



# TODAY

Issue #1

September 4, 2008

*NEWSLETTER OF THE DELTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION*

## *President's Column*

Welcome back to what will be another challenging school year! With at least two and possibly three elections on the horizon, there is no time like the present to make education a vote determining issue. To that end, the BCTF is asking locals to gather data on class size and class composition.

On June 27, 2008 the provincial government quietly amended the Class Size Regulations to include a **definition of "consult"** for the purpose of the class size provisions of the School Act. The term "consult" is now defined in section 1(4) of the Regulation to mean:

- (a) provision by the principal of a school to the teacher of a class with
  - i. information relevant to a proposal for the size and organization of the class, and
  - ii. 2 school days before a decision is made respecting the size and organization of the class for the teacher to consider the proposal and provide the principal with the teacher's views in that regard, and
- (b) consideration by the principal of the teacher's views, if any have been provided, and "consulted" has a similar meaning.

The DTA met with the Board on September 3, 2008 to discuss how the consent/consultation process will be implemented in Delta as a result of the government defining the word "consult".

School principals will provide to each teacher whose classes exceed the numbers as described on the back of this page a class list and a Record of Consent/Consultation Discussions sheet that will include pertinent information about the class/block in question as well as an invitation to the teacher to a consultation meeting. The teacher will then have at least 2 days to consider the information provided, and to respond, before any final decisions can be made about the class/block.

The "Principal Notification" sheet that accompanies classes/blocks that have more than 30 students outlines what can be discussed in terms of the assignment. Alternative placement of students, timetable limitations and the teachers load in other blocks are among factors listed. The list is not exclusive. Teachers should provide other suggestions and options they feel would make their classrooms a better learning environment for students.

The "Principal Notification" sheet that accompanies classes/blocks that have more than three students with IEP's has no guidelines about what can be discussed at the meetings. DTA suggestions include: additional in-service and training, additional preparation time, non-enrolling support, collaboration time and other additional resources as identified and requested by the teacher.

Principals met on Wednesday, September 3 to discuss the consent/consultation process. The DTA expects teachers whose classes/blocks exceed the limits will be provided an opportunity to discuss their issues with the principal. If any teacher feels that the consultation was not meaningful, they have the option of signing on to the provincial grievance that was filed by the BCTF on June 30, 2008.

While information will be provided to teachers by principals as soon as it is available as per the legislation, the Board has agreed to not finalize any classes until after the DTA Staff Rep meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

DTA/BCTF advice is for teachers to meet with the principal to discuss their classes/ blocks and to have the Staff Rep present at that meeting. Staff at each school will determine the best way to arrange those meetings. If a teacher does not provide feedback, the principal will assume that the teacher has no issues with the assignment and he/she will finalize the class.

### Class Size and Class Composition Numbers

#### I. Class Size

GRADE	MAXIMUM
Kindergarten *	22
Grades 1 - 3 *	24
Grades 4 - 7	30
Grades 8 -12	30

\* (Includes K-1 and 3-4 classes)

The maximum class sizes for Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 3 **cannot be exceeded**.

The maximum class size for Grades 4 – 7 cannot be exceeded unless the superintendent and the school principal believe that the organization of the class is appropriate for student learning **and** the teacher who enrolls the class gives his/her **consent**.

The maximum class size for Grades 8 – 12 cannot be exceeded unless the superintendent and the school principal believe that the organization of the class is appropriate for student learning **and** the teacher has been **meaningfully consulted**.

#### II. Class Composition

The maximum number of students with Individual Education Plans (IEP's) in any class (all grades) cannot exceed three (3) unless the superintendent and the school principal believe that the organization of the class is appropriate for student learning **and** the teacher has been **meaningfully consulted**.

Teachers are well aware that the public education system is underfunded. Gathering this data is one way to provide the public with facts about the reality of Delta classrooms. The Liberal government believes that Bill 33 resolved all of the class size/class composition issues that precipitated the two week strike in 2005. The DTA and BCTF need the data to prove that the issues still exist and to encourage voters to make education a vote determining issue!

**The first DTA Staff Rep meeting of the year has been moved to September 15, 2008 at Delta Secondary School.** It is important for every school to be represented at that meeting so that data gathering sheets and Provincial Grievance Reporting forms can be distributed and explained.

**Job Share Partner** - To start immediately! Grade five class at Cliff Drive. The position will switch from 0.5 to 1.0 at the end of February. If you are interested or know of someone else who may be, please contact Nancy England at [nengland@deltasd.bc.ca](mailto:nengland@deltasd.bc.ca).