

Issue #2

October 15, 2009

President's Column

“A” is for “Advocacy”

One unequivocal sign that Summer has ended and Fall has arrived is the annual Bill 33 Consent/Consultation process.

In 2005, after teachers' unprecedented nine-day strike ended, government's commitment to addressing the class-size and composition issue emerged in the form of Bill 33. This government legislation has proved over the last several years, to be a woefully imperfect remedy to the problem of elementary and secondary classes that are, in the words of the legislation, “appropriate for student learning”.

And most recently, the Dorsey Award was equally disappointing for teachers who had hoped the provincial grievances launched by the BCTF in 2006 and 2007 would return something more of the smaller class sizes and improved learning conditions for students.

Where then, from here? Here we are, at one of the busiest times of the school year, being asked by employers to participate in an exercise of ‘meaningful consultation’. At the same time, we are asked to document these same concerns on BCTF consultation forms. How, then, to respond to a teacher of an elementary class with 30 students and 5+ students with special needs who, clearly exasperated, comments: “What a waste when nothing can or will be done!”

One obvious answer is that teachers will continue to do what they have always done; teach to the best of their professional ability, despite the challenges and limitations of the times, to *individualize* instruction to help each and every student they teach to learn. Not only this, but to help each individual student to *know* that they have learned, and to ask for the support of colleagues, administrators, parents, and others in doing so. In a word, teachers will continue to *advocate* for the class sizes and compositions which best support

students' learning needs. And the DTA will continue to advocate for teachers as well.

During the Fall Consent/Consultation season, the DTA urges teachers to advocate for their students by filling out the BCTF Class Size and/or Consultation Forms and returning them, via the Staff Rep, to the DTA Office. Teachers can also advocate for students at scheduled parent-teacher interviews; advocate for students and programs when talking to school admin and members of the community. Teachers can speak out in the face of inaccurate characterizations of the realities of teachers' real world: the world of their classrooms. Do not remain silent!

Sometimes advocating for all of the things that teachers see that need advocating for can be a daunting task, but it is important that each of us takes responsibility for doing what we can. The notion of ‘many hands make for light work’ applies well here. Silence is not the best response; waves need to be made; sometimes it's OK to ‘rock-the-boat’, especially if rocking it gets the boat safely into open water.

The DTA advocates and provides advice to members who call on a daily basis on a long list of issues. What is increasingly evident during these times of fiscal instability is the importance of the DTA goal of supporting and enhancing teacher wellness.

Attached to this newsletter is information on the BCTF initiative, “Living with Balance”. The DTA encourages members to consider enrolling in this series of six informative sessions. The time and place will be determined at a future date.

While it is important for teachers to advocate for their students, their colleagues and public education, it's equally important for a teacher to ensure that they have balance and stability in their own working lives, and with the advice and support of the union, to advocate effectively for her or himself.

Your Pension ~ The Future is Worth Thinking About

Your pension has the potential to be your greatest financial asset. It will be the major part of your income when you retire. Its spending power through full indexing is not guaranteed. Indexing is an increase applied to pensions to try and maintain the spending power of the pension over time.

Within the next year, the Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees is making decisions that will allow your pension plan to maintain some measure of indexing into the future. The BCTF is looking for input from you, members of the pension plan, to give the Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees feedback on options that meet the financial needs of both active and retired members of the pension plan.

WHERE: Delta Manor Education Centre (4 - 6 pm)
North Delta Secondary Library (7 - 9 pm)

WHEN: Thursday, November 26, 2009

WHO SHOULD BE ATTENDING: Any member of the Teachers' Pension Plan.

WHY: To find out why full indexing is not guaranteed for the future and what options may be available to sustain some measure of indexing.

If you attend only one union meeting over the next five years, this should be the one.



Condolences

The DTA expresses its deepest sympathy to the family and friends of:

Katherine Trouton, who passed away September 18, 2009. Katherine was a TTOC in the District.

DTA TOC List Serve

This summer we had a catastrophic failure of the TOC list serve and have lost all the data. If you would like to be placed on this list please contact the DTA by phone (604-946-0391) or e-mail (deltateachers@telus.net) with your name and e-mail address.



TOC Social & Meeting
Thursday, November 12 - 4:00 pm
DTA, #210 - 5000 Bridge Street
RSVP to 604-946-0391 or
deltateachers@telus.net



DTA Scholarship Winners

Burnsview Sec.	Amber Devriendt
Delta Sec.	Clayton Andres
Delview Sec.	Stephanie Mah
North Delta Sec.	Blake Barber
Sands Sec.	Jessica Fowler
Seaquam Sec.	Demi Marcakis
South Delta Sec.	Jenny-Lyn Harrison

"Tad" Boyes Scholarship

Congratulations to Kristin Brown, 2009 DTA recipient of the \$750.00 "Tad" Boyes Scholarship. Kristin is the daughter of Darlene Brown (Sunshine Hills Elementary). Her career goal is to become a general practitioner.

"Factor 88"

Withdrawal from Long Term Disability Plan

Teachers aged 64 or whose combined age plus years of service equal "factor 88" are entitled to withdraw from the Long Term Disability Plan provided they have enough sick leave. The combination of short-term disability and 100 sick days will be sufficient to carry them through until they are either 65 years old or have reached "factor 90". At this point they will be ineligible for long-term disability. Contact the DTA or phone (604) 871-1921 for an application form.

School District No. 37 Delta Teachers' Salary Grid July 1, 2009

		Prov Cat 5+	TQS 6	
Step	Cat 4	Cat 5	Cat 6	Cat 6+
0	\$ 41,963	\$ 45,009	\$ 48,331	\$ 49,498
1	\$ 43,993	\$ 47,585	\$ 51,106	\$ 52,305
2	\$ 46,023	\$ 50,162	\$ 53,881	\$ 55,111
3	\$ 48,053	\$ 52,738	\$ 56,656	\$ 57,918
4	\$ 50,083	\$ 55,314	\$ 59,431	\$ 60,725
5	\$ 52,113	\$ 57,891	\$ 62,206	\$ 63,531
6	\$ 54,143	\$ 60,467	\$ 64,981	\$ 66,338
7	\$ 56,173	\$ 63,043	\$ 67,756	\$ 69,144
8	\$ 58,203	\$ 65,619	\$ 70,531	\$ 71,951
9	\$ 60,233	\$ 68,196	\$ 73,306	\$ 74,757
10	\$ 64,131	\$ 72,895	\$ 78,072	\$ 79,891