

Issue #5

February 18, 2010

President's Column

District Sick Leave

In Delta, an annual cost which accrues to the Board is that of funding employees' use of District Sick Leave. Teachers are credited with sick leave on the basis of one and one-half (1 ½) days for each month of full-time active service. For most teachers, unused sick days accumulate over time. Clearly, these days represent an unknown potential cost to the Board. We know that the employer is concerned with the cost of sick-leave, and we also know that well-established past practice does not require teachers to submit documentation of sick leave for absences of less than 10 days duration. DTA advice: Use of District Sick leave is appropriate for teachers who are ill, disabled, quarantined or because of an accident (for which compensation is not payable under the Workers' Compensation Act). District Sick Leave is not intended for other purposes, such as relief time for catching up with marking, or other work. Remember, there may be other Leave Provisions, such as Discretionary Day, Personal Leave Day, or Compassionate Leave which a teacher may be able to access. If you are in any doubt as to whether or not your planned use of District Sick Leave is appropriate, contact the DTA for confidential advice on your particular situation.

Pensions Consultation Report

The 2009 Report on the BCTF Pension Consultation has been released and is available on the BCTF website via the following link: <http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SalaryBenefits/Pensions/2009ReportOnPensionConsult.pdf>

The 48 page document renders a Summary of the Pensions Consultation Process, commencing with the BCTF 2009 Annual General Meeting's decision: *"To engage members in an education and consultation process regarding the strengthening of their pension plan and soliciting member input into major issues facing the plan."* (pg. 4)

There are several Recommendations coming forward to the 2010 AGM contained in the Supplementary Report, available via the following link: <http://bctf.ca/secure/AGM/2010/SupplementaryReport.pdf>.

DTA members are encouraged to give full consideration to the Report and the Recommendations.

New Teachers' and Student Teachers' Conference

There are still spaces available for the 2010 BCTF New Teachers' and Student Teachers' Conference, to be held March 26-27, 2010 at the Radisson Hotel Vancouver Airport 8181 Cambie Road, Richmond, BC.

Registration for BCTF members is \$70 and includes breakfast, coffee, snacks and lunches.

New teachers may apply for funding for one TTOC day and the cost of registration through the DTA Pro D Fund. Funding will be distributed on the basis of one applicant per school.

New teachers, (within their first 5 years of teaching), are encouraged to register. Please take a few minutes to check out the following link: <http://bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2010.aspx>

Looking Ahead

The DTA General Meeting elected 15 teachers to represent the DTA at the BCTF Annual General Meeting early next month. Delta teachers can be confident that our delegation is comprised of a good cross-section of new and experienced teachers, elementary and secondary teachers, and generalist and specialist teachers.

DTA members not attending the AGM as delegates are also encouraged to visit the AGM while the meeting is in session, to visit Table #8, which will be found right in front of the podium. Drop by to listen to some of the debate, and to meet and greet colleagues outside of the usual school context.

In general, I would urge every DTA member to make 2010 the year they decide to involve themselves in the work of our professional union, the Delta Teachers' Association. We have numerous committees and lots of work which needs to be done, so do not hesitate to call the DTA!

BCTF AGM DELEGATES

Listed below are Delta's BCTF AGM delegates:

Annie Coblin	McCloskey
Sukhy Dhillon	Hellings
Marianne D'Souza	TOC
Janice Falk	Hellings
Jim Hope	Port Guichon
Simon Isbister	DTA
Tonia Knight	SDSS
Trish McCullough	McCloskey
Elen Nikas	Sands
Stefanie Rainaldi	Seaquam
Greg Stafford	Richardson
Amar Sull	NDSS
Karen Symonds	SDSS
Phyllis With	Cliff Drive
Chris Yang	SDSS

Alternate:

Charlene Tennant	TOC
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Local Representatives:

Paul Steer	DTA
Pat Truelove	Sands

PAID EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

Teachers interested in making application for Paid Education Leave (60%) for the 1020-2011 school year need to submit their application to the Human Resources Division. The application form can be found on First Class, under the All Staff Conference -> District Departments -> Human Resources -> Teaching Staff.

One of the main criteria for this leave is that the candidate shall have been employed continuously by the Board for five (5) years prior to being granted Educational Leave.

Please review Article G.29 of the current Collective Agreement to ensure eligibility.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF COMPLETED APPLICATION IS:

MARCH 31, 2010

JOB SHARE MEETING

Teachers interested in job sharing in the 2010-2011 school year are invited to an information meeting **Wednesday, March 3, at 4:00 pm at the DTA office.** Job share approvals have to be renewed annually.



Occupational Health & Safety – Violence and Aggressive Behaviour

Upon examining the District's 2009 Injury Statistics, the top three categories reported by all employee groups indicated:

- 23% - Slip/Fall
- **22% - Violence & Aggressive Behaviour**
- 19% - Equipment & Object Handling.

Presuming that two of these categories are the result mostly of workers individual habits what can be done to improve conditions that may be beyond one's own control?

OH&SR 4.30 requires the employer to inform **ALL WORKERS** of the nature and the extent of the risk of violence – this duty to inform includes those whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

OH&SR 4.27 includes incidents of attempted or actual assaults, or **any threatening statement or behaviour**, towards an employee by **any person** (other than a co-worker) which gives the worker reasonable cause to believe that they are at risk of injury. Further, incidents need not necessarily be restricted to have occurred on the work site – that is an incident may be considered workplace violence if it arises out of one's employment.

Violence and aggressive behaviour can, potentially, directly affect all employee groups, thus it is incumbent upon all of us to be informed and to act on each other's behalf.

Public education is a social endeavour and sometimes people get hurt emotionally as well as physically. We have the right to **KNOW** about and **PARTICIPATE** in our workplace safety program. Remember, our shared responsibility for health and safety, extends beyond the physical hazards of our worksites.

Be careful and have fun!
Greg Stafford

BC TEACHER'S VITALITY PROJECT

Presents:

Living with Balance

A Six-week Group Program for Teachers

We are excited to announce our new *Living with Balance* group program for BC teachers. This program has been initiated by the BCTF Rehabilitation Program and developed by the Occupational Rehabilitation Group of Canada, a long-established service provider to the BC Teachers' Federation. *Living with Balance* is a six-week program, which will run for two hours once per week, in Delta on **Wednesdays March 24-April 28**, from 4:00-6:00 at Delta Manor. The program focuses on developing tools and skills related to improving one's vitality and resiliency. Our holistic approach to wellness will equip teachers to make simple lifestyle changes that will positively affect their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. There is no cost to teachers, as at this time the program is supported and cost shared fully by the BCTF.

This six-week group program will provide opportunities for:

- education, self-evaluation, and examining the importance of maintaining life-style balance
- discussing the importance of nutrition; exercise; sleep
- managing symptoms of low mood, anxiety, and stress; boundaries and managing conflict
- learning strategies that increase awareness of factors that contribute to fluctuations in mood as well as methods to manage them
- reviewing proven techniques used to improve self-esteem and self-confidence, and manage stress and low mood
- defining what work-life balance means to each of us and what happens when our roles collide, having good boundaries is often attributed to having clear values
- setting goals and achieving them
- discussing how to be intentional, creative and assertive when you need to be.
- learning the importance of social connections and community in building long-term wellness, understanding that social isolation is a significant health risk factor.

We will review the necessary interpersonal skills needed to build and sustain long-term relationships that will enhance your vitality and resiliency.

Living with balance is a program that we hope will raise teachers' awareness and understanding regarding key concepts that affect one's physical and emotional health, while providing support and encouragement in recognizing that they are not alone. The primary goal is to improve one's health and well-being. Many BC school districts, the Federation, and teachers have recognized the need for a program like this that promotes healthy lifestyle choices and emotional well-being.

For further information, please contact Cindy Kam, 604 828 3029, ckam@orgoc.ca. To register please do so on the BCTF website, at www.bctf.ca/forms/LWB-registration.aspx.

Note: The purpose of this program is not to treat, but to promote healthy lifestyles and improve emotional well-being. Consult your physician for specific guidance on health concerns.