



Sean Hayes
STA President



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

President's Newsletter

October, 2010

STA October General Meeting

It is not often that an item shows up in two consecutive newsletters, but our upcoming General Meeting is important enough to mention twice. Please be reminded that this is the meeting where we are going to **elect our Saanich Bargaining Committee members** for our upcoming round of negotiations, as well as the meeting where we are going to **decide on the items that Saanich teachers want to see on both the provincial and local bargaining tables**. Salary or benefits improvements? Prep time or improved leave provisions? As the old saying goes... you can't complain if you don't vote. Please find some time in your busy schedules to attend this important meeting.

- What: STA General Meeting
 When: October 13th, 2010 @ 3:45 p.m.
 Where: Claremont Secondary School, Ridge Theatre
 Why: > Election of Saanich Bargaining Committee (**still seeking nominees!**)
 > Ratification of Local and Provincial Bargaining Priorities

New Teacher Induction

It turns out we will be holding another important meeting this month. Every year, the Saanich Teachers' Association holds a New Teacher Induction, with this year's event being held on October 27th at the Brentwood Bay Lodge and Spa. The purpose of this evening is to formally welcome newly hired contract teachers and TOCs to the STA/BCTF.

Not surprisingly, there are not too many newly hired teachers in Saanich these days, so we are inviting **any teacher in their first 5 years of teaching** to attend this event (provided you have not already been inducted). This is chance to meet and mingle with Board Office senior management, Saanich Board of Education trustees, and STA and BCTF executive committee members (BCTF president Susan Lambert will be joining us). In addition to some welcoming remarks and drinks and nibbles, **all inductees will receive a free year's PSA (Provincial Specialist Association) membership**. Please contact Sally at the STA office (sally@saanichteachers.com) if you are interested in attending.

- What: STA New Teacher Induction
 When: Wednesday, October 27th, 2010 @ 6:00 p.m.
 Where: Brentwood Bay Lodge and Spa, Gallery Room
 849 Verdier Avenue, Brentwood Bay

The Government Wants to Hear From You!

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services is seeking public input as they build the 2011 provincial budget. The all-party committee of the Legislative Assembly is continuing the province-wide consultations in September and October and is seeking the views of British Columbians. It is very important that the voices of public school teachers are heard loud and clear. You can give your feedback by attending a public meeting, making a written submission, sending in an audio or video file, or (probably most conveniently) filling out an on-line survey. I just spent 10 minutes working on my submission... now I'll go edit out the swear words, and I'll have done my part. Please click on the following link, and spend a few minutes letting this government know your thoughts on the current state of public education funding.

<http://www.leg.bc.ca/budgetconsultations/>

Retirement Seminars

Once again this year, The Teachers' Pension Plan is putting on two different Retirement/Pension Seminars (offered in Victoria a total of five times).

Your Pension, Your Future

- 🍏 for teachers not yet near retirement who want to learn about the Teachers' Pension Plan. How is it calculated? How do I read my statement every year? Can I buy back pensionable service?
- 🍏 7:00-8:30 p.m., November 18th, 2010 at the Comfort Hotel and Conference Centre

Thinking About Retiring

- 🍏 for teachers nearing retirement who want to consider their pension options.
- 🍏 9:00-11:00 a.m. and 12:30-2:30 p.m. on both November 20th, 2010 and February 26th, 2011 at the Comfort Hotel and Conference Centre

Register online at:

<http://tpp.pensionsbc.ca>

Justice Delayed (Again)

In these newsletters, I have been trying to keep you updated on the progress of the Supreme Court challenge of Bills 27 and 28 – the 2002 Liberal legislation that stripped many crucial working condition provisions from teachers' collective agreements. Unfortunately, the court days that were scheduled for September have been delayed until mid-November (thanks to the government's "discovery" of several boxes of previously undisclosed documents). If you are wondering what all the fuss is about, the September issue of Teacher magazine has a good summary article on the case. Go dig it out of your staffroom's recycling bin, or click on the link below.

<http://www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/Publications/TeacherNewsmag/archive/2010-2011/2010-09/index.pdf>

Zimbra Reminders

Like it or hate it, email is a huge part of our working lives and it is here to stay. Our recent experiences with BCfeCES (sorry... I couldn't resist) have allowed us to appreciate Zimbra's ease of use and functionality. While it is a quick and efficient way to communicate, it is important to remember that emails sent using Zimbra are much more like postcards than sealed envelopes. As a product supplied by the Employer, they can potentially read any and all messages sent using Zimbra. It helps me to remember these wise words I heard some years ago: never press send unless you are comfortable with the contents of your email showing up on the front page of the newspaper. We should all keep this advice in mind.

By the way, don't forget that the STA folder on Zimbra (Briefcase tab... District_Forms folder) contains all sorts of STA goodies, including the Collective Agreement and Staffing Letter of Understanding. Have a look.

Non Instructional Days

With one NID already behind us, and another a few short weeks away, I thought it would be a good idea to remind everyone the rules and regulations around NIDs. Here is the relevant Collective Agreement language, followed by some explanations.

- D.14.3** The regular work year for teachers shall include no fewer than five (5) non-instructional days for professional development and/or parent-teacher interviews and/or report card preparation.
- F.4.2** Two of the five available non-instructional days as prescribed in Article D.14.3 shall be used for teacher professional development activities as approved by the Joint Professional Development Committee.
- F.4.3** Three of the five available non-instructional days as prescribed in Article D.14.3 shall be used for staff determined activities.
- D.14.8** As a part of their regular duties, part-time teachers shall participate in attendance on Non-Instructional Days as follows:
- Part-time teachers who work part of each day shall participate in a Non-Instructional Day on at least a pro-rated basis to the teacher's assignment;
 - Part-time teachers who do not work on each instructional day shall participate in a Non Instructional Day for their normal instructional time when the Non-Instructional Day occurs on that day of work;
 - Part-time teachers requested by the administrator to participate in a Non-Instructional Day longer than their scheduled time, or on a day not scheduled for work, shall be compensated in the form of pay or time-in-lieu as set out in B.41.1, the form of such compensation to be determined by the teacher.

We get five NIDs, which can be used for three purposes: **professional development, parent-teacher interviews, and preparing report cards**. Two of the days *must* be used for professional development; the other three days can be used for any of the three permitted uses. These decisions are made by the Joint ProD Committee (the F.4.2 dates), and (hopefully) by your school's ProD Committee (how to designate the other three days as per D.14.3).

Once a NID has been designated for professional development, teachers are free to choose whatever professional development activity they like, so long as it qualifies as legitimate ProD. There is no obligation to participate in activities set by administration, or even by your colleagues. The exception is the School Planning Day. This is a sixth NID (this year on March 7th) that is not covered by the Collective Agreement. These are leftovers from the old "accreditation days", and they are completely in the control of administration.