

Cranbrook Chronicles

Newsletter of the Cranbrook District Teachers' Association
October 2022



I don't stop at my past. I like new work. I like what I'm doing tomorrow
– Patrick Demarchelier

Vice-President's Message – Larry Dureski

Hello Colleagues,

I hope everyone has had time to relax and enjoy this beautiful weather over the summer and anticipate a school year start-up that is closer to normal than what we have seen in a while. If there is one thing we have learned from the pandemic (even though it is not officially over), it would be the importance of self-care. As we consider what extra responsibilities to take on this year, choose what feeds your soul as well as benefits students. Keep time available for your own interests as well as some down time.

The weather has been cheerfully inviting us outdoors for the last three months, and I spent some outdoor time at UBC between sessions while attending facilitator training and BCTF Summer Conference. Staying on the top floor of Gage Towers student residences that week offered great sunrise views of Vancouver, but also sleepless nights in a concrete structure with no air conditioning. The training opportunities included learning about new workshops to facilitate, how to stay organized in a local office, and how to help members in conflict situations. More learning two weeks later at the Health and Safety Advisory Committee meeting, including **teacher wellness resources (Page 4)**.

I look forward to serving as your Vice-President over this upcoming year by helping in the office that is here for you. The office schedule this year allows me to attend and sometimes participate in weekly Summit meetings, and I thank Shelley for that. A balanced budget is also ready to be presented at our next **General Meeting (Page 5)** with no change in membership dues.

May the freshness of September remain with you as long as possible. Stay well.

President's Message – Shelley Balfour

Happy Sunny October! As you may have heard, I became a first time Gma this summer to a set of identical twin boys, Rory and Declan Reid. That is a life-changing moment when you hold the child(ren) of your child. While the rest of the delegation was at Summer Conference, I was snuggling my boys. First time in many, many years that I have missed Summer Conference! Thank you to Larry, Jenn Doll, Janice Marschner and Julie Bond for taking a week of their summer vacation to attend the conference.

The fall has been a very busy one with a very late post and fill season and new administration in a few places. Our high-flying schools are flying very high this year with some new students who were unexpected and a few returnees whose summers weren't very positive. Hopefully the staffing juggle will end soon bringing stability to teachers and students.

Our general meeting is this Wednesday, October 5th at 4:00 pm at COTR, Room 250. Larry will present the budget, we will confirm two positions on the Executive council, talk a bit about bargaining (although you know as much as I do if you read the Bulletin from last week). At 4:30 we will open the doors to CUPE staff, Retired teachers, and our trustee candidates. Each candidate will be given 3 minutes to introduce themselves and then take questions from the audience. Running this year are Chris Johns, Trina Ayling, Wendy Turner, Doug Mcphee (all incumbents) and then newcomers Irene Bischler and Stan Chung. I hope to see you all there!



Just in case you needed an overload of cuteness here is Rory and Declan

Reports from the 2022 BCTF Summer Conference – August 22 - 26

Summer Conference Report by Larry Dureski

For the first time in three years, colleagues from across the province gathered for an in-person format of the BCTF Summer Conference. I remember facilitating online Health and Safety training at the 2020 version, only to have everything freeze with eight minutes to go. The participant pictures froze along with the audio. No glitches in 2021, but no personal contact either. Held at UBC this year, the opportunities for informal dialogue in the common breakfast room and on the way across campus to workshop sessions were a welcome addition to the planned activities. An overall positive, energetic vibe along with a full dance floor at the banquet proved that people were ready to get back together



again. Our local delegation consisted of (photo L to R) myself, Jennifer Doll, Janice Marschner, and Julie Bond.

Two NDP leadership candidates paid informal visits to conference attendees and answer questions. Here are some of their key points that I could make out through the background noise in the restaurant.



David Eby, pictured here, offered the following:

- Building schools before having to be reactive to demographic changes.
 - Supporting kids with dyslexia and autism, and having the staff to serve these programs.
 - Committed to dealing with the massive teacher shortage. Retention needs to be dealt with through pay and working conditions. David currently serves Point Grey, and teachers cannot afford to live there.
- Wants to reset the NDP relationship with the BCTF. “The way I will show my commitment is by demonstrating it.”
 - Housing – Government used to build mid-income housing for soldiers returning from WW1 and WW2. The government has since stopped that practice, but it needs to start again. Partnering with First Nations, Co-ops, and developers would help stimulate such projects.

The next day, **Anjali Appadurai** was willing to sit in the same corner to address teacher questions. She talked about how half of the party membership had left due to the party’s “business as usual” approach. “This party has strayed far from its roots. This campaign is to bring leadership back to the NDP party and shake up the stable political culture presently in place.”



“The burden of inflation is being pushed on workers, and Public Service workers should be getting COLA at least. In 2021, Canadian corporations posted the highest profits using the austerity situation to increase profit margins. Money is not being reinvested in public systems while people believe the myth that corporate profits filter down to benefit public services.”

- Restore education funding to pre-austerity levels. Austerity measures have been in place for so long that they have become institutionalized.
- Address the issue of underfunding while others profit.
- Establish the position of Climate Change Secretary.
- Tax the wealthy.
- Reinvest in Public systems. The party has done this before, and we must get back to this.

Just one more note in my report about this year’s Summer Conference: There were spaces available for more delegates from our local, so give this some thought for August 2023 if you chair a committee.

Summer Conference Report by Jennifer Doll

I took part in Summer Conference, held on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) First Nation. I attended as the Local Contact for Aboriginal Education.

There were several workshops facilitated by members of the BCTF Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee. Topics of discussion were *Acknowledging the Land*, *Aboriginal Lens*, *Statement of Principals*, and *Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Being*.

We had discussions in our Zone groupings where I met several other Local Contacts. The CDTA and FDTA are part of the Kootenay Zone. Soon I will be meeting these people again at the Fall Zone meetings on October 13th & 14th; they are from Fernie - Louise Gonsalvez; Kimberley - Jill Deeney; Windermere – Nadine Nahachewski; Golden – Caren Nagao; Nelson – Jesse Halton; Creston V. – Kianuko Louie; Arow L. Sheena DeLong; Kootenay C. – Megan Read; and Boundary – Kristen Merry.

During my first year, I will be looking forward to attending the Enhancement Act meetings in SD5 and learning more about how I can support CDTA members in the position of Local Contact for Aboriginal Education. Please feel free to email me with questions, or concerns. I will do my best to share resources, keep you updated with information, and to especially support teachers and students' Indigenous Education. The BCTF website has excellent, and free resources to access through the Aboriginal Education menu.

Challenge yourself and your students to know the *vision statement*, the *purpose*, the *preamble*, the partners, and all parts of the *School District 5 Aboriginal Enhancement Act*

<http://www.sd5.bc.ca/learning/AboriginalEducation/Documents/Aboriginal%20Education%20Enhancement%20Agreement%202017%20FINAL.pdf>

Hereditary Chief, Sophie Pierre spoke at the 2020 District Day saying, "... teachers, the people who are so significant to the lives of our future generations..." ([http://www.sd5.bc.ca/learning/AboriginalEducation/Pages/default.aspx#/="](http://www.sd5.bc.ca/learning/AboriginalEducation/Pages/default.aspx#/=))

Jennifer Doll

Report from the BCTF Health and Safety Advisory Committee (HSAC) Sept. 9, 10 by Larry Dureski

Teacher Wellness – Clint Johnston joined our meeting and presented a report about COVID guidelines remaining unchanged since June. Masks, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies should still be available. Chris Harris also stepped in and reported on the [Well Teacher Groups](#), where 12 to 20 members can gather for a six-session discussion group. Last year, about 200 teachers participated. Formerly Living With balance, the program has been revamped by Wade Repta of Humanworks. Although the sessions are designed to be facilitated in-person, they can be adapted to an online format. Also discussed under teacher wellness was [Starling Minds](#), an online program accessed by over 5000 BCTF members. This program is not therapy, but a toolkit or education piece to help address anxiety and worry. The BCTF was their first large-scale client, but now the program is being used in other provinces. For teachers considering **retirement** as a way of addressing teacher wellness, [Youtube Videos](#) have been produced to help with pension planning.

Much time was also spent in planning for the Fall Zone Meetings, where members of HSAC will be distributed around the province to collect health and safety concerns and solutions. Zone meetings are also an effective vehicle for quick distribution and discussion of new information. This fall, I will be sent to Prince George to meet Health and Safety reps from the North Central and Peace River regions.

Highlights from the September 14 Executive Meeting (Closer to home now)

Mentorship – Teams are already starting up this year, and more are encouraged. The paperwork is very easy to sign up.

Pro-D – The first meeting of our Pro-D committee is Tuesday, October 11th. **Get your applications in** to your school Pro-D rep before this date if you are planning to attend a conference on the PSA Day October 21st.

French Education – There is Federal funding for a two-year full-time position to support French Education. This position will be designed to serve both Cranbrook and Fernie.

Postings - Unfilled positions at the start of the year, with several TTOCs filling various positions.

Class Size and Composition – There are classes that began the year in flex or in remedy.

Provincial Bargaining resumes September 26. Premier Horgan stated that agreements reached by BCGEU and HEU will serve as templates for further settlements.

Retirement Celebration debrief – Lots of positive feedback toward this new format. The Royal Alexandria Hall is already booked for June 14, 2023!

CDTA General Meeting

- Happy World Teachers' Day! -

Wednesday, Oct. 5 at COTR Lecture Theatre at 4:00.

- **Examine and vote on the budget.**
- **Elect members who have volunteered to fill vacant Committee Chair positions.**
- **School Board Trustee Candidate Forum.**

September Pro-D Outdoor Offerings

The Indigenous-focused District Pro-D day on September 23rd offered a variety of sessions, several of which were outdoors. (Top Left) Bus tour of Ktunaxa landmarks, photo taken by Larry Dureski. Can you find the rabbit's ears and the Moose's footprint?

(Top right, bottom left, bottom right) All-day outing to Frances Lake, photos taken by Jennifer Doll.

