

Newsletter of the Delta Teachers' Association



TODAY

President's Column

Date: February 11, 2016

Issue: #4

Three DTA groups plan for teachers' Professional Inservice days

Since late September, when the Ministry of Education announced the addition of two more "Professional Inservice Days" to the Provincial education calendar, the DTA has been organizing for teachers' participation on the February 22nd and April 18th non-instructional days. Up to 73 release days have been provided by the Ministry of Education for teachers in Delta to come together for learning and planning about the Ministry's curricular changes. This week, the third cohort of teachers released for planning of teachers' content for each of these two days met and completed their work. The three planning groups, Primary, Intermediate and Secondary, have now met and organized a structure for the curricular inservice of teachers on the two non-instructional days.

For as long as I can remember, teachers in Delta have consistently voiced their appreciation for teacher-directed 'work-a-like' groups, with focussed discussion on teaching and learning. Now, acting on the advice of teachers, the DTA is implementing a practical structure for both inservice days that will provide time for teachers to meet in curricular 'work-a-like' groupings, and then to take what they have learned back to their larger school communities for further discussion, planning and eventual implementation.

This is an unprecedented opportunity for teachers in Delta to put their own professional mark on government's curricular changes, to ask good questions, to identify necessary supports and resources, and to make beneficial curricular change real for a generation of students, with better quality of instruction and improved student learning as a result.

Listening Tour II

The second round of DTA "Listening Tour" visits to schools has begun this month. Both 1st Vice President Arabella Devlin and I have already visited a couple of schools, one elementary and one secondary. Listening to the questions and concerns of teachers is the main purpose of these visits, but this time, we are also arriving at secondary schools to ask for feedback from teachers on how they would like to see one of our active policy grievances resolved. Please try to arrange your schedules so that you are able to attend these important lunchtime meetings. We really appreciate your attendance, and value your input highly.

BCTF Annual General Meeting including EC Pension Recommendation

One of the important recommendations coming to the 2016 AGM this is the recommendation of the Executive to the AGM

that the Teachers' Pension Plan incorporate changes – at no additional cost to plan members – that would have the effect of increasing the value of teachers' pensions over their lifetimes. One of these changes would involve what is becoming a necessary 'de-linking' from the Canada Pension Plan and being tied to the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings figure, or YMPE, which mandates a much lower pension accrual rate for teachers' incomes below that threshold. Another change involves raising the accrual rate for teachers to 1.84% of teachers' gross salary, which, over time, will result in a greater overall accumulation of value to a teacher's pension. Be reminded that any BCTF member, not only registered delegates, may attend the AGM, listen and participate in the debate, and further their own understanding of this important pension issue, and other issues as well.



The Vision is still the same: school needs to be a place where learning matters

What tremendous pressure there is, in times like these, on institutions and individuals to package and market themselves as products or commodities in an abstract, global marketplace. It's a pressure that is felt in almost all our political and social institutions, including public education. For teachers, it's a pressure that is worth resisting and pushing back against if for no other reason than the anxiety and stress it promotes are anathema to effective teaching and learning. Most teachers have heard Edgerton Ryerson's quote about 'free public education' but here is a second quotation, cited less often:

"The basis of this only true system of universal Education is twofold:

- 1. That every inhabitant of a Country is bound to contribute to the support of its Public Institutions, according to the property which he acquires, or enjoys, under the Government of the Country.*
- 2. That every child born, or brought up in the Country, has a right to that education which will fit him for the duties of a useful citizen of the Country, and is not to be deprived of it, on account of the inability, or poverty, of his parents, or guardians."*

That education should be come without cost to its recipients, irrespective of their financial or family status, standing, or other advantage, was, and is still boldly visionary; it remains a vision worth advocating for then and even more so now. It will be interesting to see how well our 21st century society holds fast to Edgerton Ryerson's original vision, or decides what superior vision might replace it. Teachers should be active participants in this dialogue.

2016 BCTF AGM DELEGATES

Lorrenne Alkema	Pinewood
Kush Brown	Richardson
Sandra Cadez	Hawthorne
Sherman Chan	NDSS
Arabella Devlin	DTA
Sukhy Dhillon	Jarvis
Nicole Jarvis	TTOC
Mahima Lamba	McCloskey
Kathy Macfarlane	NDSS
Tanis Maxfield	SDSS
Elen Nikas	Sands
Alison Roche	Pinewood
Gary Sandhu	NDSS
Viji Shanmugha	Special Programs
Peter Yang	Special Programs
Audrey Yap	NDSS

Alternates:

Heather Johnson	Special Programs
Jubilee Hu	SDSS

Local Representatives:

Simon Isbister	NDSS
Jessica Le Brun	Delview
Susan Yao	DSS

JOB SHARE INFORMATION MEETING

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

4:00 pm - DTA Office

#110 - 4977 Trenant Street, Ladner

Contact the DTA office if you are interested in attending.

STAFF REP TRAINING

Thursday, February 25, 2016

8:30 - 3:00

Delta Manor Education Centre

WORKSHOP: Advanced Advocacy Skills for Staff Reps

This workshop focuses on the needs of the local and clauses from the collective agreement that address issues a staff rep may have to deal with at the school level in an informal meeting with administration or a step one grievance.

Call Marilyn at 604-946-0391 or email

marilyn@deltateachers.org to confirm your attendance

and obtain your release code.

CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

Pink Shirt Day - February 24, 2016



Bullying is a major problem in our schools, workplaces, homes, and over the Internet. Each year, on Pink T-Shirt Day, people are encouraged to wear something pink to symbolize that we as a society will not tolerate bullying anywhere.



The International Day of Pink

April 13th, 2016.

*It's Time to Talk About
Bullying - Homophobia - Transphobia*

PAID EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

Teachers interested in making application for Paid Education Leave (60%) for the 2016-2017 school year must submit an application to the Human Resources Division by **MARCH 31, 2016**. The application form will be posted on First Class.

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.

THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN MONEY: ARE YOU REALLY READY TO RETIRE?

Come Find Out at a Workshop Session with the BCRTA

Workshop Covers:

- Developing A Broad Perspective
- Meeting the Challenges & Risks
- Assessing Your Retirement Needs
- Finding Happiness in Retirement
- And Much More...

DATE: Wednesday, April 13, 2016

TIME: 4:00 pm

PLACE: Delta Manor Education Centre, Education Room

REGISTRATION: By Wednesday, April 6, 2016

CONTACT: Debbie at debbie@deltateachers.org
or 604-946-0391

**Co-sponsored by the BC Retired Teachers' Association
and the Delta Teachers' Association**

Remembering our Colleagues

The DTA extends our deepest sympathies to the family, friends, and colleagues of retired members who recently passed away:

- Tom Fuchko—December 13, 2015
- Alison Smith—January 14, 2016
- Wendy Aiken—January 30, 2016

