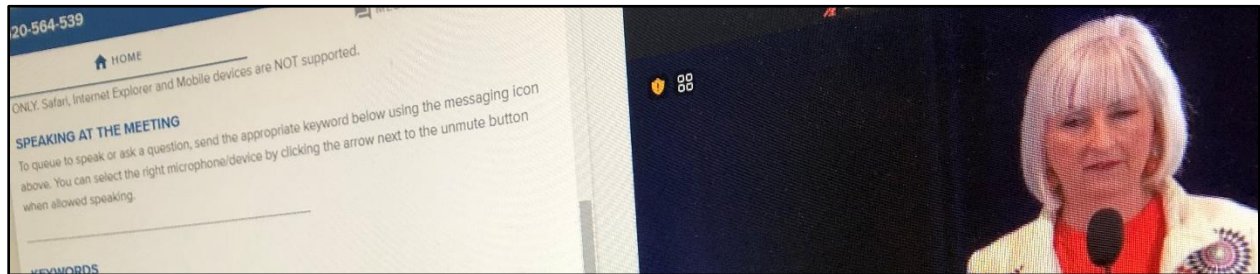


Cranbrook Chronicles

Newsletter of the Cranbrook District Teachers' Association

April 2022



Let us all be the leaders we wish we had. – Simon Sinek

Vice-President's Message – Larry Dureski

Hello Colleagues,

I hope all of you have had time to relax and recharge. In the staff rep concerns portion of our latest CDTA Executive Committee meeting, some members reported feeling rested after Spring Break. Welcome to this **BCTF AGM Report** issue. As I am writing this newsletter, my eyes are transitioning back from that square shape that formed during the meeting which occurred from March 19 to 22. Many thanks to Shelley and Alison Dawson for sharing this screen time and participating in the business of this meeting. Hosting such a large event online did have its challenges, especially microphones that did not work when delegates were invited to speak. “Select a different microphone on your screen”, “unplug and plug your headset back in”, and “refresh your screen” were pieces of advice heard often from the tech staff hired to pull this all together. Even the chair’s mic took its turn to malfunction. The participant count hovered between 510 and 520, peaking at 547 on the last day. These numbers would include BCTF staff and the tech crew. I am certain that the lower delegate numbers this year was due to the online format rather than a paid trip to Vancouver. Having 26 hours of Zoom time spread over four days does not have the same appeal. Nonetheless, the meeting was an interesting experience that would have not happened at all if not for the technology we have now. Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

President's Message – Shelley Balfour

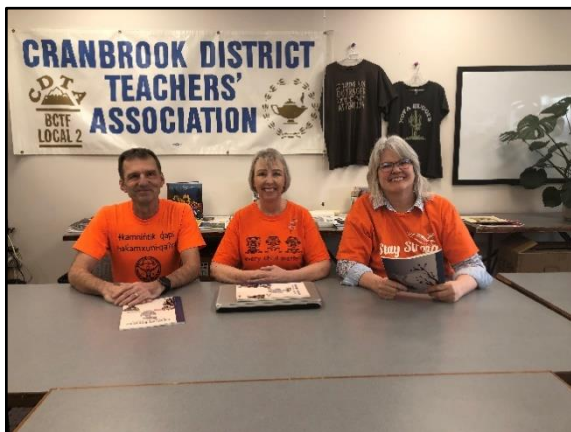
Happy Spring! I see the sun and already appreciate the longer days. My garden is still under cover of leaves as I am waiting for the bees and other insects to make their way once the days are warmer. That is what is keeping me sane! The office has been very busy with folks trying to figure out their plans for next year and figuring out whether they can make it through this year. I hope that if you are one of the folks worried about making it through this year, that you reach out and ask for assistance. You have many options available to you. Please do it before you are a puddle on the floor! I have included in my

email the staffing rules as well as the new language about continuing status that you may want to read if you are without a continuing contract. There are a few risks involved in it so please call if you are unsure about how it works.

We are working on plans for the CDTA AGM on May 18th and the Retirement Celebration on June 15th. Stay tuned for details to come! If you are retiring this year – please remember to send me a copy of your retirement letter so we can let BCTF know and include you in our plans. When you write the letter – please don't use the phrase "I **intend** to retire on ...". We just found out that Brent doesn't accept it if it says "intend." Your letter can be as simple as "Please be advised that I am retiring as of June 30th, 2022." Please also make sure your letter is signed – it can still be scanned but Brent would like your signature on it.

Enjoy the weekend! Shelley

Report from the BCTF Annual General Meeting



(Photo: our "Zooming" local delegation)

President's Report – Teri Mooring

Stress and worry are still here, but any sense of normalcy is welcome. We need to respect the places where we all are at this stage of the pandemic. There is deep hope that the health officials are right in the current easing of restrictions. Do not forget successes despite the pandemic. Thanks to Vita-Care for donating 100,000 masks to school districts, for this kick-started action in districts around the province. However, it is the employer that should be supplying

personal protective equipment to their employees first, not private donors. Organizing virtual meetings like this one are more work than planning in-person events. To put the pandemic in a nutshell, provincial safety measures were inadequate. Health and safety fell upon teachers to implement and keep students and themselves safe. Through COVID, trucker convoys, the war in Ukraine, teachers have worked tirelessly to provide safety and stability, giving kids a place to use their curiosity. (On a related note, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation Sam Hammond stated "The pandemic has ripped off the band-aids to expose the countless existing cracks in our social systems" during his address to this meeting.)

The provincial bargaining team has met with government after extensive preparation that involved debating the bargaining package with the Executive Committee. A public relations campaign has begun with the running of an ad in BC newspapers that has been produced by five public sector unions, including ours, that are set to go to the bargaining table.

Due to continuing lobbying of BCTF members for greater recognition of Indigenous culture in our curriculum, there is a new Indigenous component added to the graduation requirements.

***** moment of silence for the people of Ukraine, children in particular *****

Do not forget similar acts in other countries with less media attention, for students fleeing from those situations as well as those from Ukraine may have ended up in your class. The company that handles BCTF investments has divested from Russian stock prior to the invasion to mitigate risk to the pension plan. Teri emphasized that this was Putin’s war, not the Russian’s war. There is concern over the possibility of discriminatory actions being taken against Russian people here. At the BCTF, a new Anti-Racism office is being established. This office will include a director, assistant director, and support staff. The plan is to be in full operation in the 2022-2023 year.

Treasurer’s Report – Delwin Yung

BCTF fees will remain the same next year at 1.69 percent of salary for members with contracts and 1.59 percent for TTOCs. This recommendation was presented to the meeting as a motion, and it was carried. Although money was saved from holding events over a virtual platform over the last two years, there is anticipation of extra costs when events return to in-person including a 4.5 percent increase in travel, hotels, and the booking of larger meeting spaces. Despite anticipated increased costs, there will be no reduction in existing programs.

Awards Presentations

The Connie Jervis Early Career Teaching Award – This award is new this year, given to a teacher/activist in their first 10 years of teaching. Connie Jervis was a local president 24 years old in 1939 when she led a strike against the Langley School board for improved salary and working conditions. Click [here](#) for information about her from the BC Labour Heritage Centre. This is a good labour-related teaching resource as well!

Rick Kumar from Surrey is the first recipient of this award for his involvement in BCTF lobby efforts and working to help young workers recognize their rights. He also organized a fund-raising carnival to benefit the flood victims in B.C. Way to go!

GA Ferguson Memorial Award – Presented to Moira Mackenzie who had retired from her staff position at the BCTF. She was the Surrey Teachers’ Association president in from 1982 to 1984, a difficult time when the Social Credit government took a harsh stance toward teachers. She helped organize the 1983 [Solidarity Strike](#), the first province-wide strike.

Reporting Order Presentation – Teri Mooring

Top Three Rankings for Reporting Policy Change, by Stakeholder Group

	Top-ranked item for change	Second-ranked item for change	Third-ranked item for change
Teachers	Frequency of reporting (39%)	Other (17%)	Provincial Proficiency Scale as a requirement in Grades K-9 reporting (13%)
School Administrators	Frequency of reporting (25%)	Letter Grades & Percentages as a requirement in Grades 10-12 reporting (25%)	Other (10%)
Parents & Caregivers	Provincial Proficiency Scale as a requirement in Grades K-9 reporting (26%)	Other (17%)	Frequency of reporting (14%)
Students	Letter Grades & Percentages as a requirement in Grades 10-12 reporting (28%)	Provincial Proficiency Scale as an option in Grades 10-12 reporting (24%)	Other (13%)
Interested Public	Nothing (20%)	Frequency of reporting (18%)	Diversity & Inclusion (14%)

Valid n=4,369; missing cases=122
 Source: Reporting on Student Learning in the Classroom Public Engagement, Fall 2021

A survey was conducted last fall about reporting. Of the 4467 responses received (including teachers, administrators, and students), 69 percent reported low satisfaction, 17 percent were neutral, and 13 percent reported high satisfaction. Additional

workload and frequency of reporting were reasons teachers gave for their low satisfaction. When surveyed about the K-9 reporting scale, 54 percent rated low satisfaction, 17 percent were neutral, and 29 percent were satisfied. The letter grades used for Grades 10-12 had a 60 percent satisfaction rate.

When weighing in on self-assessment and goal-setting, students had the least satisfaction and administrators had the most. When given an opportunity to suggest changes, 32 percent of total participants suggested the frequency of reporting, the highest single item in the survey results.

The Minister has confirmed a delay in implementation of a new reporting order to September 2023.

Pensions Report – Liz Baverstock

There are currently 1.2 active members per 1 retiree, a ratio that has not changed for several years. This year, each member's pension contribution is equal to 16.34 percent of annual salary. This amount is shared with the employer, leaving the member to contribute 8.17 percent. The pension fund and indexing fund both remain healthy with strong investment returns. This year, those collecting a pension received a 4.4 percent Cost of Living Allowance. Although indexing cannot be guaranteed, it has consistently been a benefit to members over the years. For example, a member receiving \$25,000 in pension payments in 2002 would be receiving \$36,279 in 2020 on the same plan.

Election Results

Clint Johnston – President (Acclaimed)
Carole Gordon – First Vice-President (Acclaimed)
Robin Toczak – Second Vice-President
Rick Joe – Executive Committee Aboriginal Member
Benula Bunjun – Executive Committee Racialized Member
Winona Waldron - Executive Committee Member-at-Large
Jelana Bighorn - Executive Committee Member-at-Large
Lisa LaBoucane - Executive Committee Member-at-Large
Katherine Trepanier - Executive Committee Member-at-Large

Key Decisions

- That the following be the leadership priorities for 2022-2023. The federation collectively:
 - Negotiate and support implementation of improvements to the collective agreement through collective bargaining.
 - Advocate for the physical and mental health, safety and well-being of members during and post-pandemic.
 - Advocate for and advance the future of public education in a world impacted by climate change.
 - Advance decolonization and changes that address systemic discrimination and barriers within the education system and Federation structures.
 - Engage and connect members towards recovery, strength, and solidarity.
- BCTF fees and funding allotment structure within the organization remain status quo for the 2022-2023 year.

- Request the Ministry to provide training for BCTF members and staff in Compassionate Systems Leadership, part of the Provincial Mental Health in Schools strategy. Members of the BCSSTA and BCPVPA have already had the training.
- That any changes to the Code of Ethics, Constitution, or by-laws be made only at the BCTF AGM or Special General Meeting and passed by at least two-thirds of the votes cast by delegates on behalf of voting members.
- That the BCTF request the Minister to decolonize Section 5 of B.C. School Reg. 265/89 through several suggested revisions that include recognition of National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (and assembly on the day preceding this day) and National Indigenous Peoples Day, removing mandatory references to the Canadian flag, and adding a requirement of the acknowledgement of aboriginal territory at school assemblies.
- That adult education programs should be accessible and stable, and that the BCTF call on school districts to both promote and make visible these programs in their communities.
- That the BCTF lobby the Teachers' Pension Plan Board to set policy that guides the B.C. Investment Management Corporation (BCI) in divesting from portfolios containing fossil fuel industries and allocating greater portion of investments using environmental, social, and governance criteria.

National Day of Mourning offered here as In-Person Event

Come to Rotary Park on April 28 at 5:00 to honour those who lost their lives at work, including the sacrifices of frontline and essential workers who have died or become ill serving during the COVID-19 pandemic, and renew our pledge to preventing future incidents. In 1991, eight years after the Day of Remembrance was launched by the Canadian Labour Congress, the Parliament of Canada passed the Workers Mourning Day Act making April 28 an official Day of Mourning. The National Day of Mourning has since spread to about 100 countries around the world. It is now recognized as Workers' Memorial Day and as International Workers' Memorial Day by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). April 28 was selected for this event because it is the anniversary of the third reading of the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act (1914), the first of such legislation in Canada.

More Home-Based Professional Development Coming Up

About 36 members have attended each "dinner and a movie" professional development offering so far. It is not too late to sign up! Here are the upcoming sessions:

Creating Positive School Culture, May 3

****NEW**** *Reframing Challenging Behaviour through a Trauma-informed Lens*, June 7

Look for posters in your staff room or check with your Staff Rep for a more detailed description of each workshop's content. To **register** and receive the Zoom link, email Shelley at lp02@bctf.ca.

Highlights from the April 6 Executive Meeting (Hybrid in-person and online format)

School Configuration for next year – Some elementary schools are facing the prospect of being one classroom less next year. There is concern over teacher burnout resulting from stacked classes.

Staff shortages – Continue for SST time, SLP time, Counselors and VP time.

Counselors – Being spread between several schools means that they are often not in a building when the need for counselling arises.

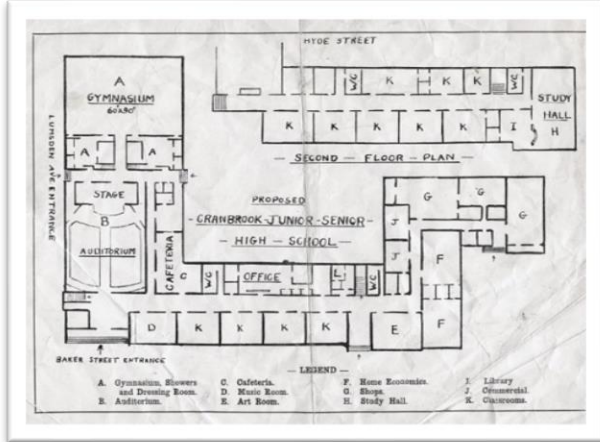
Pro-D – A lot of teachers are engaging in self-directed pro-D. The ʔaᑭamnik' School staff has been invited to participate in RSA Day.

Health and Safety – The Violence Prevention working group has made progress in defining a process for dealing with workplace violent incidents. The next step is for this to be reviewed by the District Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee (DOHSAC).

Use of Continuing Status to bid on other jobs – A protocol document explaining this Mid-Contract Modification was shared with the meeting outlining how someone with newly-acquired Continuing status can bid on other jobs and the deadlines involved for bidding on Continuing and Temporary postings.

Looking Back . . . Early Examples of “Learning Supports” in Cranbrook

These photos show the stages of construction of the auditorium and gym of the Cranbrook Junior/Senior High School (MBSS). Top left is the first truss erected for the auditorium. This same truss now spans the Band/Music room with the help of a square steel support visible in that space. Top right shows the enclosed auditorium and the framed shell of the gym, showing the trusses that are now painted black and span the theatre. Bottom left is the completed stage of the auditorium. Note the angled acoustic wall and ceiling design. This same design was used in the Armond Theatre in Cranbrook and the old McKim Theatre in Kimberley that was closed when a heavy snow load compromised its roof. The auditorium also served as a second gymnasium space when not in use for music or theatre productions. The extensive renovation that included the Key City Theatre also included the reallocation of this auditorium for the Band/Music room and the Drama room. This stage is now gone and the Drama room occupies this half of the space. Bottom right shows the original floor plan. Lumsden Avenue and Hyde Street, noted on this drawing, are now 14th Ave. N. and 2nd Street N.



Photos courtesy of the Columbia Basin Institute of Regional History