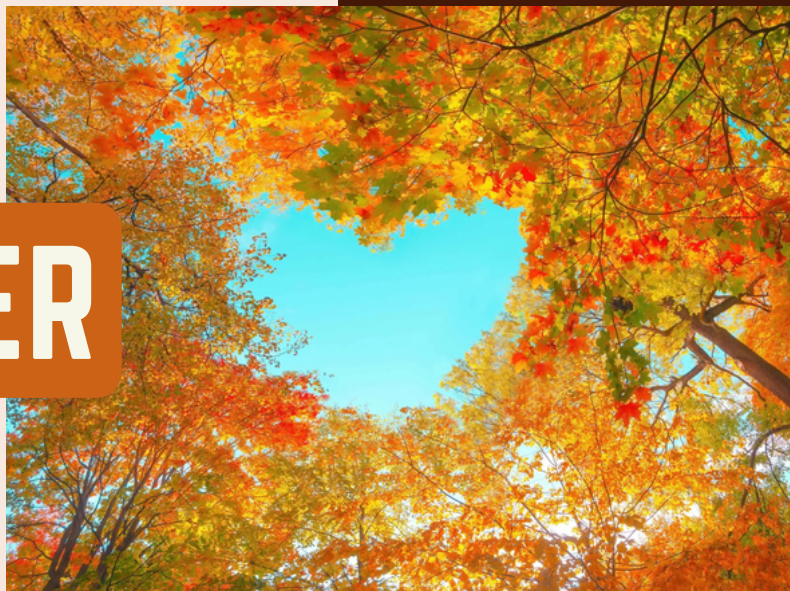




NEWSLETTER

October 2025

Ideas to spark curiosity and inspire change.

Please read and discuss with your colleagues.

Important Dates

Oct 13th - Thanksgiving
Oct 15th - Staff Rep meeting
Oct 17-18th - BCTF Zones
Oct 24th - Pro-D Day
Oct 29th - General Meeting
Nov 5th - Exec meeting
Nov 7-8th - BCTF Rep Assembly

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Celebrating Diversity and Traditions in October

This month, we celebrate Oktoberfest, Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), Diwali, Chuseok, Halloween, and Pchum Ben; each offering unique ways to gather, reflect, and celebrate. October is also Women's History Month, Canadian Islamic Heritage Month, German Heritage Month, Latin American Heritage Month, and Learning Disability Awareness Month. Together, these observances remind us of the strength found in diversity, the importance of inclusion, and the many stories that shape who we are.



We hope you take time this month to celebrate, rest, and enjoy all that October has to offer.

Cyclical Living:

by: Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

As each season shifts, I think about the natural cycles around us and how I can honour both the Land and myself within them. Summer is a season of light and high energy. For my family, it's a time when processing fish, moose meat, and medicinal teas becomes a priority. When I was visiting the Yukon this August, our community worked from sunup to sundown processing meat (which, I may add, wasn't until 11:00 p.m.).

Now, with fall here, I've been reflecting on the changes around us with the fish spawning, bears filling their bellies, and the leaves letting go. Fall is a time to slow down, yet as teachers, this can feel contradictory as the school year is just beginning, and the rhythm of September feels like the opposite of slowing down.

So, I'd like to offer this gentle reminder: connect back to the natural rhythm of the Land. When you find a moment for yourself, lean into it. Visit the river and witness the magic of the fish spawning, find a cozy spot to read that book that's been collecting dust, or share some soup with a loved one. Whatever it is, even the smallest acts of slowing down can help us stay balanced, nourished, and more present for our students. And if you're wondering why I've capitalized the word Land, I encourage you to read *Literacies of Land: Decolonizing Narratives, Storying, and Literature* by Sandra Styres.

Honouring Teachers Today and Every Day

While World Teachers' Day was celebrated on October 5, we honour and celebrate our teachers far beyond a single day; your dedication, care, and professionalism inspire us every day of the year. As we move through the busy rhythm of fall, filled with lessons, planning, and connection, we're reminded that education is both the heart of our society and the hope for its future.

The BCTF's International Solidarity Program allows us to work with teachers around the world to build resilient unions and education systems. Our president, Shawn Holland, will be heading to Cuba in early December as part of this program.

Thank you for all that you do to nurture, teach, and inspire. Your work matters deeply, and it makes a difference.

CDTA Advocacy: Progress and Updates

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

Your CDTA Executive has been working hard to ensure that members' voices are heard and that meaningful progress continues to be made on issues that matter in our schools. We want to share a few recent gains and updates from our collective advocacy efforts:

- **Clearer Communication on Reporting:** Following our calls for more clarity and consistency, the district has created and will be circulating a new document titled Assessment, Communicating Student Learning, and Reporting Guidelines for Elementary Schools. We continue to emphasize the need for more consistent communication from the district in general.
- **Inclusive Education & LST Workload:** After presenting concerns about the paperwork burden faced by Learning Support Teachers, a committee of LSTs was formed to review commonly used documents. This group provided recommendations to the Inclusive Education team aimed at freeing up more time for direct student support. The recommendations are under consideration.
- **School Growth Team Leader Process:** At the last Staff Rep meeting, members passed a motion to pause the selection process in order to review the job duties and allow for deeper consultation at the school level. We met with the Associate Superintendent responsible, voiced members' concerns, and as a result, language was reviewed, and consultation is now taking place at schools.
- **Professional Development Days:** Through collective action by our Executive, Joint Pro-D Committee, and Calendar Committee, we have made progress in moving the August Pro-D days back into the school year calendar.
- **NIDES Working Conditions:** Through ongoing advocacy, a report was created outlining actionable steps to address working conditions at NIDES. We will continue to press for improvements based on these recommendations.
- **Building Stronger Partnerships:** We have been strengthening our relationships with CUPE, DPAC, and trustee partners in support of common goals.

These examples reflect the power of collective advocacy and the importance of continuing to bring forward members' voices. Thank you for your engagement, your feedback, and your solidarity. Please continue showing up to meetings and bringing forth motions to guide our work.

Provincial Bargaining Updates Available

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

CDTA members are encouraged to log in and review the latest bargaining updates. Recent information includes updates on salary proposals, details on terms that have been agreed upon, and information on terms that have been withdrawn.

In addition, a recording of the Town Hall held on September 23, 2025, is now available for members who were unable to attend or who would like to revisit the discussion.

Please take a few moments to log in, stay informed, and remain up to date with the most recent developments in bargaining. Feel free to reach out to vicepres@cdta71.org if you have any questions around provincial bargaining.

Sept/Oct edition of Teacher magazine available now

Via BCTF

How is economic justice intertwined with education?

How can AI support concept-based teaching? Where can you find resources for comprehensive sexual health education?

The September/October edition of Teacher magazine also features lesson plans on unionization and youth-led projects to address youth mental health, and a teacher profile on Thais Pimentel Cabral and her anti-oppression work.



Please be sure to check out the fabulous article on Building belonging through movement: The heart behind the Comox Valley Inclusive Track Meet written by our own Jina Taylor (District Lead Teacher for Physical Literacy)!

The full edition can be found at teachermag.ca.

October 2025 PSA Day

by: Nick Moore (Pro-D Chair)

Looking for a Pro-D that caters to your needs as a teacher? There are 32 Provincial Specialist Associations that offer professional development, support, and advocacy in a variety of specialist areas.

Here is the link to BCTF page with link to all of the conferences: <https://www.psaday.ca>

If you are not attending a conference, Oct 24th is a great day to collaborate with colleagues or to start an inquiry that could help you develop your professional practice. If you need ideas or support, please don't hesitate to contact me. My email is pd71@bctf.ca. I work in the CDTA office on Wednesdays.

Did you know? - Local Education Agreement (LEA)

by: Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

In 2022, School District 71 signed a Local Education Agreement (LEA) with the K'ómoks First Nation to improve the success and learning journey of K'ómoks First Nation students.

What does this mean for us as teachers?

It means that we all play a role in upholding this agreement. For far too long, on-reserve students across B.C. were graduating at significantly lower rates than non-Indigenous students. The LEA is one step toward changing this reality by ensuring that the voices and priorities of the K'ómoks First Nation are reflected in how we support KFN students in our classrooms and schools. As educators, we can support this work by deepening our understanding of the LEA and reflecting on how it connects to our daily practice. Every interaction, lesson, and relationship contributes to the learning journey of our K'ómoks students.

To learn more about the Local Education Agreement and how it guides our shared responsibilities, visit [HERE](#).

Organizing for Power: Power-Up Training w/ Peter Lorian BCTF

by: Peter Lorian (Social Justice Chair)

As workers confront a billionaire coup against democracy, where a wealthy few align with far-right forces and multinational corporations to seize power on a global scale, teachers must fight for an alternative: a democracy that delivers for workers.

O4P's Power-Up training brings people together across the world to learn proven methods for building power and running effective campaigns. Since 2019, more than 45,000 organizers have taken part.

This year, local members will form a cohort with Social Justice Rep Peter Lorian to join the program.

Dates: Nov 18 & 20, Dec 2 & 4

Time: 5–8 pm

Food provided when meeting at the office

Free, team-based training (min. 10 members)

Registration deadline: Oct 25

The exact format will be decided collectively once our group is set. Sessions will balance time together at the teachers union office with the option of joining from home on Zoom.

Expect practical tools, group exercises, and a chance to connect our local struggles to a global movement for justice.

To register, email plorian@proton.me

Learn more here: [Organizing for Power](#)

plorian@proton.me'."/>

JOIN THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COLLECTIVE COMOX VALLEY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Teachers in the Comox Valley are invited to join the Social Justice Collective. Together we work toward equity, fairness, and solidarity: supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ members, racialized members, and members with disabilities, while also strengthening connections with the broader labour movement.

SPIT FIRE press

Reading Group: Spitfire Vol 2: Defensiveness, Denial and Perfectionism

Pick up your free copy of Vol 2 at the CDTA office before the event, or simply come with an open heart and willingness to share. Come sit in circle, sip tea, and build solidarity with fellow educators who care about justice.

What to expect:

- Short, accessible articles designed to spark conversation
- No requirement to finish the reading before attending
- A welcoming circle where we unlearn together: It's kind in here

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, FROM 4 TO 6 PM

Free, team-based Organizer training

Dates: Nov 18 & 20, Dec 2 & 4
Time: 5–8 pm

Food provided when meeting at the CVTA office

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: NOV 6TH

ORGANIZING FOR POWER'S Power UP

A FOUR-PART COURSE ON THE CORE FUNDAMENTALS OF ORGANIZING

→ Starting on 18 & 20 November and concluding on 2 & 4 December 2025.

As workers confront a billionaire coup against democracy, where a wealthy few align with far-right forces and multinational corporations to seize power on a global scale, teachers must fight for an alternative: a democracy that delivers for workers. O4P's Power-Up training brings people together across the world to learn proven methods for building power and running effective campaigns. Since 2019, more than 45,000 organizers have taken part.

If you'd like to learn more or get involved, contact Peter Lorian at plorian@proton.me

Join the Social Justice Collective

Teachers in the Comox Valley are invited to join the Social Justice Collective. Together we work toward equity, fairness, and solidarity: supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ members, racialized members, and members with disabilities, while also strengthening connections with the broader labour movement.

Meeting times will be set collectively once the group is formed.

If you'd like to learn more or get involved, contact Peter Lorian at plorian@proton.me

Reminder: Join us on Thursday, November 6, from 4 to 6 pm for a special **CDTA Social Justice Reading Group** featuring SpitFire Press Volume 2 (see October newsletter for more info). Pick up your free copy of Volume 2 at the CDTA office before the event, or simply come with an open heart and willingness to share.

Welcome Back Picnic in the Park – A Great Success!

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

Our CDTA Welcome Back Picnic in the Park was a wonderful success! Despite the traffic, 52 members and their families came out to enjoy a beautiful afternoon together. We were treated to the lively music of Chouette!, a band made up of local educational staff, and a fabulous acoustic set by our very own CDTA Alternate Chair, Rick Papineau. The atmosphere was full of smiles, laughter, and connection as colleagues and families caught up, welcomed new faces, and shared in the joy of community.



Report to Support

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

The duty to report means that teachers and staff must inform their supervisors or designated safety officers about any health and safety concerns they notice in schools. This includes unsafe conditions, equipment issues, air quality concerns, or any incidents that could harm students or staff. Reporting these issues helps create a safer school environment and ensures that problems are addressed promptly. It's an important responsibility to protect everyone's well-being.

Violence means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury. The potential for violence exists whenever there is direct interaction between workers and non-workers.

What to report: Any incident, including an accident, near miss, injury (including psychological injury), threat of violence, or occupational disease involving a BCTF member be reported to WorkSafeBC, investigated by a team which includes the worksite BCTF health and safety representative, or another BCTF member designated by the representative (As per BCTF Members' Guide, 13.D.06).

This includes reporting student on student violence and when you are a witness to violence as it is information that is important when conducting risk assessments and creating safety plans.

Equity Scan

by: Shawn Holland (CDTA President)

Hopefully all of you are aware of the Equity Scan currently being conducted by the district. I know there are some schools who have completed this process, while others are still in progress. Please remember the goal of this scan is to identify how well we are meeting the needs of our Indigenous learners and how we can ensure their experiences, learning, and success mirrors that of other students. Please be supportive of and sensitive to the needs of students and colleagues as we move through this process.



Registration is open for The Well Teacher Groups

Via BCTF

The Well Teacher Groups focus on supporting educators in developing tools and skills related to vitality and resiliency. This holistic approach to wellness equips teachers to make lifestyle changes that positively affect their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. All groups are confidential and facilitated by trained health consultants. Groups are composed of 10 to 15 participants and meet virtually once a week for six weeks.

The following dates and times are being offered this fall (all times PT):

Group 1 Tuesdays, October 14–November 25, 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Note: no session on November 11

Group 2 Wednesdays, October 15–November 19, 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Group 3 Wednesdays, October 15–November 19, 4:30–6:30 p.m.

Group 4 Mondays, October 20–November 24, 4:30–6:30 p.m.

To register, click [HERE](#).

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