

Newsletter of the Delta Teachers' Association



TODAY

President's Column ~ Susan Yao

Date: February 10, 2021
Issue: #4

We have passed the one-year mark for the first COVID-19 case in Canada, just over half-way through the 2020-2021 school year. We have seen plenty of changes to how teachers teach, how students learn and there are ongoing impacts of the pandemic on our daily lives. But the essentials are the same: it is largely about relationships. We are all in this together and together we are getting on with the work of teaching, learning, staying healthy and well.

School Visits Update

The DTA released officers have held virtual school visits with most school staffs since November via GoToMeeting (license currently funded by the BCTF). There are a handful of schools with no issues presumably because things are going well—with the caveat that of course the pandemic has added challenges. At some schools some teachers have not fared as well—this may be correlated with where COVID-19 exposures mash up against already complex teaching and learning environments. We appreciate teachers' sharing and frankness about their concerns and needs. In weekly meetings with senior district staff, the DTA brings to the discussion DTA member stories and issues.

Collective Agreement Update

Last year at this time BC teachers were in mediation and without a contract. The certainty of a signed collective agreement brings a measure of relief in these otherwise uncertain times. I'd like to acknowledge the hard work of Alison Roche, DTA 1st VP and Kathleen Macfarlane, DTA 2nd VP who painstakingly combed through the Collective Agreement in the recent melding process. The new CA is at the BCTF and BCPSEA for another look and then it will still need to come back to the DTA and District prior to it being ready for general distribution.

That being said, the new CA is in effect, including new locally-bargained language. Hard to believe but since this current contract ends in June of 2022, the DTA will soon need to identify bargaining objectives of DTA members to share at a BCTF Bargaining Conference this fall. We will ask members to share with us in the coming days their thoughts on what to prioritize.

COVID-19 Update

The twelve Local Presidents in the Fraser Health Authority region have been sharing concerns with the FHA region representative, Dr. Ariella Zbar. Dr. Zbar has listened to our concerns and there have been changes. Delta was just part of a pilot program to speed up letters and information sent to staff and families.



There's heightened anxiety around the COVID-19 pandemic for Delta's educators, especially in light of more transmissible variants, and even with the recent changes to the safety guidelines and protocols. While the expansion of the mask mandate is welcome, it does not go far enough to allay fears.

Example: students in middle and secondary don't have to wear masks when sitting or standing at their seat or workstation in a classroom or learning spaces? As students are often at their seats or workstations, this means that there is a lot of time students are not required—according to the new guidelines—to wear their masks. What will mask wearing behaviours actually look like with students taking masks off and on with so many exceptions? While the expanded mask-wearing initially sounded promising, the exceptions to mask-wearing may be greater than the rule.

Another question: Why so long for the expanded mandate? BC's educators have long been asking that students at secondary wear masks whether in or out of their "learning cohorts".

A local concern: How will changes affecting middle schools apply in Delta? Delta does not currently have middle schools—middle schools typically cover grades 6 through 8—as it has elementary schools (grades K to 7) and secondary schools (grades 8 to 12). The DTA concern is that increased measures for grades 6 and 7 will not be applied in Delta and, therefore, that layer of protection will not be available to staff and students at elementary.

As to the number of schools with COVID-19 exposures and letters to self-monitor and/or self-isolate, there are more schools in receipt of notices than not. Of 31 school sites, 24 schools have had exposures.

(Continued on page 2)

BCTF AGM Delegates

On the positive side, the DTA has 12 delegates for the upcoming BCTF AGM taking place this Spring Break from March 20th to the 23rd. Kudos to the twelve DTA members who are willing to serve and represent their Delta colleagues. These twelve and the three Local Representatives for Delta (myself, Sandra Cadez, and Stephen Platzer) will be considering and voting on the various recommendations and resolutions at this year's BCTF AGM. You can find the recs and resolutions on the BCTF Members' Portal.

DTA Office Issues

The DTA is pleased to report that it has paid out the mortgage, putting the DTA's financial situation in a very stable place. There are always expenses to be met regardless of the bargaining context—office employee salaries, strata fees, phone, electrical, and other—but paying off the mortgage means no longer factoring this expense into our budget.

That being said, the HVAC system for our unit in the building was recently identified to have cracks and other issues related to its age and will be replaced. This is an unexpected expense but the financial circumstances of our association allow for the work to be done. These are the kinds of expenses that come with ownership. But the financial practices of the DTA as part of our budgeting process, means that we are able to absorb this expense.

The DTA has been proactive this year in preparing for changes to our office staff and we have been interviewing and hiring part-time staff to learn the processes of the DTA office. We are happy to welcome Jane Randazzo who is currently learning the duties of the administrative assistant which involves, among other things, grievance support and professional development applications. We will be hiring another office staff to transition into full time later in February.

Our Work at the DTA

In response to recent emails from some DTA members, let me be clear: as Union Representatives, our work *is* political. We have the privilege and the responsibility to influence public discourse. Being part of a union means that representatives make requests of government at all levels (municipal, provincial, federal) and other bodies. The words of the BCTF and the DTA are subject to scrutiny. The DTA does its best to represent all its members to the best of our ability.

Your opinion on what we say matters to us. That being said, there is always a tension between representing the

views of members and also recognizing the political landscape that affects the work of unions, in particular our own.

Yes, words do matter. And a mention of a political reality in our close neighbour's country is news the DTA deems worth mentioning. What is also worth mentioning is the important information contained in our Weekly Updates that is there for teachers to read.

Our advice to members gives members the ability to look after their own interests. That includes being informed. One of the only ways that DTA members can get timely and accurate information to inform decisions is by the communications sent as Weekly Updates, the Today Newsletter and memos.

Health and Wellness

DTA members are not all the same! What? How so? Some are coping relatively well and know how to access supports. Some may not be coping well and need help. We are here for you; if you need supports, we can help with that. If you or someone you know needs help, please call the DTA or send us an email. Running low on sick days, need ergonomic equipment for chronic health issues, dealing with depression? We can help.

With the upcoming Family Day next week, I would like to share with you my wishes for a relaxing, close-to-home mini-break.



2021 BCTF AGM DELEGATES

Dale Cotter	Beach Grove
Linda Crockett	Home Quest
Jeff Hacker	NDSS
Kathleen Macfarlane	NDSS
Trish McCullough	Annieville
Jeanie McKay	NDSS
Mary Messer	Gray
Alison Roche	DTA
Lanz Singbeil	Seaquam
Trevana Spilchen	Delview
Jennifer Thoss	SDSS
Janice Wilson	Home Quest

Local Representatives:

Sandra Cadez	Hawthorne
Stephen Platzer	NDSS
Susan Yao	DTA

Paid Educational Leave

Teachers interested in making application for Paid Educational Leave (60%) for the 2021-2022 school year must submit an application to the Human Resources Division by **FEBRUARY 28, 2021**. 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.

Canada Census

Canada's next census will be conducted in May 2021. Educators will play an important role in its success by ensuring that their students understand what a census is and what they and their families need to do to complete the census questionnaire.

By doing so, you will have a direct impact on gathering the data needed to plan, develop and evaluate important programs and services such as schools, daycare, housing, hospitals, emergency services, roads, public transportation and employment skills training.

Click the link to access resource kit:

<https://census.gc.ca/resources-ressources/tk-te/index-eng.htm>

2021 Census Teacher's Kit



The 2021 Census Teacher's Kit has been developed for use in elementary, intermediate and secondary classes across the country. It includes five fun, classroom-ready activities that will help students gain an understanding of what the census is used for, how it is conducted, and the role it has played in shaping present-day Canada.

Day of PINK

Celebrate Diversity

February 24

PINK Shirt Day

The original **Pink Shirt Day** was organized by David Shepherd and Travis Price of Berwick, Nova Scotia, who in 2007 bought and distributed 50 pink shirts after male Grade 9 student, Charles McNeill, was bullied for wearing a pink shirt during the first day of school.

April 14

International DAY of PINK

International Day of Pink is a day against **homophobic, transphobic**, and all forms of **bullying**. Celebrate diversity by **wearing pink** and **challenge stereotypes** with special activities on that day.

Be creative!

bctf.ca/DayofPink • DayofPink.org



BC Teachers' Federation
Professional and Social Issues • 604-871-1850



2021
BCTF VIRTUAL
NEW TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

**Community and
connections for early
career teachers**

February 26, 2021

**REGISTER
NOW!**

bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2021

In Memoriam

Wendy Woodward (retired) passed away on January 4, 2021. Wendy taught at Gray Elementary.

Cecil Hardy (retired) passed away on January 17, 2021. Cecil taught at Delta and Seaquam Secondaries.



Census Jobs

Emplois au recensement

Statistics Canada is hiring in your community!

- Schools, housing, and health and emergency services are all planned using census data.
- We are hiring approximately 32,000 census employees to count every person in Canada.
- In the current context of COVID-19, we are committed to ensuring the safety of our employees at all times.
- Help your community to plan for the future—apply now!

Statistique Canada embauche dans votre collectivité!

- La planification des écoles, du logement ainsi que des services de santé et d'urgence se fait au moyen des données du recensement.
- Nous embauchons environ 32 000 personnes dans le cadre du recensement en vue de dénombrer toutes les personnes au Canada.
- Dans le contexte actuel de la COVID-19, nous nous engageons à assurer la sécurité de nos employés en tout temps.
- Aidez votre collectivité à planifier l'avenir : postulez dès maintenant!

IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

- Pay rates vary **by position** from \$17.83 to \$21.77 per hour, plus authorized expenses.
- Start and end dates vary by position and location, but are between March and July 2021.
- You must be available to work flexible hours, mainly during evenings and weekends.

RENSEIGNEMENTS IMPORTANTS :

- Le taux de rémunération varie entre 17,83 \$ de 21,77 \$ l'heure **selon le poste**, en plus des dépenses admissibles.
- Les dates de début et de fin d'emploi varient selon le poste et le lieu de travail, mais se situent dans la période allant de mars à juillet 2021.
- Vous devez être disponible pour travailler selon un horaire flexible, principalement le soir et la fin de semaine.

Apply now/Tell a friend

www.census.gc.ca

TTY (a telecommunications device for deaf persons): 1-833-830-3109



Postulez dès maintenant et parlez-en à un ami

www.recensement.gc.ca

ATS (appareil de télécommunication pour personnes sourdes) : 1-833-830-3109