



STA Connection April 27-May 1, 2020

BCTF 2020 Ratification: Did you vote yet!?

The ratification vote will be held by secret ballot with an online platform called Simply Voting. Around 11:00 pm on Monday, April 27, you should have received an email from the BCTF with the address vote@simplyvoting.com. This email will include your unique personalized voting link. All that is left for you to do is click on the link, choose between “yes” or “no”, and then confirm your selection. Many members have been stating how it only took them **seconds to vote!**

This link can only be used once, so **please do not share it!**

Help! I can't find my email! If you did not receive this email, please check your junk mail folder. If it isn't there, you can send an email to votesupport@bctf.ca and the BCTF technical team will help you. If you do not have internet or a device to cast your vote, you can phone the BCTF Provincial Returning Officer Suzie Mah at 1-800-871-6131 or 236-330-8995 and cast your vote with her.

Voting closes at 11:59 pm on Thursday, April 30. We suggest voting as soon as you can. If you are seeking further information about the Agreement-in-Committee, it can all be found on the BCTF portal.

All voting is completely confidential and secure. No one will know if or how you voted (unless you tell them yourself). Simply voting is completely safe, trusted, and secure, and used by many other organizations, including our colleagues in Ontario.

If you have general questions about the vote, your eligibility, or the process as a whole you can email the Provincial Returning Officer at returningofficer@bctf.ca.

The results will be released on Friday, May 1, 2020. On Friday morning, you will receive an email from the BCTF announcing the results. Unfortunately, their email system takes 3–4 hours to work through 47,000 email addresses. As a result, you may see the results on social media before you get your email.

This is unavoidable. Therefore, the official BCTF Social Media accounts will also post the results on Facebook and Twitter.

Thank you very much for participating in this important part of the BCTF's democratic structures!

Register NOW for our online STARA meeting! All Members Welcome!



As per the email that was sent last week, **the April STARA meeting has been moved to April 29, 2020 at 4 pm and will be held in a virtual format.**

We are hoping that this first attempt to have a STA Rep Assembly online will be successful. We have researched the security of a zoom meeting, including being able to have items to vote upon, and we hope it works well. We will be using the maximum security offered and, in order to ensure that security, we require you to register for this meeting in advance. All members who wish to attend will need to sign up individually as the registration keys are one use only. **Please use your surreyschools email for registration.**

REGISTRATION FOR THE APRIL 29,2020 STARA MEETING WILL BE OPEN UNTIL APRIL 29, 2020 AT 12:00 PM. To register, click [here](#).

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing your registration keys and information about joining the webinar (this process may take some time, so please register as soon as possible.)

REMEMBER, REGISTRATION WILL BE OPEN UNTIL APRIL 29,2020 AT 12:00 PM so please register early.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email sta@surreyteachers.org.

Week five of emergency remote teaching and learning

Whew! It is hard to believe how strange situations can start to feel normal after a really short time! Surrey teachers and associated professionals are performing creative miracles as they adapt to all the new demands upon them, reach out to the students they work with, and learn to deliver remote learning and supports. To single out just one group of members, we know that our helping teachers have been doing great and vital work in supporting their colleagues in adapting their work to remote learning. To say we here at the STA are impressed with everything members have been doing is a vast understatement.

It is alarming to us to learn from some members that their administrators have been hinting at or telling them outright that school will begin at a certain time in the next few weeks. The truth is we just don't know yet. From our point of view the messaging from the District and province over the last few weeks has been pretty consistent, considering the fluid health situation. Their message, and our message to the community of educators, has been "go slow," "things are not normal," "expectations must be changed," and "safety and health are the priorities."

In Jordan Tinney's weekly messages to all staff he emphasizes that yes, there will most likely be some opening of school facilities. This process has already started with child care for the children of essential service workers, is broadening to the children of other categories of worker, and is also expanding slowly to include some of our more complex learners who are most in need of in-person support. On April 28 Education Minister Rob Fleming stated that the province has not yet selected a date for a more general reopening of schools, but emphasized that planning is happening right now to maximize health and safety for students and staff if we reach that point. Any decision on a reopening, however, will be based on the decisions of the Provincial Health Officer, and if that happens, any return will presumably be gradual. And yes, it will mean more change for us, but let's not get panicked by the discussions about potential plans. Although the uncertainty is stressful, we have to take things one stage at a time, focus on what we are able to control, and advocate for health and safety to be the paramount concern.



- April 28 – Day of Mourning
- April 28 – Round 1 Applications close at 4:30 pm
- April 28-30 – Ratification Vote
- April 29 – STARA Meeting
- April 30 – Starling Minds Live Webcast @ 11 am
- May 1 – STA Convention
- May 4 – Status of Women Committee
- May 4 – Pro-D Committee
- May 5 – Executive Committee
- May 6 – IST Committee
- May 7 – Members of Colour Committee

STA Convention happening Friday!

Welcome to the 2020 Virtual STA Convention! We hope you are all well and staying safe during these unprecedented times. The Convention Committee is hard at work bringing to life a re-envisioning of Convention as we all abide the directives of the Public Health Authority to socially distance ourselves and to stay safe at home. All workshops are free for Surrey teachers and will be delivered online using Zoom. You can join the Zoom meeting on a desktop computer, laptop, tablet or even a smartphone.

Simply follow these easy steps to register and attend the Virtual Conference:

1. **Pick your workshops:** Browse the Convention website to find the workshops that you are interested in. Click the button to add a workshop to 'My Workshops'.
2. **Complete the registration:** Click the Register NOW! link in the menu to start the registration process. Enter your email address and follow the steps to complete the registration.
3. **Receive a confirmation email:** You will receive a confirmation email. Check your Spam folder if the email can not be found in the inbox.
4. **Receive the access information:** Shortly before the Convention as well as on the day of the Convention you will receive emails and/or text messages with the information on how to access the keynote as well as the workshops you had registered for.
5. **Access the Keynote:** If you have registered for the Keynote follow the instructions on how to access the Keynote.

Access the Workshops: For each workshop follow the instructions provided.

Shape of the Day: May 1, 2020

8:30 – 9:30: Keynote: Ryan McMahon - Anishinaabe comedian, writer, and media maker.

9:30 – 10:00: break

10:00 – 11:30: Session One

11:30 – 12:30: lunch

12:30 – 2:00: Session Two

General questions about the Convention? Email the STA at convention@surreyteachers.org.

Technical Support? Send a text message to 1 (844) 928-2338 or email us at support@staconvention.ca.

Annual General Meeting Call for Nominations



The STA Executive Committee has decided to postpone our local AGM from its original scheduled date of May 20, 2020. We want to take more time to investigate different models and platforms for conducting virtual meetings, as well as to learn from the experience of the online STARA and the BCTF AGM, which will be taking place online May 25-27, so that we can select the best model for the STA.

In light of this decision, **we have extended our deadline to submit your candidate statements to May 15.** If you are interested in running for a position (whether as a full-time table officer working in the STA office, as a member of the Executive Committee, or as a member of the Resolutions Committee), please review our "[Call for Nominations](#)" document. If you are considering whether you would like to run for a

position, or are curious to know more, please contact Matt Westphal at pres@surreyteachers.org.

If you wish to provide a candidate statement (for Executive Committee and Resolutions Committee) to be distributed to the membership before the AGM, please submit it to the STA office by May 15, 2020 or via fax to 604-594-5176. The maximum length for candidate statements is 600 words.

Agreement regarding term IST positions

The STA and District have entered into an [agreement](#) for members who posted into IST positions for the 2019/20 school year through a Special Bulletin prior to November 21, 2019. The agreement means that those ISTs will have the option to have their positions become continuing assignments, and will have until May 4, 2020 to decide if they want to be in a continuing IST assignment.

Professional Development Draw

The ProD Committee has made the decision to postpone the Professional Development Draw (formerly known as "The International Draw") that would normally occur at the STA AGM in May. We know this is a highly anticipated draw that allows for a very unique professional development opportunity and so we will hold the draw at a later date, next school year, when some certainty around travel returns.

Round 1 Interviews start today!

We have reached an agreement with the District to [adjust the transfer round timelines](#) slightly, as seen in the attached document. **If you are a teacher with a continuing contract, you are eligible to apply for positions in Rounds 1 and 2.**

Last year, the STA filed a number of grievances related to the transfer rounds. In our discussions with Human Resources and school principals, we got some insight into the inner workings of the process.

There are three parts to the transfer process. [Read more](#)

STA Awards

WE'RE OFFERING TWO NEW AWARDS

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
MAY 15, 2020



Every Spring, the STA sends \$1,500 to each Secondary school-site and \$500 to each Learning Centre for scholarships and bursaries for graduating students. As well, awards scholarships, bursaries and the Jennifer Wadge Memorial Social Justice Award.

This year, we offer two new awards of \$2000 each to graduating Surrey students who self-identify as Indigenous (Indigenous Student Bursary) in addition to four \$2000 Jennifer Wadge Social Justice Awards which are awarded to graduating Surrey students who are active in Social Justice pursuits. The [criteria for these awards](#) are available on our website. If you require any additional brochures or flyers for your school, or have any questions in regards to these awards, please feel free to contact the STA at sta@surreyteachers.org.

Deadline for applications is **May 15, 2020** so encourage your students to get their application in as soon as possible.

Our hearts go out to Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Teachers Union President Paul Wozney has identified Debert Elementary school teacher Lisa McCully as one of the 22 victims of the recent mass shooting in Nova Scotia. She was known to make lasting connections with her students and colleagues, and "was somebody who taught from the heart." Our condolences go out to our colleagues in Nova Scotia during this tragic time. The STA has sent letters to the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union and the staff of Debert Elementary school to express all of the Surrey Teachers' condolences at this awful time.

Mental Health Impacts of COVID-19 on Teachers

The STA Status of Women Committee usually puts on wellness events for our members, and recently met via Zoom to brainstorm ways we could support our members during this high stress time. We reached out to Dr. Andrew Miki, Chief Science Officer of Starling Minds, to request some wellness support for our members and were happy to hear that he will be holding a live webcast on Thursday, April 30 at 11 am on the topic of the mental health impacts of COVID-19 on teachers. He will be offering advice on how you can navigate the stress, anxiety, and worry brought on by these unprecedented times.

To register, please go to:

<https://info.starlingminds.com/live-webinar-the-mental-health-impact-of-covid-19-on-teachers>

Attached to this email you will find the “Mental Health and COVID-19: Supporting students and their families” pdf that was created by the BCTF and is filled with different resources to help support you and your students during this time.

COVID-19 Health Data

Please check out the [slide deck](#) that was provided to the BCTF by the Ministry of Health. Many of you may find it interesting to be able to see the various graphs and comparisons of our BC situation with other jurisdictions.



We are so proud to be Surrey Teachers and we know there are amazing things happening around the district that we would love to hear about. In the spirit of acts of kindness, we would love for our members to send us a “shout out” about a colleague who inspires you and who you think deserves recognition, whether it is for their kindness, a great resource they shared recently, or an awesome lesson they teach.

This week’s shout out goes to Marilyn Carr from Vanessa Broadworth:

“I’d like to nominate Marilyn Carr for a shoutout for the STA Connection. Marilyn has worked tirelessly to get all of our technology entered into our library system and checked out to the many students at our school who needed technology to connect to school from home. Additionally, Marilyn has been working with the TL team on the Surrey Schools One resource and on the STA Convention committee – and all with a smile and unflagging energy. She’s a superstar.”

Thank you Vanessa, you and Marilyn are now entered into our monthly draw for a \$25 Indigo! gift certificate. Please submit your “shout outs” to Angela via communications@surreyteachers.org to spread the kindness around our local and for your chance to win a gift card too!

We are Teachers

The following poem was shared with us by Michelle Mirabueno, grade 1/2 teacher at Woodland Park Elementary. Thank you so much for sharing with us Michelle!

We are teachers
In an unprecedented time
Where the world around us
Is in medical chaos
So many unknowns
But as always
Our job is to keep students safe
So for now
We cannot go to school
Be in our classrooms
See our children
And yes, they become like our children
So here we are
In the digital world
Left to teach from home

We are teachers
We are resilient
The need to troubleshoot
Learn how to reach our students
At all different levels academically and emotionally
Is a daily occurrence for us
That is not new
We can do this
Whether you choose weekly calls
Face to face lessons
Emailed instructions to work
We know our students best
We know how to reach them
This is an obstacle
That we will overcome
Choose what works for you

We are teachers
Working all throughout the day
Checking emails hourly
Answering questions from students
About how to do their work
From parents needing support
About how to get their child to work
The clock doesn't stop at 2:30
We check the work they send us

Provide feedback and insight
Letting them know we see their work
See their effort
We know this is hard
But they push on
Because we have taught them
To be resilient too

We are teachers
Some of us parents too
Trying to be mom and dad and now teacher to our own
Somehow teaching a class of 22
Seems easier than teaching 2 at home
But we persevere
Make lunches, dinners
Take time to play
Time for fresh air
Do daily household chores
Time to reflect
On what's going on
To be thankful
To be positive
To be ourselves

We are teachers
And together we can do this
We may not have had to do anything like this before
But like many other times
An unexpected occurrence happens
And we prevail
Continue to do what we do best
Teach
Teach resilience
Teach positivity
Teach that no matter what
We will never let them down
We will do whatever we can
To help them learn
And they will
Because we are teachers