



Sean Hayes  
STA President



Phone: 778-426-1426 Fax: 778-426-0716

# President's Newsletter

June, 2011

## Strike Vote and Potential Job Action

As you will have heard by now, the May BCTF Representative Assembly passed several motions outlining the details of a potential June strike vote and potential September job action. The motions are as follows:

1. That, on the advice of the Executive Committee, if there is a lack of progress in negotiations, a provincial LRB supervised strike vote be conducted between June 24, 27, and 28, 2011.
2. That given the authority of this strike vote, phase one of collective action begin on September 6, 2011.
3. That each subsequent phase of our collective action strategy be authorized by a successful provincial vote.
4. That Phase One of the collective action strategy will be province-wide and focused on serving our students:
  - a. Members will:
    - i. teach.
    - ii. maintain communications with parents regarding student progress.
    - iii. maintain communications with appropriate officials regarding the health and safety of students and staff.
  - b. Members will not:
    - i. undertake any mandated supervision of students outside of regularly scheduled classes.
    - ii. attend any meetings with management.
    - iii. submit student attendance information to administration, including any electronic formats.
    - iv. provide administrative officers with any routine printed, written, or electronic communications.
    - v. accept any printed, written, or electronic communication from an administrative officer, unless it is necessary to class start up.
    - vi. engage in mandated reporting.
    - vii. administer or mark any mandated or employer initiated assessment.

In anticipation of this strike vote, **each site will be receiving a visit from an STA Executive member over the coming weeks.** Please check with your staff rep for the date and time of your school visit, and please make every effort to attend this important meeting.

Voting will occur at each site (exact dates and times to come), and will be conducted under the supervision of our Local Returning Officer, Donnie Peterson. Stay tuned for more details.

## STA Annual General Meeting

The STA held its AGM on Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at Bayside Middle School. Quorum was easily achieved as teachers from all over Saanich crowded in to hear BCTF President Susan Lambert update us all on the state of bargaining, the potential for job action, the Supreme Court decision on Bills 27/28, and the potential for (insidious) changes at the BC College of Teachers.

The meeting also approved the 2011/2012 STA Budget, a few STA Constitution changes, some significant Pro D changes (see next article), and elected a *full slate* STA Executive Committee (the first full EC in years). Elected to work hard on your behalf next year are:

President:	Sean Hayes
First Vice President:	Donnie Peterson
Second Vice President:	Amanda Wilson
Secretary:	Rand Howat*
Treasurer:	Mark Skanks*
Local Representatives (2):	Donnie Peterson and Mike Ewan (also remains Bargaining Chair)
Professional Development:	Holly Mair/Audrey Hayes* (co-chairs)
Program:	Joe Winkler*
Professional Communication:	Peggy Watson*
Social Justice:	Diane Hayashi*
Teachers-on-Call:	Anne Stewart
Health and Safety:	Patsy McCarter
First Nations:	Ginny Underwood

\* new to Executive

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the members of this year's Executive Committee who will not be continuing next year: Sara Jolivet, Pat Stevens and Gloria Hawkins. We owe an extra special "thanks" to Gloria who is leaving us after more than 14 years as Treasurer. Thanks Gloria!

## STA to Assume Control of Pro D Funds

Have you ever wondered where our Pro D money comes from? Our Collective Agreement (Article F.15) spells out *how* we generate our Pro D money (\$230 per FTE from the Board, \$50 per FTE from the STA), but it does not spell out *who should control* these funds. Up until now, the Board Office has housed and dispensed all Pro D funds, but the STA Annual General Meeting has voted to change this arrangement.

Starting next year, all Pro D funds will be housed in an Association bank account (meaning we will accrue interest on any surplus), and will be completely administered and dispensed by the STA. It is our hope that this move will allow teachers to develop a greater sense of ownership of all things Pro D (while simultaneously diminishing some administrators' inappropriate sense of ownership of these funds). The process for accessing Pro D funds will remain the same, with school based Pro D reps approving reimbursements according to school policies, but all accounting will now occur at the STA Office, and the money will be sent out via STA cheques. In order to ensure a smooth transition to this new arrangement, please make sure your school has a Pro D representative in place for next September.

## Free iPads!

No...seriously. In an attempt to get more teachers to sign up for *MyBCTF* (the secure members' portal I told you about in the last newsletter), the BCTF is giving away nine free iPad2s. These iPads will be given to participating teachers randomly drawn from all registered members at sign-up milestones (2,000 members, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 7,000, 10,000, 15,000, 20,000, and 25,000). If you are signed up, you are eligible to win in all subsequent draws. The sooner you sign up, the more chances to win. Of course, MyBCTF will also be a critical source of information for teachers as we head into what promises to be a (job) action packed 2011/12 school year.

So, click on the main BCTF website ( [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca) ) and create an account today (instructions can be found here: <http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Announcements/WinIpad.pdf> ).

## Premium Holiday

You might remember hearing from me last year (in my February 2010 newsletter to be exact) that the Board was switching to the BCPSEA Benefits Buying Group as our benefits administrator. While this switch did not affect our actual benefits in any way, it did allow the Board to save significantly on their annual fees, and they are passing some of the savings on to you! Next September and October, teachers will be given a premium holiday for their extended health deductions. Watch for this on your month-end statements.

## Bargaining Update

Given the fact that we are heading for a strike vote, you won't be surprised to hear that provincial bargaining is not going well. No progress has been made with respect to the BCTF's objective of pushing more items to local bargaining tables. In fact, BCPSEA's proposal around the "split of issues" would see the scope of local bargaining significantly narrow, not expand.

In addition, government also sent a strong message at the last session when Deputy Minister James Gorman gave an ominous PowerPoint entitled "Collective Bargaining to sustain a strong Public Education System." This presentation made it clear that the government does not see our collective agreement as being consistent with the Ministry's vision for 21st Century learning. Although not overtly stated, it became apparent that government considers it necessary to make multiple strips to our collective agreement in order to align our contracts with this vision. This potential was reinforced when BCPSEA tabled its proposals for this round of bargaining. Their objectives are based on six themes, with a clear goal of strengthening management rights in many areas. These will potentially include:

- stripping seniority, layoff, and recall rights
- reducing our professional autonomy language
- restricting leaves
- evaluating all teachers annually
- removing protections on discipline and dismissal
- linking professional development to ministry goals
- maintaining flexibility and financial efficiency in class size/class composition

For an update on the local bargaining table, don't forget to check our website for the latest Bargaining Bulletin (<http://saanichteachers.com/>).

## 2010/2011 Grievances

Just as I did last year, I thought it might not be a bad idea to update you all on the various grievances that have been filed by the STA over the course of this school year (or left over from last year). I think many teachers find the very idea of a grievance to be distasteful, but it is important to remember that a grievance is really just an organized set of rules we have agreed to use to help us address (and hopefully settle) disagreements between the Employer and the Association. Here is a brief summary of the active grievance files from this year:

ISSUE	RESULT
Teacher resigned without being told of the option of working part-time. Contract rights and seniority lost as a result.	Teacher was reinstated with contract rights and 10 years seniority
Teacher not given experience credit while on long-term sick leave – potential discrimination	Referred to the BCTF for decision as to whether or not to send to arbitration
Employer stopped holding District Health and Safety Committee meetings (called for in Collective Agreement)	Committee reinstated (with some minor changes)
Class size and composition – various classes	Still in process... likely to be sent to the BCTF for inclusion in provincial process
New (birth) moms denied access to parental leave SUB top-up (found to be discriminatory in a recent Victoria arbitration)	Referred to arbitration
New (birth) dads denied access to parental leave SUB top-up	Referred to arbitration
Class size and composition second semester	Still in process
Failure to post Mobility jobs “as vacated” (left over from 2009/2010)	Still in process
General SIDES posting practices - doesn't follow agreed to process (from 2009/2010)	Still in process
SIDES qualification (from 2009/2010)	Still in process. Potential resolution being considered involves qualification course(s) offered by the Calgary Board of Education

Well... we made it through another year. Special thanks to the Executive Committee and school “union teams” for doing all of their important work (by the way, does your school have a Staff Rep, Pro D Rep, and Staff Committee Chair for next year?) – and, of course, a very special thanks to Sally Glen for another great year.

I hope you all have a wonderful and restful summer holiday. I think we will all need it.

*Sean*