

# The Advocate

In consensus atque unitate stat potentia

*"There is strength in unity"*

A Monthly Newsletter

APRIL 17, 2019

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Spring break seems so long ago and now the Easter long weekend is before us. The remainder of the school year will go by so quickly. One topic that has come up since we returned from our March break is that of staffing for next year and will there be a lay-off line? Good question. I can report that staffing meetings are well underway at the school board office, but the ADTA has not yet received any reports on what things look like for next school year. I can take this opportunity to remind everyone that lay-off notices must be handed out no later than May 15th so the decision to lay-off will be coming in the next couple of weeks. I cannot understand why there would be lay-offs considering we are experiencing a staffing shortage and many positions were a struggle to fill this year and some never were filled. The ADTA will update members as soon as we know what is going on.

The ADTA Executive committee is meeting with school Trustees next week. It is important that we have a chance to speak directly with our school Trustees and talk about issues that members are facing in their schools. The meeting, which has been arranged between the Superintendent and the Executive, will focus on two questions for discussion and brainstorming. One question will be around support for new curriculum implementation and the other question will be around developing a more collaborative working relationship. We look forward to the chance to speak directly with our Trustees and will update the membership as to how the meeting went.

### Class Size and Composition

In March, I received some of the non-enrolling information for this current school year. Non-enrolling ratios are district averages and now the ADTA is going through the information to ensure that things are accurate. I am in the process of contacting non-enrolling teachers to discuss caseload and roles in the schools. I am often asked about caseload and the equity between members and schools and so I want to remind members that our contractual language states district averages (unlike Langley). We do have language that states 'equitable distribution of workload', which is why it is so important that I also have the caseload assigned to each non-enrolling position. That component of the information that is required, the district has not provided, so I am starting to contact each individual teacher to get that data. This method of gathering data is very time consuming but I have been left no choice. I will update the membership once I have obtained the information.

### Remedy

Our office is receiving numerous calls about remedy right now and I am so happy that people are using their remedy for some amazing professional learning opportunities and even upgrades to their education. The office is handling remedy as quickly as possible, but we have had to pause for a bit to upgrade our accounting system. The system that we were using quickly became inadequate to handle the amount of work we were asking it to do. So, we have had to start from scratch and get an accounting program that can handle this workload. The starting from scratch also meant that every person that has received remedy had to be inputted into the new system one at a time and the money then assigned on an individual basis. This has become more time consuming than initially thought but we are working on it every day until the task is complete. Account updates such as balances will go out to everyone once we have everything up and running. This change in accounting will blend pro-d remedy money from the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 schools years into one account. This account is separate from your regular pro-d account. If you are filling out a reimbursement form for the remedy account, please make sure that you are using the correct forms. The forms are different (orange box on them) from the regular pro-d forms to make sure that we are taking the money from the account that you want us to. Remedy pro-d reimbursement forms are available directly from the ADTA office or through your staff rep.

In Solidarity,

**Jennifer Brooks, ADTA President**

## ELECTION NEWS



Candidate information is posted on the ADTA website under the Elections button. It has also been distributed electronically to every member. Voting begins in schools on April 17th. The dates for the votes are: President April 17 - 18. Labour Relations Officer April 24 - 25; and Vice President May 1 - 2. Staff Representatives are responsible for picking up the voting package from the ADTA hall, running the elections in their buildings and then getting the marked ballots back to the ADTA hall on time. If a staff has finished voting before the end of the second day, the ballots can be returned to the ADTA hall early.

Otherwise all ballots MUST be in to the ADTA hall by 4:00 pm on the second day of voting for each position. Ballots returned after the deadline will not be counted. Please note that itinerant teachers and TTOC's can either vote at the school site in which they are working if their assignment falls on a voting day, or at the ADTA office. Those teachers who are not working at a school site or who are on leave can vote at the ADTA office on the voting days. Please bring I.D.

### Bargaining Update

The ADTA's bargaining team put together a package of proposals that were ratified at the Bargaining General Meeting on April 10, 2019. The team will present this package to the District at their next bargaining meeting. Unfortunately, of the over 20 dates the ADTA indicated they were available in April and May to bargain, the District originally accepted only 3. Several more have since been added. Going forward, we hope to make some positive changes to the language in the Collective Agreement. Because we have not yet met to begin bargaining, we don't know what the District will present.

### CONTEST TIME

**Congratulations to the winners of our last contest:**

**Greg Emery, Kari Hipwell & Erica Tjart**

**Find the school bus in this newsletter and enter to win a piece of amazing ADTA swag! Find the school bus and then go to the ADTA website and find the Newsletter link.**

**Enter your name and school and where you found the bus.**

**A winner will be randomly chosen from all valid entries**

**Contest closes: Wednesday, April 24th**

### The International Day of Mourning

April 28 is the International Day of Mourning but will be observed on April 26 this year. This day remembers workers who have been killed on the job. The BCTF and the BC Federation of Labour and other partners have created the BC Schools Project about the Day of Mourning. The project is mostly geared towards secondary students. Numerous resources including postcards, posters, and announcement scripts to use in class or to learn about the day have been produced. Please think about doing something to observe this day in your school. More information can be found at <http://domschools.ca>

## Member Tips and Tidbits



Heat for Pro-D Days. The ADTA is working with the District to ensure that, hopefully, this will not be an issue again this year. Apparently it is the district's policy to require an administrator to email Facilities with a work order for heat on a non-instructional day. Please remind your Admin to do this if you are planning to do Pro-D at your site. If the heat is inadequate, please report it to your site health and safety committee and make sure it appears in the minutes.

1. Called to a meeting during your hours of work but not at your site? You are entitled to claim mileage from your site to the meeting and back. Please try to remember to fill in a travel expense claim for each trip. Instructions for filling in the form and the form itself can be found here: [Travel Expense Payment Request](#)
2. Called to a meeting during your hours of work but not at your site and miss your prep time and/or lunch? You can request that the time be made up. If your prep was in the morning then, if possible, it should be made up that day. If it was in the afternoon, then ask for it to be made up that week. AO's are available to cover. If they are too busy, then it is also acceptable for a TTOC to be called for either a half or full day to make up several teachers' prep time at once. Talk to your staff and find out who has missed their prep time, how much is now owed and then have your AO request a TTOC to cover that.
3. Non-enrolling teacher called to a meeting during your hours of work but not at your site? Please request a TTOC to cover your absence at your school EVERY TIME. There is no guarantee that you will get one, but you are entitled to a TTOC so please request one. This creates an important paper trail which may become important later on.
4. Classroom teacher who has been away but did not get a requested TTOC? Please keep reporting any TTOC shortages to the ADTA website. The button has been renamed 'TTOC Shortage'. Anecdotal evidence is needed to support the unions' opinion (contested by the district) that there is a TTOC shortage in Abbotsford.
5. Prepping for a TTOC when you have prep time in your day. TTOC's are contractually entitled to prep time when it occurs within their assignment. Please be diligent in leaving tasks for your TTOCs to do for you during your prep time. Please, do not ask a your TTOC to cover someone else's class during your prep.

## Know Your Rights!

Spring has sprung in Abbotsford and with it has come the usual accoutrements: flowers, rain and staffing. While we don't know if there will be lay-offs yet, it is still time to be thinking about your assignment in the fall. Please make sure that you let your administrator know what your teaching preferences are. If blocks/grades become available in your school because of retirements, etc. you have the right to ask for those before they are posted externally. As always, you must be qualified to teach those grades or subjects.

### ARTICLE E.21 ASSIGNMENT WITHIN A SCHOOL

1. Assignment within a school shall be based on the qualifications, training, experience, equitable distribution of workload and personal preference of the teacher, and shall not be used for disciplinary purposes

Healthy Workplaces

# 10 HEALTHY HABITS

for

## mental fitness

- Schedule "me-time" daily** (Icon: Clock)
- Reward yourself** (Icon: Star)
- Play to your strengths** (Icon: Person with arms raised)
- Ask for help and offer to help** (Icon: Hands)
- De-stress your diet** (Icon: Apple)
- Choose a positive attitude** (Icon: Thumbs up)
- Practice relaxation techniques and get enough sleep** (Icon: Person meditating)
- Set goals and stay on target with a journal** (Icon: Target with book)
- Get regular physical activity** (Icon: Person running)
- Press pause once in a while – downtime is good** (Icon: Pause symbol)

### Effects of Mental Illness

- Heart Problems
- Aggression/Conflicts
- Back Pain
- Cancers
- Impaired Learning/Memory
- Substance Abuse
- Infections
- Other Injuries/Illnesses
- Reduced Adaptability
- Increased Passivity

## Health & Safety

### Stress

The modern usage of the term “stress” originated in Canada just over 50 years ago. Dr. Hans Selye (1907-1982), the first director of the Université de Montréal’s Institute of Experimental Medicine and Surgery, first coined the term. Dr. Selye, the internationally acknowledged founder of the stress field, was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada for his groundbreaking research. He identified two kinds of stress: good stress, which contributes to wellness; and bad stress, which contributes to disease and sickness.

The right kind of stress energizes and motivates employees. The wrong kind leads to absenteeism, disability, staff turnover and low productivity. This destructive type of stress is of growing concern to employers.

Pressure is unavoidable in workplaces. Stress can be negative when the demands and pressures of the job do not match an employee’s abilities, where the employee has little control or support from others.

Employees under stress can show a wide range of symptoms; for example: irritability, poor concentration and decision-making, fatigue, heart disease, digestive problems, high blood pressure or back pain. They may develop addictions. Stress can compromise the immune system, making a person more prone to infections and communicable illnesses, and can trigger depression.

Workplaces that value job satisfaction, support work-life balance, and encourage a friendly, supportive culture have fewer problems related to stress.

### Depression

Depression is expected to rank second only to heart disease as the leading cause of disability worldwide by 2020. It is also a major cause of death and serious injury — most people who commit or attempt suicide are suffering from depression. Only one in every three people suffering from depression seeks proper treatment. For those who do, the success rate is very high. Today’s medications and therapies can help between 80 and 90 percent of those with clinical depression.

Depression affects one-tenth of the population, including one-tenth of all employees. Depressive disorders account for 30 to 40 percent of all medical plan dollars paid for mental illness. While its root causes may not necessarily be work-related, its effects certainly are — lower productivity, replacement costs and disability payments. It is clearly in the employer’s interest to identify and address depression at the earliest possible stage.

Depression is not usually resolved at home. More often, the workplace plays a key role in detection and referral for treatment. Most depressed employees try to hide their problem due to shame, stigmatization, and fears of being fired or reprimanded.

The symptoms of depression vary widely from person to person. An employee may become withdrawn or seem “down.” Irritability, lack of enthusiasm, fatigue or substance abuse may also point to depression. Effects on work can include: problems with decision-making and concentration, lower productivity, more errors and accidents, and an increase in absenteeism.

If you think a co-worker may be suffering from depression, show respect and support. On a confidential basis, urge them to talk to their physician, an on-site occupational health nurse or an employee assistance professional, who can refer them to the right kind of treatment.

#### Taking Action

Members of the Université Laval Chair in Occupational Health and Safety Management have studied the organizational dimensions that can help prevent work-related mental health problems. They have developed a prevention kit entitled Mental Health at Work: From Defining to Solving the Problem. This excellent tool helps employers and employees understand mental health issues, and offers guidance on policies and programs to address mental health issues.

Canada Safety Council

<https://canadasafetycouncil.org/mental-health-and-the-workplace/>



The games get pretty crazy at English teachers' parties.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR PAY STUB WORKSHOP

Questions about your pay stub?

Be sure to RSVP for the "Get to know your pay stub" workshop being held on Wednesday, April 24th at 4pm at the ADTA Hall. Please RSVP on our website:

<http://www.adta.bc.ca/getting-to-know-your-paystub-workshop.html>

### New Teacher Induction

The New Teacher Induction Ceremony will be held on May 22, 2019. Teachers who are eligible to attend will receive an invitation from the ADTA. Staff Reps are asked to find out who has been invited and to attend the ceremony with them, if possible. We hope to host some special guests from the BCTF who will help us officially welcome you to your union.

### Retirement Gala

For those teachers who plan to retire this year, please inform the ADTA so that you can be invited to our excellent Retirement Gala at Harrison Hot Springs. Retirees and their spouses are invited to the reception and presentation followed by dinner in the Copper Room. This year's celebration will be held on June 21, 2019. Even if your retirement is not yet public knowledge, we will maintain your privacy and not share this information but we would like to include you at our gala.

Email Nicole at [nicoleadta34@shaw.ca](mailto:nicoleadta34@shaw.ca).

*"There's never enough time to do all the nothing you want."*

*Bill Watterson, Calvin and Hobbes*

"In 1985, the Federation launched a Charter challenge claiming that the denial of full bargaining rights for teachers was a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In response, in 1987 the provincial Social Credit government passed Bills 19 and 20, giving teachers full bargaining rights at the local level, including the right to strike, but removing statutory membership in the BCTF."

"Collective Bargaining" - <https://www.bctf.ca/history/rooms/bargaining> - author unknown



### Employee and Family Assistance Program

Are you aware of the Employee and Family Assistance Program? You can get legal, financial, health, nutrition, relationship and elder care help and advice. The best part is it is free and totally confidential. The link to the brochure is here: [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#)

"The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress. Out of its bold struggles, economic and social reform gave birth to unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, government relief for the destitute and, above all, new wage levels that meant not mere survival but a tolerable life. The captains of industry did not lead this transformation; they resisted it until they were overcome. When in the thirties the wave of union organization crested over the nation, it carried to secure shores not only itself but the whole society."

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., speech to the state convention of the Illinois AFL-CIO, Oct. 7, 1965

## BCTF Executive Members 2019 2020

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 TRABANT  
 BAILLARGEON  
 EDWARDS  
 POLUKOSHKO  
 TREPANIER  
 FIGURSKY  
 DUMONT  
 WOOD  
 TOSZAK

### CALENDAR / UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

Get to Know Your Paystub Workshop	Wednesday, April 24th
ADTA Annual General Meeting	Wednesday, May 15th
New Teacher Induction	Wednesday, May 22nd
Retirement Gala	Friday, June 21st
Year End Bash	Thursday, June 27th

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