

# COQUITLAM TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

April 27, 2018 - No. 31

#208 - 2502 St. Johns Street, Port Moody, BC V3H 2B4 Ph: 604-936-9971 Fax: 604-936-7515

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**Coquitlam  
Teachers'  
Association**

## *President's Message*

### **Kindness and Mental Health**

In watching the unfolding crises in Canada in the last couple weeks and seeing how people are responding to the events in Humboldt and Toronto, we are inspired to make a statement of our own regarding some of the stresses and strains we encounter in teaching work. We feel our strength comes from unity and solidarity in our work but, it also comes from kindness, compassion and empathy for ourselves, our colleagues and our students. One can never be wrong by defaulting to kindness, in any situation. That's certainly our goal in every interaction, regardless of complexity of the situation or the manner of the person we're dealing with. Keep in mind that kindness generates good mental health both in the person giving it and the person receiving it.

### **National Day of Mourning**

Saturday, April 28th is the official date for the National Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job. Workers observed a minute of silence at 11 am Friday to honour these fallen workers. Teachers can find themselves among the ranks of the injured, rarely but, since the majority of workers injured or killed at work are young workers, we can find ourselves exposed to tragedy from the kids we work with. This day helps highlight this issue and keep health and safety and injury prevention initiatives at the forefront of employers' and workers' minds. One injury that could have been prevented is too many and there are thousands annually, showing that we still have much work to do in this area.

## BARGAINING

Thank-you again to the teachers who participated in our CTA Bargaining Survey. We have reviewed the feedback and value hearing your voice.

Our negotiations team met with LSA chairs, Committee Chairs and our CTA Executive Committee on Tuesday this week to review contract language and begin exploring ways to improve our language. We will be ratifying provincial objective recommendations at the CTA Rep Assembly May 9 at Winslow Centre and hope to see you there. Those recommendations will go to the BCTF this summer and be examined at the Bargaining Conference in October.

Just a reminder that our Coquitlam benefits were negotiated at a time where benefits could be bargained locally. That item has been moved to the provincial table and as such, we cannot change our benefits in any way. So while some would very much like to see some areas of improvements in our benefits like direct billing for prescriptions or increased amounts for eye exams or psychologists, we simply do not have bargaining authority to do so locally. Our options will be to stick with our current local plan or switch entirely to whatever plan the provincial parties negotiate. Regardless, we will have a local vote to select which plan we have at the conclusion of bargaining and before ratifying our agreements (Current Local benefits or whatever the provincial parties negotiate).

Provincial items like Salary, Paid Leaves, Prep Time, Class Size, Class Composition and other cost items cannot be negotiated locally at this time. Though the provincial parties may decide to move more items to the local table to negotiate, it is unlikely we will see some of those "big ticket" items moved to local negotiations. Time will tell, but at this time we do not have the ability to make changes to those areas.

Locally, we appreciate the feedback we received from the quadrant and survey results and are using those to develop topics and themes to explore in negotiations next year. We will bring those local objectives to a Fall CTA Rep Assembly to be ratified. We will also seek further input at that time as we get closer to opening bargaining.



Congratulations to **Roger Raghoobarsingh** who was appointed to the following committees at the April 18, 2018 Executive Committee Meeting:

- District Reporting Template Feedback & Review Team
- CTA Professional Development Committee
- District Design Committee for New Elementary Schools

See our **Committee Vacancies page 9** for updated openings.

## CTA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Wednesday, May 9, 2018**

**Winslow Centre – Gallery Room, 4:00 p.m.**

### Agenda

Recognition of First Nations Territory Greeting

1. Call to Order
2. President's Report
3. CTA Policy changes
4. Bargaining [In-Committee]
  - Ratification of Provincial Bargaining Objectives
  - Ratification of Chief Negotiator
5. CTA Finance motion: hardware upgrades
6. Grievance Report [A. Gilligan]
7. School Concerns
8. Prize Draw
9. Adjournment

## TTOC INFORMATION

The TTOC Committee is hosting a **BCTF Employment Insurance Seminar: Navigating the EI Claim Process for Teachers Teaching on Call.**

This seminar helps TTOCs understand the steps to follow in applying for, and obtaining, EI benefits. There are 30 participant spots open for this seminar.

**Where: Winslow Gallery Room, 4-6pm**

**Date: Thursday, May 17th**

**RSVP: Secure your spot by emailing Geoffrey at [gkehrig@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:gkehrig@sd43.bc.ca)**



## ELECTION OF THE 2018-19 CTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following CTA Executive Committee positions for 2018-19 will be filled at the CTA Year End General Meeting on Wednesday May 16, 2018.

- President
- 1st Vice-President
- 2nd Vice-President
- Local Reps to the BCTF (2)
- Members-at-Large (5-6)

Those interested in running for any of these positions should go to [www.coquitlamteachers.com](http://www.coquitlamteachers.com) for a CV form. The deadline for receipt of the CV form into the CTA office is **Monday, April 30, 2018 at 4:00 pm.**

**Met the deadline?** Candidates will have a write-up in the Year End General bulletin.

**Missed the deadline?** Candidates can be nominated from the floor of the May 16th Year End General Meeting.

## Further improvements to the New Teachers' Pension Plan

The Teachers' Pension Plan (TPP) started a new era on January 1, 2018. This New Plan is a modernization of the TPP that increases the lifetime pension and brings equity for all plan members regardless of working as a TTOC, part-time, or full-time teacher. Based on actuarial information from the Teachers' Pension Plan that indicates a surplus, the Plan Partners (BCTF and provincial government) have decided to implement a series of further improvements.

Although the surplus and improvements are pending formal confirmation with pension authorities in late August 2018, Partners have made the decision that the BCTF inform all Plan Members. The information was presented at the March 2018 Annual General Meeting and shared with other representative organizations (British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association (BCRTA), BC School Superintendents' Association (BCSSA), BC Principals and Vice-Principals' Association (BCPVPA), Plan Employer Partner, and the Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees (TPBT).

Starting May 2018, there will be eight regional Pension Outreach sessions explaining in detail these further improvements. The locations and dates are found here:

**<https://tpp.pensionsbc.ca/web/teachers/board-communicue-march-19-2018>, and here: <http://bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=4780>.**



## NEW TEACHER OPPORTUNITY!

Our local is hosting our BCTF Metro West Zone Meeting this May. In the wake of having our language restored and implemented this year, we are looking for a new teacher in contract to talk about their experiences for 15-20 minutes as a guest speaker on May 5th at The Executive Plaza Hotel on North Road at 2:45pm.

It's a great way to share your experiences and voice as we prepare for local and provincial bargaining. We will be offering a \$50 gift card.

If you are interested please contact Kara Obojski at 604-936-9971 or [kobojski@cta43.org](mailto:kobojski@cta43.org)

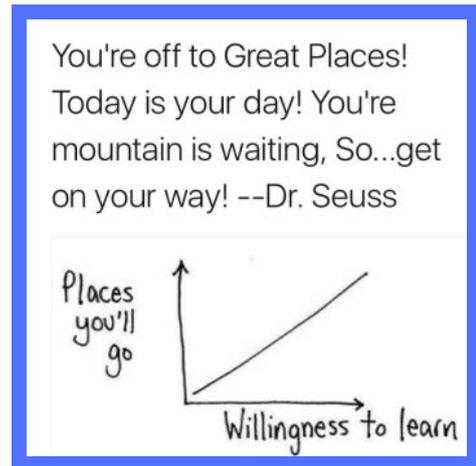


## CTA presented to principals last week at their weekly Learning Without Boundaries meeting.

We discussed the importance of Professional Development and how to be supportive of teachers' choices in PD. As educators, we all value this important part of teaching and recognize the positive impact of whole staff PD but also realize at times teachers may choose PD outside of their school site when unique opportunities arise for their Professional Development.

Principals were encouraged to provide time for teachers to share out their experiences from PD and to show interest by asking questions about their learning. The CTA was clear that attendance "checklists" and PD reports are not a direction we want to go, but that teachers do have the responsibility to let administrators know if they are off site on PD day for health and safety reasons and also in an effort to share their learning experiences.

Assistant Superintendent Carey Chute also presented on the topic and shared the districts value of PD. So, if your administrator begins to show more interest in your PD choices, rest assured it is the direction the CTA hoped for, one where a principal is encouraging and supportive of different PD experienced, however, if it becomes more of a mandatory "check-in or report out" on PD, we would like to know. It is meant to be supportive not supervisory in nature.



## #IGNITE43 – Perspectives in Teaching and Learning in 2018

Thursday, May 17th

Samz Neighbourhood Pub

2342 Elgin Avenue, Port Coquitlam

5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

\$20 TO REGISTER, email: [pd@cta43.org](mailto:pd@cta43.org)

**Along with an amazing list of presenters, your ticket includes an appetizer, entrée, and dessert.**

IGNITE43 "Perspectives in Teaching and Learning" (with sponsorship from Continuing Education) We are thrilled to announce our list of presenters: Chuck Baker (Dr. Charles Best), Jeff Christensen (Eagle Mtn), Andrea Klockenbrink (Continuing Education), Charlotte Lightburn (Gleneagle), Erica McArthur (Riverside), Trish Quan (Kwayhquitlum), Dave Sands (SBO), Erin Stainsby-Anderson (Dr. Charles Best), Greg Sutherland (SFU), Ali Tootian (Gleneagle) and Stephen Whiffin (SBO) A special thank you to James Gill (Meadowbrook) who will join us as emcee.

### WHAT IS IGNITE?

The Ignite presentation format is a 5 minutes long presentation with 20 slides and with the slides advancing automatically every 15 seconds. It's the presentation equivalent of a haiku or sonnet that sparks or 'ignites' an idea and allows time to discuss further and continue the conversation long after the short presentation is complete. <http://www.ignitetalks.io/>

Holly Stibbs

## AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The following news release was received by the CTA. It's an exciting opportunity to honour a colleague who does exemplary work. Coquitlam has had a number of winners of this award in the past and it would be good to continue the tradition.

### NEWS RELEASE

Premier announces awards for excellence in education

VICTORIA - Nominations open today for the new Premier's Awards for Excellence in Education, an opportunity to recognize the enormous contributions of education professionals who go above and beyond to make life better for students in British Columbia.

"B.C.'s talented teachers, administrators and support workers deserve to be honoured and celebrated for the important work they do," said Premier John Horgan. "We are focused on investing in British Columbia's education system, and developing new relationships with our education partners that are built on trust and respect."

Premier Horgan's announcement kicked off B.C. Education Week, April 23-27, 2018. The week includes students, teachers, staff and parents participating in a variety of activities celebrating the innovative approach to learning that occurs in their respective schools and communities. "We hope community members throughout B.C. will take the time to nominate education professionals who have made a positive difference in their own lives, or those of their children or grandchildren," said Rob Fleming, Minister of Education. "Highly skilled and innovative teachers, administrators, principals, vice-principals and support workers - who operate school buses safely, help our kids read and keep schools clean and well maintained - deserve acknowledgement for their dedication to helping students succeed."

The Premier's Awards for Excellence in Education will honour the achievements of public, independent and First Nations school-system teachers, principals, vice-principals, administrators and support staff. Awards will be given out in nine categories, ranging from community engagement to Indigenous education. Nominations will be accepted until June 18, 2018.

"B.C.'s 43,000 public school teachers all work hard every day to create safe, fun and enriched learning environments for all our students," said Glen Hansman, president of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation. "We are teachers, mentors, coaches, club sponsors and much more. It's very encouraging to have a government that emphasizes its respect for teachers, and the incredibly valuable work all educators do in our schools and communities."

Shortlisted nominees will be announced in late August. Finalists will be invited to an awards ceremony at Government House in Victoria on World Teachers' Day, Oct. 5, 2018. Premier Horgan and Fleming will be in attendance. Winners will receive a \$3,000 personal bursary for professional learning, and a \$2,000 contribution to their school community for professional learning.

"CUPE BC represents more than 27,000 education workers who work in B.C.'s K-12 education system," said Paul Faoro, president of CUPE BC. "I'm pleased the new government has established a category of awards to recognize the important work our members do making public schools welcoming, inclusive and safe."

**To nominate an education professional, go to: [www.gov.bc.ca/excellenceineducation](http://www.gov.bc.ca/excellenceineducation)**

## MENTORING

### May 8th - Interview Tips and Tricks Workshop 3:45-7:00 pm – Dinner provided

In preparation for postings and interviews the Mentoring Team is offering a workshop to help you better understand the interview process, how to effectively answer questions and how to prepare for an interview.

**Looking for mentors** – Are you interested in joining the Mentoring Team and supporting our new colleagues? We are now accepting applications. You can put your name forward here:

<http://my43.sd43.bc.ca/departments/student-services/Mentoring/default.aspx>

Tamara Sengotta  
Mentoring Coordinator  
SD#43  
604-937-6381

## Social Justice Movie Night

By Karen Learmonth,  
Chairperson, Social Justice Committee

Spotlight on the Social Justice Movie Night held February 22nd at Gleneagle Secondary:

Although a documentary about the privatization of the US public school system, there were many similarities to what is happening, and what could happen in the future with Canadian private schools.

Thanks to everyone who came out to the Social Justice Movie Night last month! It was a great night, filled with an eye-opening movie, some delicious appetizers, and great conversation with lovely like-minded people!

Thanks also to the staff of Gleneagle Secondary, for allowing us to host our event there.

We would love to have more events out in the community like this. If you would like your school to host a movie night, or if you have a movie suggestion for a future movie night, please let us know!

We can also bring in BCTF SJ Workshops on everything from gender issues to poverty and can offer great free resources. For more information, contact Karen Learmonth at [klearmonth@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:klearmonth@sd43.bc.ca)

Here are just a few shots of the show, and just a few of us that were there that night..



## **Mental Health Week is coming—and your contribution counts!**

Mental Health Week is just around the corner (**May 7–13, 2018**). I'm happy to say that mental health is on everyone's radar a bit more these days, as awareness efforts like this special week are paying off.

But we still have a bit of a hill to climb in terms of raising awareness, removing stigmas, and taking actions. While there are several major initiatives taking place to advance mental health concerns in this country, it's important not to overlook individual contributions. Every little bit counts, and we all have a role to play. So, my question to you for mental health week is a simple one: what can you do in your personal or professional life to advance the cause of mental health?

Here's a suggestion: pick a single message or a single action and bring it to life. There are many ways to do this, and none of them require a large time commitment. It can mean being attentive to the health of others and reaching out, acknowledging your own 'humanness' and vulnerability, helping improve systems, or telling others when you do things to recharge your own mental health.

Here are some examples I've heard in my work over the years—see if these give you an idea of what your contribution might be:

- A teacher reaching out to another teacher who seems to be burning out saying "I've been seeing how you're doing these days—it may be similar to what I've been through—let me know if you want to chat."
- A senior leader empathizing with a peer on their challenges and stress levels, normalizing the benefits of using resources, and sharing a psychologist's name (in this case it was mine).
- A parent acknowledging to their teenage daughter that she is quite right—they (the parent) tend to take things more to the extreme than they need to on a certain situation (that's not me, but I could see this happen in the next few years!)
- A team leader going the extra mile and working with existing structures in an innovative way to modify a team member's duties enough that they prefer to stay at work in a tough health situation as opposed to going off work.
- An adult sharing with a child what they did over the weekend, for example walking with a friend, exercising, eating healthy foods, spending time in nature, and labelling this as 'taking care of their mental health.'

Not only do we need to have mental health on our radar; we're ready for the next level—even more conversations, more actions. Your leadership is needed, and now is a great time given Mental Health Week. So, what's your contribution? Give it some thought and watch how small actions can make big differences in people's lives.

**Dr. Marie-Helene Pelletier** is a bilingual practicing psychologist and worked with teachers through the BCTF Health and Wellness Program.

# COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Teachers interested in the following committees should go onto our website for a curriculum vitae form and submit it to the CTA Office by: **Monday, April 30, 2018.**



If you have questions, call the CTA Office at 604-936-9971.

## **New Westminster & District Labour Council**

- 5 CTA reps

## **CTA Multiculturalism & Anti-Racism Committee**

- 1 elem. rep, 2 secondary reps, 1 MAL

## **CTA PD Committee**

- 1 elem. rep, 2 secondary reps

## **CTA Teachers Teaching on Call Committee**

- 5 members-at-large

## **CTA Policies & Procedures Committee**

- 1 member-at-large

## **CTA Social Justice Committee**

- 2 middle reps

## **District Student Services Advisory Committee**

- 2 CTA reps

## **District French Advisory Committee**

- 3 CTA reps

## **District Student Achievement Advisory Committee**

- 4 CTA reps

## **District Review Panel Committee**

- 1 CTA rep

## **District Technology Advisory Committee**

- 2 CTA reps

## **District Student Wellness & Safety Committee**

- 3 CTA reps

## **District Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Education**

- 1 CTA rep

## **District Design Committee for New Elementary Schools**

- 3 CTA reps



## Upcoming Retirement Events

- **Sheila Kopf** from Coquitlam River Elementary School (CRE) is retiring. A retirement party in the library at CRE on Thursday, May 31st from 4 to 7 pm. If you would like to attend and help Sheila celebrate, please RSVP Verena von Unruh (vvonunruh@sd43.bc.ca) by May 17th. We are collecting \$25 per person or \$10 for gift only. 
- **Mike Cook** from Pinetree Secondary School is retiring. A celebration on Monday June 25th from 4 - 9:30 pm at Pinetree Sec. School Library. \$20 for food & gift. Please use this link to RSVP and pay: <https://sd43.schoolcashonline.com/Fee/Details/16781/108/False/True> 
- **Brenda Graham** from Westwood Elementary is retiring. A celebration on Friday, June 22 from 3:30 - 5:30 pm at Westwood Elementary gym. \$20 for food & gift (or \$10 for gift only). RSVP by June 1, 2018 to Carly Johnson (cjohnson@sd43.bc.ca)

## Contact Us...



/CTA43



@CTA43

The CTA can be found on Facebook and Twitter. You can also email us or check out the website  
[www.coquitlamteachers.com](http://www.coquitlamteachers.com)

## CTA Contacts:

[www.coquitlamteachers.com](http://www.coquitlamteachers.com)  
CTA Office: 604-936-9971

Ken Christensen, President  
[kchristensen@cta43.org](mailto:kchristensen@cta43.org)

Amanda Long, First Vice-President  
[along@cta43.org](mailto:along@cta43.org)

Kara Obojski, Second Vice-President  
[kobojski@cta43.org](mailto:kobojski@cta43.org)

Andy Gilligan, Labour Relations Officer  
[agilligan@cta43.org](mailto:agilligan@cta43.org)

Holly Stibbs, Pro-D Chair  
[hstibbs@cta43.org](mailto:hstibbs@cta43.org)

Kelly Roberts, Executive Coordinator  
[kroberts@cta43.org](mailto:kroberts@cta43.org)

Heidi Davis, Finance Administrator  
[hdavis@cta43.org](mailto:hdavis@cta43.org)

Pat Adolf, Administrative Associate  
[padolf@cta43.org](mailto:padolf@cta43.org)

Kelly Stewart, Office Clerk  
[kstewart@cta43.org](mailto:kstewart@cta43.org)