

NEWSLETTER

June 2026

Ideas to spark curiosity and inspire change.

Please read and discuss with your colleagues.

Important Dates

June 3 - Exec Meeting

June 10th - Joint Pro-D
Committee meeting

June 17th - Retirement Gala @
Crown Isle

June 21st - National Indigenous
People's Day

June 26th - Last day of work



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June: A Month of Celebration, Reflection, and Community

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

And here we are! June! June has that very specific energy where everything speeds up and slows down at the same time. The calendar is packed, the to-do list is somehow longer, and yet there's also this collective sense that we are almost at the finish line of another school year.

Amid everything that comes with June, it is also a time to recognize and celebrate the many communities, cultures, and stories that shape our schools and workplaces.

With June comes the start of Pride season 🏳️‍🌈. Pride is joyful, colourful, creative, and full of courage. It is a time of celebration. Of embracing the vibrant, dynamic spectrum of human experience. Alongside the celebrating, there is a call for advocacy and community care. In recent years, we have seen an increase in attacks on queer and trans communities, including efforts to limit rights, restrict representation, and create division through fear and misinformation. These continued attacks are harmful and have repercussions that are felt in our classrooms, schools, and communities, affecting whether students, families, and staff feel safe, valued, and able to be themselves. Supporting one another does not always require grand gestures. Sometimes it looks like speaking up when it would be easier to stay quiet. Sometimes it means creating space where everyone feels welcome and valued. Sometimes it is simply letting people know that they belong exactly as they are.

Stay tuned for Pride in the Park [HERE](#).

June is also a time to celebrate and honour Filipino Heritage Month, Italian Heritage Month, Portuguese Heritage Month, and Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27. One of my favourite parts of teaching is exploring different cultures alongside my students through picture books, stories, food, music, and art. There is something special about learning together and discovering both the unique traditions that make us who we are and the common threads that connect us.

World Environment Day on June 5, highlights our shared responsibility to care for the natural world. There are so many wonderful things happening in our schools around this time: clean-ups, nature walks, environmental fairs, and engaging lessons for our students.

National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21 coincides with the summer solstice, a time of cultural significance for many Indigenous Peoples. It offers an opportunity to learn, reflect, and participate in Indigenous JOY. The K'ómoks First Nation is hosting a free all-day event in celebration of NIPD, find more information here → [NIPD 2025 - K'ómoks First Nation](#).



Wishing you a June filled with connection, celebration, and moments of play and laughter.

CDTA Summer Office Contact

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

The CDTA office will be closed over the summer months.

Our Office Manager, Michelle Prior, will be available in the office during the first week of July and the last week of August should you require assistance.

Shawn and I will continue to monitor our emails throughout the summer; however, we will be doing so intermittently. As a result, responses may take longer than usual.

Decolonizing Rest

by: Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

As we move toward summer, I invite you all to think about rest and what it means to decolonize not only our teaching practices, but also ourselves. Most of us have been conditioned by colonial systems to believe that our worth is tied to productivity, and burnout has become normalized in many of our lives. But Indigenous ways of being have long reminded us of the importance of finding balance in relationships with others, the land, and, most importantly, ourselves. Rest does not mean laziness. Taking time to reconnect with ourselves, our families, and the land can be an act of healing and resistance.

Decolonization begins with the internal work we do within ourselves, which has the potential to positively impact not only our own lives but also the students, families, and communities we work with. It requires us to slow down, listen deeply, reflect honestly, and address the fears, assumptions, and discomfort that shape how we move through the world.

Decolonization extends beyond Indigenous education or what we teach. It is also about how we choose to live, care for ourselves, and nurture our relationships with others, including the one we have with ourselves.

Summer offers an opportunity to reconnect with the land, not as a task, but as a relationship. Sit by the river. Swim in the ocean or lakes. Pick berries with your family. Listen to the birds in the early morning. Walk through the forests. Sometimes healing begins when we allow ourselves to reconnect with the rhythms of the land and remember that we are part of it, not separate from it.

Shàw níthän - Thank you,
Natasha Rainkie



A Season of Change

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

This time of year brings many things: warmer weather, countdowns to summer break, and, inevitably, staffing changes.

For some members, these changes are exciting. New opportunities, new schools, and new adventures await. For others, the experience can be more complicated. A hoped-for position may not materialize, a teacher bestie may be moving on, or a familiar routine may be changing in ways that feel challenging or unexpected.

While staffing is a normal part of school life, the emotions that come with it are deeply human. Behind every posting, transfer, assignment, and vacancy is a person with hopes, plans, relationships, and feelings.

As we navigate this season of change, it is worth remembering that we rarely know the full story of what someone else is carrying. A colleague who appears excited may also be feeling nervous. Someone who seems quiet may be processing disappointment. Others may simply be trying to figure out how to navigate the summer with uncertainty.

A little extra kindness, patience, and grace can go a long way right now. Check in with one another. Welcome new faces warmly. Celebrate successes generously. Hold space for those who may be struggling. We have the capacity to brighten each other's day, even if in the slightest way, and that is especially needed now.

If you are moving to a new school or experiencing a significant change in your assignment, it is worth remembering that supports are available. Through the SD71/CDTA Teacher Mentorship and Peer Support Program, teachers experiencing a significant change in assignment may be eligible for up to two days of release time to support the transition, planning, and preparation required for their new role.

Denialism Tour 2026: A Report from the Road

by: Peter Lorian (Social Justice Committee Chair) and the Social Justice Committee Chair

Denialism causes real harm. When communities are told that their histories did not happen, that their losses do not count, or that the violence done to them has been exaggerated or misunderstood, it compounds that harm. It isolates communities from one another and from the public record. The Denialism Tour 2026 was a four-stop public education panel series built on a simple idea: that understanding how denialism works, and who it harms, is something communities can and should do together.

From May 15th to 17th, hundreds of people came out across Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo, and the Comox Valley on a long weekend to do exactly that. Indigenous educators, scholars, and community leaders joined Palestinian educators, Jewish scholars, and BCTF members at each stop for conversations that were frank, grounded, and often deeply moving. Audiences were full. Conversations spilled out into hallways long after the panels ended. Communities that do not always share space found themselves in it together.

What made it possible

The tour was organized with the Coalition for Social Justice Education (CSJE), a community network of union locals, community organizations, educators, and volunteers who came together to make this happen. Financial and in-kind support came from the Comox District Teacher's Association, Greater Victoria Teachers Association, the Sooke Teachers Association, the Nanaimo Teachers Association, the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association, and the BCTF. This project took months of organizing to reach four communities in three days, and more than 40 volunteers staffed the events across the island.

Supporting the work that continues

A portion of funds raised through the tour is being directed to two grassroots projects doing essential education and reconciliation work in their communities. We encourage everyone who attended, or who simply wants to support this kind of work, to learn about them and give if you are able.

The Quw'utsun Cultural Connections Society is a community-rooted organization doing vital cultural and reconciliation work in the Cowichan Valley, grounded in Quw'utsun history and the ongoing work of healing and truth-telling. Learn more and support their work at journeyofourgeneration.ca

The Lil' Red Dress Project raises awareness of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls through community education and grassroots action. It is exactly the kind of project that emerges when communities refuse to let denialism have the last word. Learn more and donate at lilreddressproject.ca



What comes next

Three of the four events were filmed and video will be posted. A podcast drawing on highlights from across the tour is in production and will be released over the coming months. Watch for it.

There is also real excitement about bringing the tour to other parts of the province. These conversations do not need to stay on Vancouver Island. To every union local and organization that contributed, to the more than 40 volunteers who gave their time across four communities on a long weekend, and to every speaker who trusted this process and brought their full selves to it: thank you. This was a collective effort in every sense, and it showed.



TTOC Corner - EI

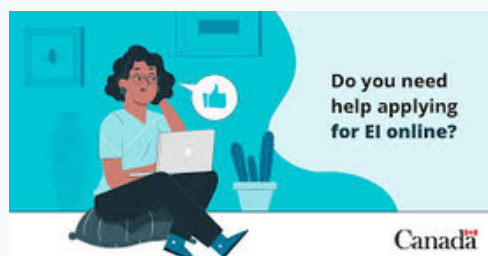
by: Meagan Roberge (TTOC and New Teacher Chair)

As we wind down to the last few weeks, you may be wondering about your summer funds. Teachers who are in temporary contracts (and who don't have a contract lined up for September) or who exclusively TTOC are eligible to collect Employment Insurance during the summer months.

The BCTF recognizes that understanding your eligibility and applying for EI can be a complex process and have created several options for those teachers who wish to know more. For those of you who missed the in-person session at the end of May, you can view the slides on the CDTA website, under Committees → TTOC. There is also a BCTF video on Youtube that you can access [here](#).

Thanks to Cassandra Mitchell for taking notes during the workshop, here are the key points.

- The last day of school in June is an administrative day and TTOC's are unable to work-use this day to file your claim.
- Apply! Jobs like ours are exactly why EI exists, we pay into it every month, we should be using it.
- You need 630 hrs of work in a year to qualify. A 1.0 day is counted as 9.1 hrs.
- EI isn't just for the summer; it can help top-up a pay cheque during slow periods and during the Spring and Winter breaks. Keep your claim open and report your hours of work every two weeks.
- You don't have to fill out all the questions. If there's no red asterisks, it's not a required question. You don't have to give more information that you feel comfortable with.
- If you've signed a contract for September, you can't claim EI over the summer- but still accept the job!



Spring Representative Assembly Highlights

by: Roger Vernon (Local Rep)

The Spring Representative Assembly focused on a common theme: the power of collective action. BCTF President Carole Gordon reminded delegates that while public support for teachers remains strong, meaningful change happens when we organize, build relationships, and engage our communities.

With school board elections approaching, members were encouraged to take an active role in conversations about public education. Polling shows that 88% of the public believe teachers should speak out on classroom conditions but support alone does not drive change. Carole's message was simple: talk to five people, support five people, organize five people, and then repeat. We are strongest when we move beyond individual voices and work collectively. Thoughtful communication, relationship-building, and coordinated action are what turn support into meaningful change. By sharing our experiences and advocating for strong public education, we can help elect school boards that support students, educators, and public schools.

Delegates also heard about the importance of solidarity in the face of growing challenges to public services and public education. Across Canada and internationally, increasing privatization, underfunding, and attacks on workers' rights continue to impact education. The message was clear: when we act together, we are powerful; when we organize together, we are unstoppable.

Our local brought forward two important resolutions, both of which were referred to the Executive Committee for further consideration. The first calls for stronger advocacy to ensure the provincial government fully funds contractual salary and benefit commitments. The second seeks the creation of a provincial school complexity and safety response team to address increasing concerns around student and staff safety through collaboration with key education partners.

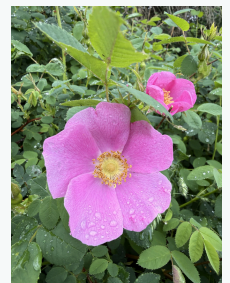
Members can also look forward to the release of the provincial Membership Survey results at the end of June. Early findings highlight growing interest in the impact of artificial intelligence on teaching, workload, and learning. This work will continue through the development of an AI Think Tank in Fall 2026.

The Spring RA reinforced an important reminder: our collective voice matters. Through advocacy, solidarity, and meaningful engagement, we can continue to strengthen public education and support the working conditions that allow students and educators to thrive.

National Indigenous History Month

by: Natasha Rainkie (Indigenous Education Chair)

As we move into National Indigenous History Month, I've been reflecting on the recent Indigenous Brilliance Day held in our district. It was inspiring to witness SD71 staff and community members come together to engage with Indigenous brilliance and ways of being.



National Indigenous History Month is a time to reflect upon and learn about the histories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples across these lands. It is an opportunity to deepen our understanding, challenge misconceptions and stereotypes, and honour the diversity and resilience of Indigenous communities.

As a third-generation residential survivor, I would like to gently remind everyone that while residential schools and the impacts of colonization are an important part of Indigenous history, they are not the entirety of our story. These truths must be acknowledged and taught, but Indigenous Peoples are more than trauma and loss. Please continue to create space for all students to learn about ancient knowledges, stories, governance systems, languages, arts, leadership, innovations, and deep ancestral ties to the land that Indigenous Peoples have carried since time immemorial. Celebrate the brilliance!

If you are wondering where to begin, I encourage everyone to first look round at the brilliance that already surrounds us on these lands and within this community. During Indigenous Brilliance Day, many of us had the privilege of learning from talented K'omoks First Nation and Indigenous community members who shared their knowledge, teachings, and gifts with us. Indigenous Brilliance Day was not meant to be a single moment of learning, but an invitation to continue this work in our classrooms and everyday life.



For educators wanting to continue this learning, Carolyn Roberts' blog post, "Teach Indigenous Brilliance," offers reflections on balancing teachings about Indigenous trauma with the Indigenous Peoples' brilliance. Her reflections offer a starting point for educators wanting to engage with Indigenous education in meaningful and respectful ways.

<https://www.carolynroberts.net/single-post/teach-indigenous-brilliance>

Provincial Budget 2027 consultation - Your Voice Matters

via Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

The provincial budget consultation is the most important opportunity for teachers to get loud about what our schools and students need. We should not be advocating for funding during bargaining, it needs to happen when the budget is being set. Please participate and share the message with others. When we encourage our communities to participate alongside us, we amplify our collective voice and strengthen the case for investing in public education.

How to Participate

You can participate by providing written input using the submission form on the Parliamentary Committees Consultation Portal by 2:00 p.m. (Pacific) on Friday, June 19. Please note: The opportunity to register to make a presentation at public hearings has now closed. The Committee is currently accepting written input only. Those who are scheduled to present to the Committee in 2026 are not eligible to also provide a written submission.

About the Consultation

The Committee includes MLAs from both government and opposition. Each year, the Committee asks the public for input on the upcoming provincial budget and then publishes a report with recommendations based on the input received.

For more information on the province's fiscal forecast and key budget issues, read the [Budget 2027 Consultation Paper](#) from the Minister of Finance, which is referred to the Committee each year before the consultation.

If you have any questions about the Budget 2027 consultation, the Committee's work, or the information in this email, please contact us by email at FinanceCommittee@leg.bc.ca or phone at 250-356-2933 or 1-877-428-8337 (toll-free in BC).

The Committee values your input and looks forward to hearing from British Columbians again this year.

Kind regards,
Parliamentary Committees Office
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

Pro-D on The Go!

by: Jacqueline Symons (CDTA Vice-President)

Queering Education

Queering Education is a Teaching While Queer podcast about LGBTQ inclusive teaching, queer pedagogy, and building authentic, affirming classrooms. Hosted by Bryan Stanton, the show offers practical strategies for educators navigating real challenges in today's classrooms—connecting theory to practice through conversations, storytelling, and actionable tools..



Each episode centers the lived experiences of queer educators and how they show up for their students, even in systems that weren't built for them. Whether you're a K-12 teacher, higher education faculty member, or school leader, you'll find actionable ways to create affirming learning environments for LGBTQ students and beyond.

Find it wherever you get your podcasts or at [THIS LINK](#).