

# DTA Monthly Update

February 2026



**Delta Teachers'**  
ASSOCIATION

## Presidents' Message – Alison Kerr

Spring Break will be here before you know it! We continue to be very busy in the office, just like I'm sure you are on the ground.

Last month we talked about the success of our rally, and shortly after we met with Ravi Kahlon, NDP MLA for North Delta. We had arranged for this meeting long before more money was brought to the table for our members to negotiate our current Memorandum of Agreement, but we kept the meeting to advocate for our CUPE colleagues, who were also stalling out at the table. A CUPE strike will also activate a teacher strike, as we will not cross their picket lines. Fortunately, shortly after that meeting, it looks like CUPE is back at it with new government money. Let's hope they get a deal. The BCTF ratification vote for teachers takes place March 2-4 online. Keep an eye on your personal email for the details. And make sure the BCTF has your current personal email!

On a more personal note, I will be out of office from Thursday February 26 until Spring Break for a minor surgical procedure on my vocal chords that unfortunately requires significant voice recovery time. Imagine me not being able to talk?!? If you are emailing, please continue to send to all 3 of us, and call the office for Kathy or Cherie, who will be released full time while I'm away.

I hope everyone has a restful and relaxing break- and your Mexican vacation isn't ruined!

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

### Budget Time is coming!

The first School Board meeting about budget was last week, where both the DTA and CUPE shared their hopes and dreams. As I was away at a President's meeting for two days, Kathy stepped in and did a great job delivering our speech while all the **#RedforBCED** photos played in the background. We will be meeting with senior management soon for a preview of the District budget. We encourage members to attend these important board meetings.

The next budget focused board meetings are on April 21st & 28th. See the full speech here:

### In this update you can expect:

President's Message

Budget Time is Coming!

Trustee Elections

Calendar of Events

Good evening, Chair Joe Muego, Trustees, Superintendent Doug Sheppard, Secretary Treasurer Jonathan Duffin, our other Employer, Union, and parent partner groups, and members of the Delta community.

On behalf of the Delta Teachers' Association, thank you for the opportunity to speak to this year's budget.

As everyone is aware, this has been a bargaining year for teachers with the current NDP government. Both CUPE workers and teachers repeatedly heard the same message in various settings from ministers: "It's not your year." "It's a bad year for unions to be bargaining."

Labour unions are the members who elected this government. It is time for that government to acknowledge that reality with fair deals for all union workers and particularly, workers in the public education system.

Teachers across British Columbia – including here in Delta – have been doing the work to bring to government attention, the urgent need for increased funding in public education. Our #RedforBCed campaigns, our rally at MLA Ravi Kahlon's office, multiple meetings with Ravi Kahlon and Ian Paton, and the province-wide BCTF letter-writing campaign, all helped pressure Premier Eby and Minister Bailey to bring more funding to the table to address working conditions for teachers.

The DTA wants to publicly thank Daun Frederickson, President of CUPE, for standing in solidarity with us during those local campaigns, and thank CUPE members for showing up alongside teachers. That solidarity matters. As CUPE enters its upcoming round of negotiations, we are asking teachers to return the favour. CUPE's fight is also our fight. Strong public education depends on all of us to fight for the needs of students.

At the same time, it remains the responsibility of trustees to continuously advocate for adequate funding. Each month, we pay attention to how Delta Trustees are reporting out on those advocacy efforts. We encourage you to keep that pressure on. Delta students deserve nothing less.

We thank Senior management, and in particular Secretary Treasurer Jonathan Duffin, for the transparency you have demonstrated in meeting with partner groups to review budget projections and constraints. Open books and open dialogue matter. We appreciate it.

For our members, the central issue in this budget – and in our bargaining – continues to be workload.

As more demands are placed on teachers, we are all noticing the consequences:

- increased medical leaves;
- insufficient supports for students; and
- a rise in violence in classrooms, particularly in primary elementary settings.

These are not abstract concerns. They are daily realities.

We are also seeing numerous new teachers entering our system. Many of these teachers are coming from other countries and are understandably unprepared for the cultural and structural realities of the BC public school system. And all new teachers – regardless of where they trained – are struggling with the escalating complexity of student needs, especially behaviour that far exceeds basic classroom management skills.

That is why 1-to-1 peer support for teachers is not a luxury – it is an essential service.

For a brief period, we will have three members dedicated to this work. The value they add to the system is immeasurable. This proactive model:

- reduces strain on Human Resources and the Union;
- increases professional capacity in schools; and
- supports teacher retention.

The creation of onsite “welcomers,” after-school workshops, and individualized peer support is precisely the proactive work this district needs. We are advocating for three continuing members to do this work. It should be the bare minimum – not the exception.

Elementary librarians continue to be shortchanged in administrative time needed to manage libraries effectively. With the potential of increased prep time in 2027–28, we ask that librarians not bear the cost through escalating workload once again.

We also urge the district to fairly settle our outstanding workload grievances. These are not fringe issues. They are systemic pressures:

- TTOCs new to the system must receive paid orientation, as outlined in the collective agreement;
- as one of the three pillars of education, Career Education teachers cannot sustainably manage caseloads of 140–150 students; and
- teachers who are willing to work half a day should not lose a full day’s pay when being forced to take a full day leave.

These are practical, fixable issues – and they should be addressed within the budget framework.

Finally, the tragic chain of events in Tumbler Ridge has deeply affected educators across the province. For teachers here in Delta, it has amplified longstanding safety concerns – particularly around locked doors that staff cannot re-enter after taking students outside.

If doors must remain locked for safety, then they must also be accessible to staff. Expanded key-card systems on exterior doors are a reasonable and necessary investment in safety. We ask that this be considered in next year’s budget planning.

In closing, a budget is more than numbers on a spreadsheet. It is a reflection of values.

If we value teacher retention, we invest in workload supports.

If we value inclusion, we fund adequate staffing.

If we value safety, we modernize infrastructure.

If we value solidarity, we stand together – teachers, CUPE workers, trustees, parents, and the community – in demanding adequate provincial funding.

We appreciate the transparency and partnership we have experienced in Delta. We hope that the priorities we have outlined tonight are taken seriously as you finalize next year's budget.

Because strong public education requires sustained investment – not just words, but action.

---

## Trustee Elections–

On Wednesday, I went to the New Westminster Labour Council Meeting to meet and greet a few trustee candidates running for the upcoming October elections. I'm always disappointed at the lack of engagement around these elections, both by teachers and the community at large. Trustees can have a heavy influence, good or bad, on what happens in the district. Rumour has it that the far right is more active and organized than ever with the help of USA backed militant groups, and this can greatly affect policy and procedures if they get in. We encourage you to go to All Candidate Debates, both in Delta and where you reside, to ask tough questions and keep potential trustees accountable. Attending current board meetings also tells you who's doing the work, who's frequently absent, and who's using trustee work as some additional income on the side, or a stepping stone to City council. With Mayor Harvey's popularity taking a hit, it will also be interesting to see if candidates run under his slate or a new one. Or independently. Keep an eye on your personal email to know when debates are happening next school year. The prep is starting now!

A reminder of how bad it can get:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/barry-neufeld-former-chilliwack-bc-trustee-pay-hate-speech-tribunal-2slgbtq-9.7098536>

---

## MARCH Calendar of Events

Mar 5 – BCTF AGM 2<sup>nd</sup> Delegates Mtg – DTA

Mar 10 – EC Mtg – DTA

Mar 10 – School Board Mtg – 7 pm

Mar 14-17 – BCTF AGM – Hyatt Hotel, Vancouver

Mar 16-27 – Spring Break

