



## **STA Connection November 9-13, 2020**

### **Continuing Covid Concerns**



Obviously the rising rate of positivity for Covid in our health region is alarming, and it looks like there is now exponential growth in cases. We are certainly seeing lots of exposures in schools, and although we are told there isn't much transmission in the schools, it is hard to believe there is none. We attend morning staff meetings, where many staffs have fearful questions about their own risk. We will be discussing Covid risk at our general meeting, so please feel invited (see below). Remember to monitor yourself for symptoms, even mild ones, and report concerns to your Health & Safety Committee by email.

### **Keeping up your spirits, and keeping collegial relationships going – virtually**

Many teachers are now keeping to themselves, trying not to go to the office/staff room/ mail room/ photocopier/ etc., staying in their rooms, not doing extra. This is important, as we must try to protect

ourselves from Covid, but not good for connections with colleagues. People have given up carpooling, pub nights, in person staff meetings, committee meetings, lunches together, etc., but could these things be replaced by social zoom or teams meetings? We encourage you to establish some new traditions of virtual face to face support for each other, a virtual pub night or tea time might be a positive way to encourage newer teachers to reach out for informal mentoring and for all of us to feel connected to each other. Things are not normal, and it will certainly take a while until they are, but we still need to stay connected with our colleagues.

## Please stay home with any symptoms

Surrey Teachers are dedicated professionals, delivering awesome programs to the students in their care. But Covid19 is a strange disease that is mild for some and deadly for others. Please monitor yourselves and do not attend work if you have symptoms, even if mild, as it is crucial that we do all we can to stay away if we are infectious.

## STA General Meeting Nov. 18 via Zoom

The next Surrey Teacher's Association General Meeting will be held on November 18th, 2020 at 4pm (3:45pm soft start). The main items of business will be considering resolutions going to the BCTF Annual General Meeting, and discussing what potential actions STA members should take to deal with the escalating Covid-19 numbers. Please register via our website to attend our virtual meeting, and to get your voting key. If you have not received your voting and Zoom links for the 2020-2021 year, please [sign up](#) for this year's links. Looking forward to "seeing" you there! Please see attached agenda.

## STA New Teachers' Conference next week



Last chance to register for our popular new teachers' conference, there are a couple of spots left. We are able to accommodate more people because instead of meeting at the STA office and providing lunch,

people will be at home, so we can release a few more with that savings. If you are a teacher with a contract, even part time, and have been teaching for up to 3 years or so, and haven't attended before, you are eligible to attend. There will be a BCTF induction ceremony and Teri Mooring, BCTF President will address the new teachers and induct you into our union. [Register](#) now!

## “Shout Out” Section Update

The STA is committed to promoting reconciliation, decolonization, and anti-racism within the public education system. We know our members incorporate these pedagogies into their everyday teaching practice. As such, our Executive Committee has passed a motion for the 2020- 2021 school year to utilize the regular “Shout Out” section of the STAC to highlight and showcase the work our members are doing to promote these important practices in their classrooms and schools. We invite members to submit lesson plans, resources, activities, events or acts from their classroom or school community which help their students experience or learn about the following themes: anti-racism, reconciliation, Indigenous history/culture and/or Black Canadian history/culture. Submit to [communications@surreyteachers.org](mailto:communications@surreyteachers.org).

## “Failures to Fill” Reporting

As many of you already know, the STA has filed a grievance regarding the District’s practice to direct non-enrolling teachers to cover failures to fill for classroom teachers. The STA has been collecting this data to support this grievance by requesting that staff reps regularly [report failures to fill via this link](#) found on our homepage under Forms and Resources > STA Protection of Rights Forms. If you are a staff member at your school tasked with monitoring Failure to Fill, please continue to complete the Failure to Fill form. Your support ensures we correctly track this information and helps us compile the data on the impact of failure to fills.

## Remember Jan. 31 deadline for Qualification Book

Have you recently completed coursework? Are you qualified for positions requiring special training such as LST, IST, Helping Teacher, Counsellor, or Career Facilitator? Have a look through the Job Description Handbook (linked below), because you might already be eligible without realizing it! In order to be shortlisted in Rounds 1 and 2, teachers need to be listed in the District Qualification Book. Teachers who are interested in changing their assignments to such positions need to apply to the Human Resources Department (courier #481) by **January 31, 2021** to have their qualifications evaluated. The evaluation will be completed by March 31. (CA, Article E.28.1)

Job descriptions and evaluation forms for specific jobs can be found on the District website at <https://www.surreyschools.ca/careers/jobdescriptionhandbook/Pages/default.aspx>

## BC Multiculturalism Week next week

From November 15 - 21 2020, B.C. celebrates the diversity of the province and contributions of multicultural communities. A multicultural society that recognizes and respects difference promotes and nurtures inclusiveness for our students. When thinking about ethnic and cultural diversity, how can we

delve deeper in our celebration of multiculturalism by being culturally responsive and build an understanding of rich histories and experiences? Resources and lesson plans to create welcoming classrooms can be found on [BCTF's Social Justice and Anti-Racism page](#) and the [Teaching for Diversity website](#).

## Diwali – November 14th

Diwali is a festival celebrated by millions of Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains. It is considered a time for the celebration of justice and goodness. This year, Diwali falls on November 14th and will be observed across the world. The STA wishes those who are celebrating a very happy and prosperous Diwali!

## Trans Awareness Week November 13-19 and Transgender Day of Remembrance

It is within the lived experience of trans and gender non-conforming members of the community that they face pervasive bigotry and violence. November 20th is Transgender Day of Remembrance which honours and memorializes victims of transphobic violence. The week leading up to November 20th, Trans Awareness Week, is an opportunity to advocate and raise awareness through education about issues concerning the trans community. To increase visibility of these issues and support the effort in creating safe and inclusive spaces, please visit [BCTF's LGBTQ2S+ Action Group](#), [GLAAD](#), and [BC SOGI Education](#).

## Communications Coordinator Introduction

My name is Adilah Abdirahman and I would like to introduce myself as your new Communications Coordinator. This is my second year with the Surrey School District and I currently serve as a Local Representative on the 2020-2021 Executive Committee. By training, I am an English teacher and hold a Master of Education from York University. I approach my work by being informed of equity and social justice issues as well as a commitment to anti-racism, anti-oppression, decolonization, advocacy, inclusion and human rights. I'm also a yoga teacher in training with an interest in mindfulness and meditation. I am looking forward to connecting with the membership through the STAC and I am excited about bringing my voice and enthusiasm to the position!

## Notification of TTOC transfer deadline Nov. 15

### 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 01, the deadline is June 30.

# *Knit, Chat, and Wine Night!*

NOVEMBER 20 • 7 PM



The Status of Women Committee is excited to start planning virtual wellness events, such as meditation sessions and beginner dance fitness classes. Our first virtual event is a weekly “Knit, Chat, and Wine Night” hosted by committee member Velma Moore! Grab your needles and some yarn and safely connect with us from the comfort of your home. Open to all levels of knitters, beginners can learn something new, and those with more experience can enjoy the company while you work on your own projects. Who better to vent about the week’s events than other Surrey teachers? This BYOB event begins at **7:00 pm on Friday, November 20**. Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvc-6przkqH9P4ch8xJIC632-eL3XgKU-H>

## **Status of Women: Wellness Project 2020**

Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey. Many of you mentioned loving yoga and yearning for an app or subscription. Therefore, our “Wellness Tip of the Week” is to check out “Down Dog”, which is currently FREE for all teachers and students (K-12 and college) until January 1, 2021! To get the free subscription, go to [www.downdogapp.com](http://www.downdogapp.com), choose what type of fitness you’d like to do (Yoga, HIIT, Barre, 7 Minute Workout, Prenatal Yoga), and sign up using your [surreyschools.ca](mailto:surreyschools.ca) email address. That’s it! You’re ready to practice!

Our committee member, Marilyn Ricketts-Lindsay, highly recommends the app. “While a yoga app is no replacement for practice in a studio with a community of yogis, the Down Dog app comes pretty close to the real thing and you get to practice on your own schedule in the privacy of your home. If you like engaging sessions, clear instructions, and customization options such as duration, level, intensity, sequence, and music, then you should try the Down Dog app.”

Do you have a wellness tip you’d like to share with other teachers? Feel free to email any tips to Angela Marcakis, committee chair, at [marcakis\\_a@surreyschools.ca](mailto:marcakis_a@surreyschools.ca).

## Please sign this petition!

The STA Status of Women Committee is endorsing the NEVR (Network to Eliminate Violence in Relationships) petition to the federal government to develop a national prevention plan that includes a media campaign on healthy relationships and the consequences of relationship violence and to proactively address educational goals and societal change to establish a society with healthier and happier relationships. Please sign the petition and share it widely with your networks.

<https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-2881>

For more information about NEVR, please visit the website: <http://www.kpu.ca/nevr>

## TESS Presents: Dr. Love - November 16 | 4-5pm

The SOGI UBC Transformative Education Speaker Series presents “We Gon’ Be Alright, But That Ain’t Alright: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom” with Dr. Bettina Love. Dr. Love is the author of “We Want to Do More Than Survive” which discusses the importance of educators teaching students about injustice and social change through advocacy and movements. This free event will explore imagining possibilities of educational freedom. To register, please visit the [TESS website](#).