

The Advocate

In consensus atque unitate stat potentia

"There is strength in unity"

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 2 - October 2016

Reporting Student Progress in Abbotsford

A message from ADTA President, Doug Smuland

The Recent History

In November 2013, there was a grievance filed by the ADTA over the excessive amount of student reporting required by our District. There was no agreement found with the District in over two years of discussion and the issue was referred to arbitration through the BCTF. Ultimately, an arbitrator wrote up a Consent Order that outlines the new arrangement for student reporting in grades 9 to 12 in Abbotsford.

Consent Order

1. The District agrees to adjust its current practice, making a parent teacher conference optional at the secondary school level, in the following circumstances:
 - a. A secondary teacher is using the Check-My-Mark software or a District approved digital portfolio software to provide regular, informal reports on student progress to parents, or is using an approved written interim report format, and
 - b. The teacher can demonstrate that they have initiated contact with parents regarding students who are struggling within their class.
2. The use of technology, be it Check-My-Mark or digital portfolios, or the use of an approved written interim report, normally satisfies a teachers' obligation in regard to providing an informal student progress report each semester.
3. Teachers will continue to provide formal reports in accordance with the current practice of two formal reports in each

semester.

4. This settlement is without prejudice or precedence in this or any other District. This agreement is without prejudice to disputes with respect to the formal and informal reports at middle and elementary schools.
5. The parties agree that for the purpose of this settlement agreement, attendance at parent teacher conferences includes one scheduled event per semester. For example, an event may include attendance at both an afternoon and evening session which, when scheduled together in close proximity, shall constitute one informal report.
6. It is agreed that Judi Korbin retains jurisdiction with respect to disputes over the interpretation and implementation of this agreement. The parties agree to the appointment of Judi Korbin in respect to any grievance and arbitration respecting the formal or informal reporting requirements at the elementary or middle school levels in this District.

Some things to keep in mind when the topic of report cards comes up in your school:

1. The ADTA believes that the level of reporting in some Elementary and Middle Schools is also excessive, but this consent order does not apply to those teaching K to 8.
 - a. The ADTA encourages K to 8 teachers to report instances wherein requirements for reporting exceed those outlined in the CA.
2. The choice to use either a District approved digital or written interim is one

made by the teacher.

- a. As outlined in the consent order, parent teacher conferences are optional when a teacher chooses to use the District approved model.
 - b. For those teachers that do not want to use a District approved electronic or written model (they may decide to phone parents instead), attendance at a parent teacher interview would remain a requirement.
 - c. A school's staff cannot vote to determine a teacher's professional decision regarding the use of a District approved electronic or written model. Individual teachers are free to determine which form of reporting they will use.
3. Secondary school principals have informed teachers that there will only be one report card in each semester, and that report card will be issued at the end of the semester.
 - a. The District can determine how many reports they want to distribute to students, but they cannot exceed what has been agreed to in the Collective Agreement or violate the School Act.
 4. Teachers have been informed that they need to make reports on such things as student attendance on a weekly or monthly basis to their administrator.
 - a. Student reporting requirements are outlined in the CA, and the ADTA would grieve instances when principals are unreasonably requiring reports on students outside of those outlined in the Consent Agreement or the CA, including those on student attendance, "grey area" students, etc.



HAPPY WORLD TEACHERS' DAY!!

October 5th this year was World Teachers' Day. Each year the ADTA hosts a World Teachers' Day celebration, and this year was no exception. Teachers enjoyed wonderful food, beverage and fabulous conversation at the Phoenix Lounge. Look for more ADTA sponsored events as the year unfolds, and if you have suggestions for activities that we can support we'd be happy to hear from you.

RECOGNIZE THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

As we begin a new school year and our journey down the path of changing curriculum I feel that it is important to remind everyone about the significance of acknowledging the traditional territory of the First Nation communities that our district occupies. Two First Nations Communities: Matsqui First Nation and Sumas First Nation are part of the larger Sto:lo Nation. Sto-lo translates to 'river' and its people being referred to as the 'people of the river'. The Sto-lo people have lived in the Fraser Valley for at least 10,000 years.

Evidence of this is the traditional stories of the Sto:lo elders. Sto:lo culture is an oral tradition. This means that Sto:lo history, culture, teachings, and spirituality are passed down orally. There was not a written tradition in Sto:lo culture. Traditional stories of the Sto:lo people tell us of a time prior to 10,000 years. Secondly, archaeological evidence at Hatzic Rock carbon dates artifacts to 10,000 years. It is for these reasons that we recognize the ancestral relevance to the Fraser Valley.

Acknowledging the indigenous people of our community is important to increase the sense of belonging and cultural pride of our Aboriginal students and families at school.

We encourage you to recognize the traditional territory in which we currently reside whenever you are addressing students, staff, and the public. If you are recognizing the indigenous community outside of the Abbotsford area substitute the name(s) of the First Nation(s) in which you are gathering.

"We would like to acknowledge the shared traditional ancestral territory of the Sumas First Nation and Matsqui First Nation. These two First Nations are a part of the Sto:lo Nation. The Sto:lo people are "the people of the river". The Sto:lo people have lived in the Fraser Valley for 10,000 years. It is for this reason that we acknowledge the traditional territory in which we reside."

Resource:

It was wonderful to meet Juanita Coltman at the Aboriginal Math Symposium at UBC. She is the Enhancement Agreement Coordinator, Aboriginal

Education Learning Division, BC Ministry of Education.

A copy of the Aboriginal lesson plan template that she had been working on will be available on the ADTA website. Juanita recently worked with teachers from SD92 to refine it.

[Lesson Plan Template](#) can be found under "Committees" on the ADTA website.

Contact information for Juanita Coltman :

juanita.coltman@gov.bc.ca

Suggested reading:

As Long As the Rivers Flow by Larry Loyie

P'esk'a and the First Salmon Ceremony by Scot Richie

Also please visit the Aboriginal Education web resources found in the Abbotsford's School District's.

<https://abbyconnect.sd34.bc.ca/Department/AE/Pages/default.aspx>

Submitted by Dyanne Schreiner - Ab Ed Rep

Attention ADTA Health and Safety Reps

We are having an ADTA Health and Safety training day on Wednesday October 26th, 2016. This year we have decided to address the violence that many of us now face in our day-to-day routines. The morning workshop is called "Violence in the Workplace a Focus on Schools" and will be presented by a BCTF Health and Safety trainer. In the afternoon we will be discussing local issues and addressing any specific concerns that you may have. Attendees will also be supplied with current forms and information. If you do not yet have an ADTA Health and Safety Rep to sit on your site committee please think about taking on this important role.

Watch for more information coming out from the ADTA office in the next week on how to sign up.

Is Our Schools Drinking Water Safe?

The school year started with the District sharing the results of water testing that indicated several schools had above acceptable levels of lead in the water. These assessments were done during the summer, and there are a variety of reasons why this might happen. The District has indicated they will provide further information in the coming weeks. Water stations for staff and students along with written notices of advice were put in place for the schools affected. It was a start toward addressing the problem and was done on short notice. Testing will be continuing to determine what corrections are needed. If there are issues with an adequate supply of water or anything else surrounding the water situation, these should be shared with administration immediately, your site committee representative needs to be aware of the issue and if not resolved then become an agenda item for the Site Safety Committee.

A second situation of concern is the on going issue of reporting Student Safety Incidents as they pertain to interactions with workers. There is an on line form available through Abby Connect that needs to be completed by the worker involved and signed. It then goes to the administrator who signs it and must send it to the Board Office. After that is done a copy of this signed form is returned to the worker. The form also has instructions on this process. It is a valuable way to accurately track issues and identify the need for services such as safety plans. Yes, it's more paperwork but it doesn't take long and can save time down the line as well as keeping our schools safer places for all.



This brings up a key issue in keeping our schools safe for everyone. A site safety committee needs to be in place to meet monthly in a meaningful way. Teachers need to select a member of this committee if you haven't already done so. Please support your representative on this committee in any way you can.

News will be coming out soon regarding a training day for site safety committee reps. This will not be on a Pro D Day so hopefully we will see your site committee rep at one of the scheduled days being arranged by the ADTA.

Submitted by Pat Smith - Health & Safety Rep

**More on Water Testing levels page 6*

Key Role of the Local Rep

The key role of the Local Rep (LR) is to ensure that the opinions of Abbotsford teachers are represented at the BCTF Rep Assemblies held in Richmond. These are two-day sessions, Friday (day & sometimes evening) and Saturday, held three times each year in November, January, and May, where locals meet with the BCTF executive to debate and make decisions about policy, direction, finances of the BCTF, etc. Districts our size typically send four people: the Local President (Doug Smuland) as an observer as well as three Local Representatives elected by the membership as voting members: the 1st VP (Jennifer Brooks), 2nd VP (Craig Hemmerich), and the Local Rep, in the ADTA's case.

The RA is a chance to network with teachers from across the province and compare notes. It is interesting to see both the similarities and differences between locals. Some districts are able to give us a "heads-up" with regard to local practices being implemented and issues within their districts, and in sharing our experiences we are able to play a similar role with others. The process of sharing successes and challenges is invaluable.

Given that our ADTA office is faced with an increasing number of

requests for assistance from teachers, as well as a growing number of grievances as we strive to ensure that our contract is honoured, it has become difficult to have both the President and 1st VP out of the office for the entire Friday to attend these meetings. Having watched our President and 1st VP in action during my last couple of years on the Executive, it seems as though they are overloaded. There are many, many issues that require their urgent attention, and the workload appears overwhelming to my eyes. At our ADTA AGM in spring, we voted to have the Second Vice-president role become a full-time release (in-office) position effective September 2017. The thinking is that with a third released officer available, in addition to having a third person in the office to conduct union business, we will also be able to have one of the three remain in the office to attend to local work while we send a contingent of four elected officials to the Rep Assembly. Watch for developments in this area later this school year.

The next RA will be November 4 and 5. Feel free to email me if you have any questions or comments.

(submitted by Jef Baerg, Local Rep)

Assessment and Reporting Committee

The ADTA Executive has endorsed members for the District Assessment and Reporting Committee. This joint committee of teachers, administrators and the Director of Instruction will review student reporting structures both informal and formal, make recommendations regarding Administrative Procedures and review district assessments.

Thank you to the following members that are volunteering their time and effort on this committee.

Ken Ambrose (John McLure)

Liane Loeppky (Jackson)

Jennifer Cox (Ten-Broeck)

Craig Hemmerick (Howe)

Julie Wilms (ATMS)

John Munro (Hansen)

Jennifer Maxwell (Mouat)

Corrie Wedel (ASIA Sumas Mountain)

Megan Bocker (Mouat)

Duncan Hazelwood (CORE - French)

Lynette Power (CORE - ELL)

Upcoming TTOC Opportunities

Hello Teachers Teaching On Call (TTOCs)! Welcome to the new school year! My name is Sylvia Rempel and I am your local TTOC Representative this year. I have been a TTOC in Abbotsford since 2007, mostly at middle- and high-school levels. If you have any issues, questions, or comments about working conditions that you experience, please feel free to contact me on the Abbotsford district email system – sylvia_rempel@sd34.bc.ca, or off of it – tocrep34@gmail.com. I will answer as quickly as possible, and, if I cannot answer it, will confidentially pass it on to the ADTA with your permission.

The ADTA has already lined up some opportunities to meet with other TTOCs and discuss issues you may be seeing this year.

- On October 19th, there will be a TTOC Info Meeting at 4:00pm at the ADTA Hall. There will be food, drink, and door prizes with a one-hour meeting. Come talk to us about any questions you may have!
- On November 9th, new teachers are invited to a School Union Rep Training (SURT) session entitled "Professional Boundary Issues: Teacher/Student Relationships." Following the session, after school hours, all TTOCs are invited to join for

discussion and food at the ADTA Hall. This gives you the opportunity to hopefully work that day and also discuss professional issues!

- Would you like to help develop policies and resources for TTOCs this year? Do you have an idea for a TTOC issue that needs to be brought to the BCTF's Annual General Meeting in February? The ADTA's TTOC Committee will be meeting several times this year to discuss directions for TTOCs in Abbotsford and in the BCTF. Let us know if you are interested in participating!

(Submitted by Sylvia Rempel - TTOC rep)

Social Justice Interests



ADTA TUTOR LIST

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE ON THE ADTA TUTOR LIST?

THE ADTA RECEIVES HUNDREDS OF CALLS EACH YEAR FROM PARENTS INQUIRING ABOUT TUTORS. WE HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED A LIST AT THE OFFICE AND HAVE DIRECTED PARENTS ACCORDINGLY. LAST YEAR WE MOVED OUR TUTOR LIST TO OUR WEBSITE AND NOW PARENTS AND STUDENTS CAN EMAIL YOU DIRECTLY. THIS CHANGE HAS PROVEN TO BE VERY SUCCESSFUL AND WE CAN NOW HANDLE A LARGER LIST. SO ANY ADTA MEMBER WISHING TO DO SOME TUTORING IS MORE THAN WELCOME TO ADD THEIR INFORMATION TO OUR LIST. PLEASE CONTACT THE ADTA OFFICE AND TALK TO NICOLE.

Just a reminder to check out the BCTF website to find resources on numerous Aboriginal Education and Social Justice Issues.

Social Justice Action Groups

The BCTF's province-wide social justice network includes six social justice action groups. Each action group is composed of four members from the provincial Committee for [Action on Social Justice](#) (CASJ), and they are all classroom teachers.

The purpose of the action groups is to provide information, lesson ideas, and professional support for classroom teachers. Each action group creates discrete web pages covering the areas for which they are responsible.

The action groups are listed below and include links to their web pages:

- [Antipoverty](#)
- [Antiracism](#)
- [Environmental Justice](#)
- [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning \(LGBTQ\)](#)
- [Peace and Global Education](#)

The global education page features the [Global Classroom](#), a joint BCTF and CIDA project, which contains unit plans designed for teachers, by teachers.

- [Status of Women](#)

Also be sure to check out the October & November 2016 calendar of events:

- Oct 1 - International Day of Older Persons Week
- Oct 2 - Gandhi's Birthday
- Oct 3 - World Habitat Day
- Oct 3-7 - National Family Week
- Oct 16 - World Food Day
- Oct 17 - International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- Oct 18 - Person's Day
- Oct 24 - World Development Information Day
- Nov 5-11 - Veteran's Week
- Nov 11 - Remembrance Day
- Nov 13-19 - BC Multiculturalism Week
- Nov 20 - National Child Day
- Nov 20 - Transgender Day of Remembrance
- Nov 25 - International Day of Violence Against Women - 16 days of action begin
- Nov 25 - Buy Nothing Day



Submitted by Teresa Hootz Social Justice Rep

Why Celebrate the Fifth of October?

World Teacher Day has been celebrated since 1994, when UNESCO, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, declared that October 5 be the official day to celebrate our profession. Every year I sit in my staff room with a lovely piece of cake from the ADTA, and I wonder why we celebrate teachers on the fifth of October. Thank goodness for Google.

Well, on October 5, 1966, a special intergovernmental conference was held by UNESCO in Paris. During this conference, a Recommendation was introduced by UNESCO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) concerning the Status of Teachers. This recommendation was a great step for teachers as it outlined the rights and responsibilities of teachers, as well as setting out international standards for recruitment, employment, teaching and learning conditions. It also contained guidelines which promote the status of teachers in the interest of quality education.

This year's celebration marks the 50th anniversary of the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation, and the theme is "Valuing Teachers, Improving their Status". While this theme embodies the basic principles of this anniversary, it also focuses on the continued need to support teachers. It is celebrated in over 100 countries around the world, with a day long event planned in Paris, France. World Teacher Day is a day for celebrating our profession while creating awareness about teacher issues. Hopefully you have an opportunity on October 5 to discuss, learn, and share successes and challenges, and if you are unable to take a quick trip to Paris, please enjoy a piece of cake in the staffroom with colleagues.

Submitted by Liane Loepky - Middle School Rep

Pro-D - It's Worth Advocating For

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to another year of learning together. I trust you tried to get some rest these last few months. This 2016/17 year will be a busy one with new curriculum and changes in reporting coming.

This summer I spent two days at the BCTF Summer Conference. The purpose, amongst others, was to train and connect Pro-D Chairs from around the province. At our session we had presentations from PIAC (Professional Issues Advisory Committee), we made PSA connections and we networked with other chairs from locals in our zone. Ideas around autonomy, professionalism, reporting, and most important for me; in-service and curriculum training vs. Professional Development. We must keep ourselves informed of the differences and be vigilant when our independence in professional matters such as Pro-D is at-risk.

I was also reminded at this gathering that the October day is actually a PSA day and would further encourage membership in a PSA that fits your teaching interests. PSA fees are an allowable Pro-D expense.

I realized as I sat through both days how professional development is not a discrete topic. Pro-D integrates with reporting, new curriculum, teamwork with colleagues within schools, and other aspects of a teacher's professional life.

Another issue that was hot off the press

was that of reporting. Early in August the Ministry released several new ministerial orders relating to reporting. These become part of the School Act. My understanding at this early time is that districts can opt for their own report card. The sooner we know what is coming in November the better. We work toward a goal and need to know what that report card is going to look like. Since writing this first portion, the district's assessment and reporting committee has met. It was a positive first session, and I am pleased that teachers had a voice in such an important topic as crafting recommendations for a new report card now expected next year

This year we have another curriculum in-service day, This is not a professional development day and is mandatory for teachers. Please encourage staff you work with to refer to this day as in-service so as to highlight the difference between these kind of days and our professional autonomy as it relates to professional development

Finally, today I just returned from staff and pro-d rep training. I always learn something in these sessions. What stood out today is the fact I alluded to earlier; pro-d matters overlap into all our practice. Professional development is lifelong learning! Its important to our autonomy. It's worth advocating for.

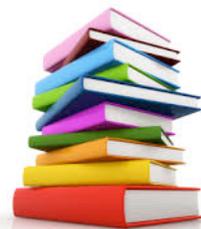
Submitted by Ken Ambrose - Pro-D Chair

GET INVOLVED!

BCFED Convention

Would you like to attend the BCFED convention?

The 57th Convention of the BC Federation of Labour starts on Monday, November 28th and runs until Friday, December 2nd at the Vancouver convention Centre. If you are interested in attending the convention, even only for a day to see what it is all about, please contact Doug or Jennifer and we will put your name forward. Members must be elected to attend the BCFED convention and we will be doing that at our general meeting in October. If you have any questions or want more information please contact the ADTA office or check out the [BCFED website](#)



BC Lions Football Team

Can you see yourself in the stands at BC Place with an unlimited amount of friends? Cheering on the hometown BC Lions in the Den?

BCTF members, family, and friends will be able attend selected BC Lions home games and save on single game ticket prices. This offer for a group night starts at \$30* and includes a FREE BC Lions branded baseball cap and a \$10 voucher for online or in game merchandise! In addition, \$3 from every ticket will go to the B.C. Children's Hospital Foundation.

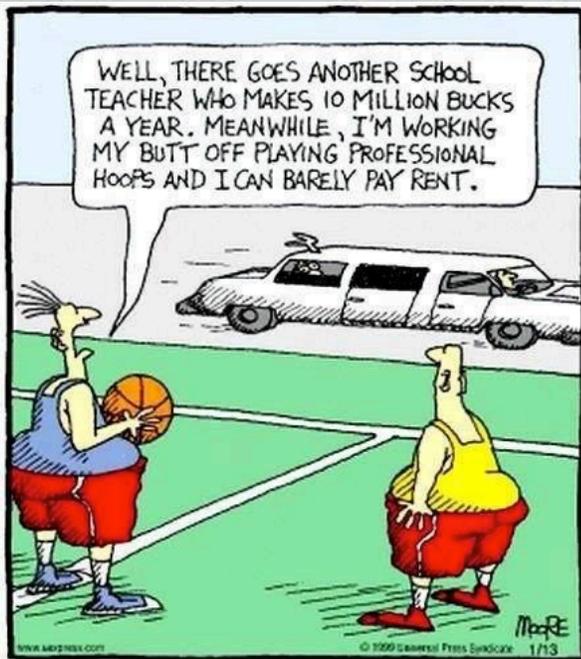
Games applicable for the deal: **Sat Oct 22 vs Edmonton, A November game, date to be confirmed.**

To order tickets, please visit www.bclions.com/bctf (Promo code is BCTF) or contact Brittany Arner at barner@bclions.com or at 604-930-5489.

Please note that you may have difficulties ordering online if you attempt to order from a computer behind a firewall. If so, please try a computer at home, or order by phone.

* \$30 is for a seat in the upper end zone sections. Members can choose to purchase a seat in almost any section, including the Club section. However, prices will vary.

A message from the secretary treasurer...



In another universe.

Definitely not our reality! We work hard for our dollars earned and on this note I would like to remind all teachers to check their paystubs each month. Ensure that you are being paid at the correct category and step and that your sick bank is accurate. Errors can happen. If it seems your paystub is incorrect please contact payroll or feel free to contact the ADTA office and we will try and address your questions or concerns.

The ADTA has had to do some building updates over the summer. We had the lighting repaired in the hall, the Fire Department insisted we replace our fire door, and the back parking lot now has a gate to prevent campers from your our property as their personal dumping ground.

Submitted by Casey Lindquist - ADTA Secretary Treasurer

Drinking Water Update

The following information was provided as a Staff Report, October 4, 2016 from Ray Velestuk, Secretary-Treasurer

This report is being presented to the Board for information.

BACKGROUND:

As previously reported water testing was conducted in 36 buildings within the Abbotsford School District over the summer. District staff conducted preliminary testing, including 72-hour, 24-hour, and 2-minute flush tests. The results from the 24-hour test were relied upon for our short term action plan. Twenty-one sites were identified: Aberdeen, Aboriginal Education, Abbotsford Arts, Abbotsford Senior (old section), Abbotsford Virtual, Bakerview, Centennial, Chief Dan George, CORE, John MacLure, Mt. Lehman, North Poplar, Ross, South Poplar, School Board Office, STaRT, Ten Broeck, Terry Fox, Upper Sumas, W. A. Fraser, and W. J. Mouat.

The short-term action plan included several steps, including placement of temporary water coolers for all sites affected and deactivating drinking locations with elevated levels.

An independent consultant (Pinchin West Inc.) began additional testing on Friday, September 23rd. The report is expected in early October however preliminary results are as follows:

PRELIMINARY REPORT DISCUSSION:

21 Site testing has been broken into 4 categories:

1. Three Sites (ITC/Ross/South Poplar) can come off the list immediately, no elevated lead levels above guidelines were found in new testing
2. Two more sites (Terry Fox/CORE) can come off the list in the next week after confirmed further investigation, more info to be confirmed regarding the building
3. Five sites (Ten Broeck/SBO/Aberdeen/Mt Lehman/WA Fraser) require repairs when the Ministry funding is approved. Water entry passed from the city but failed in at least one branch pipe. Ongoing flushing program will continue.

Staff Report: Water Testing Update October 4, 2016 Page 2

4. Eleven sites require further investigation. They include Abby Arts, Abby Sr. (old section), Abbotsford Virtual, Aboriginal Centre, Bakerview, Centennial Park, Chief Dan George, John MacLure, North Poplar, W. J. Mouat and Upper Sumas. Ongoing flushing program will continue.

If you have any specific school questions, feel free to contact Jennifer Brooks at the ADTA by email jenniferadta34@shaw.ca or by phone at 604-854-1946.

Mark Your Calendars:

October 5 (Wednesday) - World Teacher Day Celebrations

October 10 (Monday) - Thanksgiving

October 12 (Wednesday) - ADTA General Meeting

October 21 (Friday) - Non-Instructional Day #2

October 25 (Tuesday) - School Board Meeting

October 26 (Wednesday) - SURT Training (Health & Safety Reps)