



surrey teachers' association

# Bargaining Bulletin

www.surreyteachers.org

March 17, 2011

## Local Bargaining Opens

March 1, 2011 is when both provincial and local bargaining opened between the Surrey Teachers' Association and the Surrey Board of Education. The BCTF and BCPSEA opened negotiations at the provincial table.

The Surrey Teachers' Association elected eight members to be on our bargaining committee. The committee has worked over the last ten months on surveying our members, training and preparing for bargaining.

In the fall, the provincial objectives or PELRA (salary, benefits, hours of work and leave provisions) were set at the BCTF Bargaining Conference. Our team will be bringing the local objectives approved at our February General Meeting to the bargaining table in the coming months.

The February general meeting approved the local bargaining objectives. ♦



Not in photo:  
Steve Ranta, Sarb Lalli,  
John Wyndham

## Local Solutions for Local Issues

You may have heard that BCPSEA's opening position has been to not to renegotiate the split of issues as identified currently in our Collective Agreement under Letter of Understanding 1. Last year's RA and AGM moved to renegotiate the split of issues so that local issues move to the local bargaining tables and only PELRA issues stay at the provincial level.

It is our belief that without local bargaining for 19 years, there are many areas that we need to change. We need local solutions for local issues. Current Collective Agreement language treats Adult Educators differently, in part due to Adult Educators having different qualifications 20 years ago. This situation no longer exists and all

members should be treated equitably. Computers were just starting to arrive in schools and

**We need local solutions for local issues.**

Distributed Learning didn't exist in Surrey schools 20 years ago. We need to develop local solutions for these local issues. ♦



### Important Dates:

- March 1 - Bargaining opened
- March 9 - First meeting of both parties
- March 17 - Second local meeting scheduled
- June 30 - Collective Agreement expires

# What can members do to help Bargaining?

The local bargaining team is the voice of Surrey teachers at the bargaining table; however, you as members also have a strong voice. You have the ability to inform the public, parents, colleagues, friends and neighbours about the issues.

The messages we provide at the bargaining table should resonate with you and the public.

Our messages are:

Provincially -

- Salary Equity with Canadian Colleagues
- Improvements to Benefits,
- Improved language around

Preparation time, Paid Leaves and Hours of Work

- Restoration of Class Size and Composition

Locally -

- Local Solutions for Local Issues
- Equity for our Members
- Updating stale language

You can make a difference. Keep yourself informed and speak to parents, colleagues, friends and neighbours. Talk in the grocery line. Talk at the soccer practice. Sound a little daunting? Dust off the “Know the numbers” brochure, and read the bargaining bulletins.

We will be coordinating school visits over the next few months to keep members informed and discuss strategies to successfully negotiate our next Collective Agreement. ♦

## Keeping you informed:

- **The Advocate**
- **Regular Bargaining Bulletins**
- **BCTF member portal - released mid March**
- **surreyteachers.org**
- **bctf.ca**

## Opening Bargaining

Over the last two weeks, BCTF members from across the province met in their zones. Twice a year these groups meet. We were able to have the majority of our Bargaining team at the zone meeting and participating in an additional day of preparation for bargaining.

Your bargaining team met with the Surrey Board of Education, open bargaining on March 1. We

met with the Board on March 9.. The BCTF has opened provincially on behalf of all locals. We are looking forward to meeting soon to begin the process.

At the Surrey Teachers’ General Meeting in February, we as members adopted local, non-PELRA priorities for this round of bargaining. We are hopeful to negotiate with the Board ♦

The logo features the word "BARGAINING" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the words "FOR OUR FUTURE" are written in a green, sans-serif font, with "FOR OUR" in a smaller size and "FUTURE" in a larger size. A thin blue horizontal line is positioned between the two lines of text.

## Playing Catch Up

Teacher salary in BC has not kept up with the Rate of Inflation over the last 10 years. Inflation has increased 22.5 % while our salary has only increased 14.5%. This is an 8% loss in pay. This salary inequity will impact us for years to come.

In effect teachers in BC have lost salary and contributions to our pensions. The impact on your pension (assuming you work for five more years and a max 70% pension) could be \$4,563 per year if we just caught up to the rate of inflation.

Edmonton Public School District is roughly the size of Surrey with a membership of 5,010. Masters max is currently \$94,814 or \$13,325 greater than our masters max grid.

**Inflation has increased 22.5 % while our salary has only increased 14.5%. This is an 8% loss in pay.**

This is a massive inequity for one of the most expensive places to live in Canada. To achieve equity we would need a 12.5% increase now with continued fair and equitable increases. If we had equity with

Edmonton, the impact on our pension would be \$9,327 per year.

It does sound like a like a lot to achieve equity; however, we have accrued less than the rate of inflation over the last 10 years. We have lost buying power even though we have had increases.

Our pensions are directly impacted by salary increases or lack of equitable increase.

Inequity now will echo to increasing inequity for you 20 or more years of retirement. ♦