



## President's Column

Date: September 10, 2015  
Issue: #1

### Curricular Change

As the result of emails sent from both the union and the employer over the Summer teachers are now aware of the government-initiated curricular changes underway. The BCTF/DTA will be working collaboratively with the Employer/Government to monitor the process and address teachers' concerns. For now, it's enough to remember the following about curricular change in BC this year: Curricular change is meant to be a collaborative process that will make the curriculum simpler. One result will be deeper learning with aboriginal content incorporated throughout.

Although implementation this year is completely voluntary, some teachers may experience undue stress about the changing curriculum, or feel pressure of various kinds. Will there be enough support for the inclusion of aboriginal content? Will there be enough funding to make implementation successful? What about a new 'de-categorized' model for Special Education? Will it enhance teachers' ability to teach and students' ability to learn, or will it render special needs students invisible and leave their learning needs unmet?

Be open, not closed to discussion of the process of curricular change. Listen attentively and keep good notes; ask good questions. Talk about your questions and concerns with colleagues at union meetings. Where consensus emerges, make recommendations to the Principal through the Staff Committee. Pay close attention to questions, concerns or conflicts as they arise, and call the DTA for advice and support - always. Teachers have an important role to play in the process of curricular change.

### Don't accept unreasonably large classes

District letters offering cash to teachers for classes deemed to exceed statutory maximums of 30 during the 2014/15 school year have been received by some teachers. Instead of cash being offered this year, other remedies should have been brought to bear last year, when they might have been effective in making the classes more teachable, and student learning easier.

DTA advice: Remember that under the School Act, a 'class' is any group of students that meets for at least 40 minutes twice a week or more. Classes or blocks that exceed 30 students deserve close attention. Act right away to gather

as much factual information as possible, then seek your Principal's active support in remedying the situation. Also, seek advice from the DTA on how to proceed.



### MyEducationBC

The DTA/BCTF is continuing to monitor the rollout of MyEdBC, which is the replacement for the failed BCeSIS. Our union is concerned about the scope of and need for such a huge data collection system, about privacy issues regarding information that is collected, how it might be used, about the adequacy of in-service training for our members, and especially its cost in terms of teachers' time. We encourage teachers to work with their colleagues and principals to make sure that members', students' and parents' privacy rights are protected.

### Support for special needs students

Ever since provisions for students with special needs were unconstitutionally removed from our collective agreements in 2002, and subsequently when the limits on 3 special needs students per class were removed from legislation, the number of unsupported special needs students in our classes has risen steadily. In the last school year, more than 16,000 classes, or 1 in every 4, contained 4 or more students with special needs; and this, despite the infusion of LIF and the recently negotiated Education Fund monies into our schools. The lack of support for class size and composition issues remains a challenge for us all.

### Teacher Pensions

This fall, the BCTF will be conducting pension plan consultations with our members and other plan members throughout the province. Following consultations with members, important decisions will be made by our union regarding the design and application of our pension plan. Stay tuned for more information about the consultations and about the possible changes to the pension plan.

### Shared Services

The BCTF and locals are keeping a close eye on the implementation of the ministry's shared services plan, which

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has now been renamed the “service delivery” plan. It has many aspects, including attendance management and central BCPSEA control of grievances and arbitrations, regionalization of school district services, and more. It is believed that the shared services initiative may be the precursor to further school district amalgamations, possibly into regional boards along the line of the regional health boards in the province.

### The Federal Election

The BCTF/DTA will be involved in informing members, and encouraging member involvement, regarding the important issues that are central to the upcoming federal election. The Canadian Labour Congress is asking unions and union members across Canada to pay particular attention to retirement security, health care, child care, and good jobs, and to make these vote determining issues in this election.



## Committee Vacancies

### Executive Committee

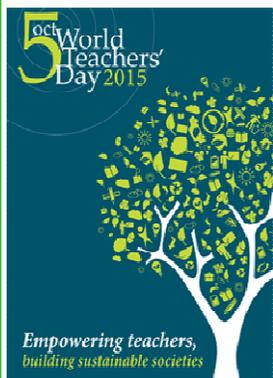
- TTOC Advisory Committee Chair
- Aboriginal Education Chair

There are also vacancies on the following committees:

- Aboriginal Education
- Bargaining/Working & Learning Conditions
- Health & Safety
- Local Resolutions
- Public Education Advocacy
- Social Justice
- Teacher-on-Call Advisory

An election will be held to fill the positions at the Staff Rep Meeting on September 28. Please call the DTA office if you would like to let your name stand for these positions.

## World Teachers’ Day 2015



World Teachers’ Day is held annually on **October 5** to celebrate the essential role of teachers in providing quality education at all levels. “**Empowering teachers, building sustainable societies**” is this year’s slogan in line with the Education 2030. It also commemorates the signing of the 1996 signing of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers.

## Category 5+ (PB+15) Information

The provincial language term for Delta’s PB+15 salary category is **Category 5+**. As a result of TQS issuing Category 5+ status three times a year, the Board will now upgrade teachers’ salary categories for this certification three times a year - August 31, December 31 and April 30. Once you receive your TQS card, forward a copy to the Board immediately. Your pay will be retroactive to the date the card was issued. For example, if your TQS card arrives at the end of May and is dated May 6, you will be paid retroactively to the beginning of May. Remember to have a copy of your transcript sent to the Board for their records.

## Factor 88? Don’t wait

A member who has attained age 64, has reached factor ‘88’ (age plus contributor service), or is in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the long-term portion of the Salary Indemnity Plan. Withdrawal may be made during any school year in which one of the foregoing conditions has been met and upon the completion of the appropriate withdrawal form. Withdrawal will be effective, upon approval, in September for applications received in that month. Applications submitted later will be effective the month following approval of the application.

In making application for withdrawal, you should ensure that in the event of serious illness or accident you have sufficient accumulated sick leave which, when combined with 120 days of benefit from SIP: short-term, will protect your salary to the end of the month in which you reach factor ‘90’ or the end of the month you attain age 65, whichever comes first.

Applications are available online at: [bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SalaryBenefits/SIP/LT-withdrawalForm.pdf](http://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SalaryBenefits/SIP/LT-withdrawalForm.pdf) or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.



## DTA Calendar of Events September/October 2015

- **September 28** - Staff Rep Meeting, 4:00 pm, Seaquam Library
- **October 1** - Rookie Staff Rep Training, 9:00 -3:00, DTA Office
- **October 7** - PD Contacts Training, 8:30 - 3:00, Education Room, DMEC
- **October 23** - Provincial PSA Day
- **October 26** - Staff Rep Meeting, 4:00 pm, Seaquam Library
- **October 29** - Staff Rep Training, 8:30 - 3:00, Action Room, DMEC