

Newsletter of the Delta Teachers' Association



TODAY

President's Column

Date: December 12, 2013

Issue: #3

Provincial Bargaining Update

Please take the time to read the latest updates from the Provincial bargaining table, posted through the BCTF Member Portal, via the following link: <https://bctf.ca/myBCTF/default.aspx> While it is there for the information of BCTF members, it is not to be copied, replicated, or disseminated in any way, by any means. One thing is for sure: provincial bargaining deserves the full attention of every BCTF member.

Table Officers Complete the Fall Round to School/Worksite Visits

The DTA table officers have nearly completed our comprehensive, Fall round of informal, lunch-time school visits. As part of the DTA's overall strategy for increased membership engagement (adopted as a priority of the DTA earlier this Fall), these visits have proved useful in facilitating more two-way communication between DTA members and the leadership. For our part, the table officers have valued these opportunities not only to sit down and eat lunch, but also to actually hear the questions and concerns of teachers. We've come away from these short meetings with a sense that these meetings have been a worthwhile 'temperature check' of teacher morale. In the New Year, expect more of these informal visits, which are crucial to members' understanding of issues – particularly in a bargaining year. Knowledge is power.

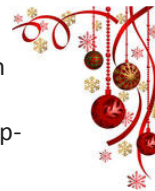
The Canadian Labour Congress Fairness Works Campaign and the BC Federation of Labour Union Renewal Conference

DTA table officers have attended two weekend sessions this past Fall, both sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress. The first, in early October, was the CLC launch of the Canada-wide public component of the initiative to remind Canadians about what unions have accomplished that benefit all. Its purpose: to remind Canadians that unions and the labour movement stand for and defend the principle of FAIRNESS, identified as a core Canadian value.

Visit the Together FAIRNESS WORKS web page: <http://www.canadianlabour.ca/action-center/together-fairness-works>, and watch for "Fairness Works" posters on the Union bulletin boards at your schools and worksites.

The second event, held during the week of November 24, was The BC Federation of Labour Together 2013 Conference. The workshops and keynote presentations, held over three days, provided both DTA table officers with an increased repertoire of knowledge and many practical strategies that will serve our membership very well in the weeks and months ahead. One ex-

ample is the DTA's membership mapping initiative, currently being piloted in four schools. Watch for further information about this initiative in the New Year, or speak to your school's Staff Union Representative about it.



School Staff Committees - Get them up; get them Functioning

The DTA has been encouraging every school and worksite to appoint and activate the Article A.30: Staff Committees. If your school/worksite has not yet constituted/reconstituted their school's Staff Advisory Committee this year, please ask your school's/worksite's Staff Union Representative for further information, or contact the DTA. One purpose of the "Staff Committee" is nominally to "... make recommendations to the ... principal ...", but another, equally important purpose is contractual. Staff Committees have an important function relating to teachers' Assignment to Positions during the annual Spring Staffing Process.

Since last year, several schools have utilized their Staff Committee to put forward recommendations to the Principal on a variety of matters of importance. The sage, consensus advice of a school's professional teaching staff is advice that the wise principal or vice principal would duly consider, and implement. What better way to prove the truth of the oft-repeated statement, "We're all on the same team", than by implementing Staff Committee recommendations on teachers' Positions and Assignments, or any other matter of importance within the school?



Seasons Greetings

From all of us at the DTA office, we wish you all the best for the coming Holiday Season. Remember to "Take good care of yourself". Please accept our very best wishes for a stress-free, restful and restorative Winter Holiday. **Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**




DTA General Meeting

Tuesday, February 11 ~ 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Seaquam Secondary Library

Agenda Items:

- Election of BCTF AGM Delegates
- DTA Audited Financial Statements

BCTF Annual General Meeting

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, BC
March 15 - 18, 2014

Contact the DTA if you are interested in letting your name stand for election to our delegation.



Condolences

The DTA sends its deepest sympathies to the family and friends of **Kathy Fox**, who passed away November 27, 2013. Kathy taught at Burnsvew from 2005-2011 and prior to that at NDSS, SDSS and Cliff Drive Elementary.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

December 17	Executive Committee Meeting
December 21	Winter Break Begins
January 6	Back to School
January 14	School Board Meeting
January 21	Executive Committee Meeting



Upcoming Pension Seminars

Pension BC offers free retirement seminars:

YOUR PENSION, YOUR FUTURE. This seminar is aimed towards new – and mid-career plan members. Join us as we explain your pension benefits and help you understand how decisions you make today can impact your future pension income, no matter how far into the future it may be.

THINKING ABOUT RETIRING. If you are within five years of retirement, then this seminar is for you. Thinking about retiring and starting your pension may raise many questions for you. We can help you with this period of change.

Pre-registration is required. To register online and to view available dates and locations visit the Teachers Pension Plan website www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca.

Pro-D Reimbursement Reminder For APPROVED Applications Only

You must submit your payment receipts **after** you have attended your conference/workshop event in order to be reimbursed. We have a large number of unclaimed funds dating back to July 2013, please submit your receipts if you have attended your event. If you have completed your credit course, please send in your proof of completion and payment receipt. Fax to 604-946-1629 or email marilyn@deltateachers.org.

Discretionary Day and Personal Leave Day

Paid Discretionary Day (Smart Find Express Reason #2):

- Every continuing teacher (full-time or part-time) is entitled to one Discretionary Day per year.
- These days do not accumulate from one year to the next.
- The Discretionary Day can be taken for **any** purpose and can be taken at **any** time during the year.
- You do not need to apply for the Discretionary Day. Use the same process you would use if you were calling in sick, except key into the Smart Find Express System the reason for your absence is your Discretionary Day (reason #2).
- You receive full salary and benefits when you take your Discretionary Day.

Personal Leave Day at TTOC Cost (Smart Find Express Reason #7):

- You must apply to the Human Resources Department for this day. Application forms are in your school, on the DTA website and First Class. Make your application as far in advance as possible.
- You receive your full salary less the cost of a teacher-on-call for the day.
- This day **cannot**, directly or indirectly, be attached to Christmas Break or Spring Break.

Unpaid Discretionary Day (Smart Find Express Reason #40):

- You must apply to the Human Resources Department for these days. Application forms are in your school, on the DTA website and First Class. Make your application as far in advance as possible.
- These days may be taken on any day of the year. Three days are available per year and they do not accrue.
- These days are unpaid. Therefore, they are not considered to be pensionable time.