

# BC Teachers' Federation Teacher



May | June 2019

**Stop the  
prevalence  
model**  
page 8

**Debriefing  
the AGM**  
pages 9-13

**Inspiring students  
to teach** page 19

**Retired teacher Anne Reynolds  
with her former student Carter  
Pitre, a new teacher**





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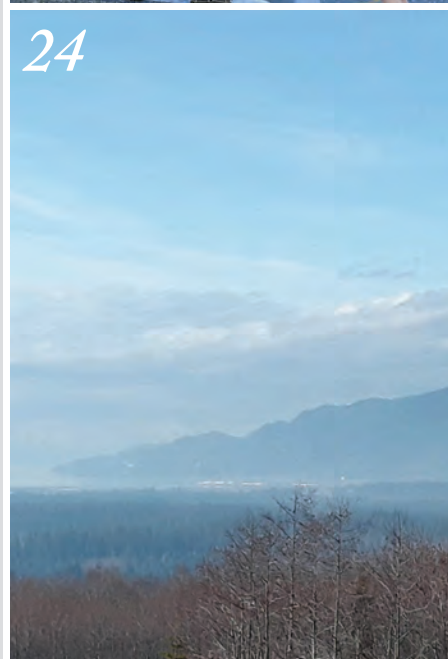
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## IN THIS ISSUE

### Volume 31, Number 5 May | June 2019

- 5 Kids Boost Immunity
- 6 25 years with a broken negotiating system
- 7 What's going on with bargaining?
- 8 Stop the prevalence model
- 9 Reflections on the AGM
- 14 Teaching to the heart of the people
- 15 The change we may never know
- 18 Bread and roses
- 19 A teacher's legacy: Making an intergenerational difference
- 20 Weaving a rainbow: Aboriginal artist takes a stand against hate
- 21 Building a dugout canoe
- 22 BCTF Assistance Society
- 22 CIVIX Democracy Bootcamp
- 23 Student Vote
- 24 The right to clean air
- 25 Winner's circle
- 27 The Educator of Canada

### REGULAR FEATURES

- 3 President's message
- 3 Message du président
- 4 Readers write
- 16 Local profile
- 26 Book reviews
- 28 Classified ads

# Thank you

I was first elected to the BCTF Executive Committee in 2009, and on June 30 I wrap up nine years as a full-time table officer of our union. It has been an honour to serve the membership in these roles. Teachers around the province have been incredibly welcoming to me over the past 10 school years as I have travelled the province to meet with them at local general meetings, or to visit their classrooms, or to be with them at events in their community. At the time of writing, I've been to all school districts in BC except for one, and to nearly every BCTF local—and most of those I've visited several times.

TO ALL THOSE who have shared with me your hopes, frustrations, experiences, and aspirations for your students, schools, communities, profession, and yourselves: a giant thank you. And thank you as well to all the local presidents and other activists who have been generous with your time and willing to share the experiences of your members in your communities so that I could share those experiences in the media, better inform our dealings with government, and make the best choices I could with the realities of all teachers in BC in mind—including those in rural and remote areas.

Every person who serves as BCTF president must reconcile themselves to the fact that many things remain a work-in-progress long after the president's term of office ends. This is to be expected leading a large, multifaceted organization with a lot on the go, in an education system that has many complexities and challenges—and especially in a political context that never stays still, and when the imperative to further equity in schools and in our union necessitates that we continue to challenge ourselves and move forward as a profession and an organization, particularly when it comes to racism faced by our colleagues and students who are black, Indigenous, and people of colour.

An additional note: as a queer person, representation matters a lot—and it's a simple fact that it wasn't that long ago that it would have been very challenging for an out member of the LGBTQ community to be in the role of BCTF president or as a labour leader in BC. Rather than obscuring my identity as a gay person, I've referred to my partner on the airwaves, I've been out in other media, and I've been myself in travelling around the province. I've also been out since day one in my dealings with government, and in working with other education and labour organizations with whom we work within BC and across Canada.

The reality is that many LGBTQ teachers still do not feel that they can be themselves in their workplaces, for a variety of reasons, and there is still work to do there; but in being myself in this role, and in the work that we've been able to do with other organizations, I hope I've been able to move things forward in this regard for both members (and students as well) while I've been here.



# Merci

J'ai d'abord été élu au Comité exécutif de la FECB en 2009. Le 30 juin, je bouclerai neuf années en tant qu'administrateur à temps plein de notre syndicat. Ce fut un honneur de servir les membres dans ces rôles. Les enseignant(e)s à travers la province ont été incroyablement accueillant(e)s au cours des 10 dernières années scolaires, alors que je parcourais la province pour les rencontrer lors d'assemblées générales, pour visiter leurs salles de classe ou pour les accompagner dans le cadre d'événements dans leur communauté. Au moment d'écrire ces lignes, j'ai visité tous les conseils scolaires de la province, sauf un, ainsi que presque toutes les sections locales de la FECB – et dont la plupart ont reçu ma visite plus d'une fois.

À tous ceux et celles qui ont partagé avec moi leurs espoirs, leurs frustrations, leurs expériences et leurs aspirations envers leurs élèves, leurs écoles, leurs communautés, leur profession et envers eux-mêmes et elles-mêmes : un énorme merci. Je remercie aussi tous les président(e)s des sections locales, ainsi que les autres militant(e)s qui ont été généreux et généreuses de leur temps et qui ont accepté de partager les expériences de leurs membres dans leurs communautés, afin que je puisse partager ces expériences dans les médias, mieux informer le gouvernement de nos défis et faire les meilleurs choix possibles en tenant compte de la réalité de tous les enseignant(e)s de la C.-B. – y compris ceux et celles se trouvant dans les régions rurales et éloignées.

Toute personne qui occupe le poste de président(e) de la FECB doit se réconcilier avec le fait que beaucoup de choses demeurent en suspens, bien longtemps après la fin du mandat du/de la président(e). Nous devons nous y attendre lorsque l'on dirige une organisation aux multiples facettes en constant mouvement, dans un système d'éducation qui comporte de nombreuses complexités et de nombreux défis; et spécialement dans un contexte politique qui n'est jamais stable et lorsque l'impérative mission de renforcer l'équité dans les écoles et dans notre syndicat nécessite que nous continuions à nous remettre en question et à progresser en tant que profession et en tant qu'organisation. En particulier en ce qui concerne le racisme auquel font face nos collègues et nos élèves de couleur et autochtones.

De plus, en tant que personne queer, la représentation compte beaucoup – et c'est un simple fait qu'il n'y a pas si longtemps, il aurait été vraiment très difficile pour un membre affiché de la communauté LGBTQ d'occuper le rôle du président de la FECB ou d'un leader syndical en Colombie-Britannique. Plutôt que de cacher mon identité en tant que personne gaie, j'ai fait référence à mon conjoint sur les ondes, je l'ai affiché dans d'autres médias et je suis resté moi-même lors de mes voyages à travers la province. Je me suis aussi affiché dès le premier jour dans mes relations avec le gouvernement et avec d'autres organisations du secteur de l'éducation et des organisations syndicales avec lesquelles nous travaillons en C.-B. et ailleurs au Canada. La réalité est que plusieurs enseignant(e)s LGBTQ sentent qu'ils ou qu'elles ne peuvent pas être eux-mêmes/elles-mêmes dans leur milieu de travail, pour plusieurs raisons et qu'il reste encore du travail à faire en ce sens. Cependant, en étant moi-même dans ce rôle et en ayant participé au travail effectué avec les autres organisations, j'espère avoir été en mesure de faire progresser les choses, à la fois pour les membres et les élèves, pendant que j'étais en poste.



## A closer look

### Teacher, March 2019, p.8–9

THANK YOU for the article on school psychologists and speech language pathologists (SLPs) in the March 2019 issue of *Teacher* magazine. I would like to extend congratulations to the SLPs who are now members of the Prince George Teachers' Association.

The SLPs in the Comox Valley have been active members since 1989 and have never looked back. We are proud to be part of this powerful and caring union, receiving all the support, benefits, and education it provides. We've been active at the local level by taking on roles of PD chairs, staff reps, health and safety chairs, chairs of the special education LSA, bargaining teams, vice-president, and president of the local. At the provincial level, we have done workshops around the province, been on advisory committees, staff at the BCTF, and a member of the Executive Committee.

The BCTF is strong because of its membership, and as a speech and language pathologist, I am proud to be a member of the BCTF. I know the SLPs in Prince George will benefit from being members and will continue to be strong advocates for public education.

Thanks again for this great article.

—Karen Langenmaier, Comox

## A closer look

I WAS PLEASED to read the articles about the roles of school psychologists and speech language pathologists (SLPs) in the March issue of *Teacher* magazine.

Based on my experience working as an SLP in the North Vancouver School District, I would need some clarity around the fact that an SLP working in four schools has a caseload of "around 30 students." I'm thinking this number was misunderstood. It could mean 30 students at one school, which would include the various levels of involvement mentioned, such as indirect services through IEP consultation or home programs, as well as direct intervention. It might also mean 30 students on the weekly direct intervention

caseload at any one time because, well, there are only so many hours in a day.

A common stat used in the SLP field is that 10% of the general population has some form of speech language difficulty. As teachers know, communication difficulties impact students in the school environment. This means that, depending on the size of the school, caseloads can be over 30 at one school. I currently work at three schools and my caseload is at 107 students. A colleague of mine who works full-time at 4 schools has 160 students on her caseload. These include students receiving direct and indirect SLP services at some point within the school year.

I would be pleased for my Prince George colleague if her full caseload really is 30 students, but I do wonder if this is an accurate reflection of the true caseload numbers.

—Judi Israel, MSc. S-LP(C) Registered Speech-Language Pathologist, North Vancouver

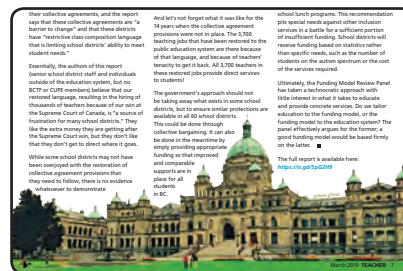
## Teacher on Twitter

### Funding model review

### Teacher, March 2019, p.7

Cathy McMillan @DyslexiaBC • Mar 16

If designations are no longer it will have devastating effects on SN students. Dyslexia needs to be identified early to remediate with success. Advocating will become next to impossible for parents of dyslexics w/o designation.



## Maintain your voice

### Teacher, March 2019, p. 11



The latest issue of @bctf #teacher magazine features @HumanworksWade second article on #voice - get it while it's hot!

Sherri Zelazny @surreyvoice • Feb 28

Replying to @thewellteacher @bctf

Thanks for all your support of vocal health! Hoarseness does not have to be a part of teaching. Good vocal health and early identification and management of voice changes will keep you in the classroom!

## On city council's vote to cut funding for Vancouver School Board's children's food programs

WHEN I GO TO SCHOOL tomorrow, I will refill the basket on my desk with snacks.

Sometimes, there is juice, sometimes oranges, sometimes protein bars.

Always there is hot chocolate and marshmallows for a wee one with too much to bear.

Hunger grinds into you, and nibbles away at your soul.

Hunger devours your ability to focus.

Hunger bites until your tummy hurts.

Hunger drains you until your body is too tired to play.

Hunger teases you until you feel angry. Hangry, but it's no joke.

Hunger means you have no energy for joy or human connection.

Hugs don't feed hungry kids.

Hunger burns.

Hunger sneaks up when no one is looking and steals the best parts of who you are, and who you would become, if only.

Hunger shuts you down.

Hunger makes you cold.

Hunger gets mixed up with shame, and hungry children blame themselves.

Hungry children can't learn, can't run, and can't hide.

Hungry children don't grow.

Hungry children rarely complain, because it takes too much energy.

He tells me that after the third day without food, hunger goes away.

It helps to drink warm water.

Oh, the promise of this six year old, Comforting me about his hunger.

—Shelley Sullivan, teacher, Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

**Editor's note:** after public outcry, Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart tweeted: "No one on council noticed the change in the funding to the lunch program. That was our mistake, and I personally feel awful that it was missed. When Council heard the issue from parents, a motion was drafted and I have full confidence that the funding will be restored when Council reconvenes." As of *Teacher's* date of publication, the funding is still in place.



Jennifer Kimbley photo

# Kids Boost Immunity How one school has funded 3,100 vaccines

By Tanis Filiatrault, teacher, Surrey

**A small, friendly rivalry between students has had a significant global impact. Grade 5, 6, and 7 students at Senator Reid Elementary in Surrey, BC are leading the country in vaccines earned for UNICEF through the federally funded cross-curricular resource Kids Boost Immunity. These students have answered over 50,000 questions to earn more than 3,100 vaccines.**

IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT for even the most eager elementary students to find ways to help the local and global community because of their age. Initially, our students were motivated by a healthy sense of competition between classes; however, as students explored more lessons and gained knowledge on the importance of vaccinations in helping the marginalized, their motivation transitioned from competition to altruism.

I believe the feeling we get when we help others without expecting anything in return is invaluable. That feeling helps students become more aware of their capacity to make significant global impacts.

Vaccines are earned for UNICEF each time students score greater than 80% on the small summative quizzes that accompany the lessons. UNICEF then distributes these vaccines to people around the world that lack access to such inoculations because of various issues of inequity.

Our students explain the value of their learning experience best:

*"Sometimes we have to realize how privileged we are, like when we take these lessons we learned that kids in developing countries don't have the ability [to be vaccinated] but we do this to give them the ability."*—Komal K.

*"It spreads awareness about diseases and vaccines."*—Jasmine K.

*"If we ourselves get vaccinated, or not get vaccinated, it doesn't just affect us but the community, especially extremely [young] people and extremely [old] people too."*—Bushara M.

*"It made us have a good feeling that we are helping people but also learning and being educated about stuff that we didn't know."*—Zara T.

*"We are helping everyone who can't get vaccines."*—Baljot K.

Kids Boost Immunity is a free online teaching resource for Grades 4–12. The program aligns with BC's physical and health education, career, science, and social studies curriculum. It has been evaluated

by the Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium (ERAC) and is an approved teaching resource.

Students complete lessons and quizzes on various scientific and social topics surrounding health in society. The evidence-based scientific lessons allow students to independently inquire about the immune system, disease transmission, antibiotics, germs, preventing cancer with the HPV vaccine, the role of non-governmental organizations, and more. Some lessons cover social studies topics such as global inequalities, solving global inequalities, and evaluating online information sources.



Kids Boost Immunity offers free science, socials studies, and health lessons developed by teachers to inspire digital-age students in support of UNICEF Canada. They are hoping to have a French version online in fall 2019.

If you would like to help multiply the immunization aid for the global community and use this resource in the classroom, please visit [kidsboostimmunity.com](https://kidsboostimmunity.com). ■



# 25 years with a broken negotiating system



**By Kip Wood, BCTF Executive Committee  
Member-at-Large, Nanaimo**

**In June 1994, hockey fans in BC were heartbroken when the Canucks lost game seven of the Stanley Cup Final to the New York Rangers. Teachers in BC were also heartbroken that same week when the Mike Harcourt government enacted the *Public Education Labour Relations Act*.**

AFTER THREE ROUNDS of full-scope local bargaining under the union model, the *Public Education Labour Relations Act* (PELRA) changed the rules by effectively decertifying 76 locals and replacing them with a single bargaining agent for teachers, the BCTF. On the employer side of the table, the BC Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) was created to represent school boards.

Currently, 43,000 public school teachers in BC are represented by a single agent at the bargaining table, the BCTF, and 60 school boards are represented by the BCPSEA.

PELRA is complicated because despite there being single bargaining agents for the respective sides, PELRA also set up a two-tiered model. The co-existence of sole bargaining agents that can authorize strikes and lockouts to resolve disputes alongside locals that continue to bargain with school boards, without a way to resolve a dispute, is why the system is broken. Many local matters have not been resolved, and many other matters that should be bargained locally have fallen off the provincial table.

When provincial negotiations opened this spring, the BCTF Bargaining Team sought to negotiate a model that for a quarter century has not addressed the needs of teachers (nor the needs of school boards). The BCTF position set at the Representative Assembly in May 2018 was to attempt an improvement within the model set up by PELRA. The Bargaining Conference in October 2018, tasked with setting objectives democratically, was more prescriptive: have all bargaining matters, other than those required by PELRA to be provincial matters, redesignated as local matters (this is often referred to as the "split of issues"), negotiate a local dispute resolution mechanism, and secure a commitment from government to fund local negotiations.

**“Many local matters have not been resolved, and many other matters that should be bargained locally have fallen off the provincial table.”**

As of this writing, the provincial parties have agreed on a “facilitated local impasse process,” or FLIP. This would provide a framework to engage a third party to assist when local parties are at an impasse and unable to resolve differences.

It was a long wait since PELRA was enacted before one significant improvement to the split of issues was achieved; posting and filling of vacancies was redesignated as a local matter because of negotiations in 2011–12. This was significant for my local (Nanaimo) because teachers were able, after local negotiations, to access continuing assignments year-round. For 20 years, teachers in Nanaimo could only access continuing postings for a six-week period in the spring.

Canuck fans also had a long wait—only to have their team lose another game seven in the Stanley Cup Final in June 2011 to the Boston Bruins. Sports fans and teachers have been patient, optimistic, and determined. I’m hopeful for the Canucks. And I’m hopeful that a better model of teacher bargaining will be achieved soon. ■

# What's going on with bargaining?

## Get the info at *MyBCTF.ca*

The BCTF's Bargaining Team is hard at work trying to get a good deal for members that includes meaningful salary gains and improvements to working conditions.

To get that deal, members need to read up on the state of talks and then get engaged in our collective advocacy work.

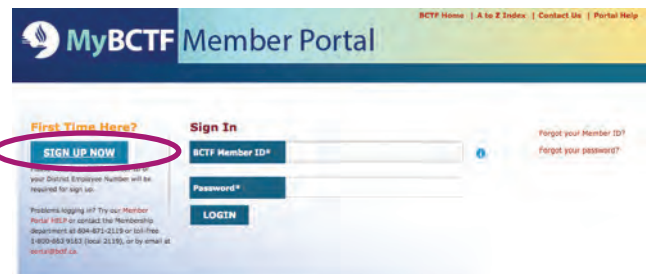
- ▶ Where does the employer stand on salary?
- ▶ Is there a way to get more than 2%, 2%, and 2%?
- ▶ What has the employer tabled on class size?
- ▶ Are the BCTF's proposals available to members to read?

All the answers are available in the bargaining updates on the MyBCTF members-only portal.

Make sure you read the bargaining bulletins to find out what the government wants to do with the collective agreement language we recently won back at the Supreme Court of Canada. Once you're in the portal, just click "Bargaining 2019" on the top menu bar.

## New to the MyBCTF portal? Here's how you get access.

From [BCTF.ca](http://BCTF.ca), click "Member Portal" and then "Sign Up Now."



There are two ways to register for the first time. You can use your BCTF Member ID or your district employee number.

Remember to make a note of your BCTF Member ID once you get it. You need it for future logins.

## Support the BCTF's ad campaign

The easiest way to help out with this round of bargaining is to share the social content that is connected to the Federation's ad campaign. Head over to [Facebook.com/BCTeachersFederation](https://Facebook.com/BCTeachersFederation) or [Twitter.com/BCTF](https://Twitter.com/BCTF) to add your voice to our message. ■



**Our kids and their teachers:  
WORTH INVESTING IN**

# Stop the prevalence model



By Glen Hansman, BCTF President

**Funding to school districts for supports and services to students with special needs has been woefully inadequate for many years, as has been operational funding overall. The BCTF welcomes discussion as to how to correct this problem so that improvement to front-line services across all 60 school districts can be improved.**

UNFORTUNATELY, the government's Funding Model Review Panel made several recommendations that will take services for students backward, not forward.

## The problem with prevalence funding

Here in BC, the education funding model that existed before the last major reform in 2002, while far from perfect, still adhered to the principle that funding be linked to the actual costs of providing services. That changed in 2002, when four-fifths of operating funds that flow to districts became based on a per-pupil amount that is equal for every student in the province, with only the remainder tied to "unique student" and "unique district" characteristics. But while these funds are only allocative (in other words, districts are free to use those funds how they wish), at least the formula provides some tenuous link between funding and services or costs.

Unfortunately, the Funding Model Review Panel's report and recommendations almost entirely sever these limited links in their proposal to move to a prevalence model for funding special education services.

Rather than funding based on the needs of individual children, much of the funding would be based on the prevalence of a child's condition or disability across the student population at large.

Students with special needs deserve (and are legally entitled to!) appropriate and consistent care that is tailored to their actual disability and specific needs, not guess work.

Rather than obscuring students' needs, schools must be adequately funded to ensure resources, wrap-around services, and personnel match the actual levels of student need.

## Misrepresenting designations and the collective agreement

Our concerns about the prevalence model are also connected to comments made elsewhere in the Funding Model Review Panel's report—including the assertion that providing special education designations is a practice that "may be discriminatory." What seems like a throwaway comment at first has more meaning in the context of the broader report and the misleading assertions

it makes about collective agreement provisions restored by the Supreme Court of Canada.

To be clear, some students with special needs, and people with disabilities in general, do face discrimination. It is wrong, and it should not happen. However, the designation itself is not the discrimination, and the confusion here is similar to assertions about collective agreement language elsewhere in the panel's report.

Discrimination occurs where there is a denial of a service, or some sort of adverse impact, as per the test for discrimination under the *BC Human Rights Code*. The *Moore v. North Vancouver School District* is a notable BC example involving a student with special needs in our K-12 system.

In contrast, our win in the Supreme Court of Canada has resulted in the restoration of approximately 3,700 teaching jobs around the province—which are enhancements to services to students, not removal of services to students.

It is unfortunate that the panel has chosen to put forward a false narrative about collective agreements and designations, instead of tackling the actual problem: inadequate operational funding for school districts and the gaps in services that result.

It is always within the authority of the Ministry of Education to fund school districts adequately, above and beyond any provision in any BCTF/BCPSEA collective agreement. Collective agreement language provides a floor, not a ceiling, for staffing and supports. Levelling down does not create equity; identifying gaps and adding resources does. ■



# Reflections on the AGM

## 2019 AGM election results



By Rich Overgaard,  
BCTF staff

Over 700 BCTF members attended the 103rd Annual General Meeting in Victoria from March 16–19.

TERI MOORING from Quesnel was acclaimed as President; Clint Johnston from Chilliwack was acclaimed as First Vice-President; and Carole Gordon from Central Okanagan was elected as Second Vice-President. They will assume their new titles on July 1, 2019.

Glen Hansman remains President until June 30, and he will continue as Past-President for one year.

Past-President Jim Iker gave a moving tribute to Glen Hansman for his contributions to the BCTF. "Thank you Glen for teaching us, for guiding us, for leading



Marilou Strait photo

2019–20 BCTF Executive Committee (L to R): Robin Tosczak, Jody Polukoshko, Kip Wood, Violette Baillargeon, Clint Johnston, Carole Gordon, Katherine Trepanier, Rae Figursky, Susan Trabant, Teri Mooring, Karen Edwards, Glen Hansman, Marjorie Dumont.

us, for pushing our union, our labour movement, and our schools to be on the right side of history," he said.

The following were elected as Members-at-Large: Violette Baillargeon from Surrey, Karen Edwards from Tumbler Ridge, Rae Figursky from Burnaby, Jody Polukoshko from Vancouver Elementary, Susan Trabant

from Prince George, and Katherine Trepanier from Prince George.

Completing the second year of their two-year terms are Marjorie Dumont from Vancouver Elementary, Robin Tosczak from Greater Victoria, and Kip Wood from Nanaimo. ■

## A single paddler in a small canoe



By Larry Kuehn, BCTF staff

The inclusion of Aboriginal teachers and acknowledging and respecting their work in schools and in the BCTF has been a work in progress.



Photo supplied by Frank Conibear

Frank in his office at Victoria High School.

AT THE 2019 AGM, Frank Conibear spoke to delegates about this journey. He introduced himself with his name, Tul Kwe Mult, from the Songhees Nation and as a delegate from Victoria. Frank had been one of the co-chairs of the BCTF Task Force on First Nations Education whose policy proposals were adopted at the 2000 AGM.

Frank recalled that he had first spoken at the 1998 AGM to challenge a motion with racial overtones. "At the time, I was the only person in the room of Aboriginal ancestry who could address the issue appropriately," he said.

From that came the decision by the BCTF to create the task force which outlined steps that should be taken, including the creation of an ongoing Aboriginal

Education Advisory Committee and a staff position at the BCTF for an Aboriginal Education Co-ordinator.

Frank told the 2000 AGM: "When I started this journey a couple of years ago, I was like a single paddler in a small canoe. Now we need a much bigger canoe so that all our cultures can start paddling together."

He came back in 2019 to acknowledge the presence of many more Aboriginal teachers and say that he is proud of the work of the union in implementing many of the recommendations of the task force and giving First Nations educators the respect that they always deserved.

However, the work is never complete. "I encourage you to carry on this work with an open heart, an open mind, and a respectful manner," he said. ■

# Reflections on the AGM

## Seth Klein speaks about climate change

By Jennifer Kimbley, Teacher editor

Marilou Strait photo



Climate change is undeniable. We have been affected by ongoing wildfires in BC, global warming is changing weather patterns, and storms are increasing in frequency and intensity.

SETH KLEIN spoke at the BCTF AGM to inspire delegates about the need to align Canadian politics with the climate emergency we are facing. He suggested that tackling climate change should now be our calling as teachers. Students and their teachers need to be thinking and learning about how to cope and adapt to the climate emergency, and how we can solve the largest puzzle facing human survival.

To illustrate how we can achieve this, Klein reminded teachers that society has done so before. During WWII, Canadians mobilized to confront an existential threat. WWII wasn't an imminent threat to Canadians, and it took leadership to get the public on board. The rich made sacrifices as well as the poor. And it's important to remember that Canada didn't wait for the US to join the fight, we did it years earlier. There's no need for us to wait for the United States to lead the way this time, either.

"We need to go to war for a collective issue—climate change needs a wartime-scale emergency response. There's a gap between what science says we must do and what politics will entertain," he said. "We have 11 years to get our emissions to net carbon zero. Failure to do so will have catastrophic and terrifying results."

He told delegates about five things teachers can do to help:

- 1 **Integrate** the climate emergency into lessons.\*
- 2 **Support** BCTF resolutions on climate change and keep it on our agendas.
- 3 **Encourage** school boards to align with this agenda; purchasing electric cars, geothermal heating in schools, locally sourced food for cafeterias, etc.
- 4 **Defend** Aboriginal rights. Future laws need to be in alignment with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- 5 **Lower** the voting age; our youth are marching, but they can't vote, and we are failing to make decisions about the world they will live in. The BCTF should add our support to the call to lower the voting age to 16.

Klein received a standing ovation, and he was followed by Tessa Jones, a Grade 11 student: "What we are working towards is crucial to our future children. We are tired of the divisiveness and we need to be working toward the same thing," she said. "Change is hard, but no matter what we do, we will see change in the very near future. We have the choice to see that change be either catastrophic or successful." ■

\*Look in *Teacher* magazine this September for two pages of climate change resources.

Nancy Knickerbocker photo



## BC students support global climate strike

By Nancy Knickerbocker, BCTF staff

Last December, University of Victoria student Antonia Paquin was sitting on a local beach when she had an alarming and life-changing realization about the urgency of the climate crisis.

"I FELT LIKE the beach was half sand and half plastic microbeads. I spent a long time seeing it but trying not to see it, until I realized 'Oh my God, this problem is enormous!'" she said. "I wondered what does this mean for me and for some child I'd like to have in the future? Ever since then I made a vow to dedicate my all to this every day."

Antonia, 21, was one of a small group of student activists who greeted delegates as they made their way into the Annual General Meeting on March 17, in advance of a keynote address by Seth Klein, "Mobilizing for the Climate Emergency."

Grade 9 student Nicholas Fairfield-Carter has been worried about climate change for years but was moved to take action this week by Greta Thunberg, the Swedish student who has inspired more than a million students to join her school strike for climate. On Friday he joined students from across Victoria in a march and rally at the Legislature. "There was a great turnout," he said. "Now is the time to take action."

Nicholas's dad, Brian Fairfield-Carter, recalled his son's "aha moment" about climate change. The family had been on a weekend camping trip and enjoyed beautiful weather until the Sunday morning. "We woke up to find ash from local wildfires covering our tent and the sky a weird coppery hue," Brian said. "Nicholas looked up and asked something like: 'Is this it? Is the world burning?'"

Since then father and son have continued their learning about climate change and now are engaging more actively on the issue.

Some students had the chance to speak to the meeting and expressed happiness that their teachers through the BCTF are focusing on education for climate justice. One student emphasized that the youth are inviting teachers' support, not asking for their permission. He said: "Climate change is the defining issue of our generation. We're going to continue striking, whether you endorse it or not." ■



Photos submitted by author



## The AGM bride

By Amanda Long, Coquitlam First Vice-President

After years of BCTF events, I couldn't think of a better way to spend my last AGM than getting married and celebrating with all my union brothers and sisters. The BCTF has been like a family for me for over a decade and it was so great to share this important moment in my life with them all, especially since I'm heading to new opportunities in Ontario this summer.

THE CEREMONY was just outside the convention centre on the hotel property garden. We booked a marriage commissioner in advance to come at the lunch break because we wanted to be legally married in BC. We chose Cathy Lavoie, a retired teacher from the marriage commissioner list. A couple of our friends, colleagues, and family members joined us and we all enjoyed high tea, hence the fascinator.

Our beach wedding was March 27 in Cabo, but it was important for us to be legally married in BC—during the BCTF AGM—where I've spent a decade of my spring breaks. Victoria was the perfect place.

That evening we attended the BCTF dance and got a wedding sketch done, hit up the photo booth, and even had our first dance after Surrey delegate Christy Van Ieperen—who I had just met that morning—asked the DJ to play our song for us. It was an unexpected but sweet moment to share with hundreds of my BCTF colleagues.



If I had one piece of advice to BC teachers it would be to get involved, stay informed, be brave, and speak up. I would love to see teachers bring more teachers to union events because that is how I got involved, and it absolutely changed my life for the

better. Joining a committee or a PSA, attending a meeting or an event, are great ways to get involved. I promise the connections you make will last a lifetime!

It is bittersweet to leave my BCTF family, but I surely have exciting new adventures ahead of me. ■

## Q&A with Laird Cronk, President, BC Federation of Labour

By Jennifer Kimbley, Teacher editor



Jennifer Kimbley photo

Laird was a guest speaker at the 2019 AGM. He spoke with me after his speech.

**Q What are your hopes for your time as president?**

**A** WE HAVE SO MUCH work to do, and lots of things to change. We have the legislative agenda, and we need to make sure that the workers are a part of the changing economy, such as the gig economy, employment standards, and labour code changes. We need to advance gender equity issues, and we need to strengthen and really build on our relationship with Indigenous peoples.

We also need to address declining density in unionization in the private sector. Some of that is labour code issues, some of that is taking advancements we can get in labour code issues, and turning that into making sure people who want to be in a union really have the opportunity to be in a union.

**Q What are your biggest challenges in labour?**

**A** Our biggest challenge as a Federation is overcoming the 16 years of the Liberal government and what they did to us legislatively. Challenges and opportunities are so tightly linked. I think it's focusing our joint strength so we don't work in silos in the labour movement. For example, some unions are really good at organizing techniques, and other unions would like to learn from them. The Federation could help facilitate discussions between them to help transfer those skills so they all benefit. So I think "un-siloing" the affiliates, while we do a lot of that, we could work to advance these efforts and make sure we are the platform for unions to find the best practices.

**Q What are your thoughts on the BCTF and our contributions to the labour movement?**

**A** Oh, it's an amazing contribution! It's tragic the BCTF had to do it, but look at the ground-breaking Supreme Court victory in 2016 to undo the Liberal attack on collective bargaining. The BCTF are fearless warriors of collective bargaining, and you set the standard for fighting for your members for collective agreements. The BCTF's contribution on a day-to-day basis at the Federation is impressive. Teachers are on committees, teachers are at the officers' table, teachers are out in force at the BCFED convention and those are the resolutions that help to shape the direction of the Federation, so you are invaluable. ■



# Reflections on the AGM

## Our shared journey toward equity and inclusion *By Glen Hansman, BCTF President*

Nancy Knickerbocker photo

**Over past decades, BC teachers have strongly advocated for meaningful inclusion and eliminating all forms of discrimination from our schools and society, but, arguably, we have been less active in examining these same issues *within* our Federation. In recent years, however, the BCTF has embraced a broad program of awareness raising and internal change.**

FOR EXAMPLE, this is the first year in which the BCTF Executive Committee has had two equity positions in place: one for an Aboriginal member and one for a racialized member. Our Leadership Report for 2019–20 contains a strong statement on decolonizing and our AGM passed a recommendation committing us to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. We should be proud of these new leadership positions, and of the other work we're doing around equity and inclusion—policy changes, training opportunities, workshops, and more.

Equity is not just one of several prerequisites for union renewal. In my view, it is the most important. It is crucial for the BCTF and all unions to reflect the diversity of their membership and strive to eliminate the barriers some members face because of who they are or how they are perceived.

These barriers were highlighted at our recent AGM, where members shared their lived experiences of racism. Despite professional qualifications and expertise, never being quite "the right person for the job." Racial and cultural stereotypes consistently being applied to them. Expectations that they must be the resident expert on all aspects of their race or culture. Outright suspicion and fear.

One Black member painfully recounted his experience on a sunny morning in Victoria, simply asking a woman on the street for directions to the local Tim Hortons. "Excuse me," he said, and before he could even pose the question, she literally screamed.

Both in the main meeting hall and in caucus spaces set aside for those who identify as women, as racialized, and as LGBTQ, delegates shared their feelings of hurt and exclusion and their analysis of how racism and colonialism still permeate society, including unions. Deep-seated biases, and both systemic and overt racism are well-documented in the history of organized labour in Canada, and the BCTF is not immune.

In a dramatic and courageous effort to express these concerns and heal wounded hearts, Vancouver elementary teacher Marjorie Dumont requested and was granted the right to address the meeting from the stage, rather than from one of the microphones on the floor. Although she is a member of the BCTF Executive Committee, at that moment she was speaking as a Wet'suwet'en woman and as the bearer of the name C'tan.

"This is a really old name handed down to me from my mother. With that name comes the responsibility to lift up our people," she

said. "And our people are hurting in this environment—being told over and over that we don't matter, that we're less than, that we don't have the skills."

She invited the Aboriginal and racialized delegates to join her on the stage as she spoke eloquently about the need for decolonization and the importance of unity among marginalized members of the BCTF, and of society at large.

"We're going to unite and heal together and, in the healing, we're going to sing Chief Dan George's Prayer Song," she said, as powerful drum beats resounded across the hall.

This action was an urgent reminder to the BCTF that all members have equal rights to participate in our union, and that damage is done when those rights are not equitably accessible. Recognizing that, we must move forward on the fundamental changes required in our practice and our thinking.

In a post-AGM report, BCTF Executive Director Moira Mackenzie wrote: "I believe that this was a very significant AGM for many reasons, the most important of which was the lessons it taught and the inspiration it provided. In so many ways it was a clear illustration of 'necessary discomfort,' a prerequisite for growth, learning, and change, in general and in equity and inclusion."

I wholeheartedly agree with Moira's conclusion. ■

# Teachers of colour

*Speaking up, confronting systemic racism, and celebrating our differences*



By Neesha Blajberg, district learning support teacher, New Westminster

**I am inspired by younger teachers of colour. They are far more aware of the systemic racism that I have only recently become more aware of.**

MY GENERATION grew up with the ideology of “colour blindness,” the idea that race doesn’t matter because in Canada we don’t “see” race. We grew up thinking we were accepted for who we were, in spite of our colour.

However, I have recently realized that we were accepted because we were ignoring our own heritage. It wasn’t a conscious decision; it was a survival technique. And it was reinforced by our eurocentric Canadian culture and education system. When my father asked me to study Indian history, I instead studied the kings and queens of England. When he asked me to read Indian literature, I instead read Austen and Hardy. I grew up rejecting part of my identity, without realizing it.

When the BCTF decided to designate a Member-at-Large position for racialized teachers, I started to think about what that meant. “Racialized” was not a term I was familiar with. What does it mean to be racialized? Am I racialized? Why do we have to use a term that seems to indicate that others impose their prejudices around race on me?

I started to identify myself as a woman of colour. At first I was uncomfortable saying

it out loud. I was aware that my discomfort came from knowing that I was making others uncomfortable by saying it out loud. But I knew my discomfort would be temporary, and I would have to let others deal with their own. One day I found myself saying out loud that it took me 50 years to realize I’d been assimilated by the dominant white culture. That first time it sounded like a joke, but each time I say it now, I know that underlying that statement there is still genuine shock and maybe even a little pain—I’m still processing it.

So to those who are used to people of colour like myself being quiet, non-confrontational, and invisible, and are now being faced with people of colour who are speaking up, confronting systemic racism, and proudly reclaiming and affirming their identity, I give this advice: try understanding. Yes, people of colour do get angry, so when we do, remember that the anger is justified. Instead of judging, find your empathy. If you feel defensive, ask yourself why. And if you don’t know why, do some research.

Because no one should have to ignore or reject their heritage in order

to be accepted. It is time for *all* of us to get comfortable with acknowledging, accepting, and celebrating our differences.

That is why I admire those younger teachers of colour who already know this. They are not willing to reject their heritage in order to be accepted. And they shouldn’t have to.

*It is time to stop saying there is work to be done: it is time to actually do the work. ■*

For information on free  
BCTF antiracism workshops, go to  
[bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=21350](http://bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=21350)





# Teaching to the heart of the people



By Catherine Quanstrom, President, Bulkley Valley Teachers' Union

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**As part of the BCTF's commitment to International Solidarity and as an adjunct to its work with Latin American countries, the BCTF sent a delegation to *Pedagogía 2019: Meeting for the Unity of Educators*, this year held February 2–6 in Havana. *Pedagogía* is a biennial international congress that brings together educators from across Latin America as well as from socialist countries that have been traditionally sympathetic to Cuban ideology.**

THERE WERE UPWARDS of 5,000 teachers from Brazil, Angola, Chile, Honduras, Guatemala, Argentina, Venezuela, Russia, Romania, Rwanda, Canada—and the list goes on. Delegations from small Caribbean countries sat alongside the 400-strong contingent from Mexico at Havana's Palacio de Convenciones (convention centre).

The Cuban conference is a combination of lectures (in Spanish) and field trips. The able translation provided by Wendy Santizo of CoDevelopment Canada meant that all members of the BCTF contingent were able to follow the lectures and presentations.

Out in the field, Cuban delegates showcased their best and most progressive schools. Uniformed students sang, danced, and gave studious attention to their teachers—with the occasional muffled giggle—when delegates peeked into their classrooms.

In the lecture hall, panelists debated the requisite values that must be taught in order to create a just and peaceful society. Cuba's constitution references education as the responsibility of the whole society,

with schools named as the core cultural institution of Cuban communities. The writings of Cuban poet and revolutionary José Martí called for education, land, and livelihood for workers and small farmers, and for racial equality in Cuba. He famously proclaimed, "With all and for the good of all."

"We teach to touch the heart of the people," said one panelist, while another referenced the pedagogy of tenderness that Cuba uses informally to guide school policy. Relationships form the bedrock of Cuban pedagogy; a warm relationship between teacher and student is coupled with high academic expectations. It is a successful method that any effective teacher would endorse—Cuba has gone several steps further than the norm by incorporating relationships into its educational policies.

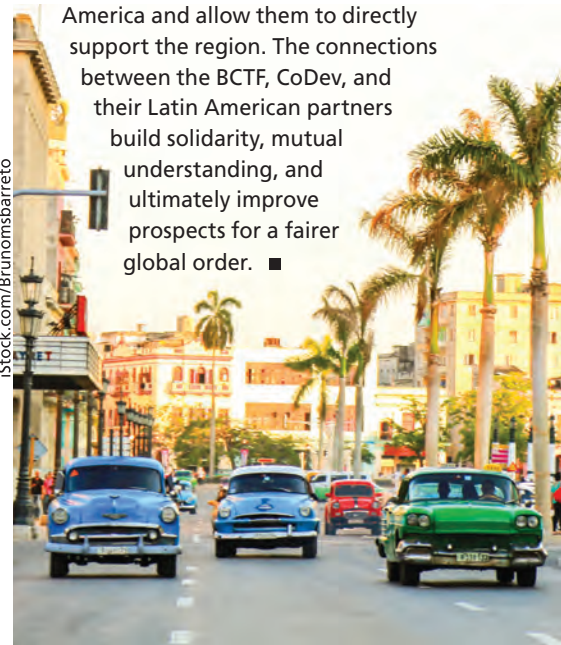
This year a small, diverse delegation from British Columbia attended, including Burnaby French immersion teacher Audrey Yap, Prince George elementary teacher Marcus Nipp, UBC teacher educator Anjum Khan, Bulkley Valley Local President Catherine Quanstrom, and Surrey First

Vice-President Julia MacRae, whose Spanish language fluency was invaluable.

Travel to *Pedagogía 2019* was facilitated by CoDevelopment Canada. CoDev, as it is known, is a BC-based NGO that works for social change and global education in the Americas. Founded in 1985 by a group of activists who wanted to go beyond financial aid, CoDev builds partnerships between like-minded organizations in Canada and Latin America to foster learning, social change, and community empowerment. CoDev and the BCTF have a long history of mutual support and collaboration on projects that elevate the rights of teachers in Latin countries. These partnerships educate Canadians about Latin

America and allow them to directly support the region. The connections between the BCTF, CoDev, and their Latin American partners build solidarity, mutual understanding, and ultimately improve prospects for a fairer global order. ■

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# The change we may never know

## *Lessons on the impact of place-based education on inclusion and empowerment from a first-year teacher*



By Andrew Wood, teacher, Rossland

Mack Bartlett photo

I wake up to the sound of water dripping on the roof over the canvas wall tent, but I've learned it isn't raining. The fog rolling off the Pacific Ocean condenses on the spruce boughs overhead, collects on the prickly needles, and falls onto the roof. This morning the campers will arrive. Shortly after the sun and wind have cleared the fog, I will welcome eight youth to our first Empowerment Camp at Cedar Coast Field Station. I cannot wait to share what I love about living off-grid on Vargas Island with the next generation.

LAST SUMMER, I received my Bachelor of Education through the University of British Columbia. Before starting my first year of full-time teaching, I accepted a summer job running camps on Vargas Island, five kilometers north of Tofino, BC. My task was to create a Youth Empowerment Camp for Cedar Coast Field Station. Cedar Coast is a not-for-profit organization offering place-based education and ecological research in the Clayoquot Sound. It is an off-the-grid property and can only be accessed by boat.

I wanted the camp to include both art and leadership challenges as ways to explore empowerment on the individual, group, and community levels.

**What I didn't know was how influential this camp would be on how I approach inclusion of children with special needs in my classroom.**

We were set to welcome eight campers, two of whom have special needs—one child with autism and one child with anxiety and a service dog. To accommodate their needs I made small adjustments to our structured outdoor solitude and overnight camping trip.

The camp was a hybrid of local knowledge, adventure-based learning, and community service. Highlights for the campers included meditation on the beach, ecological research, kayaking, and swimming with bioluminescence at night. A highlight for me, a first-year-teacher-to-be, was learning valuable lessons about planning for inclusion.

I learned creating meaningful educational experiences is about building supportive, safe environments while maintaining flexibility. When campers weren't engaged in evening workshops and wanted to throw rocks into the ocean, I joined them and shared genuine conversations about how the ocean made them feel or if they missed home.

I learned, by ensuring activities had adaptable challenge levels, my campers were able to choose variations based on their experience. Most importantly, I found

inclusion to be about ensuring equitable participation because it increases the number of chances for meaningful peer-to-peer interactions.

During our fire-building challenge, one camper (an experienced fire builder whose goal from day one was to light a fire with a flint and steel) had been shaving tinder from a piece of driftwood for over an hour. Despite his best efforts, the tinder wouldn't catch. He decided to share his resources with our youngest camper, described by his parents as "highly functioning autistic." This camper had never lit a fire before.

They arranged their kindling, and they practised striking a match into the centre of the structure. Again and again they tried, and finally the spark turned into a flame! We all shared in the magic of watching these campers light a fire by working together. The youngest camper completed his victory dance beside his first fire, silhouetted by the setting sun, and encouraged by our big, genuine smiles.

Inclusion is more than good planning, it is about creating environments where kids feel safe to fail and giving them room to discover that empowerment can be shared. Inclusion is ensuring meaningful peer-to-peer interactions and knowing as educators that authentic inclusion can lead to impactful changes that we may never, truly, know.

**Cedar Coast Field Station website:**  
[cedarcoastfieldstation.org](http://cedarcoastfieldstation.org). ■

# Nanaimo District Teachers' Association



By Lauren Donnelly, BCTF staff

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## Life in Local #68

ON VANCOUVER ISLAND's east coast, northwest of Victoria and across the Salish Sea from Vancouver, sits the seaside city of Nanaimo. Jeremy Inscho, Grievance Officer for Nanaimo District Teachers' Association (NDTA), describes Nanaimo as a city that's just right. "It's not too big," Jeremy says. "And not too small."

Local 68 is busy with about 1,200 members from Ladysmith to Lantzville to Gabriola Island. It's the second largest local on Vancouver Island, and is spread across the unceded, ancestral, and traditional territories of Snunéymuxw, Snaw-Naw-As, and Stz'umínus Coast Salish peoples. Ladysmith and Nanaimo were once coal mining hubs, and Nanaimo's last coal mine closed in 1968.

If you take a look at some of the activists from Local 68, you'll find their labour history is dynamic.

Many past-presidents have taken additional roles at the BCTF. The list includes former BCTF President and current provincial cabinet minister Jinny Sims; BCTF Member-at-Large Kip Wood; and co-chair of the provincial Bargaining Team Mike Ball. In the mid-1970s, Nanaimo teachers played a key role in the Learning and Working Conditions Committee, pushing for collective bargaining rights.

Members of Local 68 are passionate, and their activism and involvement doesn't end with retirement. Les Skipsey, who began his teaching career in 1949 and served as local

president in 1954, still pays the NDTA office regular visits.

"Our founding mothers and fathers did a pretty good job," said Local President Denise Wood. "Our collective agreement has some of the strongest language around class size and composition in the province."

That's not to say that the NDTA is without challenges.

"We're a mid-size local but we have big issues," said Denise. "Our challenges are universal—workload is a huge issue, change—just the rate and pace of change is unsustainable for teachers right now, as well as the new curriculum and the lack of resources to support it."

## Local President Denise Wood

DENISE WOOD's parents moved around a lot when she was growing up. "It's hard to know where I'm from," she says. For the last 29 years she's made Nanaimo her home, and has taught math in the district for the last 15 years.

This is Denise's first year as elected local president. Last year her first term as grievance officer was cut short when the NDTA's local president accepted a BCTF staff job at the end of December and Denise was appointed local president in her place.

Activism is a family affair for Denise. Her partner is Kip Wood, a former local president and BCTF Member-at-Large. Denise says she



L to R: NDTA Professional Issues Officer Jo Cornthwaite, Aboriginal Education Chair Michelle Sokoloski, President Denise Wood.

loves the constant learning as local president, but finds that it sometimes keeps her working long hours. "I'm a bit of a perfectionist, and every challenge is unique," Denise says. She feels a responsibility to create a system that's manageable for those with young families just coming up in her organization.

"If I'm working 12-hour days every day of the week, the next person coming in can't necessarily do that," says Denise. "And I don't think that's fair—to create that unreasonable expectation from the membership for the next person that's coming in. I want a successful succession."

## Reconciliation at Randerson Ridge Elementary



TEACHERS GATHER in a classroom at Randerson Ridge Elementary.

They're here to learn more about the three raven images at the front of the room. The artwork was created by Taxw-Snet Mitchell from Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, who collaborated with Linda Jack on the designs. One of these ravens will be the new school logo.

"Our school didn't feel like we had enough information around Aboriginal education, and so our students have asked for this," said Jo Cornthwaite, Professional Issues Officer at Local 68 and a K-1 teacher. "It's a big shift in school culture." The raven logo will be on uniforms, letterhead, and the website.

That shift is emblematic of a ripple effect throughout the district.

In February, School District 68 adopted the Syeyutsus Reconciliation Framework, the result of months-long consultation that brought together education partner groups including NDTA. The goal was to move reconciliation forward within the school district.

Syeyutsus means "walking together" in the Hul'q'umi'num' language. The heart of the framework is the idea that working with First Nations cultural lenses—land-based learning, culture, and language—is good for everyone.

Mary Jo Fulmer is a TTOC at Randerson Ridge, and says that she teaches students traditional First Nations teachings whenever she has the chance. Students in her Grade 3 science class worked with an inquiry question of what can be learned from First Nations teachings about living in balance with nature and ended the unit with a potlatch. "One of the learning outcomes is ecological awareness and taking care of the earth," she says. "What better way to learn about that than First Nations traditional teachings?"

## Meet the teachers at Nanaimo District Secondary School

NANAIMO DISTRICT Secondary School is one of Local 68's six secondary schools. It's also the oldest secondary school in Nanaimo, and that's starting to show.

There's been talk of renovating the school, but in the meantime, NDSS teachers are a lesson in resourcefulness, combining their passion and creativity to give the school's 1,400 students all they've got.

Today English teacher **Angela Milligan** has opened her door to her colleagues who trickle in to share challenges and victories.

Angela has taught at NDSS for seven years. The back of her classroom door is covered with two dozen welcomes—each one represents the first language of one of her English language learner (ELL) students. Angela says that with students' vast range of abilities it's challenging to provide teaching resources that meet them where they're at. "When I started teaching the ELL class there was nothing," she says. "Everything I have I've collected, some that I've purchased on my own."

Skills for life teacher **Dee Hartig** understands the challenge of meeting students' diverse needs. She works with students with moderate to profound cognitive disabilities, providing

a safe environment for them to become as independent as possible while learning self-regulation strategies. Dee's role extends beyond the classroom because she supports students' families too. It's a full-time teaching job and a full-time paperwork job. "If you don't do the paperwork then the students don't get the funding," says Dee.

**Kelly Barnum's** dance class is rehearsing for a performance. "They're all fighting each other," she says—and she means it—the students are exploring how stage combat and violent movement can work with dance to tell a story. Since Kelly joined NDSS in 2016, her program has grown from one block to six.

The sound of chainsaws at NDSS is likely thanks to **Franjo Crnkovic's** West Coast wilderness studies class. His students learn outdoor life skills, get first aid certificates, explore careers in wilderness, and get outside to camp, fish, and cull invasive species. "We all don't have to be doctors or contractors," Franjo says. "If we enjoy the outdoors we can be a biologist or a conservation officer."

Sustainability and conservation are **David Grey's** specialty. David leads the Eco Club, a student council committee based on the United Nations' sustainability goals. The club collaborated with the school cafeteria to compost food scraps. They used that compost to plant a school garden from which they'll grow vegetables for the cafeteria. David has plans to expand the garden to something more ambitious. "It's an incredible learning tool," he says. ■



Left: Dee Hartig  
Below: Kelly Barnum's dance class.





# Bread and roses

## *The BCTF Women's Institute: Gathering Strength, Gaining Ground*

Compiled by Jennifer Kimbley, Teacher editor

Jennifer Kimbley photo

Over 100 women from around BC celebrated International Women's Day at the second annual BCTF Women's Institute. This all-female event included workshops, a panel to discuss activism and intersectionality in the women's movement, a living library, and facilitated discussions. I asked participants what they'll take away with them after the event, and here are some of their responses:

**Carri McMullen** I learned to support women and lift them up, and to stop judging them. I don't like it when others judge me, and yet I do it all the time. We need to stop that, and we need to support each other. Life is hard enough as a female in this world and we don't need other women bringing us down as well.

**Melanie Sedergreen** Minoritized (gender and race) teachers have experienced prejudice and discrimination. For example, they have heard staff be prejudiced, which makes them feel unsafe. They also feel shame if they don't speak out and are thus caught in a double bind.

One thing we can do is celebrate difference. Tolerance can make minoritized groups feel silenced and invisible. For example, "So and so is just like me—we are the same, even if we have different skin colour." This does not honour different peoples' backgrounds, upbringing, and lived experiences. Celebrating difference does.

**Litia Fleming** I came into the conference feeling isolated: as a woman of colour teaching in a small, predominantly white community, and as a new teacher grappling with the complexities of the job and feeling under-supported. Thanks to the knowledge and stories shared by

many brave and thoughtful women, this conference took me out of that isolation and showed me that there is action I can take to better my situation and that of others.

**Angela Woods** Three days of my bucket being filled with working women's history, building new knowledge about organizing with the community for progressive issues, and using art to creatively get this message of equity heard. Hearing the personal stories and learning more about intersectionality highlighted the privilege I have as a Scottish/English settler and gave me tangible ideas of how I can support my colleagues who live at these cross sections of discrimination and are getting worn out by doing this work every day of their lives.

**Michelle Douglas** Some recurring themes I took away: women need to uphold other women; women in leadership roles should lead as women and not try to be or have characteristics of male leaders; prejudice of any kind should be unacceptable.

**Jessica Hill** I participated in a breakout session that looked at art as activism. During a current events lesson with my Grade 8 students a few days later, we found ourselves discussing how the students could find their voice when some controversial issues felt too grand and out of reach for them.

I showed them some activist art on issues like climate change. Suddenly, some of what we had been learning was more accessible to all; as one student said, "Art has no language." I challenged the students to think of an issue that matters to them, then I asked them to think of a creative way to express their thoughts on that issue. Below is one of the powerful assignments I received.



Jessica Hill photo

The Women's Institute did indeed leave me feeling empowered, and I am so proud that the lessons learned there were able to empower my students as well.

**Susan Trabant** I learned that women are ready! Ready to promote equality and ready to step up into leadership roles in their locals and in the province.

**Neesha Blajberg** I'm convinced that we must share and listen to each other's stories—it is one of the best ways for us to realize what privileges we have and others don't have. And whatever privilege we do have, we must use to help those who are more marginalized than ourselves get what they need.

Our level of denial is a huge barrier to awareness. We need to acknowledge that our current systems are patriarchal in nature and that to raise others up and support equity, we must build awareness, break down systemic barriers, and rebuild. ■

# A teacher's legacy:

## Making an intergenerational difference



By Jennifer Kimbley, Teacher editor

**It's a cool, cloudy morning, and two teachers meet in the hallway before classes start. Not the most remarkable occurrence—these two have met many times before—but this time it's different.**

ONE OF THEM is Carter Pitre, a new teacher, just over a year into his career. He teaches a Grade 6 class at North Ridge Elementary in Surrey. The other is Anne Reynolds, now retired, who was Carter's teacher when he was in Grades 6 and 7.

Anne has come to see his classroom and meet his students. This is the first time they've met since Carter has started to teach.

As a child, Carter realized he had a passion for working with children. His mother ran a home-based daycare and he began helping with the children when he was old enough to contribute. This interest was deepened by his teacher, Anne.

"She was kind, warm-hearted, and challenged me to take risks even though I struggled with confidence," Carter says. "Mrs. Reynolds inspired me to pursue my dream of becoming an educator."

Before meeting this morning, Carter told me it's been a few years since he's last seen Anne. "I've bumped into her a couple of times over the past several years and she's now retired. The last time I spoke with her, I had just decided to go back to school to become a teacher. She told me that she thought I would be a great teacher, so that was great to hear," he says.

Anne remembers Carter fondly. "He was a fairly quiet child at first, but as he felt more comfortable with me he became talkative and his fun-loving side came out. He was a good role model for students both in his classroom and in the school as a whole."

"I feel very honoured that I inspired Carter to be a teacher," says Anne, who taught him at South Meridian Elementary in Surrey. "I used to try to get my students to think about their future direction in life by having a career fair each year and many discussions about what they should do in order to fulfill their dreams. I always said school was their most important job if they wanted to move forward in life. They had to stick with it, challenges and all."

They walk into Carter's classroom, Anne admiring the space and expansive windows on the north wall. She has brought photos to share—a class photo with her 2001–02 Grade 6/7 class, and a photo of Carter with his science fair project (he says he was invited to show it at the district science fair but was too shy).

Carter explains to Anne how quickly his teaching career began. He finished the PDP with Simon Fraser University in December 2017 and was hired as a TTOC for Surrey within a week. The following month, at the age of 28, he obtained a term contact as a Grade 3

teacher at École Woodward Hill—the same school where he did his practicum teaching Grade 7.

As a new teacher, he reports his biggest surprise about teaching is how wonderfully the children challenge him every day. "I'm learning just as much from them as they are from me. I'm excited for what the future will bring!"

Anne has one final piece of wisdom to share. "I think the most important advice I have for both Carter and other new teachers is that they have to love the job. Teaching is not something you can do unless you are prepared to put everything you can into it. Also, you have to make each student feel special and show them you care. I wish Carter all the best as he embarks on his career. I know that he will do well and inspire each of his students to reach their potential."

It's 8:30 a.m., and the bell has sounded. Students are coming into the classroom, glancing at their teacher and the stranger by his side. They settle in, and before taking attendance, Carter introduces Anne to his students. "This is Mrs. Reynolds. She was my Grade 6 teacher, just like I'm your teacher," he says. There are some wide eyes and surprised faces.

I smile, wondering if there is a future teacher in the room with us. As it turns out, two of his students are interested in becoming teachers. They join us in the hall for a quick photo before the day's lessons begin.

*May we all be a Mrs. Reynolds to our students. ■*

Retired teacher Anne Reynolds, her former student and new teacher Carter Pitre, and aspiring teachers Eunice and Rashad.

# Weaving a rainbow:

## Aboriginal artist takes a stand against hate



By Nancy Knickerbocker, BCTF staff

*"Ceremony brings order out of chaos." —Vine Deloria*



**In the fall of 2017, when Chilliwack trustee Barry Neufeld first began his social media attacks on LGBTQ2S people, Peggy Janicki "was just devastated."**

A MISSION TEACHER and Chilliwack parent, Peggy immediately began reaching out to friends and family members who identify as LGBTQ2S. "What can we do?" she asked. Teachers and other concerned citizens organized rallies outside the Chilliwack school district office and Peggy participated along with her husband, Rick Joe, and their kids.

"I was feeling really heartbroken," she said. "I wondered—do we spend our energy shaking our finger at Barry Neufeld or do we turn our attention away and align with the strength of the community?"

As a Salish weaver in training, Peggy was inspired to create something beautiful and positive out of the ugly negative energy emanating from some members of the school board. She was apprehensive because she had just started a new job as Indigenous mentor teacher in Mission, but she went ahead and pitched her idea to Joseph Heslip, district principal for Aboriginal education.

"We were at the Museum of Anthropology and there was a Salish weaving installation in the foyer. I showed Joseph the sketch of my design and said, 'I want to weave this blanket in our high school and gift it to Saylesh Wesley.' Joseph jumped up and said 'Yes!' right away."

The design was extraordinary because it depicted the intersection of traditional Salish weaving with the contemporary LGBTQ2S rainbow flag. And the gesture was radical because it involved the ancient ritual of gifting a swóqw'elh—a ceremonial shawl—to Saylesh Wesley, the first Stó:lō transwoman in recorded history.

Peggy and Saylesh met years ago in the B.Ed. program at University of the Fraser Valley. Later, as a PhD student in gender,

Peggy brought the same intensity of purpose to her new project. She dyed the wool, set up her loom in the student support room of Mission Secondary, and got to work. Soon students began dropping in to watch or lend a hand while they waited to see a counsellor—quietly, steadily weaving a new organic kind of understanding of rights and culture. Some teachers assumed the weaving would hang on the wall when it was done, but Peggy explained why not.



Photo submitted by Peggy Janicki

"Salish weavings are living things. The weaver brings breath and life to them, and then they go to the people. We're going to hold a ceremony and put this shawl onto Saylesh Wesley. That was the goal from the beginning, to consciously do this political act."

When the day came, the honouring ceremony was conducted according to centuries-old Stó:lō protocols with traditional speakers, witnesses, and drumming. Dignitaries and invited guests,

including representatives of the BCTF, filled the beautiful Clarke Theatre in Mission. For Peggy, there was one unforgettable moment behind the scenes.

"It was when I put the blanket over Saylesh's shoulders. I was so overwhelmed."

In that moment, she knew the truth of Vine Deloria's words. Out of the chaos and hurt spread by homophobia and transphobia, art and ceremony brought order and grace.

**Look in *Teacher* magazine this autumn to learn more about Saylesh Wesley and her story as an educator and activist for trans and two-spirit people. ■**

sexuality, and women's studies at Simon Fraser University, Saylesh researched the precontact history of Stó:lō two-spirits in an effort to reclaim her trans identity within the postcolonial context. Her grandmother, a world-renowned weaver and speaker of the Halq'eméylem language, gave her a new Stó:lō identity—Sts'iyóye smestiyexw slhá:li—meaning "twin-spirited woman."

Even though Peggy's own mother was a master weaver, it was Saylesh's grandmother who really ignited her passion for weaving. "Her grandma put up a loom in the kitchen of the Long House and invited the ladies to help. It caught me totally on fire!"



Master carver Frank Marchand guides Kamloops students through the construction of a cottonwood dugout canoe.

Brenda Celesta photos.

# Building a dugout canoe

*How one school is revitalizing ancient knowledge*



By **Brenda Celesta**, teacher, Kamloops

**For hundreds of years, the Secwepemc people used cottonwood dugout canoes to navigate the river systems in their traditional territory, which stretches east from the Columbia River Valley along the Rocky Mountains, north as far as Tête Jaune, west to the Fraser River, and south to the Arrow Lakes.**

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP of master carver Frank Marchand, one of the few carvers left in western Canada, 19 students at Brocklehurst Middle School in Kamloops are participating in the construction of a cottonwood dugout canoe. The course is an option for Grade 8 students, and they will earn credits for science, social studies, English, and one elective course over the year. This is a new course, and will hopefully be offered again with the goal of incorporating Aboriginal content in line with the changes made to BC's curriculum.

Frank is from the Sylix/Okanagan Nation territory in Vernon. He gained his knowledge from his father, and is willing to share his skills with students; in return, he hopes to gain an apprentice canoe carver and revive the knowledge of this ancient technology.

Frank shares his stories and knowledge with students while guiding them in the canoe's construction. Students learn how

cottonwood dugout canoes link to the local territory of the Secwepemc people and why the construction process is important knowledge to revive.

The students have met local leaders, knowledge keepers, and organizations to learn as much information as they can about local plants and the ecosystem, as well as the stories, history, carving expertise, and traditional technology of the local Secwepemc people. Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc council member, Jeanette Jules, gave her blessing to the students to begin carving and learning this knowledge.

The Elders and cultural leaders of the Little Shuswap Band gifted the students with a piece of a cottonwood tree they felled earlier in 2018. The class began in September with students researching the history of cottonwood dugout canoes. They also participated in a ceremony at the site where the tree grew and a second ceremony upon its arrival at the school. Teachers and students connected with the local

Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc band leadership to follow cultural protocol—acknowledging the knowledge keepers, Elders, and territories of the Secwepemc people.

The cottonwood canoe's construction is important for durability and use. They are more rugged and last longer than birch bark canoes. Most cottonwood canoes were of similar shape, and that technology did not change over time or between communities. Very few canoes were decorated or painted, but most were scorched on the outside to make them waterproof.

Construction began in mid-October in an outdoor courtyard at the school. Frank Marchand and the students worked two and a half to three hours a day, rotating in groups, a few minutes at a time. They learned about the traditional methods of carving the canoes, but used modern hand-held metal tools such as adzes and draw blades.

After 12 weeks of construction, the Grade 8 class had created a 14-foot canoe. ■

# BCTF Assistance Society

## We could use your assistance to help others



*By Ken Bisset, Maple Ridge teacher,  
President of the BCTF Assistance Society*

It can be difficult to plan ahead for life's hardships. Family break-up, health issues, and car accidents come unexpectedly, and sometimes BCTF members don't have the financial reserves to get them through those rough patches.

CURRENT AND RETIRED BCTF members who have exhausted all other avenues of financial assistance can apply for emergency financial and compassionate aid from the BCTF Assistance Society.

Each month, the BCTF Assistance Society receives requests for aid in the form of a grant or an interest-free loan. Our funds are extremely limited and primarily rely on investment returns and loan repayments. As we do not receive regular injections of funds, and investment returns have been minimal in recent years, we are financially obligated to make our limited resources stretch as far as possible. We notify teachers who ask for help that large monetary requests cannot be considered—no matter how worthy the cause.

Our mandate does not permit us to assist teachers to pay down their debts. We must limit our aid to current situations. In some cases, we give the aid directly to an institution rather than directly to the applicant. This would apply to paying medical benefit premiums directly, or housing costs, or to pay for other treatment needs. It is never easy to make these choices, and each request must be considered on its own merits.

One BCTF Advantage Partner recently offered to make small contributions on a quarterly basis, and the society gratefully accepted. As a result, we receive a small sum from this company a few times a year.

The BCTF staff administers the society's business and bears those costs as its contribution. We value the help we receive from the staff members who receive the requests, who respond to numerous phone calls, who follow up on unpaid loans, and who provide the directors with valuable information when decisions must be made. One never knows when the Assistance Society's help may be needed in the future. Our organization has reached a point where its directors are asking BCTF members to consider making a donation to the BCTF Assistance Society. Unfortunately, contributions are not tax-deductible as we do not have charitable tax status, but any and all donations would be gratefully received.

For more information on the BCTF Assistance Society, please visit the following link: [bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=4776](http://bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=4776). If you would like to donate, please contact the Assistance Society secretary at 604-871-1921 or [benefits@bctf.ca](mailto:benefits@bctf.ca). Alternatively, you may send a donation marked clearly to the address below:

BCTF Assistance Society Secretary  
100-550 West 6th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2 ■



Jennifer Kimbley photo

## CIVIX Democracy Bootcamp

### Professional development on elections and civic education



*By June James, BCTF staff*

**"This is what all Pro-D should be like!"**  
—Teacher participant

ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT teachers from around the province travelled to Vancouver to participate in the CIVIX Democracy Bootcamp. Experts discussed digital threats to our democracy, in particular the threat of misinformation and disinformation, media manipulation, and harmful speech on our democracy.

Speakers reviewed electoral participation statistics and the barriers to voting some people face, all with a strong emphasis on why civic education is connected to improving voting rates.

"It was a very inspiring couple of days. We got to see a range of experts talking about what the backrooms of different political parties look like, and what kind of issues and agendas they're going to be bringing out into the next election," says Crystal Boeur, a teacher from the Sunshine Coast. "We also heard from people from different news organizations and analysts, looking at how we can spot fake news and tools we can teach our students for online literacy."

Democracy Bootcamp was made possible with funding from the non-partisan agencies Elections BC and Elections Canada. If you would like to participate in a future annual Democracy Bootcamp, watch for the BCTF News email, which will contain registration details. ■



## Student Vote

### Educating the voters of tomorrow

By June James, BCTF staff

Are you looking for a fun way to teach your students about the electoral process in Canada? Would you like a free resource that kids and teachers enjoy?

STUDENT VOTE is a free program that helps teachers run parallel elections—during this autumn’s federal election, you could have your class or school participate in their own Student Vote as well. Students will learn about the political parties, their platforms, and the electoral process.

Teachers enjoy using the program. “I’ve used Student Vote in the past and had a lot of success with it. It’s such a fun way to teach what can be a dry subject,” says Erin Butte, a teacher-librarian in Sooke. “I look forward to using it again.”

In fact, a survey of teachers found that 100% would likely participate in Student Vote again. They reported increased confidence in teaching civics and government and were very satisfied with materials, resources, and support.

Students who have participated in the program have a stronger sense of civic duty related to voting. Their families are positively influenced as well, and 28% reported that their child’s participation in Student Vote influenced their decision to vote.

Student Vote is made possible with funding from Elections Canada. ■

## Student Vote

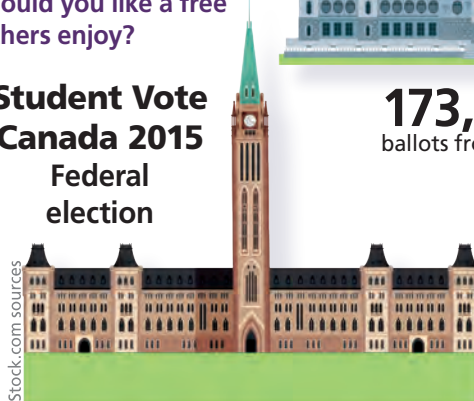
### BC 2017 Provincial election



**173,703** students cast ballots from 1,114 schools in BC

## Student Vote

### Canada 2015 Federal election



**179,702** students cast ballots from 1,099 schools in BC



BC has one of the best turnouts across Canada, with **69%** of schools registering to participate (second to only PEI in the last federal election)

**Registration for Student Vote 2019 Federal Elections will be open in May—visit [studentvote.ca](http://studentvote.ca) to get involved.**

- 1. Register your school:** The program is free, and is offered in both official languages.
- 2. Receive materials:** Schools receive pedagogical resources, campaign posters, riding maps, ballot boxes, and voting screens.
- 3. Engage with the campaign:** Students learn about government and elections, and research and discuss the issues, candidates, and platforms.
- 4. Student vote day:** Students take on the roles of election officials and cast ballots for local candidates running in their schools’ riding.

# The right to clean air

## *Two elementary teachers fight a corporate giant*

By **Lis Stannus**, teacher, Kitimat



Dan Mesec photo

**Photos left:** Kitimat teacher Lis Stannus in her classroom.

**Below:** Kitimat smoky skies, March 2019.

Photo submitted by author

**Sulphur dioxide causes acid rain and breathing problems—especially for vulnerable groups such as the sick, elderly, and young children—and yet, the BC Liberal government gave a pollution permit to a Kitimat aluminum smelter to emit sulphur dioxide into the atmosphere.**

STATE-OF-THE-ART scrubbers (air pollution control devices) were available to minimize these emissions; however, Rio Tinto, the international corporation that owns the smelter, was not required to install them.

Instead, a five-year sulphur dioxide monitoring plan was put in place to gauge the pollution's impact on air, plants, water, and human health, effectively turning the residents of Kitimat and Terrace into guinea pigs to "wait and see" if the rise in sulphur dioxide emissions would have a negative effect on our health. A study completed by the Northern Health Authority in 2014 shows Kitimat had a 60% higher rate of asthma than the provincial average.

My colleague Emily Toews and I (both elementary school teachers in Kitimat) are worried about how sulphur dioxide is affecting our health. We believe the right to breathe clean air should be guaranteed to everyone, regardless of where they live.

Four years ago, we participated in a month-long hearing to challenge the pollution permit given to Rio Tinto. We lost the 2015 appeal, and we are now on our second phase of legal action.

I am grateful that Chris Tollefson and Anthony Ho, lawyers with Pacific Centre for Environmental Law and Litigation, have accepted this case on behalf of Emily and myself as a public interest case. The BC government's approval of the sulphur

dioxide monitoring plan could prove to be an infringement of our rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Throughout this lengthy process, Emily and I have united in standing up for clean air for our students to breathe. We, along with other clean air advocates, have developed a non-profit society, Kitimat Terrace Clean Air Coalition (KTCAC), to raise awareness within our communities of the need to protect and advocate for clean air.

Many of the 35 members of the KTCAC are teachers, and they have been invaluable supporters these past four years. Together we have organized garage sales, teahouse fundraisers, folk concerts, and sat in many meetings to organize our next events or decide on letters that need to be written. Our non-profit society gives us an opportunity to reconnect but also to work toward change in the community.

The next Environmental Appeal Board hearing is expected to take place over four weeks starting at the end of July. Emily and I have learned a lot about legal process, air quality data, and the importance of community support since our initial legal challenge.

**The right to clean air is a battle we believe is worth fighting for. ■**

# Winner's circle

## A Coquitlam chess class helps students strengthen their endgames

By Lauren Donnelly, BCTF staff

Dejan Radic's classroom at Terry Fox Secondary in Coquitlam is decorated with portraits of legendary chess masters. Look closer though and, among the Bobby Fischers and Garry Kasparovs, you'll find some young faces. They are current and former Chess 11 and 12 students and, if Dejan has anything to do with it, they might be the world's next chess masters.

TODAY, STUDENTS pore over their worksheets in intense concentration. They're preparing for a test tomorrow.

The worksheets feature a series of chessboard diagrams. Each row is numbered one through eight and each column is labelled with a letter of the alphabet. Chess pieces dot the board. Students must find the best possible moves using their knowledge of tactics and strategy.

Dejan is the mastermind behind one of the school's most popular electives. It all started with a chess club in 2006 at Maple Creek Middle School. Then Dejan learned that Germany was the 30th country to develop an official chess curriculum. That got his wheels turning, he says.

He did some research, and put in many Pro-D days studying teaching materials and lesson plans from around the world. His idea has now grown into a course filling seven blocks in the school's schedule, and a full-time job teaching chess for Dejan. It's a dream job for him,

but it's changed students' lives as well.

"I always thought I wasn't really smart enough to play chess," says Kaylin Sinclair, a Grade 12 student who has completed the course. "Then I took the class and now that I'm actually decent at it. I'm definitely more confident in myself."

She's the school's top female player and can't imagine life without chess. Today she's playing against another Grade 12 student, Charlie Kim. Dejan's keeping a close eye on their match.

"If she wins it'll be the first time she's beat Charlie," he says. "He's the school champ."

As a former competitive player, Dejan understands the benefits of chess. He says it's P.E. for the mind.

Chess helps with memory, focus, critical thinking, and planning. On top of all that, Dejan sees chess as a great equalizer. Cliques and divisions fall away at the chess board along with other identifiers.

"You take away all the physical advantages another kid might have over you—height, speed, power—and it's just you," he says. "All of a sudden they're on an equal playing field. And then they win, and it's this transformation because they develop confidence."

Dejan has seen students who struggle with challenges like English as a second language, autism, mental illness, and learning and physical disabilities flourish in chess class. Many students enjoy it so much they don't want to leave.

Both Kaylin and Charlie are now peer tutors for their classmates. The competition is fierce but friendly between them.

Charlie credits chess with helping him to make wiser choices, and he's seen concrete results. "I literally became smarter since I started chess," he says with a smile. "You can check my grades."

When he graduates secondary school he plans to study education at Simon Fraser University. He says he'd like to teach chess in his hometown in Korea.

Dejan says one big challenge of teaching chess is ignorance. Many people assume it's just a game. He's worked hard to develop an approach to assessment that makes sense. Students are evaluated on their ethics, sportspersonship, and conduct, as well as their performance in games and written tactics and strategy tests.

When Kaylin checkmates Charlie, Dejan cheers loudly. "I can't believe we witnessed that," he says. "She's going to be floating for the rest of the day."

Charlie accepts his loss graciously. After all, the next match is anyone's game. ■



**Left:** Coquitlam chess teacher Dejan Radic.

**Below, L to R:** students Kaylin Sinclair and Charlie Kim.



# The Women's Atlas

by Joni Seager

**Fifth edition, published by Penguin Books, 2018**

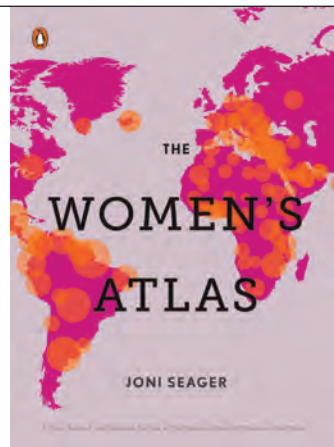
A fully revised and updated edition of *The Penguin Atlas of Women and the World*.

*Reviewed by Marian Dodds, retired teacher*

Crack the cover of *The Women's Atlas* for a fascinating, immersive experience in cutting-edge data visualization, colour-coded maps, and infographics. This rigorously researched atlas is divided into nine comprehensive, accessible chapters: Women in the world, Birthrights, Keeping women in their place, Body politics, Health, Work, Education and connectivity, Property and poverty, and Power. Each chapter provides facts, updates, and new perspectives on the global status of women.

AUTHOR JONI SEAGER, global studies professor, policy expert, and feminist geographer, highlights women's advancements since her first atlas was published in 1986, most notably global improvements in women's literacy and girls' education. But she also warns of backsliding, shining a light on masculinized militarization, religious fundamentalism, and resurgent conservative intolerance. "Women have long

warned that gains in women's empowerment should not be taken for granted: they are fragile, reversible, and always under pressure." She notes in her preface that, "Economic inequality is so extreme that even the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recognizes it as a global crisis." This latest edition pays particular attention to intersectionality, emphasizing real differences between women travelling "the fracture lines of race, class, age, sexuality, religion and place."



Recognizing that globally comparative perspectives can enrich social analysis and activism, Seager cautions that if left unexamined, global generalizations can also be troubling and could backfire. *The Women's Atlas* should kick start deeper classroom conversations beyond the inevitable, "Why is it this way?" Upper elementary and secondary teachers will find openings to probe, debate, and research current equity issues locally and globally. *The Women's Atlas* is a valuable resource for every school library.

**Answer the following with *The Women's Atlas***

**Which countries** have "marry your rapist" laws?

**Which Olympics** was the first to have women and men compete in all sports?

**What percentage** of the world's population does not use the Internet?

**What is** the "right to pee" movement? Why does this matter?

**Which western** country has increasing maternal mortality rates?

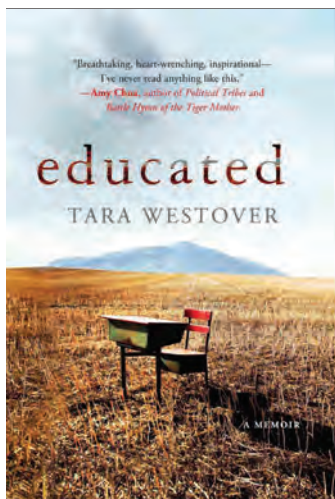
**Which countries** have the most unbalanced sex ratios and why?

**In which** countries have women's movements made effective interventions to stop and slow armed conflict and shape the terms of peace?

**How prevalent** is the use of skin-whitening cosmetics products?

**What are** the major international routes for trafficking humans for sex and forced labour?

**Where are** toxic indoor pollutants, pesticide residues, and mercury exposure in fish most affecting people? ■



## Educated

By Tara Westover

**Published by Random House, 2018**

*Reviewed by Tia Dawson, teacher, Surrey*

As educators, we often don't realize the influence our role can have on others, in fact, we often take education for granted. In our society, going to school is a given. This was not Tara Westover's reality growing up. She lived her life waiting for the "Days of Abomination" with her family.

IN HER MEMOIR, *Educated*, Tara demonstrates the powerful role of education in changing her life and, perhaps, breaking a cycle of poverty, abuse, and dysfunction that was her existence growing up. Throughout this true story,

we come to know Tara and move with her through her heart-wrenching journey, and along the way we become her cheerleaders. She begins as a young girl who is kept from any formal education until she is 17 years old, when she starts her post-secondary journey. She

ends the book as a changed person, a new self—a young woman with a PhD in history from Cambridge and, best of all, a deeper understanding of her life, the world around her, and a feeling of hope. Tara describes her change in self, writing, "You could call this selfhood many things. Transformation. Metamorphosis. Falsity. Betrayal. I call it an education."

*Educated* is a profound book that is a must-read for all educators. ■

Published monthly at Vancouver, B. C.  
Official Organ Federation of British Columbia  
Teachers.

# THE EDUCATOR of CANADA

Endorsed by Federation of Parent-Teachers' Associations, Women's Music Club, Municipal Chapter: Daughters of the Empire, Art, Historical and Scientific Society, Natural History Society.

## MANUAL TRAINING IN A RURAL SCHOOL

"HOW DO YOU DO IT?" "When do you get the time?" "How do you secure the necessary material?" Such expressions are often heard by rural teachers concerning the teaching of manual training in the rural school. We have solved the problem in our one-room school of twenty pupils.

It was first of all necessary to secure funds, which we did by giving an entertainment.

Our first apparatus consisted of a board, saw, hammer, ruler, pocket knives, nails, sandpaper, paint and varnish. The work we have done consists of bird houses, shelves, necktie racks, toy banks, match

holders, whisk-broom holders and comb cases. We secured cigar boxes and sandpapered them, stenciled designs on them, traced the designs with crayola and varnished them. They make excellent handkerchief boxes. We also planed, sandpapered and varnished over thirty-year old desks, which not only improved the appearance of our room but saved the district many dollars. The boys are now working on a cupboard to contain our domestic science supplies.

Most of the boys' work has been done during intermission periods. Some school time was taken and some work has been done at home.

## VACATION

When I try to study my spelling,  
The letters with sunbeams are misted,  
And my multiplication tables  
Are dreadfully mixed up and twisted.

What I see is a meadow of daisies,  
That lift to the wind eager faces;  
What I hear is the little brook's chatter,  
As it crosses the sunbeamy places.

And all the outdoor things keep calling,  
And something inside me calls back  
"I'm coming, I'm coming, I'm coming,  
To the fields and the green, woody track!"

For it's June—and it's no time for spelling,  
Or reading, or multiplication;  
My head may pretend it's still schooltime,  
My heart knows right well it's vacation.



Excerpts from *The Educator of Canada*, Vol. 1, No. 4, June 1919, page 10.

**Editor's note:** One hundred years ago, the first issues of what would eventually become *Teacher* magazine were published. The earliest issues of *The Educator of Canada* have been lost to time, and the oldest we have in our collection is this one—published June 1919. A century ago teachers were discussing "manual training," what we now call maker spaces, and while today's maker spaces may have modern technology, there is still interest in tools and imaginative creation.

The next issue of *The Educator of Canada* is January 1920, so look to our January/February 2020 issue of *Teacher* to see what our predecessors were writing about then. If you can't wait, all copies of *Teacher* are archived on the BCTF Online Museum at [bctf.ca/history/collections/teacher.aspx](http://bctf.ca/history/collections/teacher.aspx). ■

## 2019 WINNER

**Network of Inquiry and Indigenous Education** was developed with the aim of gaining an understanding of and respect for Indigenous ways of knowing.

**Nominee:** Debbie Leighton-Stephens  
**Team:** Judy Halbert, Linda Kaser  
Congratulations on a \$100,000 innovation!

celebrating  
great innovators  
in education

www.cmolik-prize.ca



## ADVENTURE EDUCATION

POST-DEGREE DIPLOMA

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- Work and study at the same time
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Acceptable Integrated Program  
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PRE-APPROVAL RECOMMENDED.



Centre for Sport  
& Exercise Education

camosun.ca/adventure

### CLASSIFIED ADS

**BCSS TURNING 50!** What? BCSS turning 50! Contact Sheila at [1959sjw2015@gmail.com](mailto:1959sjw2015@gmail.com) for more info—Big reunion this July for everyone who attended or worked at BCSS in its history.

Did you know that **BURNS BOG** is a “one of a kind” raised peatland? Field trips take place in the Delta Nature Reserve. Our field trips and in-class workshops are designed with you and your class in mind. They include the following: First Nations and Natural History; Threats and Stewardship; Biodiversity, Species at Risk; Habitats and Ecosystems; Plants and Animals. Our field trips and in-class presentations are offered in English and French. Book today! Phone 604.572.0373 or [burnsbogeducation.weebly.com](http://burnsbogeducation.weebly.com).

**PENSION QUESTIONS?** When do I retire? Which option to choose? How much will I get? CPP and OAS? Net income? Arnie provides personal, one-to-one consultation. Detailed report, and reasonable rates. Call 604-354-5624, or email [arnielambert@shaw.ca](mailto:arnielambert@shaw.ca).

**REUNION FOR BCSS** Midway, BC—did you teach here? Want to join us this July for a reunion? Contact Sheila at [1959sjw2015@gmail.com](mailto:1959sjw2015@gmail.com). Can you believe it has been 50 years since the doors opened!

**NEWER 3 BEDROOM** 2 bath home in Ucluelet for rent July 15– August 28. \$1500/week. No smoking, no pets. Minimum 2 week stay. Email [davemcpherson77@hotmail.com](mailto:davemcpherson77@hotmail.com).

**SESSIONAL FACULTY OPENINGS** The Teacher Education department (TED) at the University of the Fraser Valley is seeking applicants for part time sessional instructor positions for the 2019–2020 academic year to teach in the Master of Education in Educational Leadership and Mentorship program. We require sessional instructors for the following courses: EDUC 700 (Leadership Theory and Practice), EDUC 701 (Focus on Mentoring), EDUC 702 (Leading and Mentoring in Professional Learning Communities)

Please note: EDUC 700 will run as a 3 week intensive in July 2019, M-F, 9-3pm; EDUC 701 (Fall 2019 semester) and 702 (Winter 2020 semester) will run for six Friday evenings 5-9pm/ 9-3pm Saturdays through the semester, with the dates to be determined by the instructor in consultation with the chair of the MEd.

Minimum requirements are a MEd or MA (PhD or EdD preferred) in Education, TRB certification, administrative and teaching experience in K–12 in the BC school system (preference given to public schools teachers/administrators from one of our partner districts) and mentoring experience (teacher



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candidates and/or practicing teachers). Preference will be given to applicants with post-secondary instruction and/or extensive field experience in the aforementioned subject areas.

For the complete posting—including instructions on how to apply—see [ufv.ca/careers/job-postings/2019033.htm](http://ufv.ca/careers/job-postings/2019033.htm).




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 To obtain an application, go to <https://lis.gdleaemQ6> or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.



## CMOLIK PRIZE

for the Enhancement of Public Education in BC

# 2019 FINALIST




**Take a Stand: Youth for Conservation** was developed to inspire, motivate and empower youth to protect and conserve the environment through art, film and youth-driven action.

**Nominee:** Allison Kermode **Team:** Norm Hann, Nicolas Teichrob, Anthony Bonello

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[www.cmolik-prize.ca](http://www.cmolik-prize.ca)



## CMOLIK PRIZE

for the Enhancement of Public Education in BC

# 2019 FINALIST





**Province-wide Network for Environmental Learning Communities of Practice** was developed to support public education with programs, resources and funding to advance environmental literacy and citizenship.

**Nominee:** Kerrie Mortin

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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.

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## Check out the BCTF PD Calendar

A primary goal of the BCTF is to promote the continuous career long, professional growth of our members.

PD Online Calendar  
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