

Newsletter of the Delta Teachers' Association



TODAY

President's Column

Date: September 29, 2011

Issue: #1

The end of September is not the usual time for the Local President's traditional message of welcome, but this is not a traditional school year.

Teachers are on strike, and yet we continue to organize classes, assess students, plan, teach lessons and a myriad of other tasks. Our collective actions are consistent with the 'Essential service' rulings of the Labour Relations Board, and with the 'will-nots' adopted by the August 19th Special Representative Assembly in Kamloops.

Teachers have turned their minds to the challenges of saying "No" to Principals, Vice-Principals and District Administration, while continuing to say, "Yes" to colleagues, saying "Yes" to the learning needs of students, and saying "Yes" to the requests of parents for information concerning their child's progress.

Teachers are not just on-strike for fair and reasonable salaries that reflect the costs of living in British Columbia, but also for a re-dedication by the provincial and local governments to the absolute worth of public education. It is time for an end to the year after year decline in funding which has diminished the capacity of the educational system to meet the learning needs of all students.

The challenges of being on-strike and 'The power of "No"'

Even though teachers across British Columbia voted overwhelmingly in favour of a strike and began job-action on September 6 with Phase I -- a limited withdrawal of non-teaching administrative tasks -- many teachers acknowledge the challenges of taking any collective action. Teachers value a positive working relationship with their employer, and are adept at making the system function, and function well. Often this smooth-functioning comes as a result of teachers' willingness to say "Yes". Saying "No" is a behaviour that is unfamiliar to many teachers, and yet it is so necessary. For many of us, saying "No" is a skill that must be learned.

Another challenge for some, is the expressed view that Phase I does not go far enough. Some teachers have expressed a certain frustration with the limitations of Phase I, and the feeling that the employer has been largely unaffected by our collective actions to date.

It is important to remember that this gradual approach is deliberate and purposeful, non-prescriptive and open-ended. Phase I is meant to provide an opportunity for

teachers to demonstrate their historic and continuing commitment to their students' learning needs and to the community as a whole, but also to extend to colleagues the ability to decide what 'our' job-action will look like. "On Strike, but still working", is a very tangible motto for teachers who are fully committed to each other, their students and their employer, but who have legitimate needs for contractual fairness, professional respect, and stability of resources, facilities, and program funding.



Again, the challenge is for teachers to discuss the ways in which Phase I can bring subtle but real pressures to bear upon the employer and to minimize pressures upon colleagues and students. There is increasing evidence that there is a steady rise among an increasing number of intelligent, informed and knowledgeable members of the public that the chronic underfunding of public education needs to be addressed by government.

When are we moving to Phase II?

While rumours concerning an eventual escalation abound, DTA members should know that there is, at this time, no discussion of an escalation of our job-action. If an escalation of our job-action is contemplated, this information will be communicated to the membership through our representative bodies: the DTA EC, the Staff Representative Assembly, and through general meetings.

As we arrive at the end of the fourth week of Phase I job-action, the DTA will be contacting Staff Reps to arrange school and site-visits by the full-time table officers and other members of the Executive Committee. The purpose of these visits will be to respond to members' questions and to provide encouragement and support to Staff Union Representatives at each school. In summary, I implore all members to stay informed. Stay informed of the issues that have led us to begin our collective job-action. Stay informed of the issues as they unfold during the provincial and local negotiations. Stay informed as the provincial government demonstrates their level of commitment to your students' learning conditions and your working conditions.

Be informed, be strong, and resolute, and we shall move forward together in hope and confidence.

Committee Vacancies

The following DTA committees have vacancies:

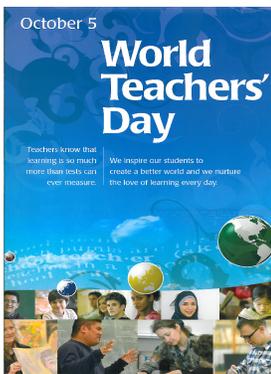
Executive Committee

- Secretary

Public Education Advocacy Committee

Elections will be held to fill these positions at the October Staff Rep Meeting. Please call the DTA office if you would like to let your name stand for any of these positions.

World Teachers' Day 2011



World Teachers' Day is held annually on **October 5** to celebrate the essential role of teachers in providing quality education at all levels. It also commemorates the anniversary of the 1966 signature of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers.

The 2011 events will focus on the theme **“Teachers for Gender Equality”**.



Have you changed your name, address, or phone number over the summer?

Please contact the DTA office (604-946-0391) with the information so we can update our records. You will also need to contact Human Resources at the Board (604-946-4101) and the BCTF (604-871-2192).

DTA List Serves

Effective September 30, 2011, all district e-mail addresses will be removed from the DTA list serves. If you would like to receive updated information on job action please send your personal e-mail address to marilyn@deltateachers.org at the DTA office.



Are you an education professional looking for a transformative experience?

CUSO-VSO is currently looking for principals and teachers for 12-month placements to mentor and train devoted community members in Rwanda, Ghana, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Cambodia, and Tanzania. You'll impact the lives of those who need it most and in return you will be provided with comprehensive financial, personal and professional support. Join an information session and hear from CUSO-VSO staff and returned volunteers:

When: Tuesday, October 25 — 7:00 pm

Where: 1460 Howe Street, Vancouver

Spaces are limited. You can register for this event by going to www.cuso-vso.org, click on events and go to October 25 and click on Information Session for Educational Professionals—Vancouver, or by calling (613) 829-7445 ext. 250.

All workers have 4 basic H&S rights

1. **The right to know** about hazards in the workplace.
2. **The right to participate** in OH&S activities through the Joint Health & Safety Committee.
3. **The right to refuse** unsafe work.
4. **The right to no discrimination**, e.g., disciplined or fired for raising OH&S concerns.



www.bctf.ca/HealthAndSafety.aspx



DTA Calendar of Events October 2010

- **October 6** ~ PD Contacts Training, 8:30-3:00, Collaboration Room, DMEC
- **October 13** ~ Rookie Staff Rep Training, 8:30-3:00, DTA Office
- **October 24** ~ Staff Rep Meeting, 4:00 pm, DSS Staff Dining Room
- **October 27** ~ Staff Rep Training, 8:30-3:30, Multi-purpose Room, DMEC