

March 2019

S.T.A. in TOUCH

A Newsletter of the Saanich Teachers' Association -- BCTF Members of Local #63 (Saanich)

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President's Message

Last month, I discussed our new Assistant Superintendent. I had mentioned that he has brought the cold weather from Ontario and maybe even the snow..... Well, it turns out that it was not a maybe, and he brought a "triple header" snow closure with him. Dave, our superintendent, blames Paul for the snow, while Paul is more than willing to take full credit for it. It is an interesting dynamic that I will be keeping my eye on.

As you know with Paul coming into the District we have had to say good bye to several people from the Human Resources department Breanne Stoudt, Laurie Calverly, and Mark Fraser have left the district. This has resulted in significant changes in the Human Resources department. Dave has let me know that we should be seeing a new Human Resources director announced before Spring Break, but in the interim, we have Joan Axford back. You may recall Joan as she is a past secretary-treasurer for the Employer, past Pension Plan Trustee, and 1 of only a handful of BCTF Honorary Members. I have had the opportunity to meet with Joan to work on some of the issues that I had been working on with the

Employer over the year. Our meetings have been the most productive meetings that I have attended with the Employer since Paul Standing left the position 2 years ago. Speaking of Paul Standing, he has been spotted in the Board Office lately, I wonder what he is up to.

Given the significant changes in HR, if you do communicate with HR by email, feel free to CC me on those communications. I will be able to follow along with the communication to see if anything is being forgotten, which is bound to happen with the number of changes with so many staff in such a short period of time.



Saanich's former Secretary-Treasurer Joan Axford, with former STA President Sean Hayes, shows off her BCTF Honorary Membership – awarded for her years of tireless advocacy for public education.

Don Peterson, STA President
lp63@bctf.ca

President's Report

by Don Peterson



Bargaining

Provincial bargaining has started and there are dates set all the way to June. Seems that both parties are interested in having a deal by June 30th. Updates to bargaining are not going to be emailed out, so you will want to check your "MyBCTFPortal" on occasion to check for updates. Wednesday night, there was a new update posted, so please check that out.

For Local bargaining, the STA is preparing our proposals. These are based on the objectives that you set at the October General Meeting. The bargaining teams will be meeting on Friday, March 15th, to discuss the protocols. Protocols are the rules in which we bargain. This includes where we bargain, how we communicate, and what colour of paper we will use. Come April, we will be trading proposals.

Call for Nominations

As per STA By-Law No. 7, all STA Executive Committee positions are up for election at our AGM in May. (Official AGM notice to come in April.)

They are:

- President
- 1st Vice President
- 2nd Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Local Representatives (2 positions)
- Bargaining
- Professional Development
- Program
- Social Justice
- Teacher on Call Representative
- Health & Safety
- First Nations
- Members at Large (up to 3 positions)

If you would like more information on any of these positions, please let me know at the office, and I would be more than happy to discuss them with you.

Contract Awareness

- **April 17th, 2019 @ 4:00 pm:**
Benefits

Do you want to know more about how our benefit package works? What is this Pacific Blue cross card for? How do you submit receipts? Is there anything you can do to help prepare for a family emergency? If you have a question about benefits who do you ask?

For this Contract Awareness Session, the STA is looking at having a benefits expert from the District to help lead this conversation.

If you want to come out and learn more about your benefit package, please email Audrey at staoffice@saanichteachers.com

Process on By-law and Policy changes

At our May AGM, we often make changes to the STA By-Laws and Policy changes. These changes usually come from our Executive Committee, but any member can put forward motions to change our By-Laws and Policies. If have an idea on how the STA could do something differently, please give me a call at the STA office, and we can discuss how you can bring an idea forward.

Thinking about retiring?

If you are thinking about retiring and you are wanting to access the **Early Retirement Incentive Plan (B.37)** Please keep these deadlines in mind:

- If you want to retire at the end of the school year, you need to notify the employer on **April 1st**.
- If you want to retire at a term or semester break between November 1st and January 31st, you need to notify the employer on **May 1st**.

The Association is also organizing a pension seminar that is focused on plan members who are within 1-3

years of retiring. If you are considering retiring over the next few years, you will want to attend this seminar. The seminar works as follows:

- May 17th, 4:00pm – 6:00pm: There will be a dinner seminar at the STA office. It will be led by **Victor Choy**, the BCTF advisor for the Pension Plan.
- May 17th, 6:20pm – 9:00pm: **Victor** will lead 20-minute one-on-one session with each participant.
- May 18th, 9:00am – 12:30pm: **Victor** will continue the 20-minutes session.

If you are interested and have not yet let us know, please contact us. If you have already let us know, keep an eye on your email for information on how to sign up for a time.

BCTF AGM

This is your official BCTF AGM 2019 Delegation:

1. Deryck Ball (Prospect Lake)
2. Amanda Byrne (Sidney)
3. Denise Jones (Cordova Bay)
4. Ayala Johnson (Royal Oak)
5. Michael MacEwan (Bayside)
6. Heather Simpson (Lochside)

7. Anne Stewart (KELSET)
8. Brittany Lapierre (KELSET)
9. Luanne Marchand (Brentwood)
10. Taryn Mah (Royal Oak)

Don Peterson will also be in attendance but will be attending as a Chairperson of the meeting. The meeting is at the Victoria Conference Centre, so if you are downtown from March 16th-19th, 2019 feel free to drop by. Any member of the BCTF can come to the meeting and speak on motions, but only the elected delegates can vote.

Please have a look at the [2019 AGM documents](#). This folder gives you all the information you need for the AGM. Please take note of the Reports and Resolutions booklet. This booklet contains all the motions that will be debated at the AGM. If you have an opinion on any of these motions feel free to contact one or all of the members of the STA delegation to express your opinions on these motions.

If you happen to see any of these delegates in the hall, please give them a big, “Thank you” for volunteering 4 days out of their Spring Break to do this important work on behalf of the STA.

Don Peterson
S.T.A. President

Questions from the Membership

How are union dues set?

One of the most important functions of BCTF meetings is to establish the annual fees paid by members. This year, for instance, BCTF members will pay 1.79% of their annual salary in union dues (with an additional percentage paid to the local Association). Some folks think this number is too high; some feel it is just right; some might even be willing to pay more (honestly, they’re out there). So, the question is: who sets this fee?

The easy answer is, you do. Wait a minute, you don’t remember voting on the fee percentage? Did you have a say at all? It turns out you do have a say in these sorts of decisions. Using the fee as an example, here is the process (including your opportunity to exert some influence) the BCTF uses for decisions such as these.

Step 1: The BCTF Finance Committee examines the financial health of the BCTF and makes a series of recommendations to the BCTF Executive Committee.

Your influence: You can run to be on the BCTF Finance Committee, or on the BCTF Executive Committee, for that matter. Furthermore, some the members of the Finance Committee are elected at a BCTF Representative Assembly, and you could run to be a Local Rep for Saanich and help choose the successful candidates. At the very least, you could contact your LR's to let them know what you think about the folks you'd like to see on the Finance Committee.

Step 2: The BCTF Executive Committee makes recommendations for cuts, and corresponding fee recommendation, for the RA to consider.

Your influence: You can directly write to the members of the BCTF Executive Committee at any time. They receive many emails from the "rank and file" and take this valuable feedback into consideration when they debate and vote on motions at the Executive table.

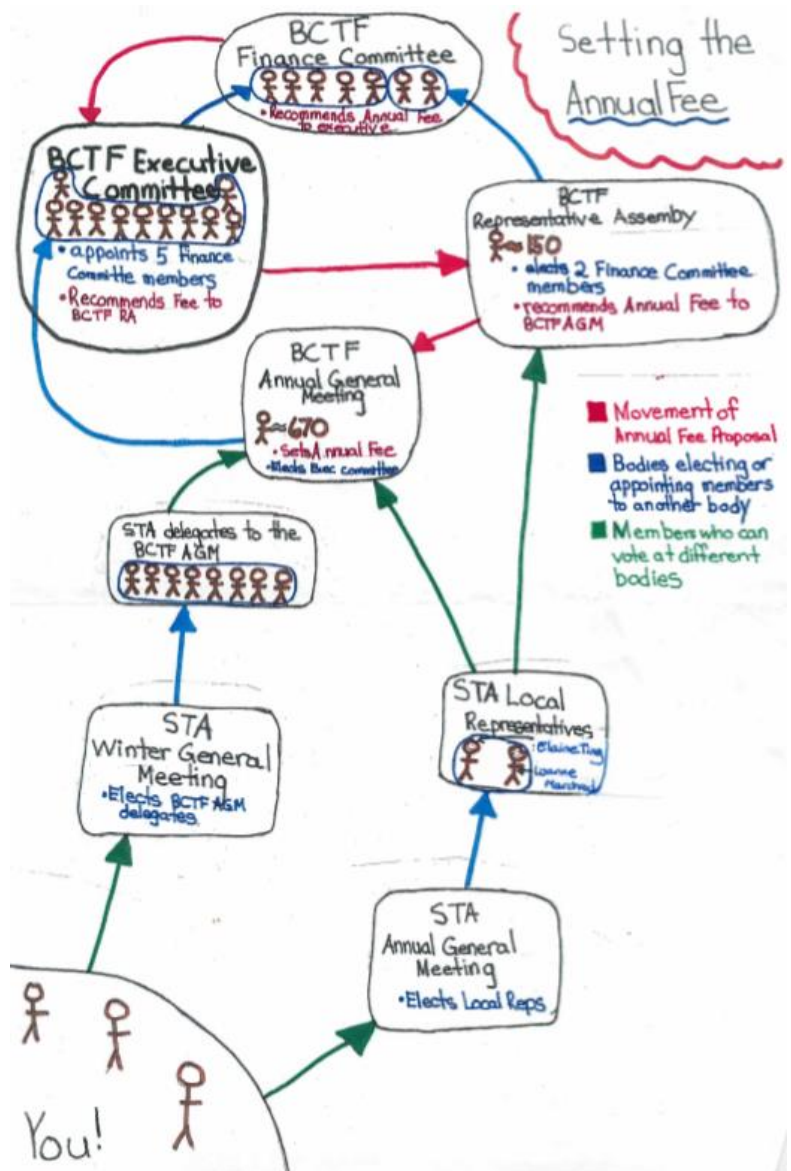
Step 3: The Winter RA debates (and often amends) the Executive Committee recommendation, and ultimately passes its own fee recommendation, to be sent to the AGM.

Your influence: Once again, you could be one of Saanich's two Local Reps, or you could simply contact your Local Reps to let them know what kind of fee you are hoping to see for the following year.

Step 4: The BCTF AGM debates the fee recommendations, and ultimately votes to set the yearly fee.

Your influence: You can run to be the one of Saanich's two LR's and automatically get to attend the AGM, or you can show up to Saanich's February General Meeting and put your name forward to be one of the additional eight Saanich AGM delegates. If a four-day meeting over Spring Break isn't your cup of tea, you can simply contact the Saanich AGM delegates and let them know what kind of fee you would like them to vote for. And, of course, the AGM is also where we elect the following year's BCTF Executive Committee.

So, as you can see, while it might seem like the BCTF is being run by a few people "over in Vancouver", we are, in fact, a very democratic organization, and you have multiple opportunities to influence the processes



and decisions of the Federation. You just have to get involved and let your locally elected folks know what you think.

As the old saying goes, if you don't vote, you can't complain.

Know Your Collective Agreement

Congratulations to **Ayala Johnson** for winning the fourth edition of the, "Know Your Collective Agreement." A gift card is in the mail for you!

This month:

Non-Instructional Days and Part-Time Teachers

*You are a new teacher, and you are lucky enough to have a 0.6 position. You work Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The Ministry Priorities NID is coming up on Friday, May 10th, 2019. This is on a day that you normally do not work. Your administrator approaches you to say that because you work 0.6, you are required to attend 0.6 of the NIDs, you have yet to attend a NID this year; therefore, you are required to attend work on the Ministry Priorities day. **Is your administrator correct? Cite the appropriate article.***

Last month:

Camera Crook

*Your principal asks you to use your personally owned digital camera to take some picture of the science fair for the school website. Unfortunately, when you return to your class after lunch, you find that your camera has been stolen from your locked desk. **What should you do? Will the school replace it? Cite the article.***

Answer

The issue is covered in **Article B.7.2**. This article compels the employer to reimburse teachers, up to a maximum of \$150, for any "loss, damage or personal insurance deductible to personally owned professional material brought to the employee's workplace to assist in the executive of the employee's duties."

Staff Committee Corner

Staff Committee Handbook

The STA Executive Committee just struck a sub-committee to look at designing the STA Staff Committee Handbook. We hope to have something ready to go by September. If you are a Staff Committee chair and have suggestions on what could be put into a Staff Committee Handbook, give us a call or send an email.

Social Justice Report

by Amanda Byrne & Ayala Johnson

Social Justice Dates for March & April

- ★ A full calendar of events can be found on the BCTF website: [National/International SJ Calendar](#)
- ★ Looking for more information on Social Justice? Check out the [BCTF Social Justice](#) tab.
- ★ This month's Seeds of Justice: [Spotlight on Antiracism](#)
- ★ For past issues of the BCTF Social Justice Newsletter: [Seeds of Justice](#)

March	April
3-9: International Women's Week	2: Equal Pay Day
8: International Women's Day	4: Refugee Rights Day
18: National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day	7-13: National Wildlife Week
21: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	10: International Day of Pink
21-27: Week of Solidarity with People Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination	12: Day of Silence (against LGBTQ2S+ name calling)
22: World Water Day	14-20: Prevention of Violence Against Women Week
31: Transgender Day of Visibility	22: Earth Day
	28: National Day of Mourning

Amanda Byrne-Jungen & Ayala Johnson
socialjustice@saanichteachers.com

Professional Development

T A P E S T R Y On February 15th approximately 400 educators attended the "Tri-District" conference, held at Esquimalt High School, featuring dozens of workshops on topics of interest to educators working at all levels of the K-12 system. Of the close to 400 attendees, approximately 50 were Saanich Teachers. This annual conference is often referred to as the "Tri-District" conference, but actually, that is a bit of a misnomer. The conference is organized by a committee made up of teachers from the Sooke, Saanich and Victoria locals, and while the conference does receive funds and cooperation from School District 61, the planning and running of the conference is done by teachers.

This year there were close to 60 workshops offered, with topics as diverse as Woodworking in the Elementary Classroom; Cardio Corner - (an in-class, engaging, and active way to provide students with a movement break); and When School is the Safest Place to Be (an Introduction to Trauma-Informed Practice). We had a dynamic and engaging keynote speaker, flown in from Syracuse New York: Julie Causton. She opened the conference with some excellent anecdotes of child-centred and student-led inclusion strategies, and followed up with well-attended "Heartset of Inclusive Education" workshops in both the morning and afternoon sessions. It was touch-and-go for a while there, because she had been delayed en-route due to the snowy weather. In fact, although she made it to Victoria in time, her luggage had been lost somewhere along the way!

The three snow days right before the conference created a few other problems for the Tapestry team, and for the conference attendees too. The excellent chef at Esquimalt High was unable to do his prep on a normal schedule because of the school being closed, but still managed to produce a hearty and tasty Indian themed lunch for us all. He and his culinary students did a wonderful job in difficult circumstances. A couple of dozen Leadership and Theatre students were indispensable in the set-up and take-down process, as well as being on-hand to help everyone during the event. We had some student volunteers who could not make it to the conference because of the snow, and parking for attendees was even more difficult than usual for the same reason.

Each year, the Tapestry Committee tries to bring in presentations, exhibitors and community tables which will serve the Professional Development needs of as many local educators as possible. Through contributions from all three locals, the registration fees for this ambitious event are kept affordable.

A special thank-you to those Saanich teachers who stepped up and offered workshops at the conference, and kudos to all of you who braved the snow and slush to make this year's Tapestry one of the best in recent memory. See you next year!

STA Program Report

by Luanne Marchand



STA / SAA Retirement Banquet



SAVE
THE
Date

Friday, June 21, 2019

The Beach House

More details to come...

Mark your calendar!

Health & Safety

Hi everyone,

I hope the school year is continuing to treat you well and as a reminder, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you might have associated with health and safety. I will do my best to answer your questions, or at least point you in the right direction. Below are some updates I thought I would share.

Measles

There has been a recent outbreak of Measles in school-aged children in both Vancouver, BC, and Washington State. This has increased interest in the topics of measles itself, and associated vaccinations for measles. Please see the following Notice to School Districts from Island Health for more information. Link: <https://goo.gl/TD8gVf>

Safety Concerns?

If you, as a staff member, have safety concerns within your schools, you have a few options to explore. First, you can go to your site-based health and safety rep, second, you can bring the issue to your site-based health and safety committee, and third, you can send an email to myself, Joel Danyluk. It is important to report unsafe conditions to keep our buildings safe.

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee in Your School

All SD63 sites are required to have a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and each site should have a bulletin board where important health and safety information is posted. Please seek that information out, or better yet, have a say and join your building's committee.

ESS

New health and safety resources have been added by the district under the health and safety tab of our ESS page, specifically focusing on computer ergonomics and safety in the Science and Technology classrooms. Please have a look when you have time, there are some great reminders of safe practices.

Stay safe,

Joel Danyluk

Notes from the STA Office

by Audrey Hayes



Are you retiring this year?



Don't leave without saying good-bye! Let the STA office know when you are retiring and be sure to give us your forwarding email address so that we can send you details about the STA Retirement Banquet in June.

Emailing the STA Office?

Need to email the STA office, but not sure who to email?

We have **two** email addresses:

- ★ If it is highly confidential, email Don Peterson at: Lp63@bctf.ca
- ★ If it is confidential and you do not wish it to be sent through the district email account, email us at: staoffice@saanichteachers.com
- ★ Want to send an email to our (non-confidential) Outlook account (replacing the Zimbra address): sta_office@saanichschools.ca



Are you moving? Has your name changed?

Are you moving or have you moved in the past year? Have you changed your name? Don't forget to let the us know.

- ★ Please send the STA office an email with your new name and/or contact information. sta_office@saanichschools.ca
- ★ Also, be sure to update your personal information at:
 - [BCTF Member Portal](#)
 - [School District 63](#)
 - [Teachers' Pension Plan](#)
 - [Teacher Regulation Branch](#)



Monthly Contest

Every month we have a very challenging question that can be answered by reading the current edition of the STA-in-Touch. If you answer the contest question correctly, you will be entered in the draw for the monthly prize.

QUESTION
OF THE
MONTH

This month's question: *When is the next Contract Awareness presentation and what will be the topic?*

Please email your answer to Deryck Ball dball@saanichschools.ca by **Monday, March 25, 2019.**

Good Luck!

Let's Get Social!

The STA is getting more and more connected to the world of Social Media. Join us!

Our **website:**



www.saanichteachers.com

Follow us on **Facebook:**



Saanich Teachers' Association

Follow us on **Twitter:**



@BCTF63

Phone us:



778-426-1426

Our **mailing address is:**



6843 Central Saanich Rd.
Victoria, BC V8Z 5V4

Email us:



staoffice@saanichteachers.com
sta_office@saanichschools.ca

IMPORTANT DATES FOR STA TEACHERS

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS: 1 HR TO FACILITATE PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Brentwood Elementary	Nov 14	Nov 15	Mar 6	Mar 7
Cordova Bay Elementary	Oct 23	Oct 24	Oct 25	Feb 27
Deep Cove Elementary	Oct 10	Oct 11	Nov 27	Mar 7
Keating Elementary	Oct 10	Oct 11	Nov 22	Feb 28
KELSET Elementary	Oct 4	Nov 21	Nov 22	Feb 28
Lochside Elementary	Nov 6	Nov 7	Nov 8	Mar 7
Prospect Lake Elementary	Oct 23	Oct 24	Oct 25	Feb 28
Sidney Elementary	Sept 26	Sept 27	Dec 5	Mar 6
Bayside Middle	Sept 20	Oct 10	Oct 11	May 16
North Saanich Middle	Sept 19	Sept 20	Oct 18	Mar 15
Royal Oak Middle	Oct 16	Oct 17	Feb 13	May 23
Claremont Secondary	Sept 26	Nov 29	Feb 12	Apr 11
Parkland Secondary	Oct 18	Nov 29	Feb 7	May 9
Stelly's Secondary	Sept 27	Nov 21	Feb 21	May 2

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

Friday, October 19, 2018	Province Wide
Friday, November 23, 2018	School Based
Monday, January 28, 2019	Curriculum Implementation
Friday, February 15, 2019	Tri-District
Monday, March 4, 2019	School Based
Monday, April 8, 2019	School Based
Friday, May 10, 2019	Ministry Priorities

~~Winter Break: December 24 – January 4, 2019~~

Spring Break/School Closure: March 18 – March 29, 2019

LAST DAY OF CLASSES: THURSDAY, JUNE 27TH, 2019

The Teachers Institute



The Teachers Institute

on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy
1 week at Parliament
 An unforgettable professional development opportunity.




Apply by April 15
www.parl.gc.ca/teachers

The Teachers Institute brings together 85 educators from across Canada for an engaging and informative week in February to learn about Parliament, governance, and citizenship.

Benefits for Participants	Program Highlights	Eligibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies for teaching about Parliament, democracy, governance and citizenship; • Learn from political, procedural and pedagogical experts; • Discuss key issues in citizenship and parliamentary democracy; • Forge contacts with dynamic teacher colleagues from across the country; and, • Take what you learn back to your classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons and other parliamentarians; • Observe Question Period, parliamentary debates and committee meetings; • Analyze critical issues with parliamentary experts; • Develop important resource materials that support civics teaching; and, • Celebrate excellence in teaching about Parliament, governance, democracy and citizenship. 	<p>We welcome applications from educators who...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • currently work in the field of education in Canada (Kindergarten to Grade 12 / CEGEP); • currently teach in a subject area related to citizenship, civics or social studies; • are prepared to undertake a follow-up activity to extend the impact of the Teachers Institute; and, • have not previously participated.

The Teachers Institute is hosted by the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons and is organized by the Library of Parliament.



Participants from across Canada are selected on merit by peer review based on teaching excellence and involvement in professional or curriculum development activities.

Program Fee:
 If selected there is a \$500 registration fee. (Travel to Ottawa, accommodation and most meals are covered)



Apply by April 15
www.parl.gc.ca/teachers

Contact Us:
education@parl.gc.ca