

The Advocate

In consensus atque unitate stat potentia

"There is strength in unity"

A Monthly Newsletter

December 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a busy month since our last newsletter and I can't believe we are about to go on holidays. Leslie and I have been doing school visits and sadly while we didn't make it to every school before the break, we only have a few left and will be contacting those reps to set something up for January. I have really enjoyed getting around to the schools recently and seeing the festive decorations that both staff and students have put so much effort into. I can also sense the excitement that is starting to build at each site as kids also realize how close the holidays are. I do hope that everyone has a safe and restful holiday season. This is a chance for us to catch up on some sleep, get over that cold that is hanging on, spend time with family and friends and not think about work. I find with teachers this is more easily said than done. I hope you all try and put work aside for a couple weeks and enjoy the time off.

In Solidarity,

Jennifer Brooks, ADTA President

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The money arrived and now the staffing list has arrived as well. After looking at the money that we received and the number of members entitled to professional development funds, it has been determined that the allotment for a full time 1.0 teacher is \$325.00. We have many professional development days left this year. The ADTA encourages all members to give some thought about your professional development goals for the year and get registered before the good stuff fills up.

From everyone here at the ADTA,
we wish you all a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.

We hope everyone has a safe and
restful holiday season.



SO...WHAT HAS BEEN GOING ON AT THE ADTA?

Retirement Information Session

We recently hosted a retirement session for those members getting close to making that decision. It was well attended with lots of great information. The ADTA is hosting another retirement information session in April for teachers who are NOT approaching retirement but have countless years to continue to contribute to their pension. Details on that session will go out in the New Year.

BCFED Convention

Every two years the British Columbia Federation of Labour holds a convention in Vancouver. It is a week-long convention with numerous unions sending delegates. There are approximately 1000 attendees each day. At our general meeting in October, it was decided that the following delegates would all attend at least one day at the BCFED on behalf of the ADTA, Doug Smuland, Jennifer Brooks, Leslie Kemp, Brent Schroeder, Joanne Samuel, Teresa Hootz, and Grant Gasser. We heard some amazing speakers some of which include Jagmeet Singh the Party Leader for the NDP, Hussan Yussaff President of the CLC, Brian Ramsey from the CFL Players Association, Glen Hansman the President of the BCTF and Premier John Horgan. This was also the last time that Irene Lanzinger (former BCTF President) appeared as the President of the BCFED as she did not seek re-election.

TTOC Meeting

Our TTOC Executive Rep, [Sharon Kehoe](#), held a TTOC information meeting. Numerous TTOC's came out and received information on the collective agreement, pro-d and health and safety. The ADTA was also able to hear some concerns coming from TTOCs and we are in the process of addressing them. Sharon is hoping to have another meeting in the new year to address further concerns that TTOCs are having. If you are a TTOC and did not have a chance to attend our meeting please check out our [TTOC webpage](#) on the [ADTA website](#). If you have any follow up questions please email your TTOC Representative, [Sharon Kehoe](#).

Christmas Rep Appreciation Dinner

Each year we hold a Rep Appreciation Dinner to thank all of our School Representatives for the hard work that they do each day. This year, like so many in the past, it was well attended and a good time was had by all. To

REMINDER:
Paid Ed. Leave
Deadline is
January 30th



TEACHERS - PLEASE USE THE MESSAGE BOX

At our recent TTOC meeting, the issue of dispatch information came up. The ADTA is making a request on behalf of all Abbotsford TTOCs, that when you book a TTOC and your work day does not include a standard classroom please indicate these details in the comment box provided. In other words, if the TTOC will be working in a wood shop, auto shop, music room, gym or portable please write that in the comment box as a heads up for the TTOC. Other situations that could be noted are if the class is going on a field trip or if the day has outdoor classroom activities this advanced notice will help the TTOC come better prepared with appropriate wardrobe choices.

**DID YOU KNOW
BCTF HISTORY**

**Vancouver teachers,
board in agreement**

In the late 1960s, teachers in British Columbia began to raise concerns about poor learning conditions for students and poor working conditions for teachers. At the time, teachers bargained locally but the law prohibited strikes and provided for bargaining only salaries and bonuses. Many terms and conditions of work for teachers were contained in the School Act, other legislation or regulation, or determined unilaterally by school boards. Teachers were legally prevented from bargaining class sizes and other learning and working conditions. In 1969, teachers successfully bargained for working and learning conditions in local contracts.

Vancouver teachers and the school board have reached agreement in committee on a contract covering terms and conditions of employment.

Details of the contract cannot be announced until it is ratified by a special meeting of the board. However, it is reported to be very comprehensive.

The board agreed to negotiate working conditions with the teachers last December after the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association served notice that its members would work to rule if a contract on working conditions could not be negotiated.

Members of the teachers' negotiating teams — representing both VESTA and the Vancouver Secondary School Teachers' Association — were high in their praise of the board's personnel committee for the courtesy and consideration extended to the teachers during the negotiations.

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THE LATEST ON CONTRACT RESTORATION & REMEDY

The ADTA received classroom information from the district regarding class size and composition on October 18th. The first step in this process is to assess whether best efforts were made by the district when creating classes. In many situations it was hard to make that assessment as the information that the district provided was incomplete. This made the best effort assessment impossible. An example of this would be our dual track schools. The district did not separate the French and English class information, thus making it impossible for the ADTA to assess best efforts. We have requested this information from the district.

As the ADTA continued to examine the information further, it was clear that it was not a comprehensive list of teachers in schools nor a complete list of those entitled to remedy. The biggest omission in the K-8 information was that teachers who provide prep coverage were not included. In other words, the classes with class size and composition violations were highlighted but the person who takes those classes for prep coverage was not included and those additional teachers are also entitled to remedy. We have made the district aware of their omission and we are waiting for updated information.

We have also noticed this year that the district has decided that numerous classes are 'excluded' from class size and composition calculations and so the violations have not triggered remedy for those teachers. The ADTA has requested more information on those classes in order to understand the district position on the matter. The ADTA disagrees that many of these classes should be excluded from the restored language provisions. The most egregious omission in the information provided is the total lack of non-enrolling information. The ADTA has not received any information about our non-enrolling members. This includes basic information such as who the members are, what school they are connected to and each caseload.

The ADTA has continued to discuss remedy options with the district and the topic of additional pro-d money for members with a violation has come up and it is currently on the table for discussion between the ADTA and the school district. We have not yet arrived at an agreement, but discussions are currently ongoing. The ADTA will update members as soon as possible.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT - Educational Leave (With Pay)

It is that time of year again when you can apply for a paid education leave. This leave allows you to have some time away from your teaching job duties while getting paid 75% of the salary you would have made. The fund for this money comes from Article G.32.1 in our collective agreement and is 0.5% of the annual teachers' payroll section of the budget as of September 30th of the current year. If you have 3 years' of service to the district at the time of application, then you are eligible to apply for this leave. Applications, which are done on-line through a specific link, can be for full time or part time leaves. The selection committee is made of 2 representatives of the board and 2 representatives of the ADTA (Article G.32.7). The applications are then viewed without any personal information and decisions are made until the money is depleted. The Selection Committee makes recommendations to the Board as to who should be granted a paid education leave. The vacancies which are created are posted as temporary assignments. Your total FTE is maintained in order to allow you to return after your educational leave. If you are interested in pursuing further post-secondary education check out the complete language in the collective agreement under Article G.32. Applications are due by the end of January for the 2019-2020 school year. If you do not have a copy of the current collective agreement please contact the ADTA office, we would be happy to provide you with one.

ARTICLE G.32 EDUCATIONAL LEAVE (With Pay)

1. The Board shall establish and dispense an Educational Leave Fund in the amount of one half per cent (0.5%) of the annual teachers' payroll section of the budget as of September 30 of the current year. This shall be the amount budgeted for salary and benefit payments to the Educational Leave Trust Fund for teachers on leave under this section.
2. The Board shall grant Educational Leave on application to teachers with a minimum of three (3) years' service in the District.
3. A Selection Committee shall be established to consider applications and make recommendations to the Board. The Selection Committee shall consist of two (2) representatives of the Board and two (2) representatives of the Association who shall be reappointed each year.
4. The basic unit of leave shall be one (1) year, but where appropriate, any portion of the school year may be granted from September 1 to June 30.
5. Payments shall be at the rate of three-quarters (3/4) salary for the leave period. That period is understood to fall within the months spanning the interval September to June. Medical Services Plan, group life insurance, extended health and dental plan payments will be shared by the Board for the full twelve (12) months of the leave.
6. A teacher granted educational leave for less than a year shall receive a salary equal to three-quarters (3/4) of the salary he/she would be paid if not on educational leave. The Review Panel may recommend a higher payment if special circumstances exist.
7. The Selection Committee shall consider all applications and make a recommendation to the Board as to priority for granting leaves. Such recommendation shall be made to the Board prior to April 15 of each year, in the case of a request made pursuant to this article. Recommendation made by the Review Panel identified under this article shall be made prior to October 31 of each year. Should the Board not accept the recommendation, the matter will be returned to the Committee for reconsideration.
8. Where funds remain unallocated for a year they are to be carried over to the next year.
9. Educational leave will be considered as teaching time for the purpose of seniority.
10. The Board shall give to the Association an accounting of monies in the fund no later than March 15 of each year.
11. Joint policy between the Board and the Association shall be established to set the priorities for and to administer the Educational Leave Plan.
12. The Board will make every reasonable effort to reinstate teachers granted leave under this article to a position comparable to that held prior to the leave or to a position that is compatible with the training received while on this leave.



You can also find information on Paid Education Leave on the ADTA website:

<http://www.adta.bc.ca/paid-ed-leave.html>

BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OPPORTUNITY

Have you ever considered attending the BCTF Annual General Meeting? We are electing delegates to attend the BCTF AGM at our general meeting on January 23rd. This year the AGM starts on Saturday, March 16th and ends on Tuesday March 19th and is being held in Victoria, British Columbia. If you would like to put your name forward as a possible Abbotsford delegate or you wish more information about the event, please email [Jennifer Brooks](#).

TTOC

In October, the District changed the way TTOCs are required to do attendance. Now, we are required to log in and enter attendance digitally, as I'm sure you've all been doing for the past few months. In my experience, usually it works without a hitch. But what about when it doesn't work correctly?

There are a few ways TTOC attendance can go awry. Sometimes, the teacher you're replacing has taken their laptop home with them. Sometimes, the school doesn't have a replacement laptop ready to loan out to TTOCs for the day. Sometimes, the replacement laptop doesn't work as expected. Some laptops are loaners from the student resource pool and require TTOCs to have (and remember) a Learn34 login and password on top of everything else. And sometimes, the office hasn't given the system the right codes.

What to do? First, what NOT to do - do not use your own device in schools! It can be tempting to just log in with your own smartphone and get the attendance finished. Resist temptation! Please, don't use your own device or your own data for attendance. This is a duty the District is requiring TTOCs to do, so it should only be done on District machines. If you are unable to do attendance on a school device, for any reason, send the attendance to the office on a piece of paper just like we used to before October.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the ADTA office.

Sylvia Rempel

ADTA Secretary Treasurer

Current TTOC

"The only effective answer to organized greed is organized labor."

- Thomas Donahue



CURRICULUM DAY

Soon after schools open in January, we will have our only curriculum day for the year. This is an opportunity for teachers to focus on some aspect of the redesigned curriculum for an entire day. The ADTA encourages all teachers to use the day to focus on a particular portion of the curriculum that you personally feel that you need to. Whether working with a colleague, attending a workshop or conference or creating something among staff, the day should be meaningful to you and where you are on the curriculum journey. Start thinking about the day as it will be upon as before we know it.

The ADTA will be hosting a MineralsEd Pro-D Workshop: K-3 Integrated Resource Unit - Kids and Rocks at the ADTA Hall (January 25/19). [Check out our website for registration details.](#)

OFFICE STUDENT MONITORS

Do you have student monitors in the office at lunch? Is there a plan for their safety in case of event or issue? Many schools offer students a leadership role in the school by allowing them to stay inside at lunch and do certain office duties. For many students they take this role very seriously and are often the ones greeting me when I enter the school for a school visit. Lately, many teachers have come to me with concerns of safety. What if an intruder entered the building? The outside doors by the office are often the only doors that are unlocked and allow anybody to walk through. When the secretary is in the office this seems less of an issue but now consider the situation with 2 students in the office. It does raise questions of safety and security. The ADTA encourages all teachers that have these concerns to bring them up at your next staff meeting and site-based health and safety meeting. Solutions can be easily found but may be site specific.



HEALTH & SAFETY

In recent years, Health and Safety for our members has become an increasing concern and each site's issues often seem very different given demographics, the size and age of schools, along with the grade levels. It is encouraging to see more site committee members receiving training and more sites posting minutes on the district site as well as in staffrooms. Also, more TTOCs are being better informed of the necessary site, specific health and safety information.

Given that lots of the Health and Safety issues are unique to some sites, please ensure any non-emergency concerns are raised with your site based JOSH Committee and recorded in the minutes. One of the JOSH committee workers is a co-chair so this may be the best person to speak with so the issue is placed on the next agenda. If a satisfactory solution isn't achieved at the site level, forward your concerns to the District Health and Safety Committee (DOSH) by contacting Leslie Kemp, our ADTA Vice-President, or me. The concern will be placed on our monthly agenda and hopefully we can assist in resolving it or finding out why it isn't being addressed. Two examples of concerns that might go to the JOSH committee are Gr. 5 students working in the school office at lunchtime without direct adult supervision. A few schools lock their front doors during these times. Others do not. Another concern is a lack of any washrooms that are for staff only. These are situations that are unique to some sites and occur for different reasons. Health and Safety concerns should not be based on school based budget decisions.

Violent incidents or threats by students have been increasing given the data the DOSH committee has seen. The district has implemented an online reporting system. If there are any concerns or problems with the process it is important for these situations be reported to the ADTA so either Leslie or myself can put them on the next DOSH Committee meeting agenda. When a member feels they have experienced a violent incident or threat it is imperative that it be reported regardless of the cause. There is the alternative of using the Worksafe Form 6A which is available on the Worksafe site. It is sent to Health and Safety in the Board Office and you must keep a copy. **The ADTA needs to know if you have any difficulties reporting an incident.**

A final thought... it is good to know that some sites are making Health and Safety an agenda item at some staff meetings. However, this does not replace a monthly JOSH Committee meeting where an agenda is created by the co-chairs and minutes kept specific to the agenda.

A safe and healthy work environment enables teachers to maintain their own personal health while doing their best for their students.

Pat Smith

ADTA Health & Safety Representative

BCTF ADVANTAGE PROGRAM - FITNESS

The BCTF Advantage program is proud to provide members with a number of fitness options. Below you will see all the fitness facilities that have signed on to support the BCTF Advantage Program. Many of these gyms have locations found right in Abbotsford.

For more details on the BCTF Advantage Program, head to <https://www.bctf.ca/advantage/>



**STEVE NASH
FITNESS WORLD
& SPORTS CLUB**



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IMPORTANT DATES

December 21st - Last day of classes before Winter Break

Dec 22nd - Jan 6th - ADTA Office Closed

January 9th - ADTA Executive Meeting

January 14th - ADTA Pro-D Committee Meeting

January 15th - School Board Meeting

January 23rd - ADTA General Meeting

January 25th - Non-Instructional Day #4 - Curriculum Day (**be sure to check out the ADTA hosted Pro-D event, [MineralsEd Pro-D Workshop: K-3 Integrated Resource Unit - Kids and Rocks](#)**)

January 30th - Deadline for Paid Education Leave

For a comprehensive list of important dates, including details, please refer to the ADTA website calendar (<http://www.adta.bc.ca/calendar.html>)

ADTA OFFICE HOURS

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

PLEASE NOTE THE ADTA WILL BE CLOSED DURING THE WINTER BREAK.

Any inquiries can be directed to the emails listed below or reach us at **604-854-1946**

Contact Us

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