



A Message from Susan Yao - DTA President

Priorities in Education

In the Centre for Canadian Policy Alternatives (CCPA)'s January newsletter: on education, climate and labour, former Delta Superintendent Steve Cardwell's article **Our Hopes and Dreams for Public Education** acknowledges, "the pressures facing our valued public education system—overcrowding, chronic underfunding, a growing teacher shortage and inadequate support for students with diverse learning" among other pressures. He notes that these cracks in the education system need concerted advocacy. This advocacy must undoubtedly come from School Trustees, as well as educators, partner groups (including the Delta Teachers' Association), families and students, and the greater community. Mr. Cardwell goes on to describe the Institute for Public Education/BC's (IPE/BC) belief that "quality, inclusive and accessible public education is key for a strong democratic society".

Big questions in education right now include the following: How is government working to solve the teacher shortage, arguably a crisis in BC and across Canada? How are we as a society working to affirm our commitment to a strong public education system?

It needs to start with better funding. For resources. For smaller class sizes to allow educators to be able to really get to know their students and to build scaffolding for each student to thrive. For more specialist teachers: counselling, school psychologists, speech pathologists, and others in order to support everyone in the system.

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BCTF Annual General Meeting

Delta teachers will participate in the decision-making processes at the upcoming 2024 BCTF Annual General Meeting (March 16th to 19th) at the Hyatt in downtown Vancouver. This meeting determines the BCTF members' dues along with decisions impacting policy and strategies of the BCTF. Since sixty locals are represented from across the province, Delta's participation ensures that our voice and our values are heard. This year, Delta's delegate entitlement is 14 regular delegates along with Delta's three Local Representatives (Susan Yao, Kathleen Macfarlane and Matt Huang). All Delta teachers are welcome to come to the AGM during those four days to listen to the debates. Even if you are not a delegate, you too can speak at a mic if there is something that you want to contribute to the discussion. However, only delegates can vote. Hope to see you there!

Thank you to all the Delta educators elected as part of the delegation. Thank you for generously giving up 4 days of your Spring Break in order to represent your colleagues at the 2024 BCTF AGM. Thanks also to the two Delta colleagues who were elected as alternates to attend if others in the delegation are ill or are not able to attend.

YOUR DTA BCTF AGM Delegates

Sandra Cadez - CC
Michele Caplan - RI
Daniela Furland - RI
Alina Ismaguilova - TTOC
Mahima Lamba - BG
Jeanie McKay - ND
Anthony Minichilli - ND
Patricia Mischke - PW
Toby Mundy - SE
Elen Nikas - SA
Alyson Quan - PW
Alison Roche - DTA
Jason Sall - BU
Trevana Spilchen - DL

Local Representatives

Matt Huang - SE
Kathy Macfarlane - DTA/NDSS
Susan Yao - DTA

Alternates

Brittany Salikin - NG
Tessa Hansen - NG

Presidents' Message cont'd

The services needed by educators include access to quality resources, quality peer support and mentorship, quality PD opportunities, and quality in-service training. Budget time is here and the DTA is preparing to engage with the district on its budget priorities. If members have thoughts on what these should be, send them to the DTA.

Cell Phone News!

The DTA is pleased that the government is working on solutions to keep kids safe so it will be interesting to see how the news about restricting the use of cellphones in schools will pan out. To be clear, this is not a cellphone ban. But what kind of policies will be put in place by the start of the next school year to be able to restrict students' cellphone use in the classroom remains to be seen. Many teachers will welcome this shift: cellphones and social media can be a distraction from learning as well as a hazard to students' mental health (body image issues, sharing of images, extortion issues, bullying). However, we also know that many teachers use technology in their classrooms: as a research tool, to assist with writing, for communication, even as a calculator. While the concerns about the use of technology are clear, what are the alternatives? Many schools do not use textbooks anymore as these can be out of date, expensive, or simply not available. While there is value in phones and devices, there are clearly also downsides.

One concern is how will new restrictions impact the positive uses of these devices? Who will handle enforcement of new policies? Teachers are already challenged with the many aspects of their jobs—they don't need yet another task to manage. What will new policies look like and how will they be implemented? Will educators be consulted? Send the DTA your thoughts.

Upcoming Salary Increase

As part of the last Collective Agreement, our salaries will be increasing as of July 1st, 2024. We will hear in March what the actual raise will be when the BC Consumer Price Index (CPI) will be used to determine the percentage. Here is the clause from the Provincial Agreement:

"B.1.c: Effective July 1, 2024 i. by the annualized average of BC Consumer Price Index (CPI) over twelve months starting on March 1, 2023 (Cost of Living Adjustment) to a minimum of 2.0% and a maximum of 3.0%, calculated as per B.1.9".

Additionally, effective July 1, 2024, the local salary grids are amended to provide a 0.11% increase to the top step of the salary grid.



Those who we have lost

Robin Pugsley - a respected and well-loved Seaquam Secondary teacher passed away on December 16, 2023.

Celebrate Diversity



Be creative!

A message from the Delta Teachers' Association

Dates to Remember

February

Feb 13 - Executive Committee Mtg - Virtual
Feb 15 - 1st BCTF Delegates Mtg - DTA
Feb 16 - Non-Instructional Day/Delta District Day
Feb 19 - Family Day
Feb 21 - PD Committee Mtg - DTA
Feb 22 - Pink Shirt Day
Feb 26 - Staff Rep Assembly - SE
Feb 28 - Health & Safety Mtg - DTA
Feb 29 - 2nd BCTF Delegates Mtg - DTA

HAPPY
VALENTINE'S
DAY

March

Mar 12 - Executive Committee Mtg - DTA
Mar 16 - 19 - BCTF AGM - Vancouver
Mar 16 - Apr 2 Spring Break

Spring
Break

Paid Educational Leave

Teachers interested in making application for Paid Educational Leave (60%) for the 2024-2025 year must apply to the Human Resources Division by FEBRUARY 16TH, 2024. The application form will be sent out by Altaf Mascati, HR Director, and will be posted on Teacher Info Teams.

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.