
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 February 22-26, 2021

The Covid Variant in Surrey



As you know the UK variant of Covid has been detected in cases associated with Surrey schools, as of Feb 26, the schools affected are Ecole Woodward Hill, Surrey Traditional, James Ardiel, Tamanawis, Queen Elizabeth Secondary, and AHP Matthew. It is extremely upsetting to realize you may have been exposed to the highly infectious variant of Covid, and we are raising our voices with decision makers to do more to protect our members and district from the virus. We had a meeting this week with the Surrey Trustees, and we pressed them on various concerns, and we hope to have a meeting soon with Surrey MLAs. We have generated a lot of media attention; Matt did 11 interviews on Tuesday!

A confusing aspect of this push is it seems unclear who actually has the power to implement a more stringent mask policy in a district. Is it the Minister of Education, the Chief PHO, Fraser Health, the Superintendent, the Government, the Trustees? At times while advocating we feel like we are chasing phantoms in a house of mirrors.

The staff of Ecole Woodward Hill were required to report to rapid testing on Sunday afternoon and thankfully all tested negative. On Tuesday morning they held a short, socially distanced, masked mini- action, where they wore red (for Ed!) assembled outside their school at 8:15, walked around the entrance area a couple of times, and then entered the school as a "walk in." Matt and Julia were happy to be there with them, to bring a few STA flags and to interact with the media that had assembled. Our thanks and admiration go out to the staff who are transforming their crisis moment into one that is reinvigorating the spirits of teachers around the district and the province in this worrisome time.

Breaking news: Staff at James Ardiel held a masked, physically-distanced walk in this morning (Feb 26) to show their togetherness, as they have been impacted with five self-isolation orders. Thank you to the organizers!

Masks for all

We believe masks to be an important protection for our health in this pandemic, along with hand washing, physical distancing etc.. Masks are also symbolic, visible items that demonstrate to others that all of us are doing our utmost to keep each other safe. We continue to push for a schools mask mandate, even if only particular to our district or health region where the Covid 19 virus is more prevalent than other areas of the province.

We have continued to roll out our videos on [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#) (@surreyteachers) with our direct ask to parents to help us all create a mask wearing culture in Surrey. So far we have uploaded videos in English, Tagalog, Mandarin, Punjabi, and Hindi, and we have more languages coming. If all of us took a minute to share these on our social media, the reach would be huge! Please do so! If you speak one of the languages, please share in your community.

In class please do your best to encourage mask wearing. When kids ask about the controversy, the news reports about Surrey schools, the arrival of the variant etc., that can be your cue to explain we are all doing what we can and as we are able to slow the spread of the virus. In your daily work, take the time to notice your routines and habits and if necessary make a few changes to keep yourself safer. With aerosolized particles as the threat, we need to make it normal to communicate with each other remotely, even though it seems strange to have a teams meeting or phone call for a conversation we would normally have in the hall, mailroom, staff room or office. Try to minimize your “face time” with colleagues, parents, etc..

What to do if the fogging chemical is bothering you

We have been contacted by several members who have had a reaction to Clorox360, the substance in the electrostatic sprayer used to disinfect schools. Symptoms include itchiness, rashes, vomiting, and shortness of breath. If you are having this reaction, you should apply to the District for an accommodation to have another disinfecting process used in your workspace.

Here is the [District Medical Certificate](#) in this situation.

If you miss work due to your reaction to Clorox, you need to fill out a [Form 6A](#).

Send the completed Form 6A to your principal, the district at District at HRES-Safety@surreyschools.ca, and the STA at hs@surreyteachers.org. Your principal may be confused by the 6A as the District uses a different form, but this is the form BCTF members are to use. You do not need to fill out both forms: the principal should use the 6A to complete the District form.

Finally, but most importantly, you need to call WorkSafeBC Claims Call Centre at 604.231.8888. If you don't call, they don't know about your claim.


If you have been denied a claim by WorkSafeBC, please contact the STA at hs@surreyteachers.org so we can advocate on your behalf.

Pink Shirt day!




Pink shirts were worn all over the district this past Wednesday to celebrate and mark Pink Shirt Day, a day to remember the impact of homophobic and transphobic bullying and how we all need to stand up against hate together. The STA Ad Hoc LGBTQ committee sponsored a sticker contest and the above is the design; stickers have been distributed to all schools.

STA Convention May 7th. Call for Workshop Proposals



surrey teachers' association

Surrey Teachers' Association Annual Convention Friday, May 7, 2021



Dr. Gabor Mâté
Renowned addiction expert, speaker author
Keynote Speaker • Panel on Equity and Diversity

Do you have a topic that you're passionate about? We know Surrey teachers are doing great work with their students and the STA Convention is now accepting workshop proposals for a wide range of topics. We are also proud to announce Gabor Maté as our keynote speaker this year and be featuring a panel on equity and diversity.

Sometimes teachers underestimate how good their own work is, but often there is nothing more useful for colleagues than someone sharing examples from their teaching practice, and the exchange of ideas in the ensuing discussion. If you have an idea you would like to share with your colleagues, please [submit your proposals](#).

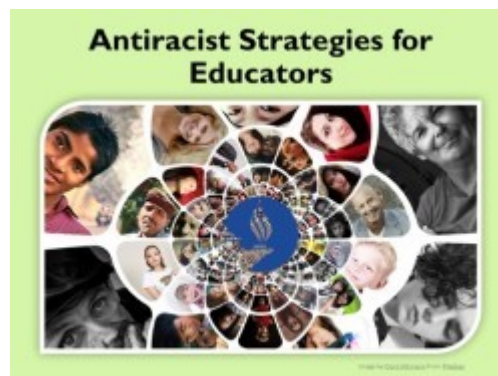
Call for workshop presenters

The Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers' Association of BC (myPITA) is accepting workshop applications for its Fall Online Conference on October 22, 2021. Please [submit your workshop proposal](#) by February 28. Honorariums, training, and complimentary conference registration available.

What to do After Black History Month?

While Black History Month gives us all a concentrated opportunity to focus on Black history and Black futures, we know that anti-racism work is important work to do all year long. If you and your staff are wondering how to further anti-racist work within yourself, the BCTF has a variety of workshops to support you and your colleagues in doing this important work. Today we are highlighting:

Antiracist Strategies for Educators (1.5-hour to 3-hour workshop)



This interactive workshop equips teachers with a better understanding of antiracism and how it can be incorporated into their daily teaching practice. Participants will consider key skills students and teachers need to discuss and implement antiracism and will have the opportunity to explore teaching strategies and resources to integrate this approach into their classrooms.

Follow this link to book the workshop - [BCTF Workshop Booking Form](#). For example you could book this workshop for a Pro D day at your school!



Status of Men in the Teaching Profession Committee

Gender Parity

**The visible absence
and declining numbers
of men who teach**



Town Hall Meeting via Zoom • Thursday, March 4 • 7 pm - 8 pm

The Status of Men Committee is presenting a Townhall meeting on Thursday, March 4 from 7–8 pm via Zoom to discuss the visible absence and declining numbers of men who teach. The Committee is inviting all interested members to [register](#) and participate - to ask questions or share your view. The Committee would also appreciate if anyone interested in the topic, shares their opinions by completing the Committee's [survey](#) on the topic.

Status of Women Committee



Have you been having trouble getting motivated to work out? Us too! The STA Status of Women Committee is hosting virtual dance classes on Wednesdays over the next few weeks. Come de-stress and have some fun with other Surrey teachers. You will burn calories and get a chance to learn choreography to a new style of dance every week! Regardless of your experience, [register now](#) via Eventbrite and join us virtually from the comfort of your home on Wednesdays from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm.



STA EVENTS

all STA committee meetings are open to all members, contact us for more information.

February 26 – [BCTF New Teacher Conference](#)

February 26 – [Knit, Chat, and Wine Night](#)

March 1 – Pro D committee

March 2 – Ad Hoc Environmental Justice Committee

March 2 – Ad Hoc Members of Colour Committee

March 3 – Ad Hoc Indigenization of the STA Committee

March 4 – Political Action Public Relations Committee

March 4 – Status of Women Committee

March 4 – [Town Hall on Gender Parity](#)

March 5 – Labour Affairs Committee

March 5 – [Knit, Chat, and Wine Night](#)