

Teacher



Magazine of the
BC Teachers' Federation

Volume 30, Number 4
March 2018



AGM 2018—Meet your candidates

Also in this issue

Mapping Indigenous land

March 8th, #MeToo, What about you?

Coming out at work—teacher stories

Golden intergenerational moments



This is your **MAGAZINE**

Do you enjoy writing? Have a story to tell? An event, topic, or issue you want your colleagues to know about?

If so, consider writing for *Teacher*.

We also welcome brief letters to the editor. If you have any thoughts about an article you have read and want to share your opinion with other teachers, send your letter to teachermag@bctf.ca.

The 2018 theme will focus on the future: what's new, what's next. Submission guidelines can be downloaded from bctf.ca/publications/TeacherNewsmag.aspx.

Teacher reserves the right to edit or condense any contribution considered for publication. We are unable to publish all letters we receive.

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Creating a culture of consent

In the past year, the #MeToo movement has galvanized people around the world to speak out and take action against sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Courageous women in many countries have broken their silence and levelled countless allegations of abuse of power and privilege by men in all sectors of society—the arts, politics, business, and more.

AS TEACHING PROFESSIONALS and members of a union, we cannot look away and pretend that our public education system is free of sexual harassment, misogyny, and bullying.

No girl or woman should have to come to school worried about being touched or harassed or shamed. No student or teacher should have to face sexist jokes or misogynist put downs in the workplace. Sexual harassment is a terrible obstacle to learning, and it should never be part of the job of teaching.

That's why your Executive Committee is bringing an important recommendation to this year's AGM to advance a culture of consent in our unions, schools, and communities.

The recommendation calls upon the BCTF to demonstrate a deep and meaningful commitment to ending sexual harassment and assault. That means providing members with strategies and resources to educate students about the necessity of consent; how to address inappropriate comments, gestures, and physical contact; ways to interrupt harassment; and how to serve as effective allies for others.

It is important that all teachers work together, and it's especially crucial for men to speak out and disrupt sexist behaviour when they see and hear other men do it.

For over 45 years, BC teachers have led the way in asserting all rights for girls and women in schools and society. But much more remains to be done. The BCTF needs to be an outspoken participant in the creation of a safe, positive, equitable, harassment-free reality for all women, including trans women, today and for generations of women to come.



Créer une culture du consentement

Au cours de l'année passée, le mouvement #MeToo a incité les gens du monde entier à s'exprimer et à prendre des mesures contre le harcèlement sexuel et les violences sexistes. Dans de nombreux pays, des femmes courageuses ont rompu le silence et ont dénoncé d'innombrables allégations d'abus de pouvoir et de privilèges de la part d'hommes dans tous les secteurs de la société - les arts, la politique, les affaires, etc.

EN TANT QUE PROFESSIONNELS de l'enseignement et membres d'un syndicat, nous ne pouvons pas détourner le regard et prétendre que notre système d'enseignement public est exempt de harcèlement sexuel, de misogynie et d'intimidation.

Mais aucune fille ou femme ne devrait avoir à se rendre à l'école, en craignant d'être touchée, harcelée ou avec un sentiment de honte. Aucun élève ou enseignant ne devrait avoir à faire face à des blagues sexistes ou à des réprimandes misogynes sur le lieu de travail. Le harcèlement sexuel est un obstacle terrible à l'apprentissage, et il ne devrait jamais faire partie du travail d'enseignement.

C'est pourquoi votre comité exécutif présente une importante recommandation à l'AGA de cette année afin de promouvoir une culture du consentement dans nos syndicats, nos écoles et nos communautés.

Les recommandations invitent la FECB à faire preuve d'un engagement profond et significatif pour mettre fin au harcèlement sexuel et aux agressions. Cela signifie fournir aux membres des stratégies et des ressources pour éduquer les élèves sur la nécessité du consentement, sur la façon d'aborder les commentaires inappropriés, les gestes et les contacts physiques, sur les façons d'interrompre le harcèlement et sur les façons d'être des alliés efficaces pour les autres.

Il est important que tous les enseignants travaillent ensemble, et il est particulièrement important que les hommes s'expriment et confrontent le comportement sexiste lorsqu'ils en sont témoin et entendent d'autres hommes le faire.

Depuis plus de 45 ans, les enseignants de la C.-B. ont ouvert la voie en revendiquant les droits des filles et des femmes dans les écoles et la société. Mais il reste encore beaucoup à faire. La FECB doit être un participant actif à la création d'un monde sûr, positif, équitable et sans harcèlement pour l'ensemble des femmes, y compris les femmes trans, pour aujourd'hui et pour les générations de femmes à venir.

Notice of BCTF AGM 2018

As required by *The Societies Act*, the following formal notice of the 2018 Annual General Meeting is made to all BCTF members pursuant to By-law 8.1 by publication in this edition of *Teacher*.

The 102nd Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Vancouver, BC beginning on Saturday, March 17, 2018 and continuing to Tuesday, March 20, 2018.

BCTF financial statements

The audited financial statements of the BC Teachers' Federation are available online in the member portal: bit.ly/1K0bfxl



Teachers' Pension Plan

New teacher pension plan website available March 2018

IN MARCH your teacher pension plan will have a new website. More searchable and easy to use, it will answer questions about your pension and your pension plan with extra layers of detail for those who want to know more.

Sign in to My Account

On the website, you sign in to My Account to view your service and salary information, name a beneficiary, calculate the cost of buying service for a leave you've taken, and more.

Take a course

Sign up for a free two-hour workshop to learn more about your pension or take an eLearning course online.

Estimate your pension

The site offers pension estimators that estimate what your pension will be on retirement.

Retire online

When you're ready to retire, you may be eligible to apply for retirement online. All the information you need is available when you sign in to My Account. The online application walks you through step-by-step instructions, guiding you through each decision, and allowing you to pause and save your information along the way.

Visit your new plan website at tp.pensionsbc.ca.

Sex talk on the carpet

I JUST READ Valdine Ciwko's article in the Nov/Dec 2017 *Teacher* about having frank conversations with her Grade 5 class regarding sexual health and gender identity. I am writing to say how much I appreciate the sharing of experiences, ideas, and strategies, and of course for implementing them in the first place! Valdine's students are so fortunate to have an early opportunity to explore ideas, develop language, and gain confidence navigating these concepts in the care of a supportive guide.

—*Kaili Vesik, Burnaby South Secondary teacher*

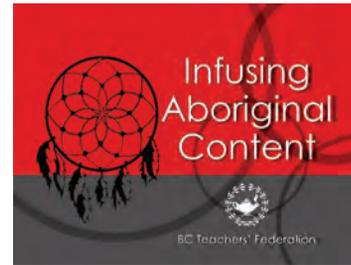
French facts

I'm just curious—on page 15 of the last issue of *Teacher* listing the top ten languages spoken at home in BC, French is not there! I can't believe there is no French spoken at home by BC students! We have Francophone schools for a reason, no?

On a positive note, I really appreciate the article from Clint Johnston and will make sure to talk about it with my school staff.

—*Paule Mondor, Kelowna teacher*

Editor's note: Thank you for your question and appreciation for Clint's article, Paule! French did not make the Ministry of Education top ten languages spoken at home list. The 2016 Canadian census tells us that while 1.25% of BC's overall population report French as their mother tongue and 0.89% do speak some French at home, only 0.36% report it as the language most spoken at home.



Infusing Aboriginal content

I NOTICED in the Nov/Dec 2017 *Teacher* there was an Infusing Aboriginal Content workshop posted. Who is presenting this? Can they present at a school professional day? Can you give me details about the workshop and a contact?

—*Georgia Loukopoulos, Clinton Elementary teacher*

Editor's note: Thanks Georgia, for your enquiry. Yes, the BCTF workshop, Infusing Aboriginal Content, can be presented at your school or PD venue at no cost to teachers! As well, the BCTF offers members a host of other workshops, nearly a hundred in total—all relevant to teaching and learning in BC schools today. Visit <https://lis.gd/1p6ELX> for all BCTF workshop descriptions and booking information.

Ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all students

IN MY FIRST YEAR as the SOGI District Lead for the Vancouver School Board, I've been pleased to work with SOGI School Leads to ensure that all students feel safe, included, and empowered regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The SOGI 1 2 3 Learning Modules offer three engaging, easily accessible resources: a video, an editable PowerPoint presentation, and a Facilitator's Guide with speaker's notes, discussion questions, activities, and worksheets. These 40-minute downloadable modules are perfect for a workshop, staff meeting, or lunch break. SOGI School Leads report very positive responses to the modules.

The SOGI website also offers downloadable lesson plans for all grade levels and provides links to some incredible community resources.

Whether you are planning a lesson on Indigenous Perspectives of Gender or want ideas on how to celebrate Pink Shirt Day, I encourage you to visit the SOGI website www.SOGIeducation.org and check out this awesome resource!

—*Renee Hock, Diversity Mentor, Vancouver School Board*



Photos of draft map submitted by Gail Stromquist



Standing our ground Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada touring soon!

By Gail Stromquist, BCTF Aboriginal Education co-ordinator

A NEW MAP of Canada will soon go on tour! This giant 8 x 11 metre floor map shows the traditional territories of Inuit, First Nations, and Métis peoples. It includes original place names, residential school locations, language groups, and the land cover. No colonial borders are featured. In the coming months, the map and a kit of activities to encourage discussion with students of all ages and levels of knowledge, will begin its cross-Canada journey.

The *Canadian Geographic Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada* is a multifaceted educational project meant to increase discussion, knowledge and reconciliation among all Canadians. Indigenous educators from all provinces and territories were consulted last December in Ottawa on the design of the floor map and activities. We're thrilled that the BCTF teaching resource, *Gladys We Never Knew* is included. A teaching-from-stories model enables classes to explore themes concerning treaties, notable people, human rights, governance, connections to land, residential schools, trade routes, place names, land disputes, and languages.

The giant map is packaged with lesson plans and can be borrowed for three weeks free of charge or purchased as a district teaching resource. Additional online and printed resources, including a multivolume coffee table atlas, will be available later in 2018. Learn more at the Canadian Geographic site www.canadiangeographic.ca.



Photos by Winona Waldron



Celebrate March 8th

Engage students to advance EQUALITY

By *Sonja van der Putten*, Surrey teacher and member of the BCTF Status of Women Action Group

When I talk to my students about gender equality and International Women’s Day, I often get responses such as “Well, when is International Men’s Day?” (November 9th, for the record), and “What about meninism?” These responses strike me as a reflection of a socioeconomic system that encourages students to be in a constant state of competition.

BY SIMPLY introducing the topic of gender equality to my Social Justice 12 class recently, several students immediately began to emphasize their group distinctiveness (e.g., “but men and boys have problems too”) and minimize their similarities (e.g., “only girls do that”). It was important for these students to understand that gender equality does not mean that one group wins rights at the expense of another group. Instead, gender equality aims to ensure equal access to opportunities, regardless of the gender with which you identify. The class discussed how the social and economic dynamics within families, communities, institutions, ethnicities, and cultures, create gendered expectations. Human needs for safety and belonging are universal, yet systems affect our thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours, and how we access these needs. We choose to identify with groups that most closely satisfy our needs for positive identity and self-worth.

“It was important for these students to understand that gender equality does not mean that one group wins rights at the expense of another group.”

Last spring, I attended the Daughters of the Vote conference in Ottawa. Hundreds of young women and students from across Canada participated to mark the 100th year of formal participation of women in Canadian politics. The event reinforced that women’s issues are everyone’s issues. In addition to a variety of workshops and presentations, these young women testified at the House of Commons Standing Committee, voicing concerns and suggesting actions needed on key areas facing Canadians.

Addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, and mental health issues benefits everyone. Closing the gender wage gap means more money in the household and more money in the economy. Women in political leadership positions results in more equitably distributed resources and structural policies that are more fairly negotiated. These impacts range from banking to natural resources industries. Gender equality has the potential to raise Canada’s GDP and improve the health of all Canadians.

One result of Daughters of the Vote is the launch of the Legacy Project, with working groups to address key concerns, including mental health; gender-based violence;

decolonization and Indigenous rights; energy, climate, and the environment; and women’s paid work and leadership. The aim is to build political engagement through the development of advocacy toolkits including an analysis of issues affecting young women, policy options, innovation, and inclusion.

International Women’s Day is an opportunity to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women, while also acknowledging that gender equality has yet to be achieved. On March 8th, I encourage all teachers to engage their students in a relevant and needed conversation on gender equality.

Gender equality resources for teachers

Daughters of the vote legacy initiatives
www.daughtersofthevote.ca/dov_legacy

Status of Women Canada resources to support gender equality and encourage students to participate in a conversation via #EqualityMatters.
<https://is.gd/teiHdE>

Women’s Rights lesson plans on the BCTF Status of Women Site
bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=19766

TeachBC Women’s Rights Portal
<https://is.gd/8yEEaV> ■

Time's Up! #MeToo! What about you?

By **Debbie Morran**, BCTF Field Service Assistant Director and Women in Negotiations co-ordinator

iStock.com/nito100

The recent #MeToo movement has brought much-needed attention to the issue of sexual harassment. As BC teachers, it is reassuring to know that we have provisions in our collective agreement meant to ensure we can teach in a non-sexist environment. And, should harassment occur, we have recourse through a grievance process.

A NON-SEXIST environment is critical in any healthy workplace, including schools. Our collective agreement defines a non-sexist environment as one "in which there is no discrimination against females or males by portraying them in gender stereotyped roles or by omitting their contributions." Furthermore, in September of each year, the school district and the union send a joint letter to all employees, notifying them of their commitment to a non-sexist workplace, and that they will work together to promote a non-sexist environment through educational programs and activities.

Nevertheless, sexual harassment does happen in every workplace, including our schools. If you have been a victim of sexual harassment at work, you are not alone. Teachers may be exposed to harassment from a variety of sources because we interact with so many individuals, including our students, their parents, our teaching colleagues, support staff, administrators, and school district personnel.

The most common forms of sexual harassment from colleagues and superiors are unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature, physical proximity, hugs

“It is reassuring to know that we have provisions in our collective agreement meant to ensure we can teach in a non-sexist environment.”

and persistent invitations for off-duty activities. Less common but more serious incidents could involve stalking and/or sexual assault. Teachers' rights to a non-sexist and harassment-free environment may also be compromised by students' sexual comments, jokes, or gestures.

Those engaging in improper behaviour may act as if their behaviour is normal and may assert that they only intended to be funny or friendly. If the individual should have known that their behaviour was unwelcome, it still constitutes harassment.

The definition of sexual harassment in our collective agreement also specifically addresses unwelcome sexual advances toward a teacher by a person in authority. This person might be a department head, vice-principal, principal, or superintendent. Sexual advances may include or imply the promise of a reward for complying with their advance or a threat of reprisal if their advance is rejected. For example, the principal places a hand on your leg under the staffroom table during a staff meeting, and then mentions after the meeting that they would like to meet with you privately in their office to discuss your next teaching assignment. Fortunately, such incidents are rare, but if this or something similar happens to you, report it to your union rep immediately and document the details of exactly what occurred and when.

Your local teachers' association office or your school's union rep can advise you on how to respond to sexual harassment. Your collective agreement outlines the resolution process. It includes both an informal and formal process, which your union will support and guide you through. Informal processes

“If you have been a victim of sexual harassment at work, you are not alone.”

could include something as basic as your staff rep flagging concerns with a colleague. As part of the informal process, you can choose whether you are comfortable confronting the harasser directly. In some instances, a staff representative may be able to speak on your behalf with the person who is making you uncomfortable and the behaviour will stop. In other situations, you may decide to proceed with the more formal complaint and investigation process. All complaints are kept strictly confidential and most cases are successfully resolved at the local level. Grievance officers often find that, once a person is made aware of the concern, they express appreciation for it being brought to their attention and modify their behaviour. It is always advisable to deal with a situation immediately, rather than allow it to fester and escalate over a long period of time.

“Your local teachers' association office or your school's union rep can advise you on how to respond to sexual harassment.”

You too can be part of creating a harassment-free workplace. Teachers who encourage each other to speak up without fear of reprisal when they see or experience sexual harassment in our schools, not only support each other, they become role models for their students.

Curious about your collective agreement? Find it online on the member portal at <https://lis.gd/rQRSin>. ■





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Classroom in Mormon Hills School,
Bountiful, BC, 2005.

ADVOCATING for the children of Bountiful

By Robyn Trask, BCTF staff lawyer

As a social justice union, the BCTF advocates for social development in our communities and province. Beyond our social justice program, the BCTF also uses the law to advocate for equality and social justice. One recent case in which the BCTF intervened was the *Polygamy Reference*. When several members of the polygamous community in Bountiful, BC were convicted of criminal charges related to polygamy and transporting underage girls across the border for a sexual purpose, the issue once again made the news.

The *Polygamy Reference* was a trial established by the provincial government to consider whether the prohibition on polygamy in the *Criminal Code* was constitutional. The trial included extensive evidence, but no individual person was on trial. The purpose of the reference was to broadly consider the constitutionality of the *Criminal Code* provisions.

The main parties to the case were the provincial and federal governments and an *amicus curiae*, a lawyer appointed to represent the view opposing government. Several organizations, including the BCTF, applied to be intervenors in the case. Each intervenor presented a unique perspective to assist the court in considering the issues before it.

The BCTF's interest in the *Polygamy Reference* related to its long history of ongoing work on issues relating to women and children, including children's education. The BCTF also has a long-standing role advocating for the rights of women and children in the community of Bountiful, BC. At the time of the hearing, there were two independent schools in Bountiful. Currently, one of these schools has been closed and the children are being home-schooled.

The BCTF argued that the court must consider the equality and security rights of women and children in its analysis. During the evidentiary phase of the proceeding, the court heard extensive evidence regarding the harms of polygamy, both inside of Canada and on a global basis. The BCTF

argued that consideration of these harms is an important part of the analysis the court must undertake. We focussed on the harms of polygamy to children and included accounts from individuals who attended school in Bountiful.

The BCTF submitted that the words "polygamy" and "conjugal union" in the *Criminal Code* should be read as encompassing exploitative polygamous relationships (and, for example, should not include polyamorous relationships). The BCTF also argued it was troubling that the independent schools in Bountiful continued to receive public funding while students' education at these schools were harmed.

In its decision, the court upheld the *Criminal Code* prohibition of polygamy, which led to the more recent charges and convictions of individuals from Bountiful. ■

BCTF steadfastly PURSUES JUSTICE for women and children in Bountiful

Compiled by Marian Dodds, Teacher editor

The polygamous community of Bountiful, near Creston, BC, has existed since the 1940s. When rumours about possible abuse of women and children in Bountiful came to the attention of teachers, the BCTF urged the BC government to take action to investigate allegations of trafficking of young girls and women into the community as wives of older men, the assigning of husbands to girls as young as 14, older men impregnating girls as young as 14, casting young men from the community to keep the gender imbalance, and teaching a narrowly focussed curriculum to children.

2004

- BCTF raised concerns with the Premier about reports of mistreatment of women and children and allegations regarding limited educational opportunities for children in Bountiful.
- A BCTF "Bountiful Petition" with 2,000 signatures, called on the provincial government to immediately protect the women and children of Bountiful.

2005–present

- Former Bountiful community member Debbie Palmer, co-author of *Keep Sweet: Children of Polygamy* was invited to speak at the AGM and in locals.
- BCTF has repeatedly written to the provincial government regarding persistent allegations about the mistreatment of women and children in the Bountiful community and allegations that the Bountiful schools fall short of government standards, practise unequal and discriminatory education of girls and boys, have low graduation rates, and use unqualified teachers and outdated learning resources.

2006

- BCTF Social Justice Conference in Creston addressed rights of girls and women since the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The rights of girls and women in closed communities was a focus. A BCTF research paper on the issues at Bountiful was discussed.



2007

- Letter sent to BC Education Minister with a petition by teachers, urging action.
- RCMP investigates the community.

2008

- BCTF met with the BC Attorney-General Wally Oppal and Education Minister Shirley

Bond to express concern about the educational programs of Bountiful and the safety of children in the community.

- A brief was presented to government officials raising issues of teaching sexist and racist beliefs, lack of accommodation for children with special needs, fewer hours of instruction than required by legislation, and unqualified teachers. Concerns also included arranged marriages to men in positions of authority, exchange of girls across the Canada/US border, boys forced to leave the community, and working conditions for children.
- BCTF urged the provincial government to withdraw funding for the religious schools of Bountiful.

2009

- BCTF presented a petition to the Attorney General and Education Minister, urging the government to take action on Bountiful.
- BCTF was invited by the BC Attorney General to participate in a hearing on the *Polygamy Reference*.

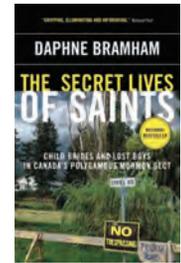
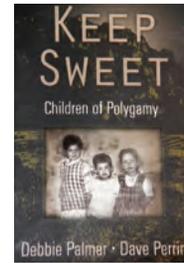
2011

- On November 24, 2011, the Supreme Court of British Columbia declared that the prohibition of polygamy is consistent with the basic freedoms guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

2017

- Two former religious leaders in BC, Winston Blackmore, 60, and James Oler, 53, were found guilty of polygamy after marrying more than two dozen women over the course of 25 years.
- One school in Bountiful has been closed. The other remains open and receives funding from the BC government as an independent school. Some Bountiful students are being home-schooled. ■

Further reading on Bountiful



<https://is.gdIdVcP8r> <https://is.gdIINCmCk>



Women's EQUALITY: not yet, not everywhere

West Coast Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF) is the only organization in BC promoting women's equality through the law. Since 1985 they have worked to end discrimination against women through equality rights litigation, law reform, and public legal education. LEAF helped bring about some of the most important victories for women in Canada: safe access to reproductive rights, fair workplace standards, fair separation agreements in family law, the right to be free of sexual harassment from landlords, human rights protections for women held in solitary confinement, and more.

Speakers Bureau

LEAF speakers can address key issues in BC and Canada affecting women's equality, the latest developments in the courts and cutting-edge law and policy research.

West Coast LEAF has intervened in many significant and historic human rights and constitutional cases at every level of court in BC, including the Supreme Court of Canada.

Workshops for youth available in and around Kamloops, Nanaimo, and Metro Vancouver

Power Play (Law 12 and Social Justice 12)

Trend Shift (Grades 8–12)

No Means No (Grades 5–9)

Youth in the Workplace (ages 15 and up)

To book a youth workshop or inquire about a Speakers Bureau presentation, contact www.westcoastleaf.org. ■

No more empty plates

Changing the numbers on workplace fatalities

By Larry Dureski,
Cranbrook teacher and
a BCTF Health and Safety facilitator



Three empty plates on family dinner tables, three affected families, and three broken communities. According to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC), almost three people in Canada per day who leave for work do not return home. This daily average of work-related fatalities has held steady over the last 20 years. What does this number look like? Imagine cities the size of Cranbrook or Fort St. John taken off the map. The BC share of this number could be represented by communities like Enderby, Chemainus, or Invermere—gone.

IN 2015, there were 232,629 accepted claims in Canada involving time lost due to injury, illness, or disease. That's the combined population of Kelowna and Vernon losing time at work and lining up for medical treatment.

As educators, we can play a role. In our workplaces, we can ensure that school sites have effective health and safety programs with full worker participation. We can insist on training in prevention measures such as inspection of worksites and work methods, conducting risk assessment and control of workplace hazards, and dealing with violence in the workplace.

This April 28 Day of Mourning, consider speaking as a teacher representative at an event. Perhaps organize a Day of Mourning at your school. School environments have their own unique hazards. Use the AWCBC numbers. Match them to similar-sized communities in your area to make these numbers real.

Display three dinner plates, and hold one plate up at the end of your presentation: "If implementation of preventive measures enabled this one person to come home for dinner, we are already making a difference." ■

Mike Wisla photo

Why a special Day of Mourning Project for schools?

SECONDARY STUDENTS and youth ages 15–24 often lack knowledge of the dangers of work and their rights as workers. Yet they are the most vulnerable group in the workforce, especially in the hospitality, retail, and construction sectors.

Consider these statistics:

- Every week in BC seven young workers are permanently disabled.
- Every day in BC an average of 27 young workers have time-loss injuries.
- In BC it is legal for 12 year olds to enter the workforce.

The Day of Mourning Project began April 28 in 1984 when the Canadian Labour Congress decided to honour lives lost and renew the commitment to improving workplace health and safety with a public event. **Since then, the April 28th Day of Mourning has been an annual event.** This year the BCTF is working in partnership with the BC Federation of Labour, the BC Labour Heritage Centre, BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association,

BC School Trustees Association, CUPE BC, and WorkSafeBC to actively encourage schools to participate in keeping our students healthy and safe at work. Teachers are encouraged to raise awareness about workplace safety through their lessons, school-wide announcements, posters, and assemblies, and to participate in Day of Mourning events in their communities.

Resources

BC Labour Heritage Centre provides downloadable Day of Mourning Project resources and registration information for schools at <https://lis.gd/i63BND>. *It is recommended that resources be reviewed before distribution to ensure content is age-appropriate.

BCTF Health and Safety offers occupational health and safety workshops for union members, support staff, and management that are updated regularly to include current legislation. Find health and safety information and workshop booking details at bctf.ca/HealthandSafety.aspx. ■



Teachers are more susceptible to concussions

By Diane Irvine, BCTF Workers' Compensation Board advocate

- WorkSafeBC statistics show that the K–12 sector (which includes all employees of public schools, including teachers, education assistants, and custodians) has a much higher claims rate for head injuries than the provincial average.
- Between 2006–2015, 7% of all injuries in the K–12 sector were concussions.
- Most work-related concussions suffered by teachers occur as the result of a fall or from a sports-related incident, such as being struck in the head by a basketball.
- While most concussions resolve quickly, some do cause significant periods of disability.

New treatment for concussions

By Allan Lee, BCTF Health and Wellness co-ordinator

“After three years of suffering, I finally found relief...”

EVERYTHING CHANGED for Sally one Saturday when she was involved in a severe motor vehicle accident. The high-energy, dynamic teacher found herself experiencing post-concussion symptoms: sensitivity to light, difficulty with movement or moving objects, difficulty with reading, migraines, foginess, nausea, dizziness, and balance problems. Despite support from a team of specialists, her challenges persisted. “It was embarrassing to wear sunglasses in my classroom...but I needed them because I was so sensitive to all types of light.” Even small tasks became difficult. “I couldn’t work without earplugs because the noise in my classroom would make my head hurt... but every time a student had a question, I had to take them out to hear what they were saying.” After three years of suffering, she finally found relief from a new, developing area of neuro-optometry called vision therapy.

Developmental Co-ordination Disorder may arise when the visual system cannot calculate accurate co-ordinates, making motor co-ordination incredibly difficult. When the brain isn’t processing depth and space properly, it affects the inner ear (vestibular system) and can throw one off balance, affect depth perception, and cause symptoms like dizziness, nausea, and difficulty in busy visual environments. If the brain isn’t accurately controlling how the eyes move and work together, there can be problems with reading speed, comprehension, fatigue, sensitivity to light, headaches, and migraines.

Vision therapy involves treatments to enable the brain to make new neurological pathways, somewhat akin to a software upgrade. Treatment may involve prescribing glasses in ways that improve efficiency, not just clarity, and/or a series of vision therapy treatments to retrain the brain. Vision therapy is also being used to treat eye movement conditions that may be interfering with reading and learning in children. ■

Resources

WorkSafeBC statistics at <https://lis.gd/ipoQbzN>.

TEDx talk about vision therapy at <https://lis.gd/jru8KM>.

BCTF Health and Wellness Program at bctf.ca/wellness. ■

Feeling stressed heading into spring break?



We can help

WE KNOW that March can be a particularly challenging time for teachers. If you are feeling stressed, remember that you are not alone. Whether it’s the blues, anxiety, or depression, 20% of teachers will experience some type of mental health issue.

The BCTF is focused on supporting you and is pleased to provide an online mental health and wellness tool—Starling Minds, already used by over 2,000 of our members. We encourage you to register, its free and 100% confidential.

To register, visit

bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=38267. ■

Pharmacare

A PLAN FOR EVERYONE



Support the Canadian Labour Congress's PHARMACARE PLAN

CANADA IS THE only developed country in the world with a universal health care program that doesn't include a universal prescription drug plan. Instead, our multiple-payer system has resulted in the second-highest prescription drug costs in the world next to the United States. Nearly 8.4 million working Canadians don't have prescription drug coverage. Even Canadians with prescription plans at work are paying more out of pocket because of ever-increasing co-payments and deductibles.

A 2015 Angus Reid poll found 91% of Canadians believe our public health care system should include a universal prescription drug plan.

Nobody should be forced to choose between paying for groceries and paying for the medication they need. That's why Canada's unions are calling on the federal government to establish a single-payer universal prescription drug plan, in co-ordination with all the provinces and territories.

For further information, visit

www.aplanforeveryone.ca. ■

Who are the kids and youth in care?

By Susan Croll, Teacher editor

iStock.com/ Starflamedia

“Invariably all the kids love their parents—even in the worst circumstances you can imagine.”

THOSE ARE THE WORDS of Bernard Richard, the Child and Youth Representative for British Columbia, referring to his recent report, *Room for Improvement: Towards Better Education Outcomes for Children in Care*. “Kids in care get pulled from their families, they are moved outside their communities. Sometimes Indigenous kids are placed in families where it’s difficult to maintain their cultural connections. Leaving their families and communities is traumatic for these children. It deeply affects their self-esteem.”

Richard is speaking about the 3,700 children and youth in BC currently in permanent care; children living with continuing custody orders (CCO). Another 7,000 BC children receive service pertaining to their welfare. Richard says the specific needs related to this trauma must be addressed if kids in care are to succeed not just in school, but as they move into adulthood.

“When things don’t work out in their foster families, they falsely blame themselves. Often, they’re moved to another school before they’ve made any significant connections in their last school. Teens especially need to feel accepted and moving often doesn’t help them.”

Richard recalls the tragic situation of Alex Gervais, the young Métis man who was

moved 17 times in 11 years. “He was referred for mental health services five times but never received any service at all.” Out of despair, Gervais killed himself.

Considering their often tenuous situations and the lack of services and resources, it’s no wonder the graduation rates of kids in care are low: 51% for non-Indigenous youth and 44% for Indigenous youth. Factor in that two-thirds of children and youth in care are Indigenous. “Kids who are already struggling and have this extra burden of living in care are less likely to graduate. They are set up for a life of unemployment,” Richard says.

Equally alarming is the number of kids living in care who have a special needs designation. In the 2014–15 school year, more than half of the children and youth living in care had special needs: more than a quarter had a physical disability or chronic health impairment, 12% had a serious behaviour or mental illness designation, and nearly 4% had a learning disability.

Yet, Richard notes that even though kids in care face great challenges, one in seven kids makes the honour roll. He says that stable, supportive living situations, access to

“Many Indigenous children and youth live with stereotypical messages and racism. They are fighting a demon they never created.”



www.rcybc.ca

resources and support, as well as positive role models and expectations at school, help kids in care succeed in school.

He explains that teachers can play a key role by recognizing that many children and youth are dealing with trauma. “Teachers need to know who the kids in care are. They can offer more flexible learning opportunities and adjust the pace of keeping up. Sometimes a different framework for graduation is required. Be alert for problematic behaviour and refer kids who are anxious or depressed to the counsellor. Organize peer supports and buddies. Please do not see or label them as ‘underperformers.’”

Richard adds that Indigenous students have an additional struggle because of colonialism. “Many Indigenous children and youth live with stereotypical messages and racism. They are fighting a demon they never created. ‘You can’t succeed, you can never graduate, you’ll never amount to anything.’ This kind of colonial thinking and its accompanying policies are damaging. And if we keep doing the same things, we end up with the same problems.”

Unfortunately, data bears out his last statement. While the number of non-Indigenous children and youth in care has decreased over the last 11 years, the same is not true for Indigenous kids. “It means the interventions used haven’t worked or prevented Indigenous kids from entering the system.”

“The response from teachers shows their level of commitment toward kids in care is high and BCTF is a strong advocate.”

Nonetheless, he finds it promising that efforts are being made to connect more Indigenous kids in care with their cultures. Connections between Elders and caregivers are happening. But he adds these kinds of initiatives need to occur consistently throughout the province rather than on a piecemeal basis. He says the response from teachers shows their level of commitment toward kids in care is high and that the BCTF is a strong advocate.

“Many teachers and school districts do interesting things but the problem is the inconsistency of services and the lack of resources over the last number of years.” He believes the BCTF win at the Supreme Court of Canada may help restore some of these services and that whenever there is a change of government, there are opportunities for improvement.

As a parent of four boys, and former Minister of Education in New Brunswick, Richard is committed to advocating for and facilitating positive change on behalf of all children and youth in care. “The Minister is the legal parent of these children. Children and youth in care shouldn’t get worse parenting than other children.”

Stability

- to live in the same place; not be moved around
- stay in the same school
- support for home or school moves.

Positive and consistent relationships

- to connect with a caring adult at school
- school staff who understand what it is like to be in care
- social workers and foster parents who support education
- peer support.

Recommendations to government include the following:

- Allocate specific funding to each school district to support the learning of children and youth in care.
- Improve and monitor supports for children and youth in care across the province, as well as tracking and reporting out on educational outcomes for these students.
- Have the Ministry of Education, school districts, and Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) work together more effectively to share information and advocate for children and youth in care.
- Provide consistent trauma-related supports and services for children and youth coming into care across all care settings, including schools.
- Authorize caregivers to give written permission for children and youth in their care to participate in age-appropriate school activities, such as field trips.

Read the report at

www.rcybc.ca/roomforimprovement.

Bernard Richard was confirmed by the British Columbia Legislature as the province’s second Representative for Children and Youth effective Feb. 16, 2017.

From New Brunswick, he is a bilingual lawyer whose early career was in social work and as Secretary General of the Société Nationale de l’Acadie. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick, where he served from 1991 to 2003. He held several cabinet positions including Minister of Education and also served as leader of the Official Opposition, Opposition House Leader, and chair of the Official Opposition caucus. ■

“Children and youth in care shouldn’t get worse parenting than other children.”



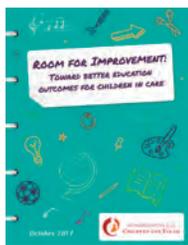
Nancy Knickerbocker photo

School

by Cheylene Moon, written in 2017

*In school,
My teachers were my inspiration.
I had a hard time,
Connecting with my peers;
When I felt alone in the world,
My teachers were by my side.
They gave me a sense of belonging,
And achievement,
That I couldn’t get from my foster parents.
Teachers were positive role models,
Always happy to see me;
Always there to help.
I’m a fast learner,
My brain like a sponge.
They helped to fill my thirst for knowledge;
To correct me when I’m wrong.
While most peers were mean to me,
Teachers were always calm,
Just wanting the best for me;
Never calling me dumb.
School was my safe place,
When my home life was a mess.
Without the great teachers,
I never would have graduated.
Would I be a junkie?
Quite possibly.
But education helped me,
To not go down that path.
It gave me a sense of purpose,
A sense of pride.
A conscience to do the right thing,
When peers would tempt me,
With the euphoria of drugs;
The sense of happiness and content,
I couldn’t get from home.
But this vast sea of knowledge,
Helps to drown my sorrows;
Distracting me from my past.
What lies ahead?*

Cheylene Moon, 22, is a second-year student at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. Of Quilchena and Scottish heritage, she was in foster care from age 12 to 19. As a community volunteer, she works to raise awareness about issues facing Indigenous youth. ■



Room for Improvement: Towards Better Education Outcomes for Children in Care

KEY REPORT FINDINGS

What children and youth in care need for success in school

Indigenous cultural support

- Indigenous content in classes
- Indigenous school staff
- connection to own culture
- school Elders.

Mental health needs met

- quick access to mental health services
- adults who know how to respond
- help to heal from trauma.

Adults who work as a team

- involve youth in planning
- plan together for success
- share information with each other.

Teachers share their coming out stories



“That gay teacher”

By Susan Trabant, Prince George teacher

Have you ever wondered how people describe you? My daughter was at work one night, talking to a new co-worker, who told her that he gets condoms at school from “that gay teacher.” (I am a certified sexual health educator.) She laughed and told him “that gay teacher” was her mom!

FOR FOUR YEARS, I’ve been an out queer teacher in the Prince George school district. It’s taken this long for students to know me as the person they can come to if they have an LGBTQ+ related issue they need to talk about. I’m that person who puts the float in the Pride Parade so kids have a safe space while proudly showing who they are. I’m that teacher who opens the Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (SOGI) room every day at lunch. I’m that one who helps queer and trans students in their transitions.

I am also that person who teaches students that being gay or trans is just one little part of their whole being. Although an important part of their identity, I want them to know they are more than just their sexual orientation or gender identity.

My coming out journey with my school district was slow. My husband and I parted amicably, but we still raised our children together. When I met my wife, incidentally introduced to me by my ex-husband, we dated discreetly. I needed time for our children to adapt to the changes.

There was no written manual to follow and no right way to come out.

I announced I was a queer teacher when presenting as a SOGI resource teacher at district meetings. I began talking about my partner at work and took her to school and union celebrations. I was involved with the BCTF and as an active union member saw how supportive they were with queer members. I realized I had support being out, even up North.

The Prince George district adopted our SOGI policy in 2014. They hired me as the SOGI resource teacher (one block per day), and we established a SOGI Advisory Committee. Our SOGI Educator’s Network now has a SOGI lead in every school. Together, we are creating a safer school community for all our students and staff members. All-genders washrooms are available in every school and thousands of dollars have been spent on resources. We have come together as a school community, determined to do what we can to support our LGBTQ+ students and families.

I feel confident more teachers will feel safe to come out in our district. And with the education we strive to provide for our students, I hope they won’t even remember they used a descriptor for gay or trans people. For now, however, I am proud to be “that gay teacher!” ■

Shifting my perspective



by Bryan Gidinski, Burnaby teacher

As a teacher, I was conflicted about how to confront homophobic commentary, behaviour, and bullying. I grew up in Burnaby in an environment where being out was dangerous. People rarely addressed hateful comments directed at one’s sexuality, or perceived sexuality.

FOR ME, addressing homophobic behaviour and introducing sexual orientation as a topic in the classroom meant coming out and admitting my own sexual orientation. I was nervous about drawing attention to myself or being accused of forwarding a “gay agenda.” I wanted my career to be defined by my accomplishments and didn’t want to be dismissed as the “gay teacher.”

The anti-LGBTQ Burnaby Parents’ Voice movement made me shift my perspective. I decided I had an obligation to provide students with a different perspective. While I did not feel I was under personal attack I was genuinely concerned for any student questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. I worried about the negative messages, the overall contempt, and the lack of support for students.

With some trepidation, I raised the topic and took tentative steps toward opening classroom dialogue, aware of the potential for controversy. I was surprised to discover I didn’t have to say much and

that students were relatively comfortable voicing their views and responding to each other. They engaged in respectful conversation and posed questions that indicated their genuine curiosity. Our local policy, and now an expectation from the BC Ministry of Education that all BC school districts include SOGI in their codes of conduct, encouraged me to do more.

In my new role as the SOGI support teacher for elementary schools, I help teachers recognize the importance of including SOGI content to create safe, inclusive learning environments. I provide teachers

My immediate reaction was to say no

By Dan Adrian, Burnaby teacher

My journey with SOGI education began over eight years ago. It was my second year working for Burnaby School District and I was a secondary English teacher. A student approached me after school one day to ask if I would help start a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) Club by being the sponsor teacher. My immediate reaction was to say no. At the time, I was not out at work and was fearful of being outed through this role.

WHILE I WAS confident in my skills as a teacher, I wasn't confident that my sexual orientation would be openly accepted by my peers, students, and administrators. Torn between doing what may be best for me personally and what was best for the students at my school, I said yes. Forming a GSA wasn't about me, it was about the students at my school who needed it. A club that I wish had been available to me when I was in high school.

Looking back, I am reminded how much fear and anxiety I had about being myself at work. Nothing specific happened to make me feel this way, rather it was something unspoken. It's this same unspoken fear that many colleagues and students still feel at school. And it is precisely because of this fear that educators need to actively work to make our classrooms and schools safer and more welcoming places for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, or background.

When people ask me about what a district SOGI support teacher does, I explain that I work at three levels. First, I support students. Sometimes this means helping with conflict mediation; other times it's one-on-one conversations when students need personal support. Secondly, I support staff. A major part of my job is providing education and working with colleagues to build capacity for SOGI education. I often help with curricular connections, giving teachers the tools and information they need to make their classrooms safe and respectful spaces. Finally, and because district work is equally important, I provide education at the district level, organize district events, and shape district policy. ■



with tools to start conversations in their classrooms and share ways they can seamlessly integrate SOGI content into a variety of existing curriculum contexts.

Teachers can start conversations in classrooms by relating anecdotes, sharing books, videos, and novels depicting LGBTQ characters, linking them to curricular objectives. Embedding SOGI content can become practice instead of a distinct, separate curricular topic, allowing students to see themselves and their families represented. ■



Facts from the Ministry of Education

- **BC's new curriculum includes a focus** on valuing diversity and respecting differences, and the topics of human rights and responses to discrimination.
- **19% of BC high school students** identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or not exclusively heterosexual.
- **1% of BC high school students** identify as transgender and 5% of Aboriginal students identify as two-spirit.
- **In the past 12 months**, lesbian, gay and bisexual youth were 7 times as likely than heterosexual youth to attempt suicide (28% vs 4%).
- **Studies show** that having SOGI-specific antibullying policies improves school climate for LGBTQ and heterosexual students, reducing discrimination, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts for all students.

Source: B.C. Ministry of Education
<https://is.gd/wH0hTy>. ■

Celebrating golden moments when students meet seniors

Charan Gill, retired teacher and BC Retired Teachers' Association director shares highlights from the 2017 Golden Star Award winners

#Never too old to volunteer

Photos submitted by Charan Gill except where noted

Belmont Elementary School, Langley

▶ Gardens nourish relationships

DURING WEEKLY VISITS with seniors at Mt. Cartier Court in Revelstoke Grade 3–4 students from teacher Amber Thompson's class at Arrow Heights Elementary School practised their language arts skills by writing letters and poems for the seniors' enjoyment and used their social skills to show their appreciation for

what they were learning. They applied math skills to design garden beds (measurement—area and perimeter) and expanded their understanding of science by learning about seeds and pollinators. Amber reports: *The Mount Cartier Garden Project has been amazing for my students over the past three*

years. With the redesign of the BC curriculum this initiative has allowed me the opportunity as a teacher to integrate so many core competencies, as well as academic subjects. The kids are not only learning how to grow food, they are learning to grow relationships with the seniors in their local community.



Belmont Elementary School, Langley

▶ Seniors and students go to the birds

AT LANGLEY'S BELMONT Elementary School, Jason Proulx's Grade 3 French Immersion students design bird feeders and bird houses with guidance from local seniors. Jason observed: *Through woodworking, my students develop their problem-solving skills, build resiliency and learn how to use hand tools; all the while making real tangible objects that they can be proud of that demonstrate their learning.* Completed projects are proudly displayed at the school before final installation in students' backyards or in community gardens.

▶ Reciprocity builds empathy and the art of conversation

AT THE FRASERVIEW Learning Centre in Mission, BC Sandra Norum's Grade 7–12 students work with seniors attending the Lifetime Learners programs. Shared activities include knitting, tech-time mentorship, gardening, and special events such as Remembrance Day assemblies, and Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. Students learn the importance of giving back to seniors in their community, while seniors teach values, empathy, and the art of conversation.



iStock.com/stock_colors

▶ Laughter and play support well-being

SENIORS OFTEN ACT as surrogate grandparents at Muheim Memorial Elementary School in Smithers. Liliana Pesce's Grade 4–5 students meet seniors from Meadows Assisted Living Centre twice a month to read, laugh, play, listen to stories, share experiences, celebrate special occasions, and to sing and dance. When Liliana asked students Catherine and Finley how they felt about their visits with the seniors they said: *Every time we came back from the Meadows we felt happy about being able to use our*

empathy skills. We also felt good about being able to fill others' buckets. Liliana explains: Filling someone's bucket is a metaphor for helping someone else feel happy and in return, one also ends up filling one's own bucket. My class had so many beautiful moments and memories that were shared during the Buddy Program at the Meadows. What they all came to learn early on was they felt good about themselves, they felt a sense of true joy and happiness, because they knew they helped to "fill



Muheim Memorial Elementary School, Smithers
someone else's bucket"—they were happy when they played a part in making their Meadows friends happy.



Quilchena Elementary School, Richmond

▶ When the students arrive, everyone is energized!

QUILCHENA ELEMENTARY School teachers Andrew Livingston and Kevin Vines bring their classes (Grade 3–4 and Grade 6–7) to Gilmore Gardens Retirement Home in Richmond to collaborate on writing poems, sharing stories, making memory bracelets, and planning a garden as part of their Forming Grand Pal Relations initiative. The teachers see many benefits: *This intergenerational opportunity to learn from and with our Grand Pals has allowed our students to form new understandings, appreciate and value the knowledge of seniors, and become more integrated into and aware of their own community.*



W. L. Seaton Secondary School, Vernon

▶ No Stone Left Alone project with Vernon veterans

W. L. SEATON Secondary School teacher Yvonne Fiala's Grade 11 French Immersion and Social Studies 11 students and members of the Okanagan Historical Society researched the history of local World War I veterans. They partnered with seniors to create a visual display (with text in English and French) to honour each veteran for their service. They joined local seniors to locate and lay poppies at the graves of the veterans they researched as part of a No Stone Left Alone program.

BCRTA Golden Star Awards invites teacher applicants

Do you have a program that connects your students with seniors in your community? If so, consider applying for one of six annual Golden Star Awards sponsored by the BC Retired Teachers' Association. Each winning school receives a cash prize of \$1,500 and an engraved trophy.

Programs should involve interaction between students and seniors at the classroom, department, school, district, or community level and have been in operation for one full school year.

For more information, visit www.bcrta.ca or call 1-877-683-2243 or 604-871-2260.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Golden Star Awards

Five \$1,500 Awards
for programs K to Grade 12
Plus one \$1,500 award
Sponsored by the
Legion Foundation
(BC/Yukon Command)

Celebrating programs that feature the interaction of seniors and students

Awards will be given to current public school programs that

- feature the interaction of seniors and students
- require students to think and work creatively
- access and use the community as an information source
- require students to work cooperatively with each other and outside sources
- use a variety of media to record and display results.

Submission deadline: April 15

Submission guidelines and more information:

Web: www.bcrta.ca

Phone: 1-877-683-2243 or (604) 871-2260

Email: laurie@bcrta.com or kristi@bcrta.com

Bridging the gulf?

Tackling controversial issues with your students



By Joan Merrifield, Nanaimo teacher and BCTF workshop facilitator

iStock.com/Tamas-V

We were on the ferry with our Grade 5–6 students when we noticed graffiti on the wall of the waiting room that showed a bridge connecting Gabriola Island with Vancouver Island. My student-teacher Jennifer and I knew we had encountered a controversial issue, one that our students cared about too, since they lived on this Gulf Island and took the short ferry ride frequently to go back and forth from the island to Nanaimo. Back in the classroom, we showed them a photo of the graffiti and asked them this question, “Should Gabriola have a bridge instead of a ferry?” Identifying their position using the plus/minus strategy, students had to respectfully argue their opinion. The room hummed as they moved around talking and listening, considering varying perspectives. During the debrief and in their journals, they shared their position, reflected on the arguments they heard and explained if or why they changed their view as a result of what they had learned from the dialogue.

HOW WE TEACH about controversial issues is the key to success. When we offer activities that allow a continuum of

perspectives instead of a polarized yes or no approach, it allows for questioning and refining of viewpoints. Sharing ideas in a safe and respectful manner broadens

understanding. Setting the stage to be about the issue and not about the person stops students from taking differing views personally.

Controversial discussion topics should be current and multifaceted. Brainstorming ideas on a web or concept map is often a good starting point to create a controversial statement for discussion. Starting with a know/wonder/learn matrix followed by research using films, articles, and/or case studies can build prior knowledge to strengthen discussions.

Controversial issues dominate current events, online and in the media. Bringing them into the classroom using educationally sound strategies gives students the chance to assess what they are hearing and to develop their own ideas, values, and opinions. It builds their critical thinking skills and helps us meet curricular goals of creating respectful and critical thinkers.

Controversial issues may seem scary for teachers, no doubt about it. Planning to teach about them effectively has the potential to foster thoughtful, deep, and meaningful learning and, in the end, can result in lessons your students will remember for a lifetime.

Learn about the BCTF workshop, Strategies for Discussing Controversial Issues and how to book it at <https://is.gd/iZX5m5>. ■



Join us to celebrate the
**20th BCTF
New Teachers'
Conference**
March 2 and 3, 2018

The program includes keynote speakers Ivan Coyote and Verna St. Denis, round tables with BCTF staff, a panel of new teachers from rural BC, and 33 workshops covering a wide variety of educational topics.

Conference website: ntc.bctfbuzz.ca

BC Teachers' Federation Annual General Meeting

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver March 17–20, 2018

BCTF members are welcome to visit the AGM during any of the sessions

Joshua Berson photo

Agenda

FIRST SESSION

**Saturday evening—March 17
7:00 p.m.–9:30 p.m.**

First Nations Recognition

Preliminaries:

- Adoption of chairpersons, scrutineers, tellers, Resolutions Committee
- Chairpersons' orientation session
- Introduction of Ombudspersons
- Adoption of agenda
- Adoption of 2017 AGM Minutes
- Stewardship Report on 2017 AGM
- Report of the Nominating Chairperson

Report of the President

Organization of the BCTF

8:15 p.m. Guest Speaker
Mark Ramsankar,
Canadian Teachers' Federation

8:30 p.m. Report of the Nominating
Chairperson

Election statements from candidates for
table-officer positions

Questions and answers session for candidates
for table-officer positions

Call for nominations

9:25 p.m. Announcements

9:30 p.m. Adjournment

SECOND SESSION

**Sunday morning—March 18
9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**

9:00 a.m. Leadership report
Finance • Report of the Treasurer
• Recommendations

11:00 a.m. Guest speaker—Tanya Tagala

Finance continued

Social Justice

Unfinished business

12:00 p.m. Guest Speaker
Paul Faoro,
CUPE-BC

Unfinished business

12:25 p.m. Announcements

12:30 p.m. Adjournment

THIRD SESSION

**Sunday afternoon—March 18
2:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.**

2:00 p.m. In Memoriam

Constitution and By-laws

Standing Rules of Order

Membership

Unfinished business

4:30 p.m. Guest Speaker—Irene Lanzinger,
President, BC Federation
of Labour

4:45 p.m. Report of the Nominating
Chairperson

Election statements from candidates for
member-at-large positions

Questions and answers session for candidates
for member-at-large positions

Call for nominations

5:55 p.m. Announcements

6:00 p.m. Adjournment

FOURTH SESSION

**Monday morning—March 19
9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**

9:00 a.m. Stewart Schon Health and Safety
Award

Health, Welfare, and Safety of Teachers

Health and Safety of Students

Education Finance

Privatization and Commercialization

Unfinished business

12:20 p.m. Report of the Nominating
Chairperson

Final call for nominations

12:25 p.m. Announcements

12:30 p.m. Adjournment

FIFTH SESSION

**Monday afternoon—March 19
2:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m.**

2:00 p.m. Elections

Starting with elections for table-officer
positions, and proceeding to member-at-large
positions

Aboriginal Education

Education Policy

Unfinished business

5:00 p.m. Awards—Honorary Membership

5:25 p.m. Announcements

5:30 p.m. Adjournment

SIXTH SESSION

**Monday evening—March 19
7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.**

7:30 p.m. Elections continued

Bargaining

Certification and Teachers' Council

Annual General Meeting

Canadian Teachers' Federation

Unfinished business

9:25 p.m. Announcements

9:30 p.m. Adjournment

SEVENTH SESSION

**Tuesday morning—March 20
9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**

9:00 a.m. Elections continued, as necessary

Guest Speaker—Patricia Clough, President,
Retired Teachers' Association

Pensions

Professional Development

BC Teachers' Council Report

Award—Bob Rosen Social Justice Award

Unfinished business

12:25 p.m. Announcements

12:30 p.m. Adjournment

EIGHTH SESSION

**Tuesday afternoon—March 20
2:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m.**

2:00 p.m. Elections continued, as necessary

Awards • G.A. Fergusson

• Honorary Life Membership

Labour Affairs

Presentation—Canadian Labour Congress

PharmaCare campaign

Questions of Advisory Committee Reports
and the Executive Director's Report

Unfinished business

5:10 p.m. Guest speaker

5:25 p.m. Announcements

5:30 p.m. Adjournment

NINTH SESSION

**Tuesday evening—March 20
7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.**

7:30 p.m. Elections continued, as necessary

Public affairs

Unfinished business

9:30 p.m. Adjournment



Joshua Berson photo

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Executive Committee Recommendations

That the following sentence be deleted from the end of By-law 8.7: ~~Financial statements and actuarial certificates disclosing particulars of the operation of the fund shall be filed annually with the superintendent of financial institutions, and no amendment to this by-law or to the Salary Indemnity Fund investment authorization set out in By-law 5 shall take effect without the approval of the superintendent of financial institutions.~~

That By-law 7.5(b) be deleted and replaced with the following: Where a complaint is referred to a Hearing Panel, and after the panel has considered the matter in accordance with its Policies and Procedures:

- (a) the panel shall be empowered to dismiss the complaint; or
- (b) where the member who is the subject of the complaint has been found in breach of the *Code of Ethics*, or to have engaged in conduct harmful or prejudicial to the Federation's interests, the panel may:
 - (1) publish the finding of the breach;
 - (2) issue a warning to the member;
 - (3) issue a reprimand to the member;
 - (4) issue a levy;
 - (5) suspend the right of the member to hold office or to receive specified benefits from the Federation and/or subsidiary bodies; or
 - (6) impose a combination of the foregoing sanctions, commensurate with the gravity of the breach and consistent with the Federation's Policies and Procedures.

That the words "*Society Act*" be replaced with "*Societies Act*" wherever they appear in the *Members' Guide*.

LOCAL RESOLUTIONS

Burnaby

That By-law 5.1.a be amended as follows:

There shall be an Executive Committee which shall consist of a President and two Vice-Presidents, elected for one-year terms; an Immediate Past President (when applicable), one Member-at-Large designated for an Aboriginal member, one Member-at-Large designated for a racialized member, and seven Members-at-Large elected for two-year terms. The designated positions shall have the same term and role as the non-designated positions. The Executive Committee positions are elected by the Annual General Meeting and shall take office on the following July 1. Each member of the Executive Committee shall be a member in good standing, entitled to vote, in accordance with the provisions of By-Law 1.1. An Executive Committee member may be removed from office under the provisions of By-law 1.7 or By-law 7.

and that:

All by-laws, policies, procedures, and standing rules of order in which the positions of the First Vice-President and Second Vice-President are named will be amended to reflect this change.

Burnaby

That By-Law 5.1 be amended to add the following:

- (g) At least two of the three table-officer positions—President and two Vice-Presidents—must be held by members who self-identify as being from an equity-seeking group, which includes members who self-identify as women. This ratio would be achieved over a two-year election cycle with at least one of the three table officers being held by a member from an equity-seeking group in 2019–20 and at least two being held by members who self-identify as being from an equity-seeking group in 2020–21, and this ratio be maintained thereafter.

Burnaby

That By-law 5.1 be amended to add the following:

- (h) Four of the seven non-designated Member-at-Large positions must be held by members who self-identify as women with this ratio being achieved over a two-year election cycle with at least three positions held by members who self-identify as women in 2019–20 and at least four in 2020–21.

VINTA

That By-law 5.1 be amended to add the following:

- (h) *At least two of the three table-officer positions—President and two Vice-Presidents—must be held by members who self-identify as being from an equity-seeking group, which includes members who self-identify as women. This ratio would be achieved over a two-year election cycle with at least one of the three table-officer positions*

**BCTF members are
welcome to visit the
AGM during any of
the sessions**



Joshua Berson photo

being held by a member who self-identifies as being from an equity-seeking group in 2019–20 and at least two being held by members who self-identify as being from an equity-seeking group in 2020–21, and this ratio be maintained thereafter.

VINTA

That By-law 5.1 be amended to add the following:

(h) Up to two of the seven non-designated Member-at-Large positions may be held by members who self-identify as men with this ratio being achieved over a three-year election cycle, with up to four positions open to being held by men in 2019–20, up to three in 2020–21, and up to two in 2021–22, to be maintained thereafter.

VINTA

That By-law 5.5 be amended to add:

If, in any given year, the AGM is not able to fill the positions that require specific equity representation or meet the ratios designated in the by-laws, due to there being an insufficient number of candidates meeting the criteria, the positions shall be declared vacant and shall be filled by the Representative Assembly, applying the same criteria, until June 30 of the following year.

SALARY INDEMNITY PLAN REGULATIONS

EC Recommendations

That all gender-binary language in the Salary Indemnity Plan regulations be changed to gender-neutral language and to make such other technical changes as may be necessary to reflect this revision without changing the meaning of the original language.

That the preamble in Procedure 13.C.02 be amended as follows:

~~These regulations, adopted by the 1984 Annual General Meeting and amended by subsequent Annual General Meetings, are effective September 1, 2017. These regulations apply to members whose first date of eligibility to receive benefits occurs on or after September 1, 2017. Members whose first date of eligibility to receive benefits is prior to September 1, 2017 will continue to receive benefits based on the plan in effect at that time.~~

These regulations, adopted by the 1984 Annual General Meeting are effective September 1, 1984. Amendments to these regulations by subsequent Annual General Meetings are effective on September 1, following the Annual General Meeting at which the amendments were made, except as otherwise noted.

That the that Salary Indemnity Plan regulations 13-C.02-1.3 be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

1.3 A member who has attained age 64, has reached the later of Factor 88 or age 60, has 34 years of contributory service or, who is in receipt of a retirement pension from the Pension Corporation (BC) may apply to withdraw from the long-term section of the plan. Application for withdrawal may be made during any school year in which one of the foregoing conditions has been met and upon the completion of the appropriate withdrawal form. Withdrawal will be effective, upon approval, in September for applications submitted in that month, and applications submitted later will be effective the month following approval of the application.

A hearty thank you to all delegates spending part of their spring break conducting the business of the BCTF.

Joshua Berson photo

2018 BCTF AGM candidates' statements



FOR PRESIDENT
Glen Hansman
Vancouver
Elementary

A change in government, the restoration of thousands of positions, and the welcoming of so many new members into our union creates so many opportunities as we enter new round of collective bargaining. At the same time, recruitment and retention challenges, affordability, inadequate support for curriculum change, continued concerns about education funding, and other issues affecting members' day-to-day work lives will also definitely inform how we proceed in our political advocacy and setting of bargaining objectives.

I am proud to be a member of a union that takes on discrimination and pro-actively pushes for positive changes in our schools and in our communities. Within the

BCTF, I believe we must also continue to actively make space and address barriers to participation experienced by members who are Aboriginal or who are from equity-seeking groups.

It is a tremendous privilege to advocate for members, students, and public schools in all regions of BC. I hope to have the honour to serve the membership for a third and final year as President. I remain dedicated to respectful and constructive dialogue, decision-making, and co-operation across all of our locals as we commence bargaining and in all our efforts as a union.

EXPERIENCE

Provincial: President (2 years), 1st and 2nd Vice-President (6 years), Member-at-Large (1 year), BC Teachers' Council, BCFED Executive Council.
Local: President (2.5 years), Vice-President (2 years), LR.
Teaching: Elementary, secondary, district-level.



FOR FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
Teri Mooring
Quesnel

It was a relief to welcome an education friendly government last summer. Consequently, we're beginning to see progressive changes in public education and other public services. Sixteen years of underfunding needs to be reversed and that will take time.

The work of implementing our returned contract language has been massive. Fighting for full restoration has taken the determination of locals and the perseverance of members. And we are continuing the work of resolving many outstanding issues.

The recruitment and retention of teachers remains a critical priority; one that will ultimately be dealt with at the bargaining table through improvements

to compensation levels and other working conditions.

I'm proud of our Federation. Our equity and inclusion work has resulted in changes to elections, and initiatives such as Women in Negotiations and the Women's institute. We have made the necessary sacrifices to put our financial house in order, and preparations for the 2019 bargaining round are well under way.

Teachers are facing many challenges with the new curriculum, reporting expectations and lack of resources. Despite these challenges I am inspired by the resilience and optimism of our members.

With your support, I am honoured to put my name forward for First Vice-President.

EXPERIENCE

International: SADTU Meeting, South Africa (2017).
National: CTF director.
Provincial: BCTF 1st Vice-President; 2nd Vice-President; Member-at-Large.
Local: President; Vice-President; LR; bargaining chair; etc.
Teaching: 22 years intermediate teacher; resource teacher.
Education: M.Ed. (UNBC); Curriculum/Counselling; BA (SFU).



FOR SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT
Clint Johnston
Chilliwack

Another year as Second Vice-President has only increased my passion for working with and learning from our diverse members. Seeing the work all of you do every day in your classrooms, your locals, and your provincial union is both amazing and humbling.

I would be honoured to continue serving as we support members through the work of—amongst myriad other things—fully implementing our restored language, continuing to defend and advocate for public education, and working toward greater equity within both our union and our communities.

As we deal this year with restoration of our language, continued implementation

of the curriculum, and prepare ourselves for bargaining in 2019, our solidarity is increasingly important. I recognize that our diverse membership often has different points of view on these issues, and commit to continue working respectfully and co-operatively with locals toward positive outcomes for all our members.

One of the keys to ensuring our solidarity is to continue to work hard at removing barriers and ensuring that our union is as equitable as possible, in order that we are reflecting as closely as possible the true voice of our membership.

I hope I have your support to continue working on your behalf.

EXPERIENCE

Provincial: BCTF Second VP (2), Member-at-Large (1), BCTF and Provincial Committees.
Local: President (3), Pro-D chair (1), Bargaining (4), Strike Committee.
National: CTF VP, chair Indigenous Ed Committee.
Teaching: Elementary (14).
Education: BHK, BEd (UBC).



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
ABORIGINAL
Marjorie Dumont
Vancouver

Dini' ze', ts'akë ze', skiy ze', Hadih, Dz'in tabi honzu. (male chiefs, female chiefs and their children. Greetings, it is a great day today).

I raise my hands in honour and respect to the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations for allowing me to live and work on their unceded shared traditional territory.

My name is C'tan (Many Leaves) and many know me as Marjorie Dumont. My father's name is Chief Wah tah k'eght (Big man) and my mother's name is Chief Wila'at (Echo in the Valley). My house chief's name is Chief Na'moks. I belong to the Tsayu (Beaver) clan of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation. My roots are also Gitksan.

It has been a blessing and a privilege to teach and learn from the teachers, students, and communities in Vancouver and Surrey, BC. My journey within the public education system has been incredible and challenging and has given me the strength and courage we continue to need to facilitate positive change for all teachers and students.

I hope to bring the knowledge and wisdom I have developed through work on BCTF committees and with education partners and other advocacy groups to be a strong advocate for teachers.

EXPERIENCE
BCTF: PSA President—Aboriginal Education, SURT presenter and trainer, AGM, Summer Conference, BCTF PSID staff.
Local: Ad hoc Aboriginal Education Committee, STA staff rep.
Teaching: elementary, secondary, LST, UBC Faculty of Education instructor, VESTA Executive.



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
ABORIGINAL
Rick Joe
Chilliwack

Indigenous protocols bid me to preface my statement. áma s'qit! Good day! My name is Skelulalus and I am from the Lílwat Nation of Mount Currie. My mother is Jeanette Green (Joe), my aunties are Bernita Joe, Gladys Joe, Mary-Jane Joe and Jane Rose Gabriel (Joe); and my uncles are Dixie Joe and Ricardo Joe. I am a dip-net fisherman, hunter, and canoe puller for Five Star Canoe Club; I am a father, husband, and grandfather.

It is a year of great distinction in BCTF! Having our collective agreement language restored has meant many wonderful things for our members. I feel our win has heartened many in countless different ways. Moreover, I know it has renewed optimism for Indigenous educators.

The new curriculum, especially the Indigenous knowledge content, gives teachers a skillful opportunity to negotiate their ethics, ideas of equity, social justice, day-to-day reconciliation as offered by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Cindy Blackstock's win from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

My mother worked hard to earn her B.Ed from SFU at a time when Aboriginal people were blatantly stigmatized. Therefore, I have been active in and around education even before I graduated from UBC's NITEP in 2001.

kukwsturn'kálap.

EXPERIENCE
BCTF: Member & chair BCTF Aboriginal Advisory, SURT facilitator, AEA-PSA Exec.
Local: Chair local Aboriginal contact; various committees on local Exec. Board member FVACFSS.
Teaching: Aboriginal enhancement teacher.
Education: B.Ed & M.Ed (UBC).



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
RACIALIZED
Lizanne Foster
Surrey

I grew up in South Africa in a home with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves filled with my father's medical books, European literary classics, and Nancy Drew mysteries. I didn't wonder why the shelves held no stories about people who looked like me. I was just grateful that there were other worlds that words would help me to escape to, worlds that were beyond the dysfunction and deprivation that were the products of apartheid.

Words have always been my comfort and have sometimes been my weapon. During the 2014 strike I used them to respond to the unrelenting attacks from Christy Clark's government. I blogged replies to the lies,

deconstructed twisted media messages, and engaged in day-long discussions with parents on social media.

Because I'm acutely aware of the power of words, I'm concerned about the way we sometimes use words within our union. Although we are all expert communicators, we can forget this simple truth: we don't all see the world as it is, we see the world as we are. If I were elected to the Executive, I would bring this perspective about how experiences shape the world we see, in the hopes of broadening the dimensions of our decision-making process.

EXPERIENCE
Local: Staff rep, local rep, PA/PR committee, International Solidarity Committee.
Education: M.Ed (SFU)
Teaching: 29 years (Durban, South Africa; Surrey, BC).



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Darren Companion
Victoria

Which values do you expect of your leadership? This is the question that I've asked myself when I considered putting forth my candidacy for Member-at-Large. I value empathy, respectful dialogue, and hard work. I believe I can deliver this to you, the teachers of British Columbia, as a member of your Executive.

Through the years, I have continued to be impressed by the passion, fortitude, and knowledge of my colleagues across the province. Now with a new government, bargaining on the horizon, and the ever-changing political landscape of our society, I expect this year's AGM to be spirited and to embody the diversity of opinion that is our STRENGTH.

Now is the time for unity, not divisiveness. I believe in an equitable and inclusive union where all voices have value and are respected. Balanced decision-making within our union can only improve the working conditions of our colleagues and the future successes of our students. As your Member-at-Large, I will continue to speak out on issues of concern and represent the interests of all teachers.

If you agree that this is the leadership needed for the future of our Federation, then I would be honoured to serve you as Member-at-Large.

EXPERIENCE
Provincial: AGM and RA chairperson (4 years), Professional Issues Advisory (6); BCTF workshop facilitator (3).
Local: Vice-President (2), local representative (5), Member-at-Large (4).
Teaching: 22 years teaching elementary and intermediate grades.
Education: B.A. (Psychology), B.Ed.



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Carole Gordon
Kelowna

Where does member engagement end and union leadership begin?

I remember being inducted in 1992, attending general meetings, being an alternate staff rep, and joining the grievance committee. It was the stripping of the collective agreement in 2002 that began my involvement on my local executive and 14 years later it was an honour to be on the provincial Executive during the Supreme Court win.

Having members first in mind as I consider all perspectives in making decisions has been an important part of my second term on the Executive. No two members' experiences are the same, participation is

varied, and barriers to engagement include variables that are both in and out of our control. Heading into bargaining for the first time in six years, it's important that members' voices are heard as we urge the new government to invest in public education, negotiate improvements to our language, address equity and inclusion across the union and in our communities, and promote our profession and teacher wellness.

Our leadership priorities will set the tone for the year ahead and I look forward to responding to the needs of locals and helping members lead the way across the province.

EXPERIENCE
Provincial: Executive—4yrs, Committees (Pensions, Benefits Review) AGM—15yrs
Local: 2nd VP, bargaining chair, staff rep, ProD rep
Community: NDP candidate, Labour Council President, United Way
Teaching: Prep, intermediate, TTC—26 yrs (UVIC, B.Ed)



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Suzanne Hall
Maple Ridge

The BCTF is an incredibly complex, diverse organization, both in terms of its members and its work. There are myriad opportunities for teachers to engage in areas of interest. Through all this work, teachers deepen their knowledge and develop their leadership skills.

I became involved in the BCTF through my passion for professional development. My work in that area led to my becoming a staff rep, PD chair, strike co-ordinator, chair of the BCTF's Professional Issues Advisory Committee, local rep, and finally my current roles of fully released Vice-President of the MRTA and a Women in Negotiations facilitator.

I am very grateful for these amazing opportunities to learn and grow. In return, it is my pleasure to now offer to serve on the Executive Committee. The main functions of a union officer are to represent, to support, and to provide leadership for our teachers. I have long recognized that teaching and learning happens through relationship; the same is true of union work. When we work together, we are a powerful force for good—and excellent problem-solvers! In this current context, I see member engagement, updating bargaining structures, mental wellness, and ensuring safety in schools as important priorities for our collective efforts.

EXPERIENCE

- MRTA (Local 42)
 - First Vice-President, fully released (2016–present)
 - Local representative (2011–present)
 - PD chair (2009–2015)
 - Strike co-ordinator (2014)
- BCTF:
 - Women in Negotiations facilitator (2016–present)
 - Professional Issues Advisory Committee (2010–2016)



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Carolyn Pena
North Vancouver

In two years, the ground has changed substantially. With our Supreme Court win, as well as the change in the provincial government, we will enter bargaining looking upon a new landscape. As an Executive Committee member, I approach bargaining decisions and strategies with an eye to the long game, setting the stage for the most effective bargaining possible. We need to address both specific needs in locals and common needs for all members. I will continue to work hard to recognize the diverse stories and experiences of members as we look for substantial improvements for every member across the province.

The Federation continues to focus on other important work, including social

justice issues in British Columbia and around the world; ensuring supports for members through the Salary Indemnity Program and the Health and Wellness Program; and supports for locals in their work protecting their collective agreements. Focusing on prudent financial planning, holding a strong bargaining position, and achieving improvements for our members enables the Federation to undertake all this important work.

With your support I look forward to continuing my work on the EC in order to ensure our prudent financial planning and bargaining successes support all members across BC.

EXPERIENCE

- Provincial:** Member-at-Large; LR; AGM Delegate.
- Local:** President, VP, PD chairperson, strike co-ordinator, Member-at-Large
- Teaching:** Secondary science and biology; Alternative Program
- Education:** B.Sc; B.Ed.; M.Ed.



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Robin Tosczak
Victoria

In March 2016, I joined the Executive Committee as a Member-at-Large. What a remarkable time it's been! Together, we achieved a momentous victory at the Supreme Court of Canada, with the restoration of our class size and composition language. In the first half of 2017, we knocked on doors, made phone calls, and activated our social media networks, and together we helped change the government.

Our work isn't done. We continue to fight for full implementation of our hard-won contract language, and preparation is well under way for successful provincial and local bargaining in 2019. Learning about teachers' diverse experiences all around BC helps inform my decision-making. I

advocate for services and opportunities that resonate with teachers. In the larger context, I'm always asking how our plans can respond effectively to our shifting political landscape.

Success at the bargaining table depends on teachers feeling empowered, included, and connected. Our goals should be relevant and meaningful, and our strategies should be inviting and effective. I have appreciated and learned from your candid conversations, thoughtful questions, and constructive feedback—thank you for contributing to our collective wisdom and strength!

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EXPERIENCE

Provincial: Executive; *Teacher Magazine & TTOC Advisory Committees*; workshop facilitator
Local: Secretary-Treasurer; LR; contract, bargaining, social justice, Pro-D, TTOC Committees; staff rep; election contact; community liaison; Labour Council secretary
Teaching: 8 years, currently reading recovery, ELL



FOR
MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Kip Wood
Nanaimo

Teachers work hard to create classroom conditions that support student learning. As BCTF Member-at-Large, it is teachers' hard work that motivates my involvement. Underfunding has increased demands on teachers. Simultaneous to increased workload, life for teachers in BC has become less affordable. Together, we will reverse these trends.

Every teacher, and every student, deserves the opportunity to thrive in a safe, inclusive, and well-resourced school. Through bargaining, legal, and political strategies, we must continue to enforce the restored language as we get closer to the upcoming bargaining round. Fair compensation and better working conditions for teachers across the province are critical for our

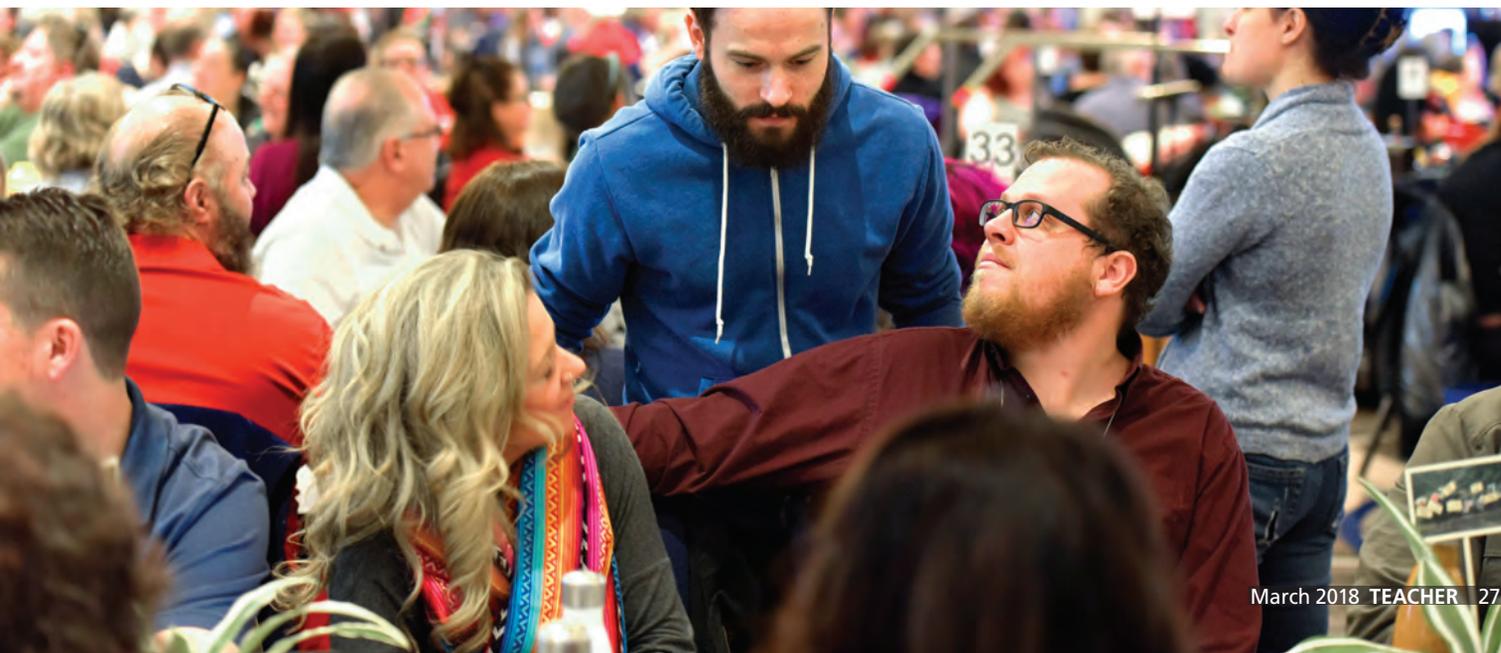
profession and the public education system as a whole.

While curriculum revisions have added to teacher workload, it has also provided opportunities. More and more teachers are bringing Indigenous ways of knowing into their classrooms thanks to Federation leadership and a team of teacher-facilitators. Sexual orientation/gender identity (SOGI) curriculum continues to improve equity and inclusion in our schools.

I am proud to be a teacher and I am proud of the work that we do individually and as a collective. It's my dream job! I remain committed to working with you as Member-at-Large.

EXPERIENCE

Provincial: Executive Committee (4 years); Finance Committee (2 years); AGM since 1994
Local: President (3 years); Bargaining (18 years)
Other: BCFED since 2004; *Teacher mag contributor* since 2008
Teaching: 28 years
Education: B.Sc., M.A. (UVic)



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FRANCE—LANGUEDOC 2018/2019
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MISCELLANEOUS

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Vancouver: March 12-13; Victoria: March 14-15

This workshop provides a framework which describes different stages in resolving the impact of trauma, and includes key principles and strategies for working with individuals.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FACILITATOR TRAINING
Vancouver: April 10-12

This interactive workshop will give participants confidence in facilitating a model of dialogue that is participant driven, culturally sensitive and empowering for all involved.

ANXIETY—Practical Intervention Strategies
Kelowna: April 23; Vancouver: April 24; Victoria: April 27

This workshop provides practical and accessible strategies which can be applied across the lifespan and address the physical, emotional, cognitive and social aspects of anxiety.

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH
Victoria: May 8; Vancouver: May 11

This workshop will provide a general overview of the common mental health concerns for children and youth, signs and symptoms, themes for treatment and the controversies that surround some of the diagnoses.

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SOGI 1 2 3 is a collaboration of the BC Ministry of Education, BC Teachers' Federation, UBC Faculty of Education, Out in Schools, ARC Foundation, nine school districts across BC, and local, national and international LGBTQ community organizations.

MARCH 2018**BCTF New Teachers' Conference**

March 2–3 Richmond

The program includes two keynote speakers, round tables with BCTF staff, a panel of new teachers from rural BC, and 33 workshops covering a wide variety of educational topics. ntc.bctfbuzz.ca.

Dealing with Difficult People

March 5 Kamloops

March 7 Vancouver

March 8 Victoria/Kelowna

Participants in this workshop will learn how to positively engage others in discussions about behavioural patterns such as passive aggressiveness and chronic resistance. Email info@achievecentre.com.

Resilience in Children—Creative Strategies for Helping in Vancouver

March 8 Vancouver

Participants of this workshop will develop competency to engage and communicate with children (ages 3–12) and their natural support systems. Email info@ctrinstitute.com.

Trauma Strategies for Resolving the Impact of Post-Traumatic Stress

March 12 Vancouver

March 14 Victoria

This workshop provides a framework which describes different stages in resolving the impact of trauma, and includes key principles and strategies for working with individuals. Email info@ctrinstitute.com.

Save Your Sanity**Proactive Strategies for Children with Challenging Behaviour**

March 26 Kamloops

CDR Consulting—www.saveyoursanity.ca.

APRIL 2018**Reclaiming Common Ground**

A cross border social justice conference for BC, Washington, and Oregon teachers

April 7–8 Surrey

Funded in part through a BCTF Regional Social Justice Conference grant, this conference will bring together teachers from BC, Oregon, and Washington to connect across common threats to public education and to re-engage in their important role in the process of social transformation. This conference is designed for educators interested in social justice themes. Keynote speakers: Naomi and Seth Klein. For more information and to register: crossborderconference.weebly.com.

Communication—The Essential Skills in Vancouver

April 9 Vancouver

In this workshop participants will learn core skills for communicating with clarity in the workplace. Email info@achievecentre.com.

Restorative Justice Facilitator Training in Vancouver

April 10 Vancouver

This is a highly interactive workshop where participants will practice and gain confidence in facilitating a model of dialogue that is participant driven, culturally sensitive, and empowering for all involved. Email info@ctrinstitute.com.

Save Your Sanity**Proactive Strategies for Children with Challenging Behaviour**

April 13 Kelowna

April 16 Prince George

April 20 Cranbrook

CDR Consulting—www.saveyoursanity.ca.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

April 19 Victoria

April 20 Vancouver

In this hands-on seminar you will discover what it is like to have a brain with autism. Once you experience the difference between a typical brain and a brain with autism, you will be able to design more effective and successful interventions that lead to successful independence into their adult years! Email info@jackhirose.com.

BCTF Regional Social Justice Conference The Justice of Place: Indigenous Ways, Social Justice, and Teaching

April 20–21 Haida Gwaii

Topics will include reconciliation, Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous ways of being, antipoverty issues, environmental justice, women's rights, antiracism, gender and LGBTQ equity, violence prevention, and trauma-informed approaches to teaching and learning. www.haidagwaiiteachers.com.

Anxiety—Practical Intervention Strategies

April 23 Kelowna

April 24 Vancouver

April 27 Victoria

This workshop provides practical and accessible strategies which can be applied across the lifespan and address the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social aspects of anxiety. Email info@ctrinstitute.com.

Depression—Practical Intervention Strategies in Vancouver

April 25 Vancouver

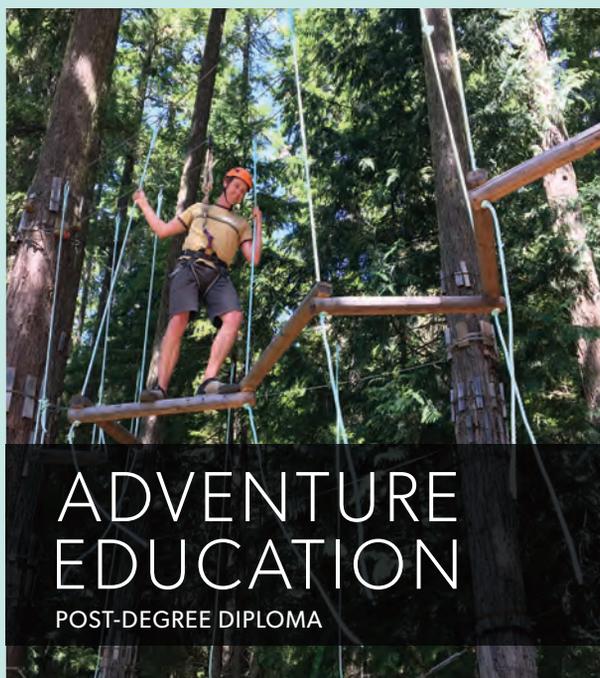
This workshop reviews a variety of effective strategies that can be used to help an individual who is struggling with depression. Email info@ctrinstitute.com.

MAY 2018**Understanding Mental Health Concerns in Children and Youth in Victoria**

May 8 Victoria

May 11 Vancouver

This workshop will provide a general overview of the common mental health concerns for children and youth, signs and symptoms, themes for treatment, and the controversies that surround some of the diagnoses. Email info@ctrinstitute.com.



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PD Online Calendar bctf.ca/PDcalendar
Changes/additions mstele@bctf.ca



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BC Teachers' Federation  bctf.ca

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