



## President's Column

Date: December 10, 2015

Issue: #3

### DTA Fall Listening Tour: Issues in Advocacy

Among the goals of the Delta Teachers' Association adopted at the beginning of this year was the goal of, "... representing the interests of DTA members to the employer, the community and the BCTF".

With that purpose in mind, in about the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the new school year, the full-time table officers, Paul and Arabella, started visiting schools at lunchtimes in what we eventually started to refer to as our 'DTA Listening Tour'. After scheduling every school for a lunchtime visit on a particular day and communicating this schedule to teachers via Staff Reps., we'd then just show-up at lunchtime for an informal visit. Arriving with no pre-set agenda other than our thematic concern with teachers' overall psychological health and workplace well-being, we were absolutely determined to remain receptive and attentive to whatever questions, comments or concerns teachers in schools were talking about on that particular day. All through the late summer and into the fall, we visited every school in the District and came away with a clearer sense of the school-based issues teachers in Delta are concerned with and are talking about. Our efforts proved worthwhile. These visits are helping to keep us focused on teachers' issues; we use these to focus our work of advocacy for teachers. Expect round 2 of the DTA listening tour to begin again in mid to late January, with regular reports back to our Executive Committee and Staff Reps at regular intervals along the way. Significantly, many of the issues and concerns coming to the attention of the DTA this Fall were raised by teachers during these lunchtime visits.

Never, ever assume that a problem, concern or issue you are encountering in your classroom is being dealt with by someone else, somewhere else; you may well be the first person to bring an important issue forward for advice, advocacy and support of the Union.

### Curricular change

The Ministry of Education, in a public announcement and photo op in Victoria on September 28th has mandated two additional non-instructional, *Professional Inservice* days in the 2015/16 school year, for purposes of planning for curriculum change.

Part of the Ministry's mandate is that teachers in each of British Columbia's 69 public school districts have been given the task of planning and facilitating the content for those days; another part of the Ministry's mandate is to, "... infuse the process of curricular change at every level, and in every subject area."



The Delta Teachers' Association takes this responsibility very seriously. We have recently asked for teachers who are experienced, knowledgeable and committed to beneficial curricular change, to help plan for the two non-instructional, *Professional Inservice* days in February and April and written to local aboriginal leaders to request their advice and support in properly meeting the Ministry's mandate. It is important that we pay more than lip service to the Ministry's mandate; we want to contribute to the process in a good and respectful way. The better to serve the cause Education in Delta.

### Enjoy your time off

Over the Christmas holiday season, there's a lot of pressure on people to over-extend themselves. My wish for everyone: find balance among all the competing demands of the holiday season; have a great holiday, and come back rested and ready in 2016.

*Season's 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!*



### FREE SEMINARS: THINKING ABOUT RETIRING

#### Within five year of retirement?

Let's talk about your future.

Learn about:

- Your *Member's Benefit Statement*
- Pension options
- Determining your retirement income
- Online pension plan tools and resources

**Tuesday, January 26, 2016 and Tuesday, April 26, 2016**  
**6:00 - 8:00 pm**

**Delta Town & Country Inn**

Pre-registration is required. To register online and to view dates in other locations visit the Teachers' Pension Plan website at [www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca](http://www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca).

### DTA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 15	PD Committee Meeting
January 12	PD Committee Meeting
January 12	School Board Meeting
January 19	Executive Committee Meeting
January 25	Staff Rep Meeting



### Have you changed your name or address?

Please contact the DTA office (604-946-0391) or email Marilyn ([marilyn@deltateachers.org](mailto:marilyn@deltateachers.org)) with the information so we can update our records.

### DTA General Meeting

**Tuesday, February 9 - 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**  
**March 12 - 15, 2016**

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 670 teachers from around the province!

If you are interested in letting your name stand for election to our delegation, please call or email Debbie at the DTA office at 604-946-0391 or [debbie@deltateachers.org](mailto:debbie@deltateachers.org).

### Pro-D Reimbursement Reminder

- All PD applications for courses or conferences that start at the beginning of January need to be received at the DTA office by December 18.
- Don't forget to submit your receipts **after** you have attended your conference or completed your course that you have been approved for.

### Discretionary Day and Personal Leave Day

#### Paid Discretionary Day (Smart Find Express Reason #02):

- 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 #07):

- You must apply to the Human Resources Department for this day. The **Request for Leave** 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 #08):

- You must apply to the Human Resources Department for these days. The **Request for Leave** 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.