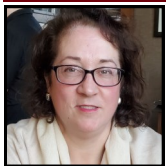




TODAY

President's Column ~ Susan Yao

Date: December 8, 2022
Issue: #3



The Delta Teachers' Association bargaining team concluded local bargaining with the Delta School District a year ago and we were – *Caution: brag alert!!*—the first local to ratify our local matters agreement. We "achieved" some good things for our local language but ultimately, we waited – along with every other public school teacher in BC – for good news from the provincial bargaining table (where the money is) for progress in wages, benefits and workload among other things.

Teachers both current and retired (and other interested parties) have come to me the last couple weeks with congratulations on the tentative deal.

"But," I said, "We still have to vote to ratify! It's not a done deal yet."

The responses were all the same: "But why wouldn't you?" (Ratify, that is.)

Now that we have ratified, here's a list of some of the wins:

SEB top up goes from Delta's current 95% of salary for the first week and 95% for the second week and top-up to 50% of salary for the next 15 weeks to **100% of pay for 16 weeks of maternity/pregnancy leave**; this is almost a doubling of the benefit.

Seniority/sick porting to 120 days (from previous 90 days). Teachers coming from other locals sometimes miss deadlines on the porting paperwork and we've had to fight to get teachers seniority restored (not always achievable); this wider window will help—although would still like to see NO deadline. Maybe next bargaining round.

Coverage for **Dexcom continuous glucose monitors** has been added to extended health benefits! Many people have asked for this for years for themselves and family members. This item has been discussed at many previous bargaining conferences and so happy it's now here for those who need it.

Better coverage for mental health and other health benefits: coverage for counselling goes from previously about 6 visits to coverage for about 8 visits per member and dependents with fewer restrictions.

The wage increase: I'm very happy for all of my colleagues who stand to benefit (everyone) and especially for the incoming teachers who will start with this improved grid with fewer steps to get to the top.

That being said there are still things we not only want but

actually need! The DTA hears every day from teachers struggling with the needs of their complex classes. And many teachers are experiencing the effects of burn-out in trying to provide for the diversity of learners under their care. Factor in the changes to reporting, curriculum and the isolating effects of the pandemic and the picture is not altogether rosy.



While Delta and some other locals have "GREAT" class size and composition language, the reality is that this language currently only serves to generate disproportionate accrual of remedy for affected teachers/schools and does little to ameliorate the existing problems of complex needs of classes. What will it take for this language to make a meaningful difference in the working lives of all teachers in BC and by extrapolation, the lives of their students? This question looms as one of the most important issues facing BC teachers in our next round of bargaining which is just over two years away.

When will we see something that addresses the class size and composition for every BC teacher? The language does not exist in every local Collective Agreement and furthermore, with the ongoing teacher shortage, it means that providing remedies has been an absolute failed experiment.

How many people in Delta voted in the ratification vote? We don't have those numbers. Why? The BCTF Members' Guide in Procedure 25.A.06.9 states that, "Any information obtained during the count, except the provincial results of the vote,"
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All the staff here at the DTA office are sending warmest thoughts and best wishes for a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year!

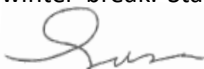


shall remain confidential". This applies with respect to electronic balloting and paper balloting. When there is a paper ballot, the local returning officer reports the result to the Provincial Returning Officer, but they should not be reporting the local result to anyone else. The turnout for voting across the province was about 72% with 94 % of those voting for the new agreement.

The DTA chose the electronic voting option and we do hope DTA members were able to access the voting link sent by the BCTF. This does seem a lot simpler than hauling the ballot boxes to schools and crossing off people's names on the voting list. If you have any thoughts about this—or anything else—let us know.

In late November, I attended two days of the BC Federation of Labour Convention which is where over forty union groups meet every two years to formulate strategies and policy relevant to labour and beyond. The BCTF put forth a motion to the BCFED to advocate for lowering the voting age in BC to 16 from 18. There were powerful speakers for this motion, including the Surrey Teachers' Association member and member of the BCFED's Young Workers Committee, Rick Kumar who spoke about the level of engagement and thoughtfulness of his own students. BCTF 2nd VP, Robin Toszczak spoke to the long-term impacts that access to voting rights have and the trickle up effect of encouraging family members to vote. This motion for advocacy passed although with some dissent. Whatever your opinion on this might be, teachers know that many of their students are driving, working to support their families and engaged in the issues that affect them.

On behalf of the DTA released table officers and DTA staff, I wish you a peaceful and/or rejuvenating winter break. Stay well and reach out if you need supports.



DTA General Meeting

Tuesday, January 31, 2023
DSS Library, 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Election of BCTF AGM Delegates

BCTF Annual General Meeting

March 18 - 21, 2023

Attend the BCTF Annual General Meeting and learn about your union, discuss and debate issues that matter to you and your colleagues, hear guest speakers discuss education and labour issues locally and worldwide, elect Executive Committee members, and connect with teachers from around the province!

If you are interested in letting your name stand for election to our delegation, please call the DTA office at 604-946-0391 or email Jane jane@deltateachers.org.

Preparatory meetings for elected delegates will be held:

- Thursday, February 16, 4:00 - 5:00 pm
- Wednesday, March 1, 4:00 - 7:00 pm

Delegates should plan to attend both of these meetings.



Making Sense of Your Pension, CPP, OAS and Group Benefits: An Essential Workshop from BCRTA

The important decisions that will determine your retirement lifestyle should not be made at the last minute as you fill out your forms. This seminar will prepare you to confidently make choices that are right for you.

All teachers age 50+ should plan to attend one of BCRTA's Pre-Retirement online (Zoom) workshops. The workshops are free. You get great planning materials along with answers to questions you have about your retirement. Please pre-register at <https://bcrt.ca/workshop>.

The agenda includes: Teachers' Pension Plan, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, and voluntary group benefits. Information about choosing your group benefits (dental, extended health and travel). They show some of the differences between the plans and help equip you to select the plan that best suits your needs.

All teachers are welcome! Sign up takes two minutes and will give you access to all the workshop materials and future updates.

- * January 18, 2023 - 7 pm
- * February 15, 2023 - 4 pm
- * March 1, 2023 - 7 pm
- * April 5, 2023 - 7 pm
- * April 19, 2023 - 7 pm
- * May 19, 2023 - 7 pm
- * May 25, 2023 - 7 pm



happy holidays



Pro-D Reminder Submissions & Reimbursements

All Regular PD applications for courses/conferences that start at the beginning of January 2023 should be submitted, via fax or email, no later than December 14th for pre-approval. Credit course applications are accepted the day before the course begins.

Wondering where your reimbursement may be? Don't forget to submit your receipts **after** your course/conference is completed for approved applications.



**DTA Office Closure
Dec 19 - Jan 2**



"What if, today, we were grateful for everything?"—Charlie Brown