

The Advocate

In consensus atque unitate stat potentia

"There is strength in unity"

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 5- April 2017

A message from ADTA President, Doug Smuland

ADTA GENERAL MEETING & ELECTION

ELECTION: On Wednesday April 12th at 4:00 PM the ADTA Annual General Meeting will be held at the ADTA Hall. Members wanting to run for a position on the ADTA Executive for the 2017-2018 school year need to either inform the ADTA ahead of the meeting or allow their name to stand during the meeting. Candidates will have the opportunity to provide a short 2-minute speech at the meeting to clarify their position on issues and advocate for their election. Please see the most recent ADTA newsletter for Executive position titles.

DUES: Each year the AGM sets the annual budget and establishes members' dues for the coming year. The ADTA Executive is advocating that a fee increase be considered by members

PROPERTY: A conditional offer regarding the several pieces of property across the street from the ADTA Hall has been made. Information about the offer and its potential consequences and benefits will be discussed.

RESTORED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT LANGUAGE

Please take some time to re-read the newly restored CA language for Abbotsford and the Memorandum of Agreement that was recently voted on. It is always important that teachers are aware of the CA rights, but perhaps more so in the current context of planning for the coming school year and given the myriad of postings seen recently.

In particular, I would suggest that teachers review Article E.21 Assignment Within A School, and be aware that it has had restored to it the "equitable distribution of workload" language that had been missing. This language may have an effect on what and whom you teach in relation to others in your building. I would also suggest that teachers review the language in Article E.27 Job Postings and E.28 Filling Vacant Positions if they are interested in finding a new position in the District. For those who might be considering a posting in another District, I would recommend that you call the ADTA office for some counsel prior to resignation. *(For more on this topic see page 3)*

SCHOOL STAFFING DECISIONS FOR 2017-2018

Decisions in schools regarding staffing will soon begin in preparation for the 2017-18 school year. School Staff Committees, staffing committees and/or department heads will be meeting with school administration to plan for next year. This would be a good time to inform your administrator of any desires you have for a specific subject, grade, or assignment.

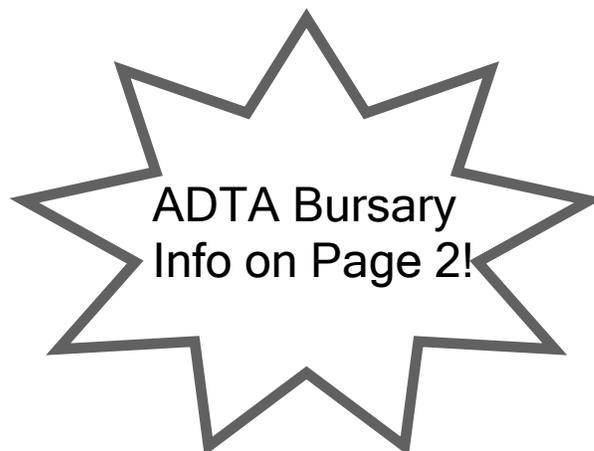
Teachers are reminded that the position of the Federation and the ADTA is that all members engaged in these staffing recommendations should participate only in school organizational decisions that are consistent with all aspects (class size limits, non-enrolling specialist ratios, caseload language, and other collective agreement guarantees) that have been restored by the Supreme Court of Canada decision.

THE CONTINUED USE OF PRIORITY MEASURES FUNDING

The Priority Measures funding that has added teachers to all schools in the District remains in effect until the end of June. For most schools, the funds have provided an additional staff member who has been working in the school for some weeks now.

When budgeting for these new positions, an amount of \$83,950 per teacher was established to cover the costs of salary and benefits. Knowing before they were hired that this would be more than what was needed to cover the costs of each of the many new teachers put in place, there were dates placed in the agreement to reallocate monies that were not spent.

When we passed the first date of reallocation on February 28, a decision was made to use the money to post numerous teacher-librarian positions that had been cut in the past. These postings closed on March 29, 2017. When we see who will be hired into these positions, we will again need to reallocate unspent monies. The next date for reallocation is March 31st. If you have suggestions for the use of any remaining money, please let the ADTA know.



NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

Teachers are reminded that there are two non-instructional days remaining this school year.

The first is on April 28th and is one of the two non-instructional days that the BC Ministry of Education has outlined be used for the purpose of providing teachers with an opportunity to participate in discussions and activities relating to the implementation of the curriculum documents.

This is not a day earmarked for the discussion of school goals or other administrative. If teachers are told that they must participate in activities unrelated to curriculum on this day, they are advised to contact the ADTA. The second day is on May 19th and is one of your 5 individual teacher directed PD days. For this day, teachers should have a plan in place about their own PD needs. Please have this plan in place well in advance of the day so that there is opportunity for discussion with your administrator should it be needed.

When asked, teachers are required to provide their Administrator with an outline of where they are going and what they are doing on these workdays. If a teacher's PD choice is not approved by an Administrator, teachers should complete and submit an appeal form to the ADTA.

Are you an ADTA Member and have a child graduating high school this year?
Don't forget to encourage them to apply for the [ADTA Bursary](#)

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

All applications and supporting documents must be received by April 15th

~ No applications will be accepted after the deadline date ~

~ Applications sent by fax or email will not be considered ~

Applications and supporting correspondence should be sent* or dropped off to:

Attn: Bursary Committee
Abbotsford District Teachers' Association
2570 Cyril Street
Abbotsford, BC V2S 2G2

**Due to the uncertainty of inter-school mail delivery it is highly recommended that applications not be sent via inter school mailbag.*

The ADTA Bursary Application can be found on our website or by clicking this [link](#).

ADTA AGM Notice

The ADTA Annual General Meeting will be taking place on Wednesday, April 12th, 4:00 pm at the ADTA Hall.

Topics that will be covered will be:

- ~ Executive Elections; 2nd Vice President, Local Rep, Social Justice & Secretary Treasurer
- ~ ADTA Property Issues
- ~ Annual Fees Discussion

Are you planning to retire by June 30, 2017?

Please be sure to let the ADTA know of your retirement intentions as we are in the midst of planning our June retirement gala.

Information received is kept in strictest confidence.

Email Nicole at nicoleadta34@shaw.ca

or by phone at 604-854-1946

RESTORED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT LANGUAGE

What has happened since the Supreme Court of Canada announced its decision?

How did we get to the March 3, 2017 Agreement-in-Committee?

Additional FAQ and updates on the implementation of teacher's restored language can be found on the ADTA blog on our [website](#)

Implementation Summary Sheet

Revised: March 9, 2017
ERRORS AND OMISSIONS EXCEPTED

SD 34 Abbotsford Restored Language

Class Size, Class Composition and Student Learning Conditions

Class Size Limits		Class Composition	
Class/Subject	Restored Language	High Incidence Students with Special Needs	Low Incidence Students with Special Needs
K	20	3 students with special needs maximum. May be exceeded by 1 student with agreement of teacher and SBT.	3 students with special needs maximum. May be exceeded by 1 student with agreement of teacher and SBT.
K-1	20		
1-3	22		
1-3 split	22		
1-3 multi-age	22		
3-4 split	25		
4-7	30		
Multi-Grade Splits (Grade 4 to 12)	28		
8-12	30		
Shop**	30		
Home/Econ**	30		
Science**	30		
Secondary English	30		
Band/Choir/PE	30*		
Special (EMH/TMH)	10	N/A	N/A

Specialist Teacher Ratios

	Restored Language
Counsellors	1:693
Learning Assistance Staffing	1:504
Special Education Resource Teachers	1:316
Teacher Librarians	1:702
ELL (ESL) Teachers	1:74

Note: In the event of any errors or omissions, the original restored language source document shall apply.

Who will defend public education?

By Maggie Milne Martens. Published in the Vancouver Sun on March 26, 2017

As the provincial election looms, the future of public education remains perilously uncertain. Persistent underfunding has eroded our public education system to the point of breaking, yet this stark reality is obscured by rhetorical sleight of hand, allegations of blame and “alternative facts.” Where are the political leaders with the courage and conviction to give more than lip service to the value of public education and make a real financial investment for the true benefit of B.C.’s future?

Finance Minister Mike de Jong has stated that education “is the most important service government provides.” In this, he is correct. A strong and equitable public education system is the cornerstone of a prosperous economy and a healthy democracy. Unfortunately, Budget 2017 remains insufficient to provide all children in B.C. with the quality public education they’re entitled to under law.

The increase of \$740 million for operational funding over the next three years is the bare minimum that government must do to avoid being in contempt of court or in contravention of its own per-pupil funding formula. Certainly, the additional funds promised to implement the Supreme Court-ordered restoration of class size and composition language will begin to redress untenable classroom conditions and improve teacher ratios for students with special-learning needs. However, this begrudged concession will not solve the funding crisis facing public education.

Given that the basic per-pupil funding hasn’t increased to match inflation, school districts across B.C. will once again need to cut vital educational services and supports to cover downloaded costs and balance their budgets as required by law. Last November, the B.C. School Trustees Association advised government that an estimated \$96 million in additional funding would be required, over and above last year’s sporadic funding announcements now annualized in the proposed budget, just to maintain educational services at their current levels. And this doesn’t factor in the additional costs related to implementing the restored language for class size and composition. After successive years of deep cuts, school district shortfalls aren’t the result of fiscal mismanagement or enrolment decline, but a failure of government to provide the predictable and sustainable funding needed to fulfil its duty to adequately fund public education.

Budget 2017 doesn’t address the many other deficits of public education that have accrued from decades of underfunding: It doesn’t provide supports for the tens of thousands of children designated with special needs that don’t even qualify for funding under the current model; it doesn’t provide relief for children living in poverty who require additional supports to succeed in school; it doesn’t address billions of dollars in deferred maintenance on buildings that are below provincial health and safety standards; it doesn’t restore the staff or

resources necessary to support arts education in elementary schools; it doesn’t allow high schools to offer the full range of core and elective courses; and it doesn’t fund the millions of dollars in technology, educational resources, teaching equipment and basic supplies and furniture that school districts now rely on parent fundraising and charitable donations to provide.

In B.C., one in five school-aged children live in poverty and are disproportionately from recent-immigrant, aboriginal or single-parent families. Their families can’t afford the basic school-supply fee let alone the thousands of dollars needed to privately outsource what has been systematically eliminated from the public school system. These kids don’t have the luxury of “choice” — that magical deflection concept that creates the illusion of abundant options in the context of manufactured scarcity. The failure to adequately fund public education across the full curriculum for all learners results in discrimination of educational opportunity, which violates the principle of equity at the very heart of public education.

The government’s own Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and the recent citizen input survey for Budget 2017 both overwhelmingly indicated that K-12 education was the top funding priority for British Columbians. In fact, the executive summary of the budget survey noted the urgency in public responses with respect to public education funding. It’s outrageous that a government can choose to disregard the priorities of its citizens and continues to impose structural deficits on an already strained system whilst simultaneously boasting of a budget “surplus.”

A high-quality public education system isn’t a luxury or a special-interest platform. Neither is it a drain on taxpayer resources: it’s the reason we pay taxes. Public education is a primary investment in the sustainability and future prosperity of our economy, as well as a just, tolerant and democratic society for all. Whether or not we have children, we all have a stake in B.C.’s future. It’s therefore our collective responsibility to ensure that every child, no matter their economic situation, has access to a quality K-12 public education that allows them to reach their full potential.

It’s time to wake up and recognize that a quality public education system in B.C. is only as secure as our shared commitment to properly fund and prioritize it. We must all do our part as citizens to hold government accountable and defend the value of public education against the forces that threaten to dismantle it. Now is the time to demand the adequate, sustainable and predictable funding that our public education system so desperately requires not only for our children today, but also for future generations. This is our public duty.

Maggie Milne Martens is a parent and co-founder of the Parent Advocacy Network.



“I grew up in a family where talking about emotions wasn’t something to do on a regular basis,” says Todd, a Starling member. “Everyone has feelings, but boys and men don’t talk about them so much. I didn’t really have a vocabulary to talk about these things.”

Today on Starling’s blog, we share stories of men and mental health. Learn how Starling, as well as the Bell Let’s Talk campaign, are helping to reverse the entrenched stigma against men sharing their struggles:

<https://www.starlingminds.com/blog/men-and-mental-health>.