

DTA Monthly Update



Delta Teachers'
ASSOCIATION

Presidents' Message - Alison Kerr

Coming to you a week early, as we wanted to get a member-only Weekly out to you about our upcoming AGM next Friday! Reminder that the 2nd Vice President role is up for grabs, as Cherie Nagra is stepping down from the role, despite our best efforts to bribe her to stay.

It's been a busy week with major events happening such as budget announcements and layoff. I also had three community meetings this week that went to 9pm! Kathy and I went to the School Board meeting Tuesday about the district budget for next year, where Daun Frederickson, CUPE 1091 President, and I gave speeches on the areas we feel need addressing or added to budget recommendations. Michelle Jones, one of the three team members for Teacher Support and 1-to-1 Support, gave a moving speech that accompanied the DTA request to keep the new member of the Teacher Support team (Mandeep More) as a permanent position to support Michelle and Dana MacDonald in their crucial work with members. We find out if they will grant those requests on February 28th. The North Delta Reporter gave great coverage of our speeches in this article:

<https://northdeltareporter.com/2026/04/23/delta-teachers-asking-for-more-one-to-one-peer-support/>

On Monday, I presented at the District Parent Advisory Board meeting to talk about the myths of "parental rights" and the not so hidden agendas of the advocates of this movement. Here is a repeat of the poster we put out to members in the last weekly.

Why talk about this now? Because School Board Trustee elections are coming in October, and some are declaring now. We know in the union world what a terrible trustee (think Barry Neufeld) can do to teachers in the system. It's important to find out all you can about who's running where you live. The DTA will hold candidate debate meetings in Delta in late September, and hopefully, attendance by both teachers who live in Delta and other community members will be better than in previous elections. Delta looks to have 3 slates for council, and Parent Voice is lurking. Get informed and more importantly go vote!

In this update you can expect:
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What educators need to know about the rhetoric of “parental rights”



What is the history of “parental rights”?

Efforts to secure “parental rights” in education are not new; this rhetoric has been used throughout history to challenge issues such as the teaching of evolution, child labour reforms, school desegregation, mandatory schooling, reading materials, and comprehensive sex education.

For more information, please see [Challenging ‘Parental Rights’: A Primer for Parents, Students, Educators, and Advocates](#) by Heather Ganshorn.

Are “parental rights” legally enshrined?

“Parental rights” are not explicitly named in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Courts have interpreted the Charter to include a parent’s right to make decisions about the care, upbringing, and education of their children.

However, these rights are not absolute. They are subject to reasonable limits and balanced against the rights and best interests of the child, as well as the government’s duty to protect children. As Emeritus Professor Mark Carter states in [“Debunking’ Parents’ Rights in the Canadian Constitutional Context,”](#) **the Charter does not give parents the right to override children’s rights.**

Do children have legal rights?

Yes. Children, like all individuals in Canada, have Charter rights. As well, children’s rights are enshrined in the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), which Canada ratified in 1991.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child allows a student input in their education and affirms that children have a right to life and development, and a right to be heard.

The Convention also indicates that “the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration” when actions are undertaken concerning children by public or private institutions. Substantial legal precedence demonstrates that when parental authority comes into conflict with children’s best interests, the children’s interests should be prioritized.

Can parents’ private values determine what is taught in public schools?

No. Public schools have a responsibility to uphold and reflect public values, namely those outlined in provincial human rights legislation, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. As well, teachers have an obligation to uphold “the principles and protections outlined in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, and [develop] an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, hate, and oppression” according to the MTS Code of Professional Practice.

School curriculum, created by Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, determines the knowledge, skills, and values that are expected to be taught at each grade.

People can expect respect and accommodation of their private (religious) values up to the point that they infringe on the rights of others. For instance, schools have a responsibility to establish safe and inclusive environments that reject homophobic or transphobic views. Public schools cannot curate lessons to mirror the values of individual parents, when those values are not in line with human rights, children’s rights, and the provincial curriculum, especially in a diverse society.



Internal Coverage Crackdown

It's come to our attention that teachers are often asking colleagues to cover their classes so they can go on field trips or sporting events. If you need coverage for a half day or more, the school needs to hire a TTOC. Otherwise you are preventing TTOCs from getting work. Factor that cost into your trip. Grievances have been filed in the past against the employer for allowing this to happen.

TTOCs Struggling to get Work

If you're old (and in the top 20 of the seniority list?!) like me, you remember when being a TTOC meant struggling to find work and your main goal was to get a contract as soon as you could in order to get a steady income. After the return of our stripped language in 2016, there was a teacher shortage for years. Work was everywhere for TTOCs and they could pick and choose. Their wages had also gone up significantly. That has all shifted back this year. Work is more precarious again and TTOCs are grabbing what they can get. Having a contract means steady work and if above 50% it also means extended health benefits. This year isn't a blip. It's the shift back to what has traditionally been the case for TTOCs.

Layoff and Term Specific - Know your Rights

If you were in a Term Specific contract you got a letter yesterday. It told you that your job was ending in late June, and if you were below the layoff line (3.1), you are also in receipt of layoff. Either way your job is over, so what's the difference?

Term specific means the job ends but the district still owes you contract work for next year. You have to find this work at your current site (internal staffing), in the rounds, or during the postings in the summer. If you can't find anything you're qualified for, call Kevin Vasconcelos. If you're qualified for jobs but don't want them, you probably need to take them. Otherwise the district will park your seniority and you go back on the TTOC list, which makes it harder for you to get jobs when you have no seniority. If they stripped your seniority and there wasn't work available for your qualifications, call us.

Term Specific and under the layoff line means that the district cannot guarantee you work. But you do have recall rights. You can post into the rounds (you have no internal rights at your site) and after round 3, having recall rights means you get first dibs (in seniority and qualifications order) over any jobs that pop up between the end of round 3 and May 10, 2027. If you pick up a term contract that ends before the end of June, your recall rights are returned to you. If you want to ditch Delta because you can't get work, you are only eligible for severance if you applied for jobs you were qualified for and didn't get them.

What if I'm in a Continuing Job?

Continuing and under the layoff line is pretty much the same as term specific under the layoff line. You have no internal rights at your site, and you have recall rights and access to severance in the same way listed above.

Continuing and Surplus means you are not in receipt of layoff, but there is a shortage of work at your site, and you are the lowest in seniority at your site, even though you are above the layoff line, so you're out. The lowest seniority piece does not apply to positions of special responsibility (usually at DMEC) that the district decides to end. The good news is the district still owes you work, and you need to find it in the rounds. If more staffing suddenly gets added to your site (you go up a division in elementary, blocks get added in secondary) you can go back to your old site. This does not apply if someone moves from your school and there's an opening. If you are surplus this year, you cannot be surplus for the next 2 years (this includes DMEC positions).

Do not rely on your administrator for advice around the way staffing works. As this isn't part of their regular work, they don't know it inside and out like we do, and often use the wrong vocabulary or incorrect applications of rules to describe your situation. Call the DTA. We also have new HR. Call the DTA to confirm what you've been told. Don't send an email as staffing is under tight time constraints.

Filing Bullying and Harassment - Why you're Likely to be Disappointed

The bar to prove harassment is extremely high, and you not getting along with your colleague, or a couple of nasty exchanges isn't going to meet it. Does this mean you have to take it? No. Your admin is supposed to step in. If you are in dispute about teaching practice, follow Clause 5 of the BCTF Code of Ethics. This basically means go to the teacher first. If someone is rude to you consistently, yelling, hostile or subtly sexually harassing you, it's your employer's job to step in and sort the other person out. Take a Staff Rep and go talk to them. And be an innocent victim. If you are acting unprofessionally and losing it, you will also be in trouble. If your admin isn't handling it, call us. This is why having a rep with you when you tell them is important. We will also see what action the admin is taking and monitor the situation. Often, bullying and harassment claims come about because the admin didn't step in when they should have and the member is frustrated.

Day of Mourning: Information from the BCTF

April 28th is the National Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job. On that day in Canada, we remember all those who have died or have been seriously hurt while working. These tragic deaths and injuries happen to people who are mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers. They happen to friends and family members. They happen to both the very mature and young.

The group of people most likely to be injured on the job are like many of our students – young people, young workers, eager to do a good job, possibly less experienced, possibly less aware of the risks of work.

Many of our students in our schools have part-time jobs and perhaps are soon moving on to full-time. Our hope is by observing the Day of Mourning, you all will remain conscious of your own safety at school, while educating our students about their rights to workplace safety. We want to encourage our students to insist that their employers establish and follow workplace safety training, programs, and procedures, and will always exercise their right to refuse unsafe work.

In 2025, there were 138 work-related deaths in BC:
Of those, two were young workers aged between 15 and 24 years old.

Two work-related death claims came from the education sector:
One plumber and one secondary school teacher due to conditions related to asbestos exposure.

We, at the BCTF, ask that you encourage your members to take some time out of the week leading up to April 28th to engage with students about the Day of Mourning and reinforce in them that, when they enter the workforce that they have the same rights as any worker in British Columbia.

Visit the Day of Mourning BC Schools Project at <https://domschools.ca/> and the BC Day of Mourning website at <https://dayofmourning.bc.ca/> to access resources, statistics and educational videos to use in your classrooms.

On Tuesday, April 28th, please join us and all workers in BC and across Canada with a moment of silent reflection. Remember our BCGEU colleague, Shannda Aviugana-Durand, who we lost in the fatal incident at Tumbler Ridge Secondary. We honour her, all those lost and affected by this tragedy, and every worker who left for work one day, and never came home.

Locally, the DTA will join CUPE and district staff at the board office at 8:30 am for a CUPE presentation. There are also presentations in the community:

April 27, 7-8 pm at the North Delta Centre for the Arts - 11425 84 Ave
April 28, 10:45 am at Delta City Hall - 4500 Clarence Taylor Cr. in Ladner

MAY

Calendar of Events

- May 5 - DTA AGM - DSS
- May 12 - EC Mtg - DTA
- May 12 - SBO Mtg - 7 pm
- May 13 - FFWL Social - Cravings 3:30 pm
- May 15 - Non-Instructional Day
- May 18 - Victoria Day
- May 19 - SJ Committee Mtg - DTA
- May 20 - PD Committee Mtg - DTA
- May 21 - Mat Leave Workshop - TEAMS
- May 25 - SRA - SE
- May 27 - TTOC Committee Mtg - DTA
- May 29/30 - BCTF Spring Rep Assembly



In Memorium

Ed Baran
Leon Mandrake
Llew-Anne Broughton
Brian Davies