



TODAY

President's Column

Date: February 10, 2011

Issue: #4

Advice to those who would lead government: "Quit tinkering!"

With candidates vying for position for the leadership of British Columbia's two main parties, it should come as no surprise to teachers that at least a couple of this year's catch of would-be leaders have decided to whet their political ambitions with the waters of public education. Irrespective of which political party they would lead, these ambitious men and women should proceed carefully. Over the years, successive BC governments, usually without any clear electoral mandate for doing so, have felt obliged to effect changes to educational laws and policies. The beneficial effects of these tinkering have been few.

In The 1980's, the 'Year 2000' initiative, introduced under a Social Credit government, was partially implemented and then abandoned by a New Democratic government, years short of the turn of the 21st Century. Ten years' ago, a newly-elected, pugnacious BC Liberal government, decided to take a direct hand in the work of teachers by telling them how student learning would be evaluated. Those who remember government's misbegotten "Portfolio Assessment" initiative will bear witness to the attempt of government to make an extensive Graduation Portfolio a prerequisite to secondary school graduation. The effect was to take an excellent evaluative strategy – portfolio – and to ruin it, essentially by mandating its use for all students. Would-be premiers of British Columbia, wanting to be seen as effective and dynamic leaders, should learn from these past mistakes, and leave their hands off of public education.

"Re"-Visioning the Delta School District

In response to the Superintendent's request that Staff Meeting time in February be devoted to a reconsideration of the District's original 2008 'visioning' effort, most school staffs have now worked through a mediated exercise designed to achieve greater clarity, if not greater consensus about Delta School District's Bold New Vision for the future of education in Delta. While some teachers have questioned the propriety of 'another' visioning exercise, especially in these aus-

tere times, many teachers have nonetheless set aside these misgivings, participated in the sessions, and generously contributed personal time to a potentially worthwhile exercise. At a time when so many outside the educational realm are willing to offer their own report cards, rankings, and recommendations of various kinds, an opportunity for teachers to be meaningfully consulted is quite unique. Our expectation, of course, is for the recommendations of teachers to be received, celebrated, and then recommended by Senior District Staff to the Board of Education Trustees. Time will tell how truly bold and real Delta's Bold New Vision intends to be, and how well it brings the insights and priorities of teachers into focus.



FSA Tests

A few days ago, the Fraser Institute released its annual rankings of elementary schools across British Columbia. Increasingly, the public is becoming aware that these rankings are essentially harmful and punitive, and tend to favour schools in wealthier communities over those where socio-economic disparities are more pronounced.

While teachers have been opposed to the rankings since they were first produced, many other groups, even including the Ministry of Education, have acknowledged that the so-called 'snapshot' provided by FSA results is misleading, and, in the words of the Ministry, "... invites misleading comparisons that ignore the particular circumstances that affect achievement in each school." Teachers can advise parents to ignore the rankings, and the harmfully negative agenda of those promoting them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul", written in a cursive style.



Delta District Day 2011
Engage, Educate, Empower!

Friday, February 18, 2011
8:30 am - 2:30 pm
North Delta Secondary School

2011 BCTF AGM DELEGATES

David Bennett	Delview
Dan Burgess	SDSS
Annie Coblin	McCloskey
Janice Falk	Hellings
Simon Isbister	DTA
Paul Leroy	Special Programs
Trish McCullough	McCloskey
Kathy MacFarlane	NDSS
Matt McKay	TOC
Elen Nikas	Sands
Stefanie Rainaldi	Seaquam
Greg Stafford	Richardson
Darren Ursulak	Seaquam
Phyllis With	Cliff Drive
Audrey Yap	NDSS

Alternates:

Marianne D'Souza	TOC
Tish Sladden	Sands

Local Representatives:

Paul Steer	DTA
Pat Truelove	Sands
Toby Mundy	Seaquam

STAFF REP TRAINING

Thursday, February 17, 2011 ~ 8:30 - 3:00
Delta Manor Education Centre

Workshop: "Is it a Grievance? Problem-solving at the School Level"

Call Marilyn at 604-946-0391 or e-mail marilyn@deltateachers.org to confirm your attendance and obtain your release code.

PAID EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

Teachers interested in making application for Paid Education Leave (60%) for the 2011-2012 school year must submit an application to the Human Resources Division by **MARCH 31, 2011**. 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.

New Date Pension Meeting **Wednesday, February 23, 2011** **4:00 pm** **Delta Manor Education Centre**

Information will be presented about your Teachers' Pension Plan, including governance, investment, administration, the pension formula, and your pension options.

Time will be provided for questions. Teachers are encouraged to attend and to ask any questions they may have concerning the Teachers' Pension Plan, including questions about perceived inequities within the plan.

JOB SHARE MEETING

Teachers interested in job sharing in the 2011-2012 school year are invited to an information meeting.

Wednesday, March 2
4:00 pm at the DTA Office

Job share approvals must be renewed annually.

New Westminster & District Labour Council

Connecting workers and their communities
through the Canadian Labour Congress.



The DTA is entitled to designate 7 delegates and the same number of alternate delegates to the New Westminster and District Labour Council. Meetings are scheduled the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Operating Engineer's Hall on Ledger Avenue in Burnaby, although no delegate is obliged to attend every meeting. Any Delta teacher with an interest in representing our union at the Labour Council should contact Paul or Simon at the DTA for further information.

The 2011 Census is Staffing 35,000 Jobs Across Canada

If you are over 18 years old and can commit to at least 20 hours per week including evenings, weekends and holidays, apply now.

Rates of pay (\$14.72 to \$18.04 an hour) vary by assignment. The work period is early March to the end of July 2011, depending on assignment.

Please tell friends and family about opportunities to work on the census. Visit the 2011 Census website for more information.

To download and submit an online application, visit the website at www.census2011.gc.ca.