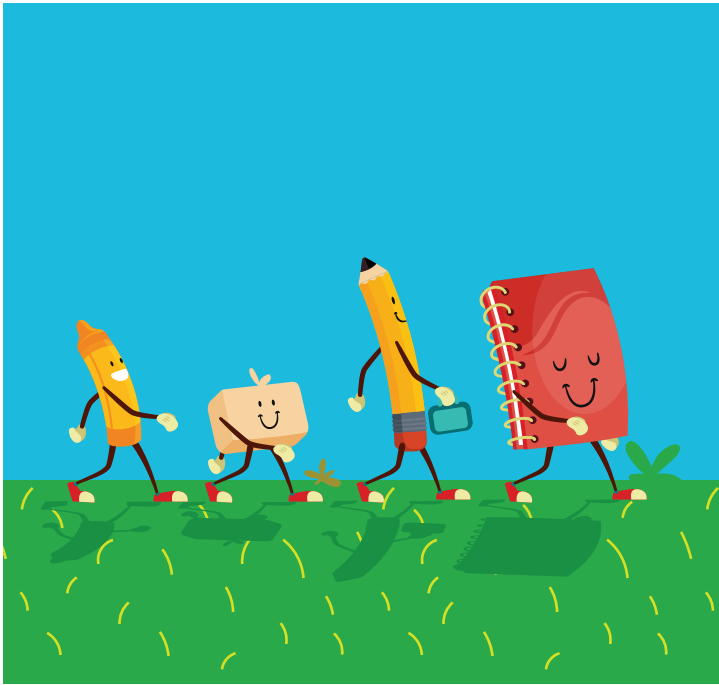


'We're ready to go': No teacher shortage here, says Surrey School District



In an [article](#) recently published by the CBC as well as in a [CBC radio interview](#), the Surrey School District has told the public that they are ready to go for the start of the year. Parents, teachers and the STA have all been concerned about TTOC shortages and what to do about failure-to-fills. Doug Strachan, spokesperson for the District, responded to the question, "What happens when you can't find a substitute teacher?" Strachan responded in his radio interview with the following: "We have contingencies in place whether it's a vice-principal or principal... We have options available to us to ensure that students in a class have a teacher." When pressed again with a followup question around those contingencies, Strachan replied, "We can have administrators fill in. We can move move teachers in an emergent situation from other positions to help fill in who don't have a class of their own."

The Surrey Teachers' Association is very pleased to hear the District take this public stance of having school administration take on some of the load for failure-to-fills. For schools that have not already done so, we encourage you to put a motion forward at your next School Staff Committee meeting that addresses an equitable way for the school to respond to failure-to-fills which includes school administrators as people who will provide coverage.

School Visits/School Concerns

You may remember last June, we began to schedule pro-active school visits for September. Table Officers will be starting those visits this week. We plan to visit every school over the course of the 2017/2018 school year. We want to hear from you about what's going on at your school and how we can best support you. Please see the attached 'School Concerns' document shared last year, to help staff reps take notes on issues your school is facing. This document could be helpful both for when we have a school visit or as something to share with the STA at STARA meetings.

We encourage staff reps to find a couple of dates and times (before school, at lunch or after school) and contact Esther Young at esther@surreyschools.org in the STA office to book your school visit and ensure your school gets its preferred date and time. Staff at the STA and STA Officers will be also be contacting staff reps we haven't heard from in October.

Opportunity for 2 Members: District SOGI Working Group

The District is looking to strike a Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity working group with respect to the policy/procedures outlined in [Safe and Caring Schools 9410.02](#) to revisit the work that has been done to date and to better understand current concerns. We are looking for one elementary teacher and one secondary teacher to participate. If this is an area of interest for you, please fill out the attached STA CV and submit it to Dana in our office by next Monday September 25th so that we can appoint people at the September 26th Executive Committee meeting.

NVCI Training

It has come to our attention that the district is offering Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training on September 25th. Please be aware that if you are teacher for whom NVCI training is required in order to do your work effectively and/or safely, you should not be taking NVCI training on a professional development day. This advice applies to IST teachers, BASES teachers, and any teacher who works with a student at risk of being violent. We have let the district know that they should be providing NVCI training through detached duty in-service on a regular instructional day for these teachers, rather than expecting them to take it on one of their own teacher-directed Professional Development days.



SAVE THE DATE! World Teachers' Day is coming up on October 5th!

On Thursday, October 5th, as in previous years, your STA will be hosting a World Teachers' Day Celebration. Last year, we successfully held a celebration at two locations; this year we're aiming to expand that to three or four location! Appies will be provided, and your 1st drink is on us! There will be prizes & giveaways. Stay tuned for more details to come.

Recovery of Lost Preparation Time

Under the collective agreement, the remedy for lost prep time for contract teachers (as opposed to TTOCs) is to receive prep recovery. Unrecovered prep carries over to the following year. There is no entitlement to money for lost prep; although the District has occasionally paid out unrecovered prep on a without-prejudice basis, it is declining to do so at the moment.

The District is making an effort to dispatch PTOCs and TTOCs to schools this month to provide prep recovery, because demand for TTOCs is lower than it will be at other times this year. Please note, however, that the employer cannot compel you to take your recovered prep at a time when you don't want it. Article D.4.9.c. says "*The employee shall be entitled to compensatory preparation time at a time agreed to as convenient to the school administration and the employees concerned.*" As the language indicates, the time must be agreed to by both the teacher and the school. Our suggestion is for members to identify some possible times for prep recovery, and discuss the matter with admin to see whether it can be arranged.

Ensure Teacher Regulation Branch has up-to-date contact information!

We have had members encounter difficulty when they did not receive communications from the TRB (for example, to get their fingerprints done) because the TRB did not have the member's current address. Missing such communications can potentially result in the suspension of your teaching certificate. To verify your current information with the TRB, go to this website:

<https://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/CertificateHolders/login.aspx>

Coming Your Way: The Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA)

The previous government made the decision to conduct FSAs this fall. The BCTF has pushed consistently for the government to mask test data to avoid harm to students, teachers, and schools (e.g. through the Fraser Institute rankings). The BCTF repeated these concerns in a meeting last week with the new Deputy Minister of Education. However, although the Deputy Minister expressed interest in working with the BCTF to address privacy concerns, he made no firm commitment, and stated that the FSAs will proceed this fall as planned. As in recent years, the BCTF will be encouraging parents to opt out of the FSAs.

To facilitate our communications with parents of Grade 4 and 7 students about the test, could ELEMENTARY STA REPS please send the following information to: Esther Young at esther@surreyteachers.org

- the dates when the FSA test will be held at your school;
- the number students at your school in Grades 4 and Grade 7;
- a rough estimate of languages spoken at home for the Grades 4 and 7 students (e.g. Punjabi 40%. English 30%, Mandarin 30%).

Curriculum Change Feedback Survey

For the past several years, British Columbia has been in an intensified period of curriculum change. The BCTF wants to know your thoughts on the proposed direction of curriculum change, as well as the resources, time, and support needed for implementation.

By providing your feedback by October 2, you will help us to develop a deeper understanding of the state of curriculum change across the province, and shape the Federation's priorities for supporting members in relation to curriculum change. The results will be used to help teachers and the BCTF make critical assessments of curriculum change over time and advocate for a teacher-led process that enhances public education in BC. This includes working to get you the resources, time, and support you need for the 2017-18 school year.

<http://questionnaire.research-recherche.net/f/s.aspx?s=E3D8E872-93FC-475E-BF50-FAD39365AE18>



What if Staff Meetings are scheduled on Pro-D days?

September 25th is our first non-instructional day of the year. For some schools, the principal has designated it as the one admin-directed non-instructional day of the school year. For other schools, it is a teacher-directed Pro-D Day. The STA has not planned any professional development activities for this first day.

Watch for further updates on the November 10th non-instructional day, "Shining a Light on It: Aboriginal Education," and the February 16th Focus Day. And, of course, please make sure you register for a conference for the provincial PSA Day on October 20th, so that you don't miss out on the great opportunities on that day!

If Monday, September 25th is a teacher directed Pro-d day at your school and you have a Staff Meeting scheduled for that day, the meeting cannot happen during instructional hours (because a staff meeting is admin-directed, not teacher-directed). Furthermore, teachers are not required to be at their school site on teacher-directed Pro-D days; Principals should not expect teachers to return to the school site in order to attend a staff meeting at the end of the day. For this reason, some Principals choose to change the date of their monthly meeting, which is reasonable. If it is a Teacher-Directed Pro-D day, and there is a Staff Meeting scheduled during instructional hours, Pro-D funds cannot be used for any portion of the day. Confused? Have questions? Contact your STA! sta@surreyteachers.org

Reminders

Special General Meeting on Sept 20th (& STARA meeting)

- Election of TWO "Member-At-Large" Representatives (one designated for an Aboriginal person) for the STA Executive.
- Members-At-Large are required to attend the bi-weekly Executive meetings (on Tuesdays from 4-6pm), as well as the monthly STARA meeting (generally the 3rd Wednesday of the month) [our first one is EagleQuest, but we may change to other locations], and may be called upon for support with other events, and committees, as needed.
- Please note that candidate statements are attached!
- **Child Care:** STA policy is to provide childcare at meetings to make it easier for members with children to participate. Unfortunately, we neglected to advertise child care for the STARA/Special General Meeting on September 20th. We are also having issues with our child care provider. Accordingly, members needing child care are advised to obtain their own child care, and submit receipts to the STA for reimbursement at \$13/hour. If you wish to attend the meeting, but are unable to get child care, please bring your child(ren) with a quiet activity for them, and note that you will be responsible for their care and supervision. We apologize for any inconvenience, and are working on resolving child care arrangements for our October meeting.

Pro-D Rep Training

- Sign up ASAP via our website for training sessions : <http://www.surreyteachers.org/pro-d-rep-training-2017/>

Staff Reps:

- Please complete the Orange Shirt Day draw, and email the office (hello@surreyteachers.org) with the following information by **4pm TOMORROW (Tuesday, September 19th)**.

School, Winner(s) Name, Preferred Size

- Please complete and return the "School Information Form" identifying all the STA reps/roles in your school. Remind fellow reps there is a meeting at Eaglequest on the 20th!

- Training: Sign up for sessions via our website (<http://www.surreyteachers.org/staff-rep-training-october2017>) October 3-5, and 10-12. See poster for more information. Rookie training session on Oct. 2!

Deadline Wednesday, Sept. 27 to submit application for Teacher Inquiry project!

Email proposal to pd@surreyteachers.org
More info at: <https://bctf.ca/TeacherInquiry/>.

PSA Super Conference registration closes on Oct. 15th!

Upcoming Opportunities for Activism:

September 21: Terry Fox Run

September 24: Walk for Reconciliation

<http://reconciliationcanada.ca/walk-for-reconciliation-2017/>

September 30: Orange Shirt Day (Friday the 29th in schools) Resources: <https://goo.gl/Vy3JiM>



Social Justice DVD library

The STA owns a mini DVD library that is available to all members. Please browse our titles at <http://justicetogo.wikispaces.com/Film+List> and email Julia MacRae at the STA office at julia.macrae@surreyteachers.org to request the DVD. It will be delivered to you in the courier at your school, and you can return it the same way a few weeks later. Why not use a fascinating film to get your students thinking this year! Or why not borrow a few for your staff to view, or for your personal interest?

Contact Us! The STA is here FOR YOU!

We want to hear from you; questions, concerns, advice - everything! Not sure who to contact? Send your message to STA@surreyteachers.org or hello@surreyteachers.org and it will get directed to the right place!

Joke of the Week

No Jokes were submitted this week.

If you would like to participate in joke of the week, please submit a short, clean, (but not necessarily education-related) joke to hello@surreyteachers.org. If your joke is drawn for publication, your name will then be entered into a draw for a gift card at the end of the month.