

Ideas to spark curiosity and inspire change.

Please read and discuss with your colleagues.



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Important Dates

- April 9 - Joint Pro-D Meeting
- April 11-12 - BCTF Zone Meeting
- April 16 - Staff Rep meeting @ Curling Club
- April 18 - Good Friday
- April 21 - Easter Monday
- April 30 - CDTA AGM**
- May 7 - Exec Meeting

Taking action on violence in schools

via BCTF

This week, BCTF members and colleagues from CUPE BC met with MLAs and the Premier to discuss the level of violence occurring in BC schools and the need for strong action from the government on this important issue. Over the course of two days, members from four different locals, along with four education assistants (EAs), told their stories to 31 MLAs from two political parties (the NDP and the Green Party—a meeting with the Conservative Education Critic is scheduled for later this month). It was the first time CUPE BC and the BCTF have engaged in this type of lobbying together. It was a very meaningful experience for all involved.



Teachers spoke eloquently about their students who, despite their complexities, have a right to an education and a right to learn. They spoke of being kicked, hit, punched, and bitten. They talked about stopping dysregulated children from running into oncoming traffic. They told stories of Kindergarten students biting through the winter coats of staff members until they drew blood, pulling out the hair of their classmates, and threatening horrific violence. They spoke about the lack of dignity for these students in being unable to articulate their own needs, to be seen and served by the educators around them, and the deep frustration of teachers and EAs who are unable to properly support them. In one instance, a member stated, “I know you wouldn’t put up with this level of violence in your workplace. Why are we forced to swallow it at ours?” Another member stated, “Students have the right to an education—that said, we, as educators, also deserve safety in our workplace.”

In many sessions with MLAs over the course of two days, CUPE BC and BCTF members shared stories that illustrated the heightened and real tensions felt by educators across the province.

Their passion for ensuring that students get their needs met in the classroom was very inspiring. Our collective demands were:

- immediate implementation of the government’s commitment to ensuring that every primary classroom has at least one EA.
- immediate implementation of the government’s commitment that every school has a counsellor.
- hours and wages to address recruitment and retention so that a career of any kind in K–12 is livable and sustainable.
- ending the backlog of assessments for BC students.
- redistributing the millions of dollars that the government dumps into elite private schools into the public education system (the good news is that it’s money that’s already accounted for in the budget; they can just redirect it).

BCTF President Clint Johnston and CUPE BC President Karen Ranalletta also spoke of the need for immediate and impactful investment in the system, no matter the complexities of the current economic and political turmoil.

The importance of our democracies

by: Shawn Holland (CDTA President)

The last week of April is a big week for democracy in our district. We have both a federal election, and we have the CDTA AGM where we will elect our Executive Committee for the upcoming year. These share a couple of essential pieces – not only are all of you eligible to vote in both, but you also have the responsibility to vote in both. It can be argued that the federal election has much higher stakes with its potential impact on our economy and the direction our country will move towards for the next four years, but I would argue that those on your executive have the power to affect more of your day-to-day issues.



For both of these elections is it important to consider your values: what do you hold as important compared to what various candidates hold as important, and I would encourage you to consider this as you vote. Sometimes the differences can be subtle, but others are more obvious, especially when we consider not only our work, but those we work with. Teaching is all about inclusion, respect, and learning from the past to build a better future. Public school teaching is about accepting all and helping them grow and improve. It is also about accountability and responsibility.

Please take the time to inform yourself on who is running and get out and vote. It is this process that keeps our democracies strong.

Standing for Inclusivity and Human Rights

by: Roger Vernon (Local Rep to BCTF) and Tim Krutzmann

While the CDTA does not endorse any specific candidate or political party, we wish to make it clear that we cannot support any candidate or party that does not affirm inclusive education—specifically, the support of SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) initiatives, such as SOGI 123—and the importance of fostering safe, respectful, and welcoming learning environments for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.



As an association committed to equity, human rights, and public education, we cannot support candidates who do not uphold the dignity, safety, and legal protections of all individuals as guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We urge all eligible voters to thoughtfully consider these values when making decisions at the ballot box. This is a critical moment in Canadian history—one in which our national autonomy and the fundamental rights of individuals may face significant challenges. These are not matters of political trend or ideology. They are essential human rights issues that speak to the responsibility we all share in ensuring Canada remains a safe, inclusive, and just society for everyone.

Budgeting in a bargaining year

by: Shawn Holland (CDTA President)

Provincial bargaining has begun. Although we are looking ahead with hope, we are also wanting to be prepared for all possible outcomes. I am pleased to say I know many members of the provincial bargaining team and I know that they will be doing everything they can at the table to make gains for us. Our last round of negotiations saw the biggest salary increase in the last 30 years. Despite this massive win, there were many who were upset as they were wanting other gains.

In this bargaining year we are facing massive economic uncertainty, a teacher shortage, and challenging classroom conditions. This all combines to create a scenario where, despite the best efforts of the bargaining team, they may not be able to reach a deal that will be supported by a majority of members: the government will be reluctant to give us a large raise, there are not enough teachers to impact class size and composition, and as a result classroom conditions may not be addressed. This could result in a call for job action.

While job action is not a certainty and we are hoping for a more positive outcome, it is important to be aware of this possibility. Members may want to consider the following:

1. Put away more money from each paycheck into a separate savings account. This could give you a nest egg to weather job action and a little bonus for after the settlement even if there is not job action.
2. Postpone significant expenditures. Be it a large trip or a bathroom renovation, holding off until there is more certainty could relieve stress later.
3. Check with your bank to see if they offer mortgage and loan deferral. Interest will still accrue but you will not have to worry about the payment.
4. Stocking up on non-perishable items. If you have the space, purchase these items now, especially if they are on sale, lowering your expenses in the future.

None of this completely protects against the stress of the uncertainty of provincial negotiations, and none of this is to suggest there will be a strike, but it is always good to hope for the best but prepare for the worst. The BCTF has done this, amassing a strike fund of over \$100,000,000 so they are able to provide support to members for several weeks if needed.

Please make sure you have provided the BCTF with your current email address so you can be sent bargaining updates as they become available.

CDTA Annual General Meeting

by: Jacqueline Symons (Vice-President)

The CDTA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is fast approaching!

A call for nominations for executive and committee positions has been sent out. If you're interested in getting more involved with the CDTA, now is the time to submit your nomination. **The deadline for submissions is April 16th.**

Keep an eye out for the AGM package, which will also be sent out on April 16th. This package will contain all the information you'll need to prepare for the meeting. We look forward to seeing you there and appreciate your active participation in shaping the future of our association!



CDTA Social Justice Reading Group – May Day Edition 📖

by: Peter Lorian (Member-at-Large)

Thursday, May 15th | 4–6 PM | CDTA Office

All members welcome. Snacks and good conversation included!

Join us this May for a special CDTA Social Justice Reading Group session featuring the powerful, beautifully crafted work of SpitFire Press – a grassroots pamphlet series that invites us into deeper reflection, connection, and action for justice.

SpitFire Press creates welcoming, supportive, and conversational pamphlets rooted in friendship and a shared desire for a more loving and just world. Whether you're a longtime organizer or just beginning to explore social justice, SpitFire is designed to meet you where you are – and move with you toward meaningful, collective change.

📖 Volume 1 explores themes like urgency, white supremacy culture, and medicinal slowness, through short, accessible pieces by contributors including Tema Okun, Kenneth Jones, Ienna, Tsimka, and others. These articles are intentionally short and digestible, designed to spark discussion, not overwhelm. The reading is reflective and thought-provoking – perfect for deep conversations in community.

Please RSVP by May 8th by emailing office@cdda71.org and pick up your free copy of Volume 1 at the CDTA office any time before the event on May 15th. Pre-reading is encouraged but not necessary – just bring an open heart and a willingness to learn and share.

Come sit in circle, sip some tea, and build solidarity with fellow educators who care about justice. Let's read, reflect, and resist – together!

Gender-Based Violence Committee: Your Input Needed

by: Jacqueline Symons (Vice-President)

The Comox Valley Schools Board of Education has established a Gender-Based Violence Committee to provide feedback on how the district prevents and addresses sexual misconduct and gender-based violence, particularly between students.

This committee acknowledges that these issues are not unique to our district but are broader societal concerns. Its goal is to better support members of our school community who have experienced or are currently experiencing gender-based violence or sexual misconduct.

The committee is currently gathering feedback to help guide its work. The CDTA encourages all members to complete the survey to ensure the committee has the necessary input for effective change. [Complete the survey HERE](#)

ANONYMOUS SURVEY FOR: PARENTS/CAREGIVERS, STAFF & STUDENTS YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

How can our schools better *prevent* and *respond* to sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence among students?



The BCTF AGM 2025

by: Jacqueline Symons (Vice-President)

Your 2025 British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) Annual General Meeting (AGM) was an inspiring and productive four-day event where delegates came together to engage in vital conversations, make meaningful connections, and shape the direction of public education in BC. Teachers from all corners of the province gathered with a shared purpose: to discuss the issues that matter most to educators, students, and the future of the education system in BC.

Throughout the AGM, delegates actively participated in debates and deliberations, voting on a wide range of resolutions that addressed pressing issues facing the education system today. These resolutions covered a variety of critical topics, including working conditions, curriculum development, educational policies, and the need for more inclusive and equitable practices in schools.

Our local was successful in passing our resolution on violence in schools. This resolution highlights the urgent need to address safety concerns in the classroom and to support students and teachers in environments that foster learning without fear of violence. It is promising to see that conversations around this important topic are already underway as highlighted in the first article of this newsletter.

In the coming months, the BCTF will continue to push forward with the implementation of these resolutions, ensuring that the priorities set during the AGM are carried out. For teachers, the AGM serves as a reminder of the power of collective action, as it's through our shared efforts and determination that we can bring about real, lasting change in our schools and communities. The 2025 BCTF AGM was not just a meeting—it was a testament to the dedication, passion, and commitment of educators across BC. It's an event that reaffirms the importance of unity and advocacy in building a better future for public education.



April Hiring Practices Quiz

Hello fabulous teachers! Complete the short quiz below to help you get to know the district's hiring practices and be entered for a chance to win \$20 to Hot Chocolates.

Congratulations to Sophie Simard for winning last month's newsletter quiz draw!

[April's Quiz](#)