

The Advocate

In consensus atque unitate stat potentia

"There is strength in unity"

A Monthly Newsletter

JANUARY 2019

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! January has started out to be a busy month. With bargaining starting in the near future, Doug, Leslie, myself and members of the bargaining committee are holding meetings in schools to talk to members and get direct feedback from each site. The conversations at these meetings have been informative and it gives all members a chance to contribute.

Semester one is soon to be behind us as semester two begins on Monday January 28th. We have had reports that the district is working on a new coaching pilot that will be starting in select secondary schools for second semester in a limited scope with plans to increase in the fall. The ADTA has limited knowledge of what the plan is moving forward as we have not been included in the conversations and planning for this change. As such, we are trying to get more information at this time. If you have information about this coaching pilot, please call the ADTA office and speak with either Leslie, Doug or me.

We continue to hear reports of TTOC shortages, and we again are experiencing issues around internal coverage. Please continue to report these shortages using the ADTA website under the tab 'Prep Recovery'. If you are a TTOC and are not working virtually every single day please give the ADTA a call as there could be something wrong with the system that is dispatching TTOC's.

In Solidarity,
Jennifer Brooks, ADTA President

CONTRACT RESTORATION AND REMEDY UPDATE

We have numerous classes in violation of the restored collective agreement language and currently no remedy has been provided to those members. The ADTA received documentation on October 18th, 2018, with lists of all the teachers and the violations in their classes. Upon examining that data, the ADTA quickly discovered countless teachers that were missing from the list. We identified those teachers to the district, but we have yet to receive any updated information with the complete list of names.

In the meantime, we have been in discussions with the District regarding Option #4 and an [agreement](#) has finally been reached. Members with class size or composition violations will soon be receiving an electronic remedy selection form with a list of four choices. The choices include prep time, additional teacher to co-teach the affected class, additional non-enrolling teacher to work with the affected class and additional professional development money to be used by the member. So, watch your email for the form to arrive and more information on remedy will be sent out tomorrow in a Remedy Update Bulletin.

Letter to the Editor

The following letter to the editor was written by Doug Smuland in response to the following articles that appeared in the Abbotsford News. January 4th 2019 "Abbotsford School Trustees spend \$10, 300 on travel", January 9th 2019, "Abbotsford top educators get 6% raise for 2017/2018" and January 12th 2019, "Abbotsford School District's executive raises nearly double many employees". This was submitted to the Abbotsford News but has yet to be published.

In response to recent articles regarding compensation for SD#34 upper management and trustee positions, the numbers would indicate that these people are viewed by some as being far more valuable to students than the teachers working for the District. As you outline, over the past two years senior school district management has been awarded close to a 15% increase, while concurrently, teachers received only 1.25% a year when averaged over the same time period. As we are all aware, within these years the inflation rate in BC reached well over 2.5% each year. In the midst of a teacher shortage these are hardly numbers that would attract new teachers to the city or to the profession.

While the District has spent considerable time and money on recruiting new teachers for positions over the past two years, there has certainly not been any public recognition from the school board that the District's need of teachers might have something to do with local teacher salaries being near the lowest in the country. In way of comparison, during the time that upper management and the trustees were creating and claiming their own increases, a beginning teacher in Abbotsford was earning \$48,343; a meagre 17% of the superintendent's \$282, 506.

Irrespective of whether or not the trustees ought to have awarded themselves an increased indemnity last fall or approved the salary increases for upper management that they have, it seems only reasonable that they would now also publicly champion a solid wage increase for the teachers and other workers employed within the district; if for no other reason than to help overcome the economic hurdle of attracting teachers to work in what is a very expensive place to live. My guess is that if the opportunity arose for such a public sign of equality and support there would simply be a statement made that teacher salaries are bargained by the BC Public School Employers Association (of which the trustees are members) and it would be inappropriate for trustees to comment on what will certainly be an issue in the upcoming bargaining talks later in the spring.

Doug Smuland
Labour Relations Officer

DID YOU KNOW?

“On March 19, 1971, BC teachers launched a campaign to improve the pensions of retirees by participating in their first provincial withdrawal of service. A year later, prompted in part by the government's failure to deal with pension improvements, BC teachers participated actively in the provincial election. The result was that the NDP government defeated the Socreds and introduced changes to improve teacher pensions. “



BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The following ADTA members will be attending the BCTF AGM on behalf of the ADTA:

Jennifer Brooks	Lorrie Lamb
Leslie Kemp	Liane Leoppky
Doug Smuland	Penny Miller
Ken Ambrose	Becky Pagulayan
Alessandra Delaporte	Robin Price
Harj Dhaliwal	Sylvia Rempel
Grant Gasser	Joanne Samuel
Anita Gordon	Avneet Sharma
Teresa Hootz	Jennifer Simpson
Tina Kirkham	Meagan Smith

PAID EDUCATION LEAVE DEADLINE FAST APPROACHING!

The application deadline for a Paid Education Leave (Article G.32) in the 2019-2020 school year is January 30th, 2019. Applicants must have three years of service to the district at the time of application to be considered. The application process is completely online and the link can be found on the ADTA website. The Paid Education Leave committee will begin meeting in February to review applications.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING ACCESS

Have you ever been dying to attend a public Abbotsford School Board Meeting but couldn't get a sitter or found it so packed that you couldn't get a seat and didn't want to stand, or had too much marking to finish at school? We've all been there, right? Never fear! Starting on February 5, 2019, SD34 is going to start televising their meetings. You will be able to sit in the luxury of your home, or bundle up in the nippy comfort of your classroom and tune into watch the drama unfold. If you want to be super prepared you can access the board's Electronic School Board and get a 'sneak peek', first-hand look at the agenda. We have been advised the Board Office "will communicate the appropriate URL will all of our key stakeholders closer to the date", but we will find out the information anyway and communicate it to you, likely in the next newsletter. Stay tuned!

Leslie Kemp
Vice President

"The labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them."

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., speech to AFL-CIO, Dec. 11, 1961

CURRICULUM DAY JANUARY 25TH

The non-instructional day designated as a curriculum day is coming up tomorrow. Friday, January 25th is the curriculum day in Abbotsford. Teachers should be reflecting on where they are in their personal understanding and use of the redesigned curriculum and finding or designing something that meets those needs. Teachers might attend one of the district workshops, work with colleagues at your school site, work with colleagues at a different school site, or do your own personal self-directed day of curriculum exploration. You are required to indicate to your principal where you will be working and the topic or subject you will be exploring.



Why science teachers
should not be given
playground duty.

LEAVES WORKSHOP (not the kind that grow on trees)

Thinking about a leave for next school year? Interested in a Job Share or Job Exchange? The ADTA is holding a workshop for anyone with questions about leaves, job share and job exchange. All necessary forms and information packages will also be available at the meeting on Wednesday, February 6th, 2019 at 4:00 at the ADTA hall. See you then.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWS

Did you know that repeated and/or prolonged exposure to sounds louder than 85 decibels can permanently damage your hearing? Further, many people experience hearing loss so slowly that they really don't notice it until it has become profound. The first sign that noise may be affecting your hearing is the loss of ability to hear high-pitched sounds. The type, loudness and length of noise over-exposure that causes damage is probably less than you might think. For example, the average kitchen blender makes a noise of 90 dbs. To put this in perspective, the noise levels in a large high school were tested using an easily downloadable phone app.

The first test was in a computer lab with about six students typing and chatting occasionally which averagely registered 60 dBs, the sound of a normal conversation. Walking in the hallway with a few students working on projects silently netted the same result. At lunch time, the tests yielded higher results...in volume level, jumping from 75 dBs to 85 dbs. The outdoors did little to help the sound, averaging around 80 dbs.

The levels measured don't include added noise, such as listening to music with earbuds or talking with a friend. Listening to music with earbuds or headphones at maximum volume on the iPhone is about 100 dBs, already in the unsafe range. Listening at 50% of the volume (50 dBs) in a relatively quiet classroom (60 dBs) reaches the dangerous level as well.

What's more as the noise levels go up, the time needed to cause damage drops dramatically. For example, a worker experiencing noise at 85 dBs for 8 hours must be included in a "Noise Control and Hearing Conservation Program". But exposure of 103 dBs can cause damage in only 7.5 minutes. If you want to check the noise levels in your work space, you can download any number of free apps from the App Store or Google Play. The Abbotsford School District is conducting hearing tests during the month of February and concluding at Spring Break. If you are not contacted by the district for a hearing test, you can request one through your principal. If you have a test done, the technician will explain the results to you or will refer you to your doctor or an ear specialist to provide treatment if you have a correctable hearing problem. If it is determined that your hearing loss is noise related, you can then file a compensation claim with WorkSafeBC.

Leslie Kemp
Vice President

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Have you ever been asked to be the teacher in charge while your administrator is away? Did you know that there is collective agreement language that covers this?

There are times when teachers are asked to be the 'teacher in charge' or the 'point person' while the Administrative officer is off school property. There is language in the collective agreement that outlines the process that should be occurring in schools and is found in Article B.29 Short/Long term Position of Special Responsibility. What do you need to know?

- This position is voluntary. If you are asked to be the teacher in charge you have the ability to decline.
- It does not have to be the same person every time.
- The district does not require a principal to leave anybody in charge.
- If you agree to be the teacher in charge and are assigned any administrative duties while in that role, then you are entitled to a TTOC. These duties may include morning supervision, recess supervision or assemblies.
- If something comes up during your role as teacher in charge and you are required to leave your teaching job to deal with the situation, a TTOC should be called immediately to cover your teaching duties and that time should be recorded and TTOC time should be applied retroactively.
- When you are teacher in charge for more than 5 days you get paid 1/200th of the administrator officer's salary for each day worked in addition to the TTOC to replace your teaching duties.

Did you also know that the ADTA grieved this issue many years ago now and as part of the settlement to this matter the district created a timesheet for teachers in charge to fill out and also an outline of the process. I have attached both for your reading enjoyment.

A link to the Short/Long term Position of Special Responsibility form can be found on the [ADTA website](#)

ARTICLE B.29 SHORT/LONG TERM POSITIONS OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. Short Term

- a. In the event that an Administrative Officer assigned to a school is absent for five (5) days or less, a teacher may be requested to temporarily replace the Administrative Officer.
- b. The teacher shall not be responsible for major administrative and managerial duties nor the evaluation of fellow teachers.
- c. The teacher shall be provided with substitute teacher time equal to the administrative release time of the Administrative Officer he/she replaces.
- d. In the event that a short term assignment (five [5] days or less) becomes a long term assignment (greater than five [5] days) the teacher shall receive one two hundredth (1/200th) of the Administrative Officer's salary retroactive to the start of the assignment but in no case shall this rate be less than ten per cent (10%) greater than the teacher's current salary. Benefits are to remain in accordance with the status quo.

2. Long Term

- a. A long term position of special responsibility occurs in the event of the absence of the regular Administrative Officer for greater than five (5) teaching days and the Board requests a teacher to assume the major administrative and managerial duties of the absent Administrative Officer, excluding the evaluation of fellow teachers.
- b. The teacher involved shall receive one two hundredth (1/200th) of the Administrative Officer's salary for each day worked but in no case shall this rate be less than ten per cent (10%) greater than the teacher's current salary. Benefits are to remain in accordance with the status quo.
- c. The teacher will be provided with substitute teacher time equal to the administrative release time of the Administrative Officer he/she replaces.



Members of the BC Teacher's Federation, the Vancouver Canucks are pleased to provide you with an exclusive ticket offer to our upcoming games:

- Saturday, February 23 vs. New York Islanders
- Saturday, March 23 vs. Calgary Flames
- Tuesday, April 3 vs. San Jose Sharks

Follow the link below and use the PROMO CODE: BCTF
[FIND SEATS](#)

If you have any questions, please contact John.Kassis@canucks.com or John Kassis at [604-899-7491](tel:604-899-7491).

CALENDAR / UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

Curriculum Day	Friday, January 25th (all day)
Paid Education Deadline	Wednesday, January 30th
BCTF Representative Assembly	February 1st and 2nd
Leaves Workshop	Wednesday February 6th at 4:00
Non-instructional day	Thursday February 14th & Friday February 15th
Staff Rep Meeting	Wednesday, February 20th at 4:00pm
Sd #34 Long Term Service Dinner	Wednesday, February 27th
Deadline for Long Term Service Leave	Friday, March 15th
Deadline for Alternative Employment Leave	Friday, March 15th
Deadline for Educational Leave (Without Pay)	Friday, March 15th
Deadline for Job Share Applications	Friday, March 15th
Deadline for Job Exchange Applications	Friday, March 15th
BCTF AGM	Saturday, March 16th – Tuesday, March 19th

ADTA OFFICE HOURS

Our office hours are **Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.**
Any inquiries can be directed to the emails listed below or reach us at **604-854-1946**

Contact Us

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