

Monday Memo

Upcoming Dates

OCTOBER

- 27 STA New Teachers' Induction & Workshop
- 28 Surrey Schools Coalition Rally
- 30 Deadline for New Teachers' Conference Workshop Proposals

NOVEMBER

- 1 Grade 7 Girls' Conference Planning Dinner
- 1-2 Health + Safety SURT
- 3 Non-Instructional Day for Curriculum Implementation
- 3-4 BCTF Representative Assembly
- 6 Meeting with Secondary Counsellors (STA Office)
- 7 Executive Committee Meeting
- 7-8 Health + Safety SURT
- 10 Non-Instructional Day To Shine a Light On It 2017
- 13 Statutory Holiday (Remembrance Day)
- 14 Deadline for Variance Application to STA
- 22 STA+SD36 joint New Teacher Social (information to come)

October 28th - Rally to Push for New Schools in Surrey



Surrey Schools Coalition (which is a collaboration between DPAC, Surrey Board of Trade, developers, and home builders) has planned a rally to call on the government to fast-track the building of new schools in Surrey. \$217 million dollars was confirmed last January, but only one project (\$26 million for Clayton Village Elementary) has been approved. This year, the Surrey School District has 50 MORE portables than last year, bringing the total number of portables into the 300s. Without full capital funding for new schools, the District must spend its operating funds to pay for running portables and part of the cost of new schools, leaving less money for teachers, EAs, learning resources, and other needs.

The Surrey Teachers' Association supports this initiative to bring attention to the overcrowding in Surrey, and encourages its members to attend, particularly if they have children attending Surrey schools. **The rally will be held on Oct. 28th, from 12pm-2pm at Earl Marriott Secondary.** More details can be found [HERE](#).

Media Release

The STA released a media update on Thursday October 19th discussing the devastating side effects of cuts to LST and the ongoing staffing shortages. "Surrey's Learning Support Teachers have an impossible task and our complex learners deserve more support." Read the [MEDIA RELEASE HERE](#) and share it widely with your networks. CBC also picked up the story [HERE](#). This week we have a delegation of specialist teachers and Table Officers meeting with MLAs, to advocate for the support needed.

Call to Action: Write a letter to your MLA!

Last week, the Monday Memo featured an update on the LST crisis, and encouraged you to write to the STA and your MLAs with real examples, describing what is happening in your school. Below you'll find a copy of a letter that was written at the beginning of this year by a Surrey LST teacher.

The start of this new school year does not bode well for all students, even with the recent winning of the Supreme Court case between the government and the BCTF. We are starting this school year with severe cuts to our Learning Support Teachers which directly affects some of our most vulnerable students. Recent new funding with the court case win will make a big difference for many students; unfortunately, the same cannot be said about those students who are serviced by our Learning Support Teachers. Those students include our new Canadians that need to integrate into our society and learn the language, slow learners, those that have mild intellectual delays, and those students with a diagnosed learning disability such as dyslexia. Those are the students that get direct, specialized literacy and numeracy interventions delivered on a regular, sometimes daily, basis from a Learning Support Teacher in a small group or individual setting. Who is going to deliver those interventions to them now that their support has been cut? Just like any other government institution, all staff in a school have their defined roles that they play in terms of who they support and what type of support they provide for our students. Currently, only these specialized Support Teachers provide these interventions to English language learners and learning-disabled students and that service has been cut yet again, so that these students will be receiving even less learning support than they did in previous years! While it is nice to know that some categories of students will be getting extra support, it is appalling that others will be getting less, especially considering that they have been short changed for a decade already. I would urge all parents to lobby their MLAs and government leaders to right this situation immediately so that our students can finally get the support they deserve.

Arlene Laing



Job Shares working as TTOCs

If you are in a job share you have the option to TTOC (including for your job share partner) on your days off. In order to be eligible to TTOC you must be activated on our TTOC list by registering with the Automatic Dispatch System (ADS). Only teachers who are activated on the TTOC list will be dispatched, even for your teaching partner. If you have any questions, please call Dispatch at 604-595-6140.

Middle Years Developmental Instrument (MDI)

The District is proceeding with the administration of the Middle Years Developmental Instrument this year in November and December for Grade 4 students. According to its administration guide, the MDI is "a self-report questionnaire that asks children in Grade 4 and Grade 7 about their thoughts, feelings and experiences in school and in the community. The MDI is not an assessment for individual children. Instead, it is a unique and comprehensive population-based measure that helps us gain a deeper understanding of children's health and well-being during middle childhood."

Teachers have contacted the STA with concerns about the MDI, particularly the loss of instructional time given that it comes right on the heels of the FSAs. Although teachers should feel no obligation to volunteer to participate in the MDI, it is not possible to prevent the MDI assessment from taking place. The District has committed to us that teachers are not required to administer the MDI: "In the absence of teacher participation, a school-based principal or vice principal will facilitate the assessment process for students." If you encounter pressure to participate, or have other concerns about the MDI, please contact the STA.



Failure-to-Fill

September had 300 failure-to-fills, and that number has already spiked in October, with 185 failure-to-fills on October 4+5 alone.

School Staff Committees have had success drafting procedures outlining protocols for how failure-to-fills will be covered within their schools. For example, failure-to-fills would be covered first by administrators, followed by teachers on prep, and lastly by pulling LST (and other non-enrolling) teachers. While it is certainly frustrating to lose your prep time, at least there are systems in place for eventually recovering that time. It is important to keep track, for your own records, when you are asked to cover someone else's class during your prep. We encourage you to bring the issue of "failure-to-fill coverage protocols" up at your Staff Committee meeting, and discuss procedures that work best for your school. For failure-to-fill forms, please [CLICK HERE](#).



Sexual Orientation + Gender Identity (SOGI)

Colleagues, you may have seen some recent articles appear in both the Langley and Surrey papers in reaction to the launching of SOGI 123 curriculum and the support it is receiving. We were very concerned when we learned last week that the District was considering renting the Bell Centre to Culture Guard, a group that holds very discriminatory attitudes towards the work of SOGI 123 and LGBTQ+ people in general. We let the superintendent know that it was important for the District to deny this rental to be able to ensure that all staff and students feel safe within our work and school communities. We are pleased with the District's decision to deny renting our public-school spaces to Culture Guard. It sends a strong message to the members of the LGBTQ+ community in Surrey schools that our schools are always safe, caring and inclusive spaces. We hope that they make similar decisions to any rental groups whose values are so fundamentally opposed to the ones upheld in our public schools.

Our union (BCTF) is proud of our involvement in the development of the SOGI 123 teaching tools and resources that support an LGBTQ-inclusive education. We worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the UBC Faculty of Education, and a variety of LGBTQ community groups. We are thrilled that the Surrey School District is a member of the SOGI 123 community. It also has support from both the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, and the BC School Superintendents Association.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) is a term used by the BC Human Rights Code to describe an area of prohibited discrimination. It is an inclusive term that encompasses all individuals regardless of where they identify on the sexual orientation or gender identity spectrums, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, heterosexual, and cisgender. Everyone has a right to feel safe, included and cared for at school. SOGI 123 resources give teachers a place to start, and knowing that its supported by so many groups, including the Surrey School District, teachers should feel confident about using those tools and resources in our schools and classrooms. To reinforce this, we have included a joint letter of support from both Gioia Breda and Glen Hansman and a letter from the BC School Superintendents Association. The letters can be read in full [HERE](#).

Here are some related resources you may find useful:

SOGI 123: www.sogieducation.org/home

Grievance Report: Help Us, Help You!

Please reach out, and share what you know with us. We depend upon members like you to let us know what is happening in our schools. The more we learn, the better we are able to advocate! Send a quick email to Joanna Cerazy at grv-spt@surreyteachers.org or Mark Keelan at grieve@surreyteachers.org

School Visits/School Concerns

Table Officers have been pro-actively visiting schools since mid-September and 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 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 work to contact staff reps we haven't heard from in October.

Transfer of Out-of-District Teaching Experience

We have filed a grievance on behalf of teachers who have recently been hired by the District and whose experience has not been fully recognized. We have been contacted by some teachers who have been recently hired by our district and who have experience teaching in other districts. According to the Collective Agreement, experience gained outside of the district has to be recognized for the teacher's placement on the salary grid. Some newly hired teachers have found that the District is not recognizing all of their teaching experience. For example, in at least two cases, teachers who were at Category 5 Step 5 on the salary grid in their former district were assigned Category 5 Step 1 in Surrey. This amounts to a more than \$10,000 per year pay cut.

Adding TTOC Experience to Contract

Since September 2014, TTOCs who get a contract and have TTOC days accumulated are able to add the TTOC days to their contract experience in order to go up the salary grid. The TTOC days are divided by 17. Each 17 days equal one month. 170 days are needed for an increase. For a transfer of TTOC experience to be effective December 31, teachers must apply to the payroll department in writing by November 15. And for an increase to be effective September 1, the deadline is June 30.

Split Shift

We have become aware that at one of the secondary schools which follows an extended day schedule, teachers were given split shifts assignments, so that they teach 4 out of 5 blocks with a one block break in between the blocks. We are opposed to split shifts. Unfortunately, there is no general rule against split shifts in our CA but there is some good language that supports our position.

Agreeing to Accept Extra Students

Recently, a member was asked (by a colleague), to send an email to an administrator saying that it was okay to accept an extra student into their class, even though it was going over the class size/composition agreement. Advice from the STA is, #1 don't write or sign any agreements because it violates our newly restored language, and #2 if you do choose to do that, not only will you not be ineligible to receive any future remedy, but it will also negatively impact our position moving forward with future bargaining and/or arbitration surrounding the class size/composition language that we've been fighting to restore for the last 16 years.



Sick Leave Bank

TTOCs in our District who have worked for more than 20 days earn sick day credits for each day worked. They get approximately 1 sick day per every 13 days worked. When TTOCs get continuing contracts their TTOC sick bank should be transferred by the Employer to their contract sick leave bank. If you are TTOC who has just gotten a continuing contract, please check your pay stub to make sure that your TTOC sick bank has been transferred. Also, if you know a teacher who has just gotten their first continuing contract, please make sure to share this information with them.

Call Us... No Really, Give the STA a Call!

Every week the Monday Memo provides teachers with an update of what's going on with the STA; however, we don't always hear from you. When we don't hear anything, we assume that things at your school are running smoothly, that teachers are satisfied with how administrators are managing the sites, and that you don't need our support in any specific way. When members do call the office, it's often about situations that have been simmering for a long time, where perhaps we could have lent advice or support earlier on to help minimize the overall impact to members.

Calling us at the office is not a bother and it doesn't have to be a big deal. Answering your questions, brainstorming what you might say or do next, and helping you understand your rights are all part of our job. If something seems off, it probably is. Please do not hesitate to check in with us, we love to hear from you. (604-594-5353)

No time to call? Not sure who to ask? Send a quick email to STA@surreyteachers.org and we'll pass it on.

Social Justice

Join the Anti-Poverty Committee!

Are you new to the district and want to connect with a dynamic committee? Or have you attended events our committee has put on in the past few years, and are interested in getting involved? Some of our dearest hard-working activists have moved to other districts and we are feeling their loss! This year we have an exciting event planned: a fundraising dinner for "Bright Beginnings", a foundation started by retired Surrey teacher Tammy Neuman, to create full scholarships for kids graduating from Surrey schools who come from households in poverty. If you have a mind for event planning, and could come to 3 or 4 meetings between now and mid-February when the event is taking place, please join us! Contact 2-vp@surreyteachers.org to join us!



Grade 7 Girls' Conference

Attention all GRADE 7 teachers! The Status of Women Committee is planning the Grade 7 Girls' Conference. We would love to hear your suggestions and ideas for making this year's conference a success. We will be hosting a dinner for Grade 7 teachers on Nov. 1st, at 4:00pm in the STA Office. If you are interested in attending, please [SIGN UP HERE](#).



Welfare Food Challenge

THE 6TH ANNUAL WELFARE FOOD CHALLENGE starts on Wednesday, November 1st, 2017 and runs for a full 7 days. The Challenge highlights the inadequacy of welfare rates in BC. Participants will be expected to live on only the food they can purchase with \$19 dollars. This calculation is based on the expectation that welfare recipients will have to pay rent and damage deposit, bus tickets and cell phone (necessary to look for work and contact the welfare office) and personal hygiene. Even with the \$100/month raise implemented by the new BC government, this amount is not enough. A single person receives only \$710/month, which provides only \$19/week for food. With the rising cost of rent, lack of rent control, exorbitant cost of living in the city, this is only \$1 more per week than the Challenge in 2016. Sign up today!

Health + Wellness

Health + Safety Rep Training

School Union Representative Training for Health + Safety Reps will be happening on **November 1, 2, 7, and 8** at the STA office. The workshop topics include **Violence in the Workplace** and **Incident reporting**. Registration information will be available soon.

BCTF Bullying and Violence Experience Survey

The BCTF, in collaboration with Simon Fraser University, invites you to complete a survey on your experiences of workplace violence and bullying during your career as an educator. Even if you have not experienced any school-related bullying or violence in your role as an educator we would still like you to **COMPLETE THE SURVEY**.

Information from this survey will be used to help estimate the incident rate of violence against teachers, to identify steps that can be taken to prevent incidents of violence and aggression, and to deal with incidents if they occur.

Participation is entirely voluntary and all information you provide will remain confidential.



Stress Management Strategies

Many of us get so caught up in the fast pace of life that our day-to-day level of stress can feel overwhelming. The awesome BCTF resource, Starling Minds, is offering a 5-day Mental Fitness Challenge which will improve your stress management skills in 5-10 minutes a day. The challenge starts on Monday, October 23 and ends Friday, October 27th. You can join by **SIGNING IN TO YOUR STARLING ACCOUNT**. If you're not a Starling member, you can **REGISTER HERE**. There are no fees to join the challenge.

Twitter Highlights

#PSADay

@bcerac

Resources for Integrating Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Learning. Explore the growing collection.

<https://abedsupport.bcerac.ca/>

@PSASuperC2017 "reverse search google" great tool for students! #Fakenews #psaday

@ijukes We must embrace the reality that much of what school is about today can be outsourced to a smartphone...

@ijukes Unless you are the top 10% of readers/writers in the classroom, you learn more watching video and discussing with others #PSADay

@msdcottingham "Students need to learn how to learn."

@ijukes knows what's up!! Let's rethink education. #psaday

@MrsWassensclass Schools can foster resilience through the natural healing power of play. #gordonneufeld #psaday

@TeacherTrish_U Teachers haven't learned to teach students the way they learn - and who has the learning problem? @ijukes #psaday #sd36learn

Opportunities for Members

Please note that the deadline for the following applications is **November 15, 2017**.

• Labour conference in Chicago

The BCTF is accepting applications for one member who is in their first five years of teaching and/or who identifies as Aboriginal and/or as a racialized worker to be sponsored to attend the 2018 Labour Notes conference in Chicago. The conference is one of the world's largest gatherings of grassroots union activists. Please fill out and submit this **ONLINE FORM** to apply.

• UC Berkley Summer Institute on Union Women

The BCTF will be sponsoring two members to attend this year's **SUMMER INSTITUTE ON UNION WOMEN** at the University of California Berkeley Labour Center in July 2018. The delegation will include at least one member in their first five years of teaching and at least one member who identifies as Aboriginal and/or a racialized worker. Please fill out and submit this **ONLINE FORM** to apply.

Joke of the Week

Q: What do birds do on Hallowe'en?

A: Go trick-or-tweeting!

Thanks to Sara Z. for this week's joke!

If you have a short, clean, (but not necessarily education-related) joke, please send forward it to hello@surreyteachers.org. When your joke is drawn for publication, you will be entered into the monthly prize draw.

Contact Us!

The STA is here FOR YOU!

We want to hear from you; questions, concerns, suggestions, advice - everything!

Not sure who to contact? Send your message to STA@surreyteachers.org and it will get directed to the appropriate person.