

NEWSLETTER

November 2025

Ideas to spark curiosity and inspire change.

Please read and discuss with your colleagues.

Important Dates

Nov 24th – Contract Committee Meeting

Nov 26th – Staff Rep meeting

Nov 28-29th - FLI training

Dec 3rd - Exec Meeting

Dec 10th - Joint Pro-D



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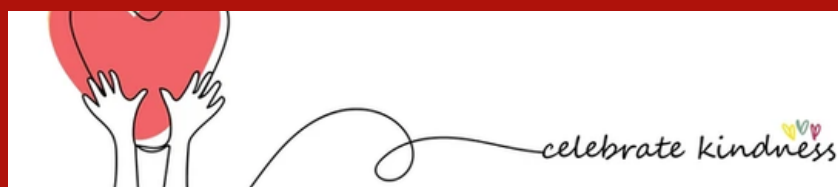
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November in our Community

Across our community, we recognize important days and cultural celebrations that invite us to pause, learn, and come together.

This month includes Veterans' Week (Nov 5–11) and Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8, honouring the courage and contributions of service members, and Remembrance Day on November 11, when we reflect on the sacrifices made for peace. We also observe Transgender Day of Remembrance (Nov 20) and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Nov 25), moments to honour resilience, raise awareness, and commit to creating safer, more inclusive communities.

Many also celebrate Diwali, Loy Krathong, and Pepero Day, each offering moments of light, gratitude, and togetherness. World Kindness Day on November 13 reminds us that simple acts of care and compassion can have a lasting impact within our schools and communities. In British Columbia, November is recognized as Indigenous Disability Awareness Month and Anti-Poverty Month, both encouraging reflection on inclusion, equity, and shared responsibility. Nationally, we observe Hindu Heritage Month, Financial Literacy Month, and Movember, which raises awareness for men's health and well-being.

Together, these observances remind us of the power of kindness, the importance of inclusion, and the many stories that shape our shared community.

We hope you take time this month to reflect, connect, and celebrate the richness of November's traditions and the spirit of care that unites us all. Please share any projects or activities you did connected to these events. We would like to highlight and celebrate the work done in our schools.



Indigenous Veterans Day

by: Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

November 8th was Indigenous Veterans Day, a time to honour and remember the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis veterans who served and continue to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces. Before Indigenous Veterans Day was officially recognized in 1994, the contributions of Indigenous soldiers often went unacknowledged. Indigenous Veterans fought bravely side-by-side with their non-Indigenous comrades, serving with courage and dedication in every major conflict. However, when they returned home, they did not receive the same recognition or benefits for their service. This inequitable treatment made their transition back to civilian life even more difficult and has had lasting physical, emotional, and social impacts on Indigenous Veterans, their families, and their communities. On November 8th, we honour and remember the strength, sacrifice, and resilience of all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Veterans who served and continue to serve.

There are great resources on the Indigenous Education portal. You can access them [HERE](#).



Wear red on November 17 to support RedForBCED Day.

Via BCTF



On November 17, the BCTF Provincial Bargaining Team will be back at the table negotiating with the BC Public School Employers' Association. As bargaining has reached a more intense phase, it's time to get together with your colleagues at schools and show your solidarity with each other and the team.

We're encouraging all members to **wear red on Monday, November 17**, and share pictures on social media or with the Provincial Bargaining Team. You can use the hashtag **#RedForBCED** on your preferred platform or send an email directly to the team at bargaininginfo@bctf.ca.

Wearing red all together shows our employer and the government that teachers expect a fair deal that addresses our working conditions and the recruitment and retention crisis. The government needs to come to the table with more funding so the two sides can reach an agreement.

By wearing red on November 17, we can also show our solidarity with the Alberta Teachers' Association who were legislated back to work by the United Conservative Party. Danielle Smith's Conservative government shamefully invoked the Notwithstanding Clause of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which is not only a blatant attack on teachers' bargaining rights but threatens to erode the rights of all unionized workers.

Here in BC, we know what it's like to have government attack our rights. November 10 marked the 9th anniversary of our Supreme Court of Canada win that restored our unconstitutionally stripped working conditions from our collective agreements.

All Canadians must take a stand against this kind of government overreach and infringement on our rights.

So, on Monday, November 17, wear red to show solidarity with our Provincial Bargaining Team, our colleagues in Alberta, and for our determination to get a fair deal!



Health & Safety Incident Investigations – Your Role Matters

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

At the recent District Health and Safety Committee meeting, it was highlighted that when a teacher is involved in a health and safety incident, they should be included in the investigation and have input into the resolution.

This means that if you experience or witness a workplace incident:

- You have the right to participate in the investigation process.
- You can provide input on what occurred and how similar incidents can be prevented.
- You should be informed of the outcomes and actions taken to resolve the issue.

If you're involved in an incident, ask explicitly: "Will I be part of the investigation team? When will the findings be shared? How will corrective actions be chosen and communicated?"

If you believe you're not being included, raise this with your JOHSC rep or your supervisor. If you continue to not be included, contact the District Safety Manager to ensure proper procedures are followed.

Your participation strengthens workplace safety and helps ensure our schools remain safe, healthy, and equitable environments for all.

For your reference:

[AP 160 Appendix C Accident or Incident Reporting and Investigation](#)

[AP 175 Violence in the Workplace](#)

Grassroots Solidarity Rally

by: Peter Lorian (Social Justice Chair)

On October 22, more than 75 people gathered at Sid Williams Plaza in Courtenay for a Grassroots Solidarity Rally organized by local teacher Heidi Pridy. The rally brought together community members and unionized workers to reject austerity and corporate greed, and to show support for striking members of BCGEU, PEA, CUPW, Unite Here Local 40, and others fighting for fair working conditions.

CDTA President Shawn Holland spoke about the importance of community unity and the growing need for solidarity as teachers may soon face similar challenges. The event highlighted a simple truth: the way we win is together. When workers stand with one another across sectors, we build the power needed to demand justice and dignity for all. Solidarity forever.

[Read about the BCGEU tentative agreement here](#)



photo by Dylan Thiessen

2025-2026 Professional Development Update

by: Nick Moore (Pro-D Chair)

I hope that you had a useful and fulfilling PD day on Oct 24th! The Joint PD committee is hard at work planning a District PD day for Tues Feb 17th. We will be using Vanier to invite teachers to come together for the first 75 minutes to root us in the place we live in a good way, and to be uplifted, inspired and affirmed before we embark on two 90 minute workshop opportunities on various topics that teachers will have to choose from. We are working hard to ensure there are workshops that will appeal to teachers at all levels and that there are opportunities for all members to participate in meaningful PD that day, regardless of where they are located or what role they are in.

Last week we put out a call for presenters on this day. Please consider sharing your talents, experiences, and strategies with your colleagues (check your SD71 inbox for that email). The deadline is Monday Dec 1st.

We are working with CUPE and management to see if there is a way to meaningfully collaborate in a way that works for everyone. In addition, Campbell River also has a district PD day that day. We are working with them to make sure that teachers have the opportunity to benefit from great options that will be available in both districts.

If you are looking for some PD in a specific area but don't know how to make that happen, please reach out to me to discuss how we can help you. Chances are you are not alone. Sometimes the best workshops come to be because someone asked for help in an area!

At the last joint PD meeting, the committee decided to give a majority of the money that is available to us for teacher PD to individual teachers. This year \$135 was deposited into each teacher's personal PD account; this accounts for an increase of \$10/person, the first time the amount has been increased in over 30 years.

I'm happy to report that Superintendent Jeremy Morrow has recently provided the joint PD committee with an additional \$25,000 for teacher professional learning this year! That almost doubles the amount of money we have available to spend on teacher PD this year. The Joint PD committee will be talking about how to use this money in the coming 6 weeks, so stay tuned for more opportunities to access resources that we know you need!

Remember that groups of teachers who are working together to enhance their teaching on a certain topic through a local specialist association can access \$250. We also have money available to groups of teachers who wish to participate in a book club.

Organizing for Power

by: Peter Lorian (Social Justice Chair)

There's still time to join the Organizing for Power: Power-Up Training with Peter Lorian. **Deadline extended to Nov 14th.** This free, team-based program runs November 18 & 20 and December 2 & 4, 5-8 pm - email plorian@proton.me



Fall RA Summary and Bargaining Update

by: Roger Vernon (Local Rep)

In the wake of the Alberta teachers' strike—which saw over 50,000 educators walk off the job and the government respond by invoking the notwithstanding clause to impose a contract—the Fall Representative Assembly (RA) focused on several pressing issues affecting public education, labour rights, and political advocacy in British Columbia.

A major theme of the RA was the growing influence of far-right groups in the province, particularly around education policy and school board elections. Delegates were encouraged to become politically active, especially in the lead-up to the 2026 trustee elections, by supporting candidates who understand and advocate for classroom realities. The BCTF also reaffirmed its solidarity with Alberta teachers, emphasizing that the use of the notwithstanding clause to override collective bargaining rights is a threat to all workers across Canada.

Financially, the BCTF is in a stable position. However, rising costs and slower revenue growth are narrowing surpluses. Grants to locals are the fastest-growing expense, and declining enrolment may impact future revenues. Despite this, the union remains well-positioned to manage minor deficits if necessary.

The pension report also noted that the plan remains in good financial health. However, demographic pressures are emerging, with nearly 30% of members eligible to retire within the next five years. The majority of members are currently aged 40–50, with relatively few under 30, raising long-term considerations for sustainability and workforce renewal.

On the bargaining front, a lot of conversation, dialogue, and questions were discussed in committee. A Job Action Plan has been established and approved, but no immediate action is required at this time. We remain at the bargaining table and have not reached either a legal or strategic impasse. However, preparations are underway should additional pressure be needed in the future, including coordinated province-wide actions and local mobilization efforts. Further information from our local president will be shared soon to provide clarity and updates. Members are encouraged to stay informed and engaged as the next phase of bargaining unfolds.

Thank you for your continued commitment and professionalism. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

In solidarity,

Local Representatives: Michael Aldridge and Roger Vernon

Vancouver Canucks Educators Night: January 19, 2026

Via BCTF

The Vancouver Canucks Educators Night is back and takes place on January 19 as the Canucks take on the New York Islanders at 7:00 p.m. Ticket prices are \$79 for the upper bowl and \$125 for the lower bowl. [Purchase your special-priced ticket](#) for the game and receive a \$20 Rogers Arena gift card.



Reflection on Naomi Klein's Keynote at the Provincial Day of Action

by: Peter Lorian (Social Justice Chair)

I was grateful to attend the Anti-Oppression Educators Collective conference and hear Naomi Klein speak. Klein, a Canadian author and activist whose work on climate justice, capitalism, and social movements has shaped my own thinking, offered both challenge and hope.

She urged educators to embody the antithesis of fascism, not its reflection, to act from care, not reaction. She reminded us that collective action must be rooted in love, not crisis. We need spaces to be with one another, including those still finding their way, and to stay grounded amid scarcity and fear.

Klein comments echoed recent progress in our union. At the BCTF's Spring Representative Assembly (May 30–31 2025), members voted to incorporate Anti-Palestinian Racism APR (to learn more about APR visit: (<https://antipalestinianracism.org/>) into all anti-racism policies and to work with the Ministry and school boards to acknowledge and address it. Recognizing APR as a distinct form of racism marks an important step toward protecting educators and students. Klein also referenced The CIJA Report: A Pattern of Anti-Palestinian Racism and Genocide Denial ([Jewish Faculty Network](#)), which documents how educators are being targeted, surveilled or silenced for teaching about Palestine and genocide. The BCTF is a social justice union, and as members we share in the responsibility in addressing anti-Palestinian racism alongside other intersecting forms of racism, including but not limited to anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, and antisemitism.

Seeing so many Comox Valley teachers at the conference reminded me how vital our local connections are. Our Social Justice Reading Group offers one such space. Join us monthly as we explore a range of topics as we sit in circle for reflection, connection, and shared learning.

Klein closed by naming what gives her hope: young activists like Greta Thunberg and those sailing with the Freedom Flotilla to Gaza, people linking struggles for climate, peace, and justice.

Their courage, and our commitment to embody love and solidarity, remind me that change remains possible.

What is giving you hope in these troubled times?



photo by Rea Zogia

Cultural Leave for Indigenous Educators

by: Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

Did you know that Indigenous teachers may be granted five (5) paid cultural days per year. These days recognize the importance of Indigenous educators having time to engage in cultural practices, ceremonies, and events that strengthen identity, increase sense of belonging, and connection to culture. This leave helps support the well-being of Indigenous staff and honours the cultural responsibilities many of us hold outside of our classrooms. To access this leave, provide seven (7) days' written notice to your administrator. You can find more details in our collective agreement under Article G.11 (page 87).

Pro-D on The Go!

ANCESTRAL ECHOES

I'm excited to share a podcast that can serve as both pro-d and a teaching resource! Ancestral Echoes is an inter-generational storytelling podcast education program in the Comox Valley. It pairs youth with Elders in meaningful conversations that can help us explore storytelling as a powerful form of knowledge transmission while also deepening our understanding of community and place. The episodes could also be used for listening in the classroom, followed by student-led reflection, discussion prompts, creative responses, or even have students initiate their own oral storytelling podcast. As you listen, you might recognize a few familiar voices!



Shàw níthän - Thank you,
Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

CTF PODCAST SOURCE

The first episode of season 4 of the Canadian Teachers' Federation podcast Source is now available. This episode explores the epidemic of aggression and harmful language in Canadian schools, and strategies for creating safe learning spaces.

[Listen now.](#)

Via BCTF



This is a new segment of the newsletter. If you have any Pro-D on-the-go suggestions, please forward them to vicepres@cdta71.org