



# TODAY

Issue No. 1 | September 14, 2023

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## Welcome Message from Susan Yao - DTA President

Last week in my role as DTA President, I signed a joint statement—along with the District—titled *Non-sexist Environment – Joint Commitment*. This document will be available to all DTA members and it enshrines the commitment of the Delta Teachers' Association and the Delta School District to provide a work environment free from sexism. This statement also reflects important new language in the Provincial Collective Agreement which was expanded to clarify that no discrimination will be tolerated based on sex, gender identity, or expression—including by refusing to acknowledge one's gender identity. Another part of the new language provides for a review of anti-sexist programs, materials, and resources during a staff meeting to be held prior to October 31st of each school year.

Ever heard of the “Bystander Effect”? Psychology Today describes the bystander effect this way: “occurs when the presence of others discourages an individual from intervening in an emergency situation, against a bully, or during an assault or other crime. The greater the number of bystanders, the less likely it is for any one of them to provide help to a person in distress. People are more likely to take action in a crisis when there are few or no other witnesses present.”

While gains have been made at the bargaining table, it is the responsibility and right of every educator to protect and assert these rights. Reach out to the DTA in confidence if you have concerns for yourself or others. While conversations about the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity may be uncomfortable, it is incumbent on educators to step up and ensure that our workspaces are safe. Don't let the bystander effect impair your ability to act.

A resolution brought forward by both the Delta and West Vancouver Teachers' Associations and passed at the 2023 BCTF Winter Rep Assembly has tasked the BCTF with developing a workshop to help locals educate members about their rights and responsibilities arising from Article E.1 Non-sexist Environment. It is the DTA's understanding that this workshop has been created and was presented at this summer's BCTF Summer Conference. If you want to book this workshop for your school, contact the BCTF.

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## Dates to Remember

### September

- Sept 22 - Non-Instructional Day
- Sept 25 - FSA Documentation to be distributed to all Grade 4 & 7 students
- Sept 25 - SRA @ Seaquam
- Sept 30 - Natl Day for Truth & Reconciliation

### October

- Oct 2 - DTA Office Closed
- Oct 5 - World Teachers' Day
- Oct 5 - PD Training
- Oct 9 - Thanksgiving Holiday
- Oct 10 - Executive Committee Meeting
- Oct 20 - PSA Day
- Oct 30 - SRA @ Delta Secondary

## Celebrate!



## Committee Vacancies

### Executive Committee

- Political Action Committee Chair
- Teaching Teacher on Call Rep

### Committees Members

- Aboriginal Education
- Health & Safety
- Bargaining/Working & Learning Conditions
- French as a First or Working Language
- Political Action
- Social Justice
- Teacher-on-Call Advisory

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

## Arbitration news

In arbitration news, the DTA filed a grievance against the Delta School District several years ago when the District stopped the practice of allowing DTA members to take certain leaves in half-day increments. On May 1, 2019, the District advised the Local at the local bargaining table that BCPSEA would be serving its estoppel notice on the BCTF at the Provincial Table for the following leave provisions: G.3—FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY LEAVE 2. G.4—BEREAVEMENT LEAVE 3. G.5—UNPAID DISCRETIONARY LEAVE 4. G.22—COMPASSIONATE LEAVE 5. G.24—PERSONAL LEAVE DAY 6. G.25—DISCRETIONARY DAY. The DTA responded with a letter denying the notice to end practice provided by the employer regarding the above Articles and a grievance was filed.

The use of leave days in half-day increments had been accepted practice for many years in Delta and the ensuing dispute stemmed from interpretation of the Collective Agreement with both parties unable to agree. The collective agreement interpretation matter was considered by Arbitrator Kandola earlier this year and the decision came out in June 2023. While merits were found for some of the Union's arguments, ultimately the nineteen-page analysis and decision written by Arbitrator Kandola dismissed the Union's grievance. This is unfortunate for DTA members and a reminder that the grievance process can be lengthy and runs the risk of dismissal for either party. Seeking local resolutions for grievances can mean that both parties still have some control of the outcomes, while the arbitration process cannot provide that surety.

What does this outcome mean for you? Well, you ARE able to access all of the aforementioned leaves (if you have a full or part-time contract) but only in full-day segments. Sick leave days CAN be used in full or half-day increments, so that is not impacted by this arbitration ruling.



The BC government has an obligation to protect student data from being used to rank schools. The Foundation Skills Assessment doesn't help students learn or teachers teach. It provides no meaningful feedback to parents and it is making existing inequities worse.

You can help. Send a letter to your MLA at [bctf.ca/fsa](mailto:bctf.ca/fsa).

Parents/guardians of Grade 4 or 7 students have the right to excuse them from this test and the misuse of their data. Scan the QR code to download a withdrawal letter.



## Building Trust and Understanding

Making sure that workspaces are safe, inclusive, harmonious and effective is the responsibility of all parties, with the brunt of that responsibility enshrined by Articles in the Collective Agreement and the BC Employment Standards Act. To that end, the DTA is pleased to support the upcoming Joint Staff Representative Training, organized and supported by Delta School District's Human Resources and senior team, CUPE, Delta Principals and Vice Principals Association (DPVPA) and the DTA. These three one-day sessions (split up to allow for workable groups!) are meant to bring together a team from each worksite (Admin, CUPE & DTA) to accomplish the following: "to build team, understand the role of union representatives and develop our skills to work through issues". The DTA looks forward to hearing from individuals and schools for feedback after this training is complete. It is our hope that this endeavour brings more trust and understanding for all!

*Jane*



## Cancellation of TTOCs

As part of the resolution to Grievance 130, Teachers on Call not Utilized, in September 2012, the Union and the School Board have agreed to the following:

- Teachers on call will not cancel an assignment fewer than 60 minutes prior to the start of an assignment except with extenuating circumstances.
- Teachers will not cancel a teacher on call assignment fewer than 60 minutes prior to the start of an assignment except with extenuating circumstances.

This resolution assures that TTOCs will not be cancelled as they are arriving at a school, and also that classes will not be left without a TTOC.

## Those who we have lost

**Helen Matson** - July 20th, taught at Cliff Drive Elementary until her retirement.

**Meriel Abrahamson** - June 29th, taught at Ladner Elementary from 1989 to 2015.

**Mary Louise Owen** - August 28th, taught for over 30 years in many schools around Delta.