

# Cranbrook Chronicles

September, 2016

*"The object of teaching a child is to enable him to get along without a teacher"*

*Elbert Hubbard*

[www.cranbrookdistrictteachersassociation.com](http://www.cranbrookdistrictteachersassociation.com)

## Vice President's Message by Larry Dureski

Hello Everyone,

I hope you had a summer that was free of educational thinking and collaborative team conversations. We have ten other months for that. Most of the time in the Dureski household was spent with our grandson Nate and fixing school Band instruments so that the kids do not have to hum their parts this fall.

I also hope you had a chance to catch up on things for which you did not have time during the school year. A deer-proof fence across the back of our yard was one such project for us, but I got only as far as a row of post holes and dirt piles. Somehow, the deer did not recognize this as a potential minefield, and continued to eat everything that tries to grow in our yard. The fence needs to get built, or I need to deliver the latest BCTF Risk Assessment Workshop to the deer.

At the BCTF Summer Conference, educational thinking began a couple of weeks early. Over the week, a couple of themes emerged: "Random Acts of Funding" – a term assigned to the funding of Public Education through grants such as LIF and the Rural Schools Grant. At \$1000.00 per student below national average and the lowest percentage of GDP spent on education, these grants do little to close the gap between BC and the rest of Canada. Also, grants are easy to discontinue after the next election. This brings us to the second theme: "Glen Hansman's Birthday Present" – Although our new BCTF President claims to be too old to ask for birthday presents, he made an exception for his next birthday in May of 2017. He would like to wake up to election results that do not include Christy Clark.

What can we do to help Glen with this wish? A friend of mine who was victim of the Alberta employment collapse told me of his 30-second "elevator speech" he had ready at all times, should he end up in an elevator with a potential employer. In one of those 30-second elevator rides in downtown Calgary, he managed to secure another job. Your "elevator speech" could be your personal story of what working in an underfunded system is like, and how things changed in your school since 2001. Your elevator ride could be that encounter with a parent in the dairy aisle. Collectively, we need to get our message out there, and secure another government.

In the meantime, may the excitement and energy of these first few weeks carry you into the year as far as possible! Take care.

## President's Message by Shelley Balfour

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year! I hope your startup was smooth and that you were fully recharged at the start of the year. Things in the office started smoothly but have been a bit hectic over the past 10 days!

As you well know, this is a year full of changes...or not! As we head into the **start** of the implementation of the revised curriculum for Elementary and Middle Schools, I want one phrase to stick in your head – "the curriculum police force does not exist." This is the start of a very long process of curriculum change and I hate to point out the obvious but it isn't funded properly and resources aren't being provided as such. The Government is relying on teachers to rise to the challenge and provide their own resources. However, with the random acts of funding approach that Christy Clark is currently taking, she may suddenly realize that resources are a necessary part of a curriculum overhaul and make a big cash announcement – like she did with the money drop into rural schools and transportation for students over the summer. Yesterday, Minister of Education, Mike Bernier, declared that "there has been a great deal of confusion about utilization targets lately – much of that confusion driven by misinformation pushed out by various parties (he must be referring to the big, bad BCTF). We are ending that confusion today by getting rid of utilization targets as part of our school investment process." Their rationalization for the utilization targets was to save money for taxpayers by ensuring that they wouldn't replace or seismically upgrade schools unless they were at 95% capacity! My 55<sup>th</sup> birthday is on Election Day in 2017 and I share the same gift request as BCTF President Glen Hansman. I am weary of living under the umbrella of disrespect for our profession. Don't be fooled by the money dropping from the sky – things will not get better if the Liberals (aka Conservatives) get in for another 4 years. End of my rant!

I was only able to attend one day of the BCTF Summer Conference this year due to a family commitment so was very thankful to have Lori Graham, Michelle Lesage, Jennifer Doll and Larry Dureski there on our behalf. Thank you for spending a week of your summer break doing the work of our Union! - Shelley

## Curriculum Update:

*"I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they learn"* – Albert Einstein.

You have been told several times, and here we go again. . . There are no Curriculum Police. This is year to try new ideas, but not to throw out everything you did before. If you have already been allotting more instructional time to topics that are of interest to you or your students and finding creative ways to help struggling learners, you may be only checking your grade level to be sure of any content changes.

This year, we have one District day set on the theme of Curriculum Implementation along with five additional hours (one day) of non-instructional time for the purpose of curriculum implementation. This non-instructional time is in addition to our five teacher-driven Professional Development days.

View the [K-9 Curriculum](#) here or click here for the [French translated curriculum](#).

## The Latest on Reporting:

With all the talk about curriculum redesign going on over the last three years, we are now hearing references to reporting. I have hyperlinked the documents for you so that you can see how reporting has not changed much so far.

Frequency and types of reporting can be found in the [new reporting policy](#). The minimum requirement of three formal written reports and two informal reports is still in effect for grades K-9. The format of an informal report is still decided by schools and teachers.

Check the [Student Progress Report Order](#) for the latest requirements of a written report. These include the use of performance scales, letter grades, and written comments.

Although the required number of formal and informal reports is unchanged, Education Minister Mike Bernier seems to be pressing for more reporting in the name of personalized learning: "With the technology we have now in the school system, there are opportunities to have almost daily report-backs, if that is what parents choose". This is the most worrisome proposal in reporting for BC teachers, as there are no specified limits placed on teacher workload. Will the two informal reports from the past grow into a daily commitment of updating the class website and/or posting student work? Kate Noakes, former FDTA President, summarized our concerns in her reaction to Mike Bernier's statement:

"Oh my...This is just what I was worried about when I saw that reporting order at summer conference. We need some clear responses to Boards who think it is okay to require teachers to post reports to parents every day or to allow parents access to digital mark books. Not only will teachers be fueling the helicopter, but professional autonomy on reporting will be significantly reduced. Not to mention the impact on teacher's work load. What comes off the plate if this goes on?"

Beware of the pressure to become a "lighthouse school" or a "lighthouse district" through the use of reporting technology, and being the first to send daily data to parents. As the delegates at Summer Conference were reminded, lighthouses are what ships steer AWAY from, not go toward. That "lighthouse" opportunity could leave you in the rocks!

# Dates to Remember

Date	Event	Location	Start Time
Friday, September 23rd	Curriculum Implementation	Own Schools in the morning, KCT in the afternoon	To be determined at each school. Lunch from 11:30-12:30. Presentation at KCT to start at 12:45.
Friday, October 7	Start of a four-day week-end	Anywhere you choose	3:15 Thursday, Oct. 6
Wednesday, October 12	CDTA General Meeting	COTR Lecture Theatre	4:00
Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22	PSA Conferences	Local and Provincial Professional Development Events	

## Know Your Collective Agreement

### ARTICLE C.4: TEACHER TEACHING ON CALL EMPLOYMENT

1. Experience Credit
  - a. For the purpose of this article, a teacher teaching on call shall be credited with one (1) day of experience for each full-time equivalent day worked.
  - b. One hundred seventy (170) full-time equivalent days credited shall equal one (1) year of experience.
2. Increment Date for Salary Grid Placement

Upon achieving one (1) year of experience, an increment shall be awarded on the first of the month following the month in which the experience accumulation is earned. Note: See also Article B.25 Experience Recognition for Salary Purposes.

### ARTICLE C.21: TEACHER TEACHING ON CALL HIRING PRACTICES

1. Availability of teacher teaching on call
  - a. When a teacher assigned to a school is absent, the Board shall employ a teacher teaching on call to replace that teacher upon being informed of such absence. The Principal shall obtain a Teacher Teaching on Call to replace all teachers except when in the opinion of the Principal the employment of a Teacher Teaching on Call would be educationally unsound for positions such as Counsellors, the Teacher of the Gifted, the Resource Center Co-ordinator, the English as a Second Language Teacher, the Teacher of the Hearing Impaired, the Teacher of the Visually Impaired, and the District Assessment Counsellor.
  - b. Except in emergent circumstances, or on a voluntary basis, teachers assigned to a school shall not be required to:
    - i. perform the tuition or instructional duties of a teacher who is absent;
    - ii. supervise the students of a teacher who is absent.

## 2. Teacher Teaching on Call List

- a. The Board shall maintain a list of persons who are qualified and have been placed on the list of teacher teaching on call. The Board shall forward a copy of such a list to the Association in the month of September, and in the month of January in each school year.
- b. In the event that the Board removes the name of a Teacher Teaching on Call from the Teacher Teaching on Call list the Association will be notified of such removal.

## 3. Teacher Teaching on Call Hiring

- a. The School Board will give hiring priority to certified Teachers Teaching on Call providing the Principal can effect a reasonable match between the Teacher Teaching on Call and the teaching assignment.
- b. The Board may appoint persons not on the Teacher Teaching on Call list to a Teacher Teaching on Call teaching assignment only in the event that no available person on the list possesses the necessary qualifications for the assignment.
- c. Where the Board reasonably expects a teacher to be absent for more than twenty (20) teaching days, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment to a temporary contract using normal appointment procedures. When a Teacher Teaching on Call completes twenty (20) days continuous teaching on the same assignment, a temporary contract shall be granted retroactively to the commencement of the assignment. It is understood that temporary contracts that are assigned in this fashion may, or may not, qualify under Article C.20 (Temporary Teachers' Employment Rights) as one of the qualifying periods for being placed on the Recall List. The qualification shall not be unreasonably denied.

Note: See also Local Memorandum of Agreement "Teachers Hired as Teachers on Call Awaiting Initial Certification."

### **\*\*\* CDTA General Meeting \*\*\***

**Wednesday, October 12**

**4:00 at the COTR Lecture Theatre, Room 250**

#### **Agenda:**

- Assessment expectations
- Budget Amendment,
- Election of BC Fed Convention delegate, Social Justice Chair and Local Election Contact

## CDTA Executive Meeting Highlights

Notes from the September 14 meeting:

**A gift of time** – will be provided for all teachers in the morning of September 23 for collaboration or exploration of the redesigned curriculum, prior to the afternoon presentation at the Key City Theatre.

**FSA** – This is still with us for January/February 2017, with the replacement coming out in October 2017. Our Senior Management has decided NOT to be a pilot for this. (We can be thankful that they steered our ship away from those rocks.)

**Teacher Mental Health** – Dr. Andrew Miki has developed the self-paced [Starling Minds](#) online program for teachers to examine their stressors and tools to deal with them. Any BCTF or family member can access this service. The program is available by accessing this link:  
<https://bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=38267>

**New Teacher Mentorship program** – At the New Teacher Orientation, Alexander Gilmour presented the Mentorship program to the new employees. The District and the CFTA have reunited in a Mentorship Program which will match new teachers with experienced teachers. If you are interested in being supported through your first few years of teaching, please contact Shelley at the CDTA office

A big *THANK YOU* goes out to all new and returning CDTA Executive members for your commitment this upcoming year. All of you are truly the face and voice of the union in your schools!

Check out the new Executive for 2016-2017 on the CDTA website at:

[www.cranbrookdistrictteachersassociation.com](http://www.cranbrookdistrictteachersassociation.com)

## Time for some fun....

### Is this your classroom clock???

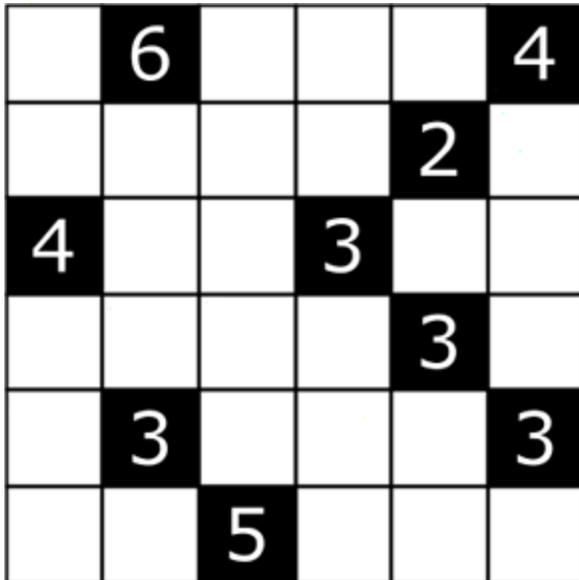
You have the misfortune to own an unreliable clock. This one gains exactly 22 minutes every hour. It is now showing 10:15am and you know that it was correct at midnight, when you set it. The clock stopped three hours ago, what is the correct time now?

Show Answer

## Get yourself in line . . .

Place a horizontal or a vertical line into every blank square.

Each number tells you the total length of the lines connected to that square.



### Example



Show Hint

Show Answer