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North Okanagan-Shuswap Teachers' Association

In This Issue:

Your New NOSTA Executive

Summer Conference

Cuts Hurt Our Kids

NOSTA's First General Meeting – the College of Teachers

A College of Politicians?

NOSTA Has a Web Site

Rename the Newsletter Contest

What's Up Doc?

Your New NOSTA Executive

Your executive welcomes you back to another year of doing the job we all love: teaching. Everyone knows things are not as rosy as they should be but together we will continue the good struggle to do what is best for our students.

The executives gathered on September 8, 2003 for their first meeting. They met for about two hours and discussed how to best represent the membership and advocate for public education. It looks like it will be a busy year once again.

A beautiful day allowed for a pleasant break in the meeting for a picture. Feel free to contact any member of the executive through our office at 832-1933.



BACK: Paul Bennett (Bargaining), Dick Lonsdale (LR), Julia Body (TOC chair), Leslie Lowe (Pro D), Ruth Hay (2nd Vice), Patricia Clough (LR), Phil Lepine (Health & Safety), Tami Burgess (Past President), Doug Brown (LR).
FRONT: Jonathan Bradshaw (Communications), Heather McDonald (Social Justice), Donna Smith (secretary), Lynda Nicholson (Pres.), Pauline McKenzie (Treasurer), Judy Boling (Member Involvement), Mike Holiday (1st Vice)

Summer Conference

“Communities build schools; schools build communities”

For a week this summer, more than 500 B.C. teachers met at U.B.C. to discuss, debate and participate in training for teacher representation and leadership. Meeting amidst an atmosphere of cutbacks in services to students, lost jobs and lost schools, teachers had much on their minds as they prepared for the “what next” of the government’s agenda. This summer conference was organized around themes of professional development, social justice, the newly legislated College of Teachers, health and safety training, TOC issues, bargaining and practical skills and strategies for defending public education.

Teachers involved in local leadership give up a week of their summer, stay in lovely concrete dorms with shared bathrooms, and meet in classrooms for training because they believe in the principle of teachers working for teachers. The government agenda to slash education funding and remove teacher influence on educational matters is intended to stress and weaken us. Teachers work hard to meet the needs of their students and to preserve the quality of public education that we have built in this province. Your local executive will use the skills and strategies we learned at summer conference to strengthen and support your working conditions. Attacks on schools and teaching will only bring us closer together.

As we face another year of challenges, I hope you will enjoy the highlights of your work with students, reduce your stress where you can, and support your schools and colleagues. We do make a difference!

Submitted by: Patricia Clough, Local Assembly Rep
Also see <http://workingtv.com/2003bctfsummerconf.html>

Cuts Hurt Our Kids

The Board insisted that the cuts being made to custodial time would “be as far removed as possible” from impacting our students. Perhaps they had the best intentions possible as they toiled to implement Christie’s designs for our education system. Yet the teachers of the district see the impact of these cuts every day.



At Parkview Elementary the cuts to custodial time have had an immediate impact. These cuts have resulted in the closing of three rooms in the school; including the activity room and a boys change room. The effect on the students is that they all now have a reduction of about 25% in indoor PE time.



Closed Boys Change Room at Parkview Elementary

There will be many direct and indirect effects on the students and staff of our district due to the Board’s cuts. We need to bring all of these to the attention of the Board so that they see the damage that their cuts have done to education in this district. **Let your association know of any negative effects on your school and students due to the cuts you have experienced.**

NOSTA's First General Meeting – The College of Teachers –

The first general meeting of the newly formed NOSTA occurred on September 17th, 2003. The one item of business to deal with was the government's move, through Bill 51, to take political control of the College of Teachers.

The NOSTA executive invited Irene Lanzinger, Second Vice-President of the BCTF, to come and discuss the issue of the college with our members. Irene presented the BCTF plan in a thoughtful and logical manner while also listening carefully to the concerns and ideas that members present had to share.

Members were not happy that once again teachers seem to be targeted by this government. Steve Naylor spoke out about his strong feelings saying: "What this government is doing is morally and ethically wrong...it stinks!" Other members expressed similar feelings.

"What this government is doing is morally and ethically wrong...it stinks!"
-Steve Naylor

The first step in fighting this draconian move is to be sure that your staff rep receives your signed form withdrawing your permission to deduct College dues from your payroll. The NOSTA office needs these forms before the end of the month so that strategic decisions can be made by the BCTF.

Full information on these issues can be found in the special issue of *Teacher* and in a handout that you can obtain from your staff rep.

A College of Politicians?

It was suggested at the general meeting that the politicians of this province should, themselves, be forced to be members of a college. That way, "conduct unbecoming a member" would put the Premier in a lot of hot water for driving intoxicated several times over the legal limit. Meanwhile, "professional misconduct" could be argued against the entire cabinet for the mess they are creating in this province. Finally, with a "snitch" law in place, cabinet secrecy would be a thing of the past, as ministers would have to tattle on each other.



NOSTA Has a Web Site



NOSTA now has a web site hosted by the BCTF. It is currently under construction but several pages are finished. The site can be reached at www.bctf.ca/local83. Hopefully the site can be viewed on all platforms and using any browser. If not, get in touch with the NOSTA office and we will see what we can do.

Information on contacting NOSTA through phone, email, and "snail mail" can be found on the home page. Other pages include a list of your executive, past newsletters, and an interesting links page. In the future a copy of the contract will be available through this site (and, yes, you will be getting a hard copy soon).

Name the NOSTA Newsletter

Since we are a new local we need a name for our newsletter. Hence, A contest is in order. Just send in your name and you could win a brand new car. Just kidding! But there is a prize and it will be a gift certificate to a local restaurant of your choice. So enter now and enter often. Contest closes on October 17, 2003. The first suggestion received of repeat suggestions will be the only one considered. Phone: 832-1933 FAX: 832-4592.



What's Up Doc?

World Wide Web

www.bctf.cd/local83

NOSTA web page.
-or just leave off "local 83"
for the BCTF site.

www.canadians.org

The Council of Canadians.

www.policyalternatives.ca

The Canadian Centre for
Policy Alternatives.

www.handsoffhydro.com

Site dedicated to keeping
BC Hydro in the hands of
those who paid for it.

<http://www.strategicthoughts.com>

Analysis of BC political
events.

Calendar of Events

Month	Day	Event
OCTOBER	02	P.D. Rep Training
	03	School-based P.D. Day
	06	Executive Meeting
	20	General Meeting
	24	P.D./P.S.A. Day
NOVEMBER	03	Executive Meeting
	10	School-based P.D. Day and LRA
DECEMBER	01	Executive Meeting
	08	LRA Meeting
	18	Christmas Open House NOSTA Office 3:00 – 6:00?

"History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

-- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.