

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

Happy February!

It is just so exciting when the days get longer and when I go to work and come home at night, it is still light. This time of year, always gives me hope that winter is powering down and spring is powering up. I have ordered plants for my pandemic garden already!

I just want to say how much I appreciate the people I work for. You are a fantastic group of teachers who care deeply for their students and colleagues. That makes my job a whole lot easier. There have been days during this year when I have felt more worn out than I do during a strike year. I know you have too! Thank you for putting in all the effort to keep yourselves, your colleagues and your students as safe as we can. The extra effort in planning, cleaning, redoing the plans, cleaning again, etc. haven't gone unnoticed.

There are quite a few services available for you during through this office, the BCTF and the EFAP program. Please take advantage of those services. You pay for them through your dues. Those services include but are not limited to: Psychologist, counsellors, Living with Balance course for teachers only, Health & Wellness program, Mentoring program, Collaboration program, etc. Call me if you need help accessing any of those services.

Sylvie de Grandpre and Deleen Adams have developed a fantastic CDTA Collaboration Project. Sylvie presented it to the Executive last week. The premise is that teachers interested in collaboration will blitz a school who has requested the service and work with the teachers as a whole, both in and outside the classroom. I am really excited to see how this works. TTOCs will be provided through the week to release classroom teachers to collaborate. Sylvie & Deleen hope to have this project up and running in the first week after Spring Break. If you or your school is interested, please contact either teacher at their SD5 email addresses. Let's do something fun and interesting in the last quarter of the year. Enough of the doom and gloom of the pandemic right now!

Masks & our students – As much as I appreciate Bonnie Henry and her quiet demeanor, I am a wee bit frustrated by the latest news on the protocol. There are so many ambiguous statements and unanswered questions! The COVID19 committee is reviewing the documents over the weekend and we will meet on Tuesday to revise SD5's protocol. I know that you have received the information to update the mask protocol already.

Finally, if you have any parents wondering about the FSA and worried about the hassle, please have them contact me at the office. I'll give them the courage to stand up to the man! Shelley

## VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

New year, new me – nope. New year, accepting of change me - yup. In this school year we have, so far, lived and worked through so much change. I want to create the habit to accept that change is a difficult and necessary task. Dealing with the scope of change during COVID is unprecedented, and yet we still prevail (though pretty beat up). We have resilience – we go through micro-changes every minute of every working day when our students need this, or have forgotten that. Yes, it is taxing, and drains us of energy, but we are a profession of change. New students, new curriculum, new marks programs, new district initiatives; we are not always stronger or better people through all the change, but we are still here.

I have recently read from the book *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. His premise is that goals are important, but more important than setting a goal is the creation of the small habits that will ensure success of that goal. I can't get my mind around personal health challenges, political turmoil, global pandemic concerns, and more, but I do know that I can create a small change in my personal being that one day will help to make one of my goals a reality. "Hey, I didn't eat two chocolate bars and half a bottle of wine for dinner," is a good habit and is a personal success. It may be small, but it is a beginning. "A waterfall begins as one drop of water" (The Power of One, 1992 movie). We need to acknowledge the small but important habits and victories that help us get through the day.

The remainder of the school year will not be without more challenges. Is there another small habit I can create to help achieve my goal of surviving this school year? There are many, and sticking to those habits will help me to achieve my goal of another year of pensionable service.



This is something I am trying to teach my students. It is the little habits that will ensure success, not just setting a goal of passing English or Social Studies. What have they done that will help them achieve their goal? Brought textbook, binder, pen/pencil, reviewed homework, eaten breakfast, slept more than 7 hours? All simple habits, but some of the key habits needed to reach their goal to finishing the course successfully. If there is one wish I have for my students to come away with when we finish the course, they know healthy habits are important.

I have had many students express to me how they had a teacher who did something cool, or another teacher that made a certain idea stick. I see those examples of not past events, but a new habit in a student's ability to enjoy learning. Thank you to all those wonderful habits you have in your classrooms that spill in one way or another to every student and future teachers down the line.

Here is to 2021 – a year of new and healthy habits that will get us through this crazy world!

Take care,

Connie

## DECEMBER TREAT: A DRINK AND SNACK AT MAX'S PLACE

Thank you, Lisa and Graham from **Max's Place** and the over 200 teachers who took part in the holiday treat on behalf of the Cranbrook District Teachers' Association. It was a small gesture of thanks for all the time and effort (frustration and tears) you put into your teaching!



## KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

### G.11 SICK LEAVE

Recently, we have won a grievance regarding part time teacher's sick leave.

G.11.3 reads: Part-time teachers shall accumulate and be charged for sick leave on a pro-rated basis.

This means, that for part-time workers, you will not be charged a whole day of sick time if you are employed in an 0.857 position. Past practice was that if you were sick, you would lose your sick time faster than it accumulated.

There is continued discussion as to how this will come out in the wash as there are a number of questions around the part-time schedules of elementary and middle schools. Stay tuned! We are still in the fight!

Thank you, Shelley for fighting for our Union rights!

## BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY - MARCH 20 - 23, 2021

Like everything else, this year's BCTF AGM is going to be held virtually! So instead of sitting in a room in some swanky Vancouver hotel ballroom, you can join in the conversation and business of the BCTF via the comfort of your own home or join Shelley and Connie at the CDTA office.

You will be given a \$100 dividend to spend on meals or snacks for those days and learn a lot about how the BCTF works! Please let Shelley know if you are interested!

January feels like the longest month since last March.

## A BLAST FROM THE PAST!

Letters from our members,

*Thanks Shelley, for the funny story about the pant suit – I remember being a grade 8 student in Castlegar in 1971 and not being allowed to wear pants to school. We girls had a meeting with the principal and had to ask permission to wear pants in the winter – it was a snowy year! He agreed as long as it was part of a pant suit outfit – not just jeans like the boy's wear! My daughter just gives me a "look" when I tell her these stories!* - Heather McKenzie

*I always read your newsletters as it is my way of keeping in the loop. My wife is in that picture. The dress code at the time was that ladies wore skirts or dresses and men wore suits. I had suits of many colours. You can see both were quite impractical for teaching thus the much more casual look of the day.* - Brian Lutz

*I really like the newsletter. I even discovered my mother in the old Central School photo. She was so young.*

- Kim Lutz

## Contest Time!

How many teachers can you identify from this picture?

Email Shelley your answers and your name is put into the hat to win a beverage and a treat from Max's Place!



**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Winter Wearies are upon us!

If you are having any issues, say with ventilation, please record and let your JOH&S committee members know about any symptoms (ie/ sneezing, shortness of breath, dry cough...) immediately! It is very important that the JOH&S committee know and record issues as they arise so that proper paper work can be completed. Without a paper trail, further claims can be problematic.

If you have any concerns about cleaning in your school, lack of supplies, or otherwise, address the issue immediately via your JOH&S committee members. With a team effort, we will make it through this school year!

If you have the time, do a quick reflection about your own mental health well being and be sure to take care of yourself.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 9, 2021 Pro-D Executive Meeting – 4pm
- February 15, 2021 Family Day – NO SCHOOL!
- February 26, 2021 Professional Development Day
- March 3, 2021 Executive Meeting – 4pm
- March 10, 2021 Pro-D Executive Meeting – 4pm
- March 22 – April 2, 2021 SPRING BREAK!!

Be sure to check out the Cranbrook District Teachers' Association webpage for easy access to your contract and up to date information.

FSA'S HAVE BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>!

