



## STA Connection May 18-22, 2020

### Return to Schools Update

We have heard from many members and reps with concerns and confusion about the planning process for returning more teachers to face to face instruction on June 1. It is really helpful to hear what is going on in the schools and work sites, as it helps us advocate at the district level. We are pleased that the district is consulting with us regularly, but please remember, the decisions ultimately rest with the administration, the senior staff, the government, and the provincial health officer, depending on the topic. We do urge you all to consider bringing site-level concerns also to the attention of your Staff Committee or Health and Safety Committee, as relevant. Staff committee exists to improve the school, and it is appropriate to bring concerns or suggestions there. Health and Safety Committee will support any health and safety concerns, and can work with the administrator to enforce Worksafe requirements on site. It is a time of great change and concern, and this is why we bargained for these important committees to exist; now is the time to use our structures!

### COVID19-related Accommodation Request

**District Health Services has created a special form for processing Covid 19 related accommodation requests, and they are currently assessing members' requests to continue teaching remotely from home.**

You MAY qualify for an accommodation if:

- you are immunocompromised or have an existing health condition, you are at higher risk for health complications if exposed to the virus, and you have concerns about returning to school sites during this pandemic.

- you live with a family member who is immunocompromised or otherwise at greater risk for health complications if exposed to the virus, and you have concerns about returning to school sites.
- you are pregnant and seeking an accommodation to continue working from home due to pregnancy.
- you are in the high-risk age group of 60+ (as defined by the BC Ministry of Health).
- you cannot find child care for your children who are not school aged (note that if your children are school age, K-7, you can qualify for child care in your children's own school in Surrey district on days when your children are not in class, since teachers are considered essential service workers for the purposes of child care).

**This form was sent to all Administrators on Wednesday, May 20. Please ask your Administrator for the form. Members may also request this form by email at [healthservices@surreyschools.ca](mailto:healthservices@surreyschools.ca).**

Steps to request an accommodation related to COVID19:

1. Member fills out the Employee portion of the form – Part A:

- You could complete the form with basic information about your request to continue working from home, due to a 'medical condition' or 'health concern', to keep your private details confidential. Then be sure to email [healthservices@surreyschools.ca](mailto:healthservices@surreyschools.ca) directly with more details to support your request for accommodation.
- State that the accommodation you are requesting is to continue working remotely from home.
- Health services is not requiring a doctor's note to accompany this special form, but they may ask for additional documentation as part of the assessment process.
- Submit the form as soon as possible, rather than waiting to have medical information.

2. Administrator will then fill out the Manager portion of the form – Part B:

- Your Administrator is not responsible for approval of your request for accommodation – this will be done by Health Services.

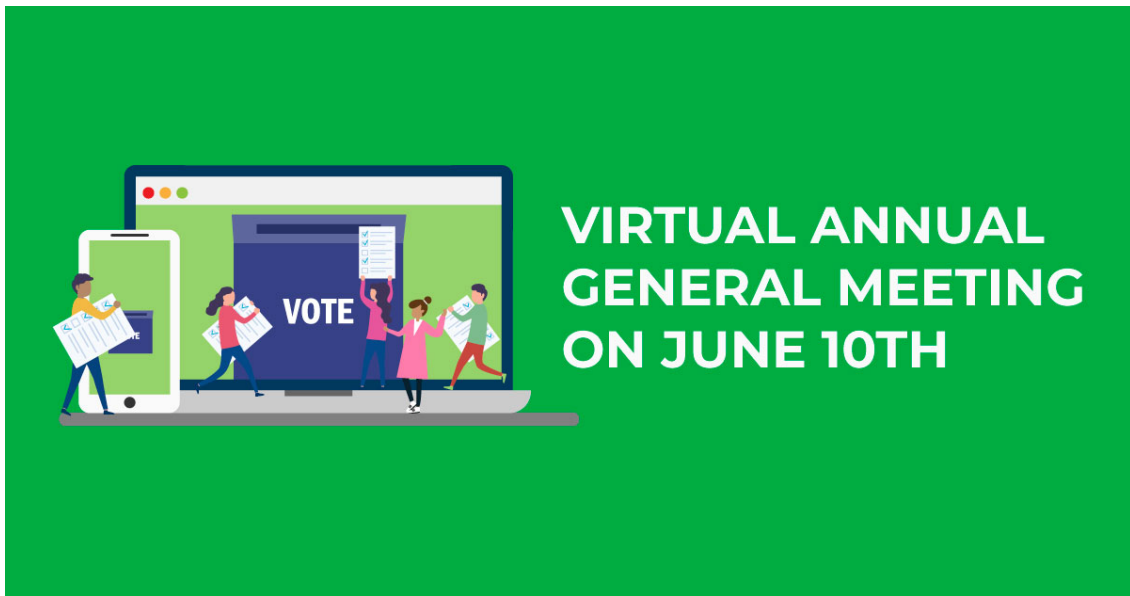
3. Administrator will send the form to District Health Services for assessment.

**Please note: At this point we do not have any guarantee on how the District will manage our members' requests to continue working remotely from home. We will continue to advocate that members with these needs be accommodated, and will support members whose requests for accommodation are denied.**

For further clarification, please email Dana Neidig, STA Health and Safety Officer, at [hs@surreyteachers.org](mailto:hs@surreyteachers.org).

## STA AGM

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This year's STA AGM will be taking place at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, June 10 via Zoom. All members who wish to attend will need to sign up individually as the registration keys are one use only. You can [register now](#) with your surreyschools email.

More information about the meeting and elections to come.

## Curriculum - we have to run a different track now!

The word curriculum comes from classical Latin curriculum "a running, course, career," and for sure, each year that I have taken my students through the curriculum for English 10-12, or for Spanish 9-12, I have had moments when I feel I am forcing some reluctant kids through a running course. I have been proud of how I have used many teaching skills, including differentiating instruction methods, using stories, varied activities, hilarity, making things interesting, or just dogged persistence to get some of the more reluctant "runners" to go all the way, getting every bit of the course completed.

But now we are in a pandemic. It is OK to not complete the course, to force them all to get all the way around. We need to slow down, forgive ourselves, and to seek some professional satisfaction from just connecting with the strivers and the stragglers, the middle of the pack and the ones who never got to the start line. A major aspect of our job that we are trained to do is to study the curriculum, meet our students, and use our professional autonomy to get them all through it. Thinking about not doing some of that is a huge change for many teachers.

Even in elementary, where the mandate to focus on literacy and numeracy skills is easier to fulfill, there is a letting go. So much of what we had hoped our students would discover through their work with us in the classroom will need to be left in the hands of next year's teacher. And next year's teacher will need to adjust, again, and as always to the diverse needs of their students. We remind ourselves that we teach children, not just curriculum.

In a recent meeting with the SOGI teachers advisory group, we asked, are the LGBTQ+ kids doing OK? In another recent meeting with some secondary reps, we asked what happens to kids who have struggled or never engaged with remote delivery of learning? And what about kids in gr. 11 or 12 who need to complete courses for Post Secondary admission and success? In another meeting, elementary teachers talked about discussed the feelings of grade 7s who may not articulate to gr. 8 with all the supports that we usually provide. **Many times there are not happy answers to these questions.** Not all kids have the

ability to concentrate on scholastics when their family is thrown into chaos by job loss, conflict, or mental health problems. Others just know this new reality will go on a while and they are not doing OK.

The district has been very clear in their communications to us, that social emotional learning and supports are extremely important in this time, and all teachers are a part of that work. Reporting expectations have been emphasizing a compassionate, equitable approach to student assessment. Government has made it clear that we are reopening schools to more learners June 1st, that we will be providing face to face instruction and that remote learning opportunities will continue. And at the same time there is an expectation that teacher workload will not increase.

So, something has to give, and it is a conundrum, because we know that providing engaging content and maintaining high expectations for school work to be completed IS an important aspect of social emotional learning; it gives purpose to the days in isolation and a sense of hope and normalcy. I asked Jordan Tinney if there is any talk at the provincial level of changing the curriculum demands, the graduation requirements, or the length of the school year. He couldn't answer that, and who knows, that may come, but for now, we need to get to the end of this school year, triaging the most important parts, and letting some things go. Next year will not be back to normal, and this conversation will continue.

- Julia MacRae, 1st VP

## Local Ratification Vote Results

STA members voted to ratify the contractual provisions that were agreed to in local bargaining. Results will be emailed to members, but the vote was approximately 97.6% in favour, and 2.4% against, with more than 1,900 votes cast. Thank you to all who participated in the online ratification vote!



- May 22 – International Solidarity Committee
- May 22 – PAPR Committee
- May 25 – Professional Development Day
- May 25-27 – BCTF AGM
- May 26 – Round 2 begins
- June 10 – [Virtual STA AGM](#)

## Surprised you didn't get the job? Types of Transfer Grievances...

In general, there are two main types of transfer grievances. In qualification grievances, a teacher is sometimes not shortlisted for an interview because the principal decided they were not qualified. In suitability grievances, a teacher was interviewed, but the principal considered a junior candidate demonstrably more suitable and offered them the job instead.

This year, the STA plans to use the expedited arbitration process in the Collective Agreement for transfer grievances. That means that timelines are very short, particularly for Round 2 grievances.

You can find out if someone with less seniority was awarded the job by reviewing the [Round One Closed Report](#) which is now available for viewing on the District website. Please note that you need to be logged-

in to be able to access the report.

If you do find that a teacher with less seniority was awarded a job you applied for, or you feel you were well-qualified, or there might have been an irregularity in the process, please contact Mark Keelan at [grieve2@surreyteachers.org](mailto:grieve2@surreyteachers.org).

It is very important, given the short timelines, to seek advice about irregularities as soon as possible.

## Shortlisted Without An Interview?

Did you apply for a job in Round One? Were you contacted for an interview?

Unlike other districts, in Surrey the candidate with the most seniority is not always awarded the position. Due to language in our Collective Agreement, the job can be awarded to a less senior, but more suitable candidate. However, candidates with more seniority must be offered an interview.

If you applied for a job in Round One, please check the [Closed Report](#) (available May 19). If the job was awarded to a candidate with less seniority than you, and you were not offered an interview, please contact Mark Keelan, Grievance Officer, at [grieve2@surreyteachers.org](mailto:grieve2@surreyteachers.org). If you would like more information about this process, it's described in this negotiated settlement agreement document.

## New Salary Grid and Retroactive Pay!

We can expect to receive our 2% retroactive salary payment by June 5! (Earnings that require individualized manual retro calculations, such as remedy and maternity/parental leave top-ups, to be paid by June 30.) This increase also applies to TTOCs and Summer School employment. The retroactive 2% increase is calculated on pay for every day worked since July 1, 2019. View the [revised salary grid for Surrey](#).

Attached you will also find a timeline of our BCTF collective agreement gains.

## Summer Pro-D Vote

We recently reached agreement with the district regarding the summer pro-d vote. This year, votes will be conducted during a virtual staff meeting using the Polly add on in Teams. Polly allows for anonymous and accountable voting during a virtual staff meeting where only those members who are eligible to vote are able to. It is the only method that meets the criteria of an accountable and anonymous vote. Other voting platforms such as Survey Monkey and Forms in Teams were reviewed but did not meet necessary criteria.

Staff reps and ProD reps will be receiving an email package regarding summer pro-d and the vote. Please watch your emails.

## Missed your School visit?

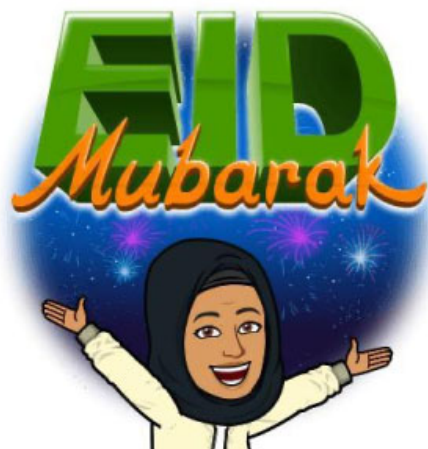
If your school has not received a visit from a table officer or executive member this year (we visited 107

work sites before Spring Break, yay!), and you would like to have a zoom meeting with one of us and your staff, we could do it! Please contact Julia at [1vp@surreyteachers.org](mailto:1vp@surreyteachers.org), or Stacy at [repsupport@surreyteachers.org](mailto:repsupport@surreyteachers.org), to request a virtual visit. This is a chance for teachers to discuss any aspect of union work in the schools.

## SFU Grad Diploma – Teaching for Social Justice

Beginning September 2020, the Graduate Diploma in Advanced Professional Studies in Education has been developed in partnership with Surrey Schools for educators interested in deepening your pedagogical understanding of identity, belonging, social justice and equity while engaging in sustained reflective inquiry program. This is a 2 year program of study and completion would allow teachers to move from TQS category 4 to 5 or from 5 to 5+. The deadline to apply is July 24, 2020. If you are interested, [RSVP](#) to attend an information session either on 2:00 – 3:00 pm on May 20, 3:00 – 4:00 pm on May 28, or 6:30 – 7:30 pm on June 1. For more information, [click here](#).

### Eid this weekend



Dear colleagues,  
I hope you are all well.

As you may know, Muslims have been fasting (no food or drink from dawn to dusk) for the month of Ramadan for almost a month now (we began April 24). To close this holy month, we celebrate Eid el Fitr, which is one of the biggest celebrations in the Islamic calendar (there is another Eid that will occur in the middle of the summer this year). Eid el Fitr will mostly likely be on the weekend but possibly on Monday, depending on the sighting of the moon and when you started Ramadan. After a month of fasting, you can imagine the celebrations that occur on Eid. While they centered around prayer, charity and community, they are also filled with food, family and presents. Eid in the time of covid, will no doubt be different, like all other things in life right now.

I just wanted to let you know that some of your students will be celebrating Eid this weekend, in ways we never thought we would have to. The greeting for Eid is Eid Mubarak, Eid Saeed, or just happy Eid!

I think at this time, when a lot of kids will not be getting the big culminating celebration at the end of this month of fasting, they will appreciate our acknowledgement more than ever before.

Eid Mubarak!

- Sajeda Rashid, Creekside Elementary



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 Stacey Joyce from Nicole Calla:**

*“I’d like to give a shout out to my LST teaching partner, Stacey Joyce. Stacey has done an amazing job as our mentorship leader this year, and has adapted everything she was doing to support her colleagues in learning new technology and platforms during emergency remote teaching. Every time someone has a question, she says, “I’ll make a quick video about that!” like some kind of technology wizard! We are so appreciative of her knowledge and help!”*

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

## Surrey Student Talent!



Richie Zhou from Guildford Learning Centre created the following art piece for Earth Day, inspired by the first Earth Day in 1970. Thank you to art teacher Anna Hittrich for sharing this beautiful art with us!