife.



***Rights not wrongs: The
role of unions in creating
a better world***

This is a conference for human rights and social justice activists in the labour movement, jointly sponsored by the BCTF and the BCFED, April 3-5, 2008 at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. There is a registration fee of \$125.00.

Online registration is now available at:

[https://www.sporg.com/registration?
link_type=reg_info&form_id=101813](https://www.sporg.com/registration?link_type=reg_info&form_id=101813)

Thinking of Retiring?

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



**Annieville
is Celebrating
its 100th year as a
School in Delta**



**Open House – May 1, 2008
5:00 pm – 9:00 pm**

For more information please contact Kerry Belanger, Annieville Century Committee @ 604 589-3221.