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Surrey teachers work on the unceded traditional territories of the Kwantlen, Katzie, Qayqayt and Semiahmoo First Nations. As part of meaningful reconciliation work, we reflect on the impacts of colonialism through self-education in order to be accountable to Indigenous people and pay attention to our students of Indigenous ancestry, providing them the tools for their success in the future. We are all on a path to learn more and understand the role of each of us as educators in healing the broken relationship with the First Peoples of this territory. We thank those who live on and care for the land.



## STA Connection January 18-22, 2021

### General Meeting this week

We held our General Meeting on Wednesday this week and elected our delegates to the BCTF AGM. The 105th BCTF Annual General Meeting 2021 will commence on Saturday, March 20, and conclude on Tuesday, March 23. Thank you to all who put forward your names, and congratulations, all were elected. We still have a few (approx. 20) more spots, so please consider putting your name forward. (email your name to [reception@surreyteachers.org](mailto:reception@surreyteachers.org), or put your name forward at the Feb. meeting) We plan to have a short extra General meeting before STARA in February and at that time we can fill our delegation. For this AGM, the BCTF will be introducing a new platform called LUMI where you will be able to speak on amendments, debate, and view resolutions, presentations, and videos all on one platform. Delegates will need a laptop or computer for the BCTF AGM as well as internet connection. It will be virtual and will be an improvement over last year's telephone town hall meeting; there will be a way to view the speakers to motions, hurray!

The Societies Act and our own By-law No. 2 (page 12 of the Members' Guide) require locals to elect their AGM delegates at local general meetings. So here is your last chance to get involved - please send in your name in advance and/or run off the floor. **Final call to be elected will be February 17, 2021 at STARA.**

Elected as delegates to the 2021 BCTF AGM:

- |                              |                           |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Kevin Amboe               | 15. Katalin Toreky Paziuk |
| 2. Vanessa Broadworth        | 16. Hilary Wardlow        |
| 3. Erin Coleman              | 17. Katrina Wisniewski    |
| 4. Navpreet Ganda            | 18. Kate Taylor           |
| 5. Nicole Hurtubise          | 19. Doug Knight           |
| 6. Dustin Johnson            | 20. Sandra Willing        |
| 7. Lesley Marriott           | 21. Onkar Bahia           |
| 8. Melanie Miki              | 22. Pauline Veto          |
| 9. Mykola Misiak             | 23. Nicole Jarvis         |
| 10. Dana Neidig              | 24. Maggie Li             |
| 11. Marilyn Ricketts-Lindsay | 25. Christy Van Ieperen   |
| 12. Brett Salary             | 26. Mark Maretic          |
| 13. Sharon Sall              | 27. Glynis Cawdell        |
| 14. Gavin Slade-Kerr         |                           |

These members will be attending as elected LRs, Resolutions committee members, or BCTF exec members:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Local Representative - Adilah Abdirahman   | Resolutions Committee - Gavin Hainsworth |
| Local Representative - Lizanne Foster      | Resolutions Committee - Derek Imai       |
| Local Representative - Rick Kumar          | Resolutions Committee - Andrea Leeks     |
| Local Representative – Angela Marcakis     | Resolutions Committee - Kelly MacLean    |
| Local Representative - Annie Ohana         | Dosen                                    |
| Local Representative - Amrit Sanghe        | STA President/BCTF Executive Committee   |
| BCTF Executive Committee Member - Violette | Member - Matt Westphal                   |
| Baillargeon                                | STA 1VP - Julia MacRae                   |
| Resolutions Committee - Marilyn Carr       | STA 2VP - Jatinder Bir                   |

## Pro D

Surrey Focus Day is taking place on February 19, 2021 with keynote speaker Kevin Lamoureux. Registration begins on January 26th. More information can be found on the [Surrey Focus Day website](#).

## FSA campaign update

We have received some feedback from members about principals pushing back when parents seek to exempt their children from writing the FSA. In the past couple of years, the Ministry of Education has put great pressure on school districts to increase FSA participation rates. The Ministry's position is that all students must write the FSA, unless they are prevented from doing so by family emergency, lengthy illness, or other extenuating circumstances (e.g., a student's anxiety

about writing the test). If parents and guardians encounter resistance from administrators when they seek to excuse their children from writing the FSA, it is up to them to decide whether to comply or keep pushing admin. The opt-out letter that was sent to parents was approved by BCPSEA, and our advice is for teachers not to go further than what the letter says in seeking to support parents in dealing with admin over this issue.

As for the FSA opt out letters, we have sent a package to all schools. Reps, if you haven't received them, please inquire with your admin to see if they didn't make it to your box. When sealing the letters to give to the students to take home, you may want to use a damp sponge instead of licking them, for Covid safety. As you know the test rollout has been delayed and will happen mid-February. If parents of blended students ask you for an electronic version of the FSA opt out letter, please forward the package to them attached to this memo.

## General Meetings – Young Workers

In the STA Connection (STAC) article about our Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> General Meeting, members were invited to put their names forward to be delegates to the BCTF AGM, and in particular younger teachers were invited as we reserve 2 spots for younger workers. We erroneously advertised the age to be under 30, but in fact a younger worker is **35 and under** in the BCTF. There is a further opportunity to volunteer – see above!

## BCTF Rep Assembly coming up

Do you have concerns you would like our local reps to bring the BCTF Rep Assembly? It takes place January 29-30 and our six representatives will be attending. Your local reps are Adilah Abdirahman, Amrit Sanghe, Angela Marcakis, Annie Ohana, Lizanne Foster and Rick Kumar. All of them can be reached directly, together, by emailing [lr@surreyteachers.org](mailto:lr@surreyteachers.org).

## BCTF New Teachers' Conference – funds available

The [BCTF New Teachers' Conference](#) is now open for registration. The virtual conference costs \$25, and since it takes place on a school day, attendees will need a release day from the classroom to attend. Please apply for funding for the registration and release time from the STA by emailing [reception@surreyteachers.org](mailto:reception@surreyteachers.org). First come, first serve. We have a limited budget, but we can send 20 members who are in the first 5 years of their teaching career.



Community and  
connections for early  
career teachers  
**February 26, 2021**

**REGISTER  
NOW!**

[bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2021](https://bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2021)



## Very interesting opportunity! Call for Project Team Co-Researchers

School liaison officers (SLOs) exist in many schools across BC. How does their presence impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) educators and students? The BCTF is collaborating with the Surrey Teachers' Association (STA) and 3 other locals to carry out research on this issue. The BCTF invites STA members who identify as BIPOC to apply for a role as Co-Researcher on the Project Team. The Project Team will consist of 2 representatives from each of the participating locals and one representative from selected BCTF committees. We are really happy that the BCTF is following up on ideas generated in Surrey. For more information, please review the attached memo and application form. **The deadline for applications is January 29th at 5pm.**

## How can I get most or all of my students to wear a mask?

Below are some effective strategies in a teacher's own words that she has used:

"I get 100% mask usage in my high school classes (8s, 11s, 12s). I did this in a few ways:

1. I began each course with a COVID presentation. As a science teacher this was easy as I could relate it to content. We discussed what Covid is, how it spreads, and how we can protect ourselves and each other (masks included).
2. If we have spikes in cases, I start the class with the dashboard as so many students are unaware of the cases and spread. I show them the graphs, the distribution of ages, compare what it was a few days ago... that usually gets those that may be inclined to remove their mask during class to wear them.

3. My saying is “Wearing a mask to protect others is an intentional act of kindness”. I stress kindness in my classroom and this is a direct way that students can be kind. I made large posters of this quite with images and printed them at staples to put around my classroom too. I remind students of this if mask usage goes down by reminding students at the beginning of class that I’m expect kindness, as well as praising acts of kindness (even wearing masks) throughout class.
4. I frequently have them check in with their “desk partners” to ask their comfort levels. Many ask each other to wear their masks so they feel safer. This way they take ownership for their kindness and students who feel uncomfortable can learn to advocate for themselves in asking others to be considerate.
5. I tell them that “I wear a mask to protect you, I kindly ask that you wear one to protect me, especially if I am giving you one on one help”. I get complete compliance with this. They know that if they want direct help within 2m, they must put on their mask. Otherwise, they have to accept help from 2m.

I have no students who are unable to wear a mask, hence these techniques. I have zero issues and all students recognize that is their choice still, but that wearing masks makes everyone feel safer ad calmer.”

The STA Connection is looking for success stories about how you have encouraged or motivated students to wear masks in class. Although we sometimes can’t achieve a 100% compliance rate in our classes, we’ve love to hear from our membership and exchange tips on how we can work together to reduce the risk of Covid.

Please share any useful strategies on how you or a colleague have achieved mask wearing in your class by emailing [communications@surreyteachers.org](mailto:communications@surreyteachers.org). We would like to highlight the active effort of our members to make our communities safer.

## Status of Men Survey

The Status of Men committee has been meeting this year and would like your support answering 9 quick questions to start examining the decline of males in teaching from 38% in 1991 to 23.6% in 2016. The fact that we have such a pronounced gender imbalance in our profession has many implications.

Thank you to those that have been able to complete the survey so far. The committee would like to hear from all Surrey teachers about this issue, regardless of gender or orientation. Please consider answering this very short, anonymous survey to provide the committee with your thoughts on the matter.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/STASOM>

## In Memoriam tributes at the AGM 2021

As you may or may not know, at the BCTF AGM we take a few solemn moments to pay tribute to

members who have passed away.

Unfortunately, we did not have a chance to honour our fellow members during last year's virtual AGM. However, this coming BCTF AGM we want to make sure to honour both members who passed away in 2019 and in 2020. We already have the names up to March 2020.

If any of our members have passed away since March 2020, could you please forward their names to the Surrey Teachers' Association [sta@surreyteachers.org](mailto:sta@surreyteachers.org) so that we can include them in the BCTF AGM "In Memoriam" presentation.

## A Conversation on How to Honor Black History and Culture

Black History Month is fast approaching. Because we know systemic racism exists, we have a responsibility, as agents within the education system, to educate ourselves and to become more actively anti-racist in our practice.

Are you feeling like you don't know enough about Canada's rich Black history? You are not alone. "Join human rights nonprofit FAST, and an esteemed panel to discuss ways to honour Black history and culture - in preparation for February: Black History Month with opening remarks from BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner." Please [register on Eventbrite](#).



### THURSDAY, JANUARY 28 @ 4 PM (PST) via ZOOM EDUCATIONAL EVENT

A Conversation on how to honour Black History & Culture with:



Jodi Derkson  
FAST, BC Director



Alyshah Veji  
FAST, Ontario



Dr. Ali A. Abdi  
Professor  
UBC, Education



Dr. Lisa Gunderson  
Psychologist  
One Love Consulting



Silvia Mangué Alene  
Kulea Love & Culture  
President Black History  
Awareness Society BC



Rachel Luke  
2020 Recipient  
PM Award for  
Teaching Excellence



Olaolu Adeleye  
Faculty  
Royal Roads  
University



Hayden Atwell  
Teacher, Ontario

### Addressing Injustice

#### [Anti-Racism Resources for Teens and Adults:](#)

- "How to be an Anti-Racist" by Ibram X. Kendi
- "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" by Malcolm X
- "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria" by Beverly Daniel Tatum
- "The Skin We're In" by Desmond Cole
- "Policing Black Lives" by Robyn Maynard
- "Black Skin, White Masks" by Frantz Fanon

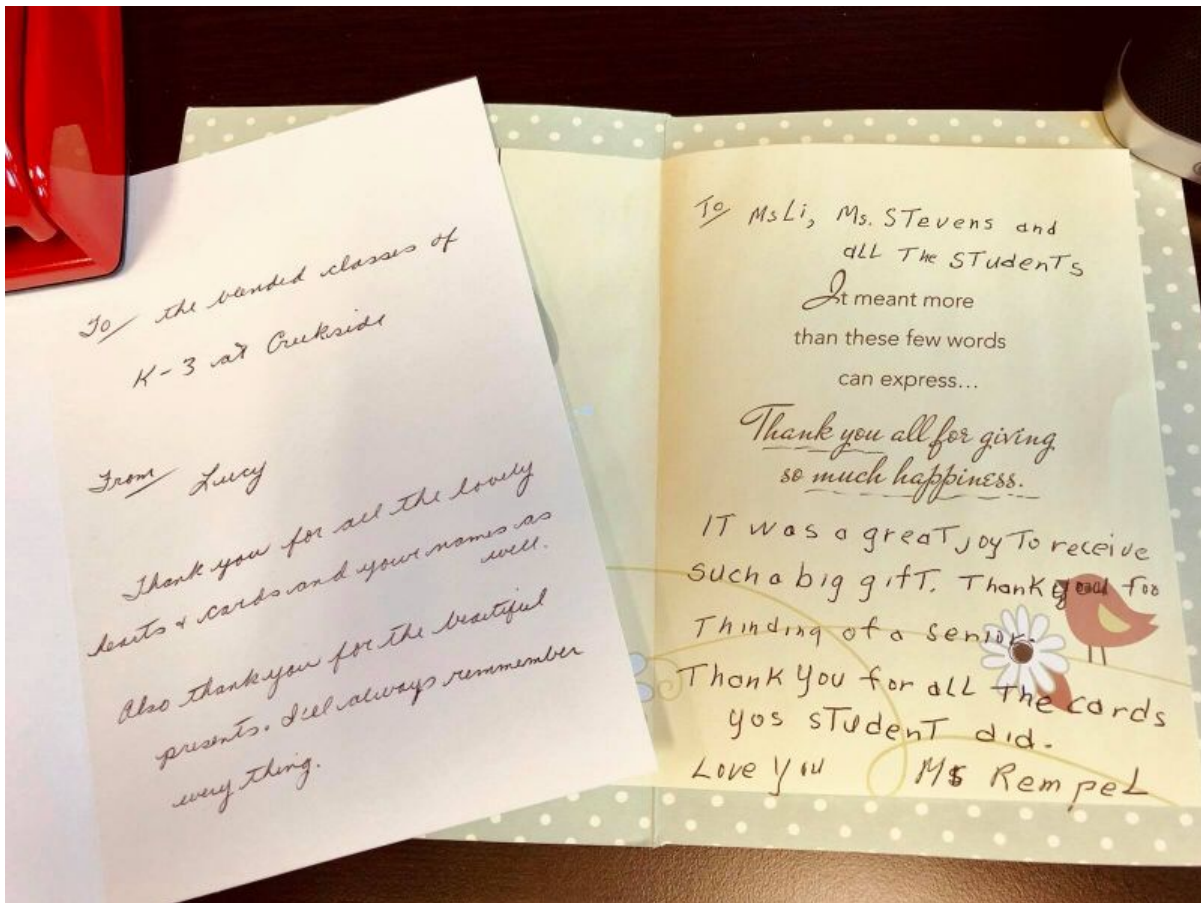
- "The Fire Next Time" by James Baldwin
- "Racism: A Short History" by George M. Frederickson
- "I am Not Your Negro" by Raoul Peck
- "13th" by Ava Duvernay

### [Anti-Racism Resources for Kids](#)

- "Sulwe" by Lupita Nyong'o
- "Little Legends: Exceptional Men in Black History" by Vashti Harrison
- "Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History" by Vashti Harrison
- "Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness" by Anastasia Higginbotham
- "A Is for Activist" by Innosanto Nagara
- "This Book Is Anti-Racist" by Tiffany Jewell
- "I Am Enough" by Grace Byers
- "When We Were Alone" by David A. Robertson
- "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Boy" by Tony Medina
- "A Kid's Book About Racism" by Jelani Memory

## Send a Senior Some Love this February!

By Angela Marcakis and Marg Geddes, Creekside Elementary



Prior to the winter break, Creekside Elementary students sent care packages and handmade cards to seniors who were spending the holidays alone. This simple gesture brought so much joy and cheer. Many of our seniors are going through this pandemic alone, and that loneliness and isolation can significantly compromise mental and physical health. Creekside is hoping to spread the love through all of Surrey and would love other schools to join the initiative. Have your class

connect with a senior who would love to receive some valentines from your students. It could be a long-term care facility near your school, a retired educator that used to work in your school, or a senior that someone on staff knows is alone. We're having a second wave of COVID, so let's have a second wave of hearts!



## International Solidarity Committee Draw



Winners of the ISC café etico coffee draw for January are:

- Sonya Bedi, T.E. Scott.
- Meena Manhas, Westerman.
- Nicole Little, Surrey Centre
- Samara Bassett, Lord Tweedsmuir.
- Melissa Allingham, Katzie
- Jas Sidhu, Creekside.
- Sierra Rai, Earl Marriott



Your pounds of coffee will be coming to you in the courier!

Check out [etico.ca](http://etico.ca) where there is a short video filmed in Nicaragua explaining their organic and fair trade practices. This is the only organic, shade-grown, non profit, cooperative-produced fair trade coffee available that we know of!

## Environmental Justice Committee



Are you interested in deepening your understanding of climate justice, expanding your repertoire of lessons on climate change, or just interested in what more you can do about the climate crisis? The Environmental Justice Committee invites you to participate in the BCTF workshop "Taking Action on Climate Change." The workshop will be held on February 2, 2021 from 4:00 - 5:30 pm (via Zoom). Spaces are limited. Please [register on Eventbrite](#) by January 28.



### STA EVENTS

January 25 – Local Reps Meeting  
January 26 – Executive Committee  
January 27 – [Staff Rep Training](#)  
January 27 – STARA Steering Committee  
January 27 – Ad Hoc Indigenization Committee  
January 28 – Ad Hoc Members of Colour

### OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

January 29 – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia

Committee

January 28-29 – BCTF Rep Assembly

January 31 – Deadline for Qualifications book

February 1 – Pro-D Committee

February 2 – [STA New Teachers' Conference](#)

February 2 – [Environmental Justice Committee:](#)

[Taking Action on Climate Change Workshop](#)

February 8 – BCTF AGM Delegation Rookie

Orientation