

NEWSLETTER

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Welcome Back Everyone!

President's Message

Summer vacation is over and we are all back in our familiar or soon to be familiar routines, perhaps dwelling a bit on pleasant memories of special places visited or on time passed relaxing with a good book. Where does the time go? I hope that your school year is rewarding and productive and creates satisfying memories of special moments when students suddenly achieve those sparkles of insight or spontaneously demonstrate their appreciation for your efforts. Teaching can be a rewarding profession. I wish you all good luck for the upcoming year and I encourage you to become, even if only in a small way, involved in the work of the Abbotsford District Teachers' Association, the organization to which you all belong.

Rick Guenther, President, ADTA

DID YOU KNOW?

The **ADTA WEBSITE** is updated weekly with new and current up-to-date information. Check it out at www.adta.bc.ca

BCeSIS COMMITTEE

The ADTA is forming a committee to look into the effects of BCeSIS on teachers in the Abbotsford School District. If you would like to be part of the committee or wish to share your experiences, please contact Shannon Murnaghan at the ADTA office either via AbbyNet or at (604) 854-1946.

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ!

For many years, teacher-librarians have organized special school events to mark National School Library Day (NSLD) on the fourth Monday in October. On Monday, October 26th, 2009 the British Columbia Teacher-Librarians' Association is challenging schools, trustees, and members of the legislature to "Drop Everything and Read!" for 20 minutes.

Last year, dozens of schools across the province met the challenge on National School Library Day. Hundreds of BC students engaged in silent reading that day, and the response was terrific. Make sure your PAC hears about the event, and that your LSA sends a copy to your Superintendent, trustees and your mayor.

FACTOR 88 DON'T WAIT

Teachers who have reached the factor 88, age plus contributory service with the teachers or municipal pension plan, and have 120 sick days or more saved may voluntarily withdraw from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan: Long Term. If you have reached age 65 or factor 90, you are no longer eligible for long-term benefits and should withdraw. It is necessary for you to apply to withdraw. Send a completed form, available from Income Security, local presidents, or online at bctf.ca/pensions/salary/LT-WithdrawalForm.shtml, to the BCTF Income Security Division.

PENSION SEMINARS 2009

Thinking about Retirement?

The Teachers' Pension Plan, in cooperation with the BCTF, continues to offer pension seminars to plan members.

Plan members have a choice of two seminars. **Your Pension, Your Future** is for new and mid-career plan members. **Thinking about Retiring** is designed for members within five years of retirement.

Members can access the online registration system at tpp.pensionsbc.ca under the Pension Information Seminars section. This section also provides a link to view the schedule and register manually with a paper form.

Registration is on a first-come, first served basis and some venues fill up quickly so it is important to register as early as possible.

Contact the Teachers' Pension Plan Seminar Services staff in Victoria at 250.356.2466, or toll-free at 1.877.558.5574 or via email at TPPseminars@pensionsbc.ca

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TUTORING?

Please contact the ADTA office if you would like your name added to our list. Contact Shannon Murnaghan @ 604.854.1946 or email me at adta34@telus.net

NAME OR ADDRESS CHANGE?

Please inform the ADTA if you have a name change, address change or a new telephone number. It's your responsibility to inform the BCTF and the College of Teachers' of any personal changes. The BCTF website has change forms which you can download or submit online.

Your Health & Safety Report by Dyanne Warkentin

Did you know that the employer must advise every worker who may come in contact with a student, or a parent who has a history of violence, of the nature and extent of that history of violence and of ways to deal with that person? Many teachers who work with violent students think that it is simply part of the job to be kicked, punched, slapped, threatened, and spat upon. This is particularly true of teachers who work with students with special needs, some of whom are violent, although many not intentionally so. In fact, teachers do not have to be beaten up at work. The employer has a legal obligation to keep every one of its workers safe. Teachers are often told that they cannot have access to information about the violent past of a student because it would violate the student's right to privacy. This is simply not true. The School Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the Youth Criminal Justice Act all contain provisions that allow the release of information related to safety. All supercede the student's privacy rights. Insist that your school and your school district have provisions in place for the prompt disclosure of information about histories of violence. Insist that a proper risk assessment and safety plan is in place before a student with such a history is placed in your class. And, insist that the employer provides appropriate training for dealing with violent students.

September	October	November	December
Tues. & Wed. Sept. 29 & 30 Pro D Training	Mon. Oct. 5 World Teachers' Day Celebration	Wed. Nov. 4 Induction	Wed. Dec. 9 Rep Dinner
Wed. Sept. 30 General Meeting	Wed. Oct. 7 & 8 Staff Rep Training	Wed. Nov. 11 Remembrance Day	Dec. 19 - Jan. 3/10 School Winter Break ADTA Office Closed
	Mon. Oct. 12 Thanksgiving Day	Tues. & Wed. Nov. 17 & 18 Health & Safety Training	
	Wed. Oct 21 Staff Rep Meeting	Wed., Nov. 18 Staff Rep Meeting	

BCeSIS

During the 2008/09 school year the Langley Teachers' Association conducted a survey of their 6 BCeSIS pilot schools, part of their report is printed below.

According to the Internet homepage for the Ontario-based software company, AAL Solutions, www.aalsolutions.com, the author of BCeSIS, the stated purposes of their system are "creating more time for teaching" and enabling "schools to spend more time educating and less time on administration." When asked, How has using BCeSIS affected your amount of student contact time?—63% of teachers reported a decrease of student contact time. The frustration of having precious hours removed was summed up by the comment, "What had been most stressful is that BCeSIS has taken so much of my time away from my students." Other teachers report that having to use BCeSIS over previous software resulted in significant time taken away from their personal lives as well.

Excerpt from: A report from the BCTF to the members of the legislative assembly printed by the BCTF on March 20, 2007.

"BCeSIS is definitely a top-down system designed for the ministry to collect data rather than a system developed to meet the needs of students, staff, and school boards."

"A manual attendance routine, performed five times a day with paper, pencil, and a human brain takes me about four minutes for the whole day. A smooth day with BCeSIS requires sixteen minutes of time to perform the same attendance routine for my five classes."

"The program is slow, badly designed for classroom use, unreliable, and does not seem to be improving even though we are now two months into using it."

These are quotes from teachers currently using BCeSIS. Unfortunately, they are experiences shared widely among BC teachers. BCeSIS, a centralized data system initiated by the Ministry of Education to collect and process data on all students, is sadly flagging. In its short life, BCeSIS has gained a reputation as sluggish and expensive.

BCeSIS gets the boot in Vancouver elementary classrooms

The Vancouver Board of Education has cut all expenditures that would have seen BCeSIS implemented into every elementary classroom in Vancouver, and VESTA is very pleased with that decision. Members at the BCeSIS "lead schools" in Vancouver have been refusing to use this system since September. Concerns have been expressed about privacy of the data, security of the system, the cost of the system at a time when we're losing teachers and SEA support, the communication plan surrounding the roll-out, and a "user agreement" that hasn't been formally bargained at any bargaining table. While BCeSIS will fortunately not be seen in any Vancouver classrooms, the privacy and security concerns remain for its office use.