

The Advocate

In consensus atque unitate stat potentia

"There is strength in unity"

A Monthly Newsletter

November 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Leslie and I have been doing school visits and I can tell that teachers are starting to feel burned out and tired. I do hope you are all taking care of yourselves. The conversations during our school visits, however, have been fantastic. So many fun and interesting things happening in classrooms all over the district. But I am saddened to learn that so many class size and composition violations are still occurring in classrooms and there are struggles to get support for the students that so desperately need it. The Union is still waiting to get all of the information from the District regarding the number of violations and who is in those effected classrooms, but it is already clear that more remedy will be owed to teachers and that remedy should have started October 1st. The ADTA will be sending out more information on remedy once we have the data that is required.

We are again experiencing teacher shortages. In addition to the daily TOC shortages the District has been unable to fill several teaching contract positions mainly in the area of French Immersion. Please keep track of the number of times that you are being re-directed to cover a classroom and let the ADTA know by entering these shortages through our website under the tab '[Prep Recovery](#)'. **If you are a TOC please note that the ADTA is having a TOC meeting on Tuesday, December 4th starting at 4:00pm at the ADTA hall.**

At this time of year, it is often a struggle staying healthy. Late nights marking papers and working on report cards can lead to illness and a general feeling of being burned out. Try to take a few minutes and do something not work related. Give yourselves a break and try to get rested up before the holiday season is upon us.



Update from the General Meeting in October

In October there was an ADTA General Meeting, part of the agenda was a constitutional change proposal regarding our name. As you likely read in previous emails (way back in September), the motion was to rename ourselves from the Abbotsford District Teachers' Association to Abbotsford Teachers' Association (ATA). However, once the motion was up for debate an amendment came from the floor and it was to change the word Association to Union. There was much debate and great discussion around the change, it was not taken lightly and our speakers list was long. The amended language did pass and as of July 1st, 2019 we will now be the Abbotsford Teachers' Union or the A.T.U. A historic moment in our local union history.

In Solidarity,

Jennifer Brooks, ADTA President

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CONCERT TICKETS WINNER!

A pair of John Mellencamp tickets were donated to the ADTA by an American couple that were unable to attend the show. The wife is a school psychologist and really wanted the tickets to go to a teacher in Abbotsford. The ADTA decided the best way of handling this fairly was through a trivia question and draw..

The winner of the John Mellencamp tickets was Dean Fetterly at Abbotsford Senior Secondary.

Congratulations Dean! We hope you enjoyed the concert.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

The ADTA once again participated in the Abbotsford Remembrance Day ceremony. Jennifer Brooks, ADTA President was joined by Executive member Liane Loepky. It was the 100th anniversary of the armistice and the turnout was excellent.

A big thank you to Liane for laying our wreath again this year on behalf of all ADTA members.



COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT - STAFF MEETINGS

We get many inquiries about staff meetings and I encourage all ADTA members to read the language in the collective agreement below. Your staff should get the meeting agendas 3 school days ahead of time, if this is not occurring then the staff meeting is re-scheduled. Staff meetings do have time limits and are no longer than 105 minutes from the dismissal of regular classes (the bell at the end of the day). Part-time and itinerant teachers attend only when the staff meeting falls on their work day. Take a moment and read over the language set in the collective agreement and if you have questions or concerns about what is occurring at your school please contact one of the ADTA Released Officers.

Article D. 27 - Staff Meetings

1. The purpose of staff meetings is to facilitate the administration and enhance the operation of the school.
2. Teachers are expected to attend staff meetings unless prior approval for absence has been granted by the Administrative Officer. Part-time and itinerant teachers shall attend staff meetings when the staff meeting is contiguous to their hours of work.
3. Teachers may submit items to the Administrative Officer which will be placed on the agenda of staff meetings. A copy of this agenda shall be given to each teacher.
4. At least three (3) school days' notice of regular staff meetings shall be given, including a preliminary agenda. Notice may be waived for short emergency meetings. The Administrative Officer will arrange the agenda in order of priority. The Administrative Officer will make all reasonable efforts to restrict the frequency and length of staff meetings.
5. Staff meetings will not be longer than one hour and forty-five minutes (105 min.) from dismissal of regular classes, nor held during recess or lunch break unless of an emergency nature. With majority consent, staff meetings may continue on a voluntary basis.
6. A teacher shall not be required to act as recording secretary. Written minutes shall be kept and circulated to all staff members.
7. It is the teacher's responsibility to be apprised of the staff meeting agenda and the decisions made at the meeting.

BCTF ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

The BCTF Advantage Program is your gateway to a number of benefits and offers from cars to insurance. With 41,000 members the BCTF, as an organization, has been able to obtain savings on various products and services for members. The BCTF Advantage program allows your membership in the BCTF to work for you in areas outside of your employment relationship. For most BCTF Advantage partners you simply state that you are a BCTF member and they will apply your discount/savings to your purchase.

Check out the BCTF Advantage program website and start saving.

<https://www.bctf.ca/advantage/>



UPDATES.....

BCTF REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

Each year the BCTF holds three meetings that see members from each local throughout the province in attendance. The first of these three Representative Assemblies was held on November 2nd and 3rd in Richmond. In Abbotsford we send 5 members to these meetings, the 3 local representatives, the president and the labour relations officer. The 3 local representatives are the only members with voting rights and from our Executive that is our VP Leslie Kemp, our 2nd VP Grant Gasser from ATSS and our LR Liane Leoppky from Jackson.

This first meeting of the year was a busy one as we had to elect 2 members to sit on the BCTF Executive committee as we had 2 vacancies since the BCTF AGM last March. The successful candidates were Karen Edwards from Tumbler Ridge and Susan Trabant from Prince George.

We also had a report from the Teacher Pension Plan and I am happy to report our pensions are doing well and are actually in a surplus situation. In January 2019 your contributions will change slightly to address this surplus and you will have 1.75% less deductions to pay. This will feel like you are making more but I caution this is not a pay increase. You will simply have fewer deductions and so it will give you more take-home pay. This is a temporary situation and will change one day.

ECONOMIC STABILITY DIVIDEND

Last week came an announcement by the Government of British Columbia that the economic stability dividend (ESD) will again lead to an additional pay increase for many unionized workers including teachers. It is the largest ESD so far at 0.75%. It will be added to the 1.0% salary increase already set to occur on May 1st, 2019 for a total of 1.75% being applied to the salary grid.

Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor.

JOHN F. KENNEDY, speech, Aug. 30, 1960

BCTF ZONE MEETING

Since our last newsletter the ADTA has also sent a full delegation to the BCTF Zone Meeting held in Surrey. Members that attended on behalf of the ADTA were the three Released Officers, Pat Smith for Health & Safety, Sharon Kehoe for TTOC Rep, Dyanne Schreiner for Professional Development, Charlotte Tommy for Aboriginal Education Rep, and Deb Varnes for Social Justice Rep.

It was a great 2-day conference that included presentations regarding representational voting, bargaining, equality and inclusion. Each Executive chair then had the opportunity to meet with their colleagues from the surrounding districts to discuss local issues.

TTOCs

The school year is well underway, and we have already had reports from schools that there have been shortages of TTOC's and teachers have had to cover internally. If you are a TTOC and you are not working almost every day, please contact the ADTA and we will see what the issue might be. There are some quiet days in the life of a TTOC but not many and if you are not getting called out we should look into why that is occurring.

If you are one of those teachers that did not get a TTOC and your school had to either use internal coverage or services were simply cancelled that day please record the day using our on-line system located on the ADTA website under the button 'Prep

Know Your ADTA Executive

L E M P I E H B U S R R A L I
 K S P A T B R J M B E O I E K
 E O T S H O A I U O N Q O O S
 M R F R O K T E I W I Y Q H N
 P B G K E H R A R B E S B E A
 V M S D S M M I E G R P U K M
 Q A I J Q Q P G K B H Y X H U
 P T N Z K K I E D Z C T H O H
 L J M F S Z G K L N S Q Y O S
 O E H B K A V D T G A K M T U
 E O V K C A E W A Q C L P Z M
 P K N R R S I S F Y W E U P E
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 K B E Z S E R I D R A D U J S
 Y S P P R R L G X W T X O D L

BROOKS
 KEMP
 SMULAND
 GASSER
 LOEPPKY
 REMPEL
 SCHREINER
 SIMPSON
 AMBROSE
 BAERG
 MUSHUMANSKI
 SMITH
 VARNES
 KEHOE
 DARDIR

HOOTZ
 KIRKHAM



- Jennifer Brooks - President
- Doug Smuland - Labour Relations Officer
- Sylvia Rempel - Secretary Treasurer
- Dyanne Schreiner - Pro-D Chair
- Angeline Mushumanski - Ab. Ed. Representative
- Sharon Kehoe - TOC Representative
- Teresa Hootz - Middle School Representative
- Jennifer Simpson - Local Elections Chair
- Leslie Kemp - 1st Vice President
- Grant Gasser - 2nd Vice President
- Liane Loepky - Local Association Representative
- Pat Smith - Health & Safety Chair
- Debra Varnes - Social Justice Representative
- Khaled Dardir - Secondary School Representative
- Tina Kirkham - Elementary School Representative
- Ken Ambrose - Member at Large

BCTF HISTORY: DID YOU KNOW.....



When the BCTF was formed in 1917 teachers had no bargaining rights. The objectives of the new federation were to address the economic, professional and social concerns of teachers.

The first teachers' strike in the British Empire occurred in Victoria in 1919. One hundred and seventy-eight teachers refused to work for two days over a salary dispute. When the Provincial Secretary refused to intervene on the behalf of the school board, a negotiated settlement ensued.

(Collective Bargaining - <https://www.bctf.ca/history/rooms/bargaining>)

ADTA CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

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|-------------------------|--|
| November 26 - 30 | BC Federation of Labour Convention |
| December 3 (Tuesday) | TOC Meeting - 4pm @ ADTA Hall |
| December 4 (Wednesday) | Executive Committee Mtg - 3:30pm @ ADTA Hall |
| December 10 (Monday) | Pro-D Committee Mtg - 4pm (ADTA Boardroom) |
| December 12 (Wednesday) | ADTA Rep Banquet |
| December 21 - January 7 | Winter Break |

ADTA OFFICE HOURS

Our office hours are **Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.**

Any inquiries can be directed to the emails listed below or reach us at **604-854-1946**
The ADTA office will be closed during the upcoming winter break.

Contact Us

- Jennifer Brooks, President jenniferadta34@shaw.ca
 Leslie Kemp, Vice President leslieadta34@shaw.ca
 Doug Smuland, Labour Relations Officer adtalabourrelations@shaw.ca
 Susan Steinhilbert, Office Staff susanadta34@shaw.ca
 Nicole Smith, Office Staff nicoleadta34@shaw.ca

