

TACKBOARD

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President's Message



Doug Kearney (BCTF) & Debbie Pawluk
at BCTF Rep Assembly, January 25, 2013

WITH ANOTHER YEAR comes a new round of bargaining and a sense of renewed hope for public school teachers throughout BC. As you have undoubtedly heard, the BCTF and the BCPSEA developed an agreement-in-committee to address

bargaining which was subsequently ratified by both parties in late January. The framework for bargaining will significantly alter this round of negotiations, particularly at the local table, due to the newly agreed upon "split of issues." While PELRA matters such as salary, benefits, paid leaves, and hours of work/preparation time will remain at the provincial table, many relationship issues have been designated for local negotiations, including post and fill and layoff and recall. The framework also provides for an early start to bargaining (with the goal of having all locals at the table by March 1), a mutually agreed- to facilitator, and the establishment of common data prior to the start of bargaining. Please visit the BCTF Member Portal for further information about the framework and plan on attending the VTF General Meeting on February 19th for further details related to local negotiations.

Also posted on the BCTF Member Portal is the government's White Paper proposal: the Premier's "ludicrous" (to quote S. Lambert) plan for a 10 year deal with teachers. Interestingly enough, the Premier and Minister McRae unveiled their proposal just days before both the BCTF and BCPSEA were meeting to ratify the agreement-in principle, a clear indication of direct government interference (yet again) in the bargaining process. Simply put, the plan is completely unviable, primarily because it makes no provision for teachers to bargain working conditions (a right we won in court) or salaries, the two key issues that we fought for in the last round of negotiations. Additionally, despite Premier Clark's public assertions, the BCTF was not directly consulted and received an embargoed copy of the document less than 24 hours prior to the media release! How the Premier intends to proceed is a mystery at this point.

After a series of meetings, the Local School Calendar Committee has forwarded a recommendation to the trustees for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 calendar. Based on member feedback from a variety of stakeholder groups, the proposal is for 7 school closure days, 5 of which would be added to the spring break. Research has shown that a two week break in March is becoming the norm in practice across the province and particularly in the metro region. While there was a range of support amongst the committee reps for closure days, everyone supported their continuation as a way to reduce costs, to partially mitigate the negative impact of the anticipated budget shortfall...a staggering \$24 million! Additionally, the committee proposed a blend of non-instructional days for professional development, thereby providing a degree of local autonomy. Now, the VSB will engage in a one month public consultation period (must be concluded by February 28) which will be followed by Board approval prior to March 31st.

On a lighter note, our full entitlement of local delegates for the upcoming BCTF AGM was elected at the January VSTA General Meeting. Our members will volunteer their time to join hundreds of teachers from across the province from March 15-18 to elect members to the Executive Committee, review BCTF policy, and deliberate on a wide range of recommendations, in addition to setting the 2013-14 membership fee. The recommendation is for the fee to remain at 1.69% of the actual salary of the member.

I know that many of us are looking forward to February 11th, the newly created Family Day. Take full advantage of the long weekend to kick back, relax, and enjoy time with friends and family. I hope to see many of you at the VTF General Meeting on February 19th.

Take care,

Debbie

VTF GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, February 19, 2013
4pm at Tupper Auditorium

All teachers are encouraged to attend to
elect delegates to the BCTF AGM.

Did You Know?

UNION ADVANTAGE

Union workers are an important part of the local community and economy in and around Vancouver. Their incomes support local businesses and bolster the local tax base. This translates into support for public works and community services that add to everyone's quality of life.



In and around Vancouver:

Number of union members	302,300
% of all employees	29%
Weekly payroll	\$287 million

With average earnings of \$4.93/hour more than non-union workers, this translated into \$52.3 million **extra** dollars paid into the local economy each week.

And research show that in regions of the world that are unionized people rely less on social services, workers experience fewer workplace accidents and our children reach higher levels of educational achievement. This is the union advantage.

Based on the average annual wages for 2011 in the local Census Metropolitan Area (Statistics Canada)



22nd Annual Women's Memorial March

for missing and murdered women

FEBRUARY 14, 2013

March - 1:00 pm from Carnegie Community Centre

Healing Circle - 2:30 pm at Oppenheimer Park

Community Feast to follow - Japanese Language Hall

For more information, call the Women's Memorial March Committee at 604-665-3005.

The Every Teacher Project on LGBTQ-Inclusive Education



The BCTF has lent its support to the Every Teacher project, a national study designed to identify and make

widely available the collective expertise that exists among Canadian teachers on inclusive education practices for sexual and gender minority students. Responses to the **Every Teacher Project Survey** will enable us to learn what educators think about the climate of Canada's schools for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two Spirit, or questioning (LGBTQ) students; which approaches to inclusion of these students seem to work, and in what contexts, and which don't; what supports educators in doing this work, and what holds us back. Results will be made widely available throughout the school system. All members of teacher organizations are encouraged to participate, including education assistants, counsellors, and teachers with administrative responsibilities.

Members and other educators can request a paper copy of the survey by contacting the research team at: everyteacherproject@gmail.com. The survey can also be completed online by navigating to <http://fluidsurveys.com/s/every-teacher-survey/?collector=3106>.

Participation is possible between **October 11 and mid-February 2013**, but we encourage members to participate as soon as possible.

Every teacher organization in Canada has agreed to support this project. Teachers across the country are moving strongly to improve school climate for LGBTQ students; students with LGBTQ parents; heterosexual students who are also homophobically bullied; and the 58% of heterosexual students who are distressed by homophobic elements of school culture.

The Every Teacher project team is led by Dr. Catherine Taylor at The University of Winnipeg in partnership with The Manitoba Teachers' Society. The project is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

"88 and Out" – Save up to \$800 Per Year

BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan regulations provide for a member who has reached age 64, or a total of age plus contributory service of 88, to withdraw from the long term portion of the plan. You may wish to continue the plan, however, if your accumulated sick leave and BCTF Short Term SIP (120 days) will not protect your salary until you reach the age of 65 or factor 90. Members who withdraw from the Long Term portion of the plan will still receive the 2% SIP allowance. Call the Income Security Division at the BCTF at 604-871-2283 or VSTA for more information.

A brief history of bargaining

The distant past...

Prior to 1987 teachers were restricted to negotiating salary and benefits with no right to strike to balance the bargaining dynamic with the employer. In 1987, in response to government pressures, 97% of teachers voted to unionize making our locals the bargaining agents for teachers. It was during the period of bargaining from 1987 to 1994 that teachers gained the vast majority of the language that we have in our Collective Agreement today. Vancouver itself was involved in a withdrawal of services in 1991 and 1993.

The past...

Things changed significantly with the imposition of provincial bargaining in 1995. The Public Education Labour Relations Act (or PELRA) created a single bargaining agent for the employers (BCPSEA) and the BCTF became the provincial bargaining agent of teachers. In 1998 teachers declined any salary increases for two years to achieve K-3 class size limits and improvements to learning specialist teacher ratios and some improvements for TTOCs. However, in 2001 education was declared an essential service, severely hampering our ability to exercise our right to strike.

The origin of our troubles...

In 2002, with Christy Clark as Minister of Education, the government stripped our collective agreements by introducing Bills 27 and 28. With the stroke of a pen (and the work of arbitrator Rice and the legislature) government eliminated protections on class size and composition, cut support for kids with special needs, and stripped teachers of their bargaining rights. This move slashed \$336 million annually from public education resulting in devastating cuts that continue to affect kids, teachers and schools today.

The recent past...

Despite a 10 day strike in 2005 and a Supreme Court ruling in 2011 that Bills 27 and 28 were illegal and unconstitutional, teachers struggle to support students with 2,800 fewer teacher (1,500 of which were specialist teachers) and are still waiting for the restoration of these provisions. During the past year teachers engaged in limited job action and a three day full withdrawal of services. In addition to salary and benefits, one of our key issues was advocacy for smaller class sizes and a return of supports for vulnerable learners.

Where we are now...

Bargaining has resumed following the ratification of a new Framework for Bargaining by both parties (see article on page _). The need for restored funding has never been more apparent. If British Columbia were to bring education funding back to the national average we would need \$377 million dollars in additional funding for BC Public Schools. Teachers need to do all they can this spring to ensure that Education is a vote determining issue.

Report on Winter 2013 Representative Assembly

The Representative Assembly met at the end of January with some significant decisions to make concerning bargaining and finance. The BCTF Executive has been in talks with BSPSEA regarding the coming round of bargaining. A Framework of Agreement In-Committee was ratified that stipulates the following:

1. The parties agreed to develop a common, cost-shared process for the gathering and reporting of data related to bargaining.
2. The split of issues will be amended to allow additional items such as Posting and Filling of positions and Layoff-Recall language to be moved to the local table.
3. Bargaining will begin on February 4th with a mutually agreed-to facilitator in place to assist with all matters of collective bargaining.

The BCTF has been under significant mounting financial pressures over the past decade related to legal costs and public campaigns. Recommendations from the Finance Committee and EC to restore fund balances and provide a balanced budget were considered and a cut to local support grants was passed that will impact the VSTA. Further cost saving cuts will be going to AGM this March. The fee recommendation going to the AGM is for retention of the fee at 1.69% of member salary.

One highlight of the meeting was a presentation by Seth Klein of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives entitled *Changing the Public Conversation on Taxes*. He presented a convincing analysis that our income tax system in BC is far from progressive.



Lisa Pacheco & Sylvia Metzner, LRs at the BCTF Rep Assembly



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Upcoming Pension Seminars

YOUR PENSION, YOUR FUTURE.

If you are within five years of retirement, then you may wish to attend this free seminar.

Seminar Dates and Locations

FEB 7	Burnaby	6-8 PM
FEB 21	Coquitlam	6-8 PM
MAR 6	Vancouver	6-8 PM
MAR 9	N. Vancouver	9-11 AM, 12:30-2:30 PM
APR 11	Surrey	7:30-9:30 PM
APR 17	Delta	6-8 PM
MAY 7	Langley	6-8 PM
MAY 9	Vancouver	6-8 PM

Pre-registration required. Dates are subject to change. For the full list of seminars or to register, go to tpp.pensionsbc.ca.

THANKS to the following VSTA members elected as Delegates to the BCTF AGM

Michael-Don Borason (VT), Rory Brown (VT), Young Cheng (PG), Moira Ekdahl (JO/DLS), Darren Gock (PW), Treena Goolieff (LOA), Stephanie Koropatnick (DLS), Kim Leary (Brit), Stephanie Lemmon (EH), Katie Leung (DT), Susan McIntosh (GLAD), Jolene Mergens (GLAD), Duane Mugford (EH), Trish Mugford (Magee), Bal Panesar (EH), John Silver (KILL), Tobey Steeves (KILL/TOC), Leo Strong (CT), and Shaun van der Hoop (VSTA). Thanks also to alternates Jillian Maguire and Petr Pospisil, both from Kitsilano. VSTA LRs will also be attending: Sylvia Metzner (VSTA), Lisa Pacheco (GLAD) and Debbie Pawluk (VSTA).



BCTF New Teachers' and Student Teachers' Conference

Teachers build a better world

March 1-2, 2013

Radisson Hotel, 8181 Cambie Road, Richmond
 BCTF conference for new teachers, student teachers, and new TTOCs.

Visit the resource fair, attend workshops, meet with Susan Lambert, BCTF President, network with other new teachers, collect valuable classroom materials

For registration info and program:
bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2013/
 Registration opens January 2013

For more info:
 Marion Shukin, 604-871-1804, shukin@bctf.ca
 or Dawn McCormick, 604-871-1869,
dmccormick@bctf.ca

Vancouver & District Labour Council
 Women's Committee invites you to

CELEBRATING WOMEN

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2013

Friday, March 8

5:30 pm - Doors

6:00 pm - Appetizers / 6:30 pm - Dinner

Fraserview Hall

8240 Fraser Street

south of Marine Dr.

Speakers: An Inter-generational
 Discussion on
 Feminism &
 Labour



Marion Shukin
 BCTF President



Jarran Hodges
 Feminist Blogger &
 Union Communicator

Music & Entertainment



No Shit Shirleys

Tickets \$40 / \$30 low income (tables of 8)
 Primarily a women's event but open to all
 ASL Interpretation Provided

For tickets contact Kaziah at the VDL Council—604-254-6703 or office@vdlc.ca



Always happy to hear from you!
 Debbie, Shaun, Sylvia, Kim & Mo