



## Cultural Leaves

With our new Collective Agreement, all Indigenous employees now have access to 5 days of cultural leave. This leave connects to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and is in response to the acknowledgement of the importance of connection to community for Aboriginal members and their important role in our communities.

This leave is found under article G.11 - Cultural Leave for Aboriginal Employees in the Collective Agreement. It states: The Superintendent of Schools or their designate, may grant five (5) paid days per year leave with seven (7) days written notice from the em-

ployee to participate in Aboriginal Cultural event(s). Such leave shall not be unreasonably denied.

Some examples of cultural activities are:

- Hunting
- Pow-wows
- Sweats
- Community Funerals
- Cultural events and ceremonies
- Gathering traditional medicines

If you would like to talk any of this through or have any questions, the local contact for Aboriginal Education is Jesse Halton at [jshalton1@gmail.com](mailto:jshalton1@gmail.com)

## 2021/22 NDTA Meeting Schedule

September 21
October 25
November 22
December 13 (short meeting and social)
January 25
February 22
April 4
May 9
June 13

If your school has not yet submitted its form indicating this years staff reps, health and safety chairs, and pro-d reps, please do so as soon as possible. We are presently organizing staff-rep training and want to make sure every school is represented.

Meetings will continue via Zoom for this year.

## Mentorship

The NDTA has recently launched its mentorship program. We received money for this program from the provincial government through our last round of bargaining. This initiative supports our colleagues who are in their first five years of teaching. We have an enthusiastic group of dedicated mentors. They had their initial meeting on September 17 followed by a retreat on the 23rd and 24th at the Harbour. to learn about effective mentorship and plan their first event for the mentees.

The mentees attended their first meet and greet and are looking forward to their first major event.





## Expanded Health and Safety Measures

As most of you are aware, earlier this month the BC government expanded its health and safety guidelines. In particular, the updated mask mandate requires K-3 students to wear masks (October 4).

In addition to the Ministry announcement, the BCTF Kootenay Zone meeting also addressed the new guidelines. The following is a list of key take-aways from communication we received as well as the guidelines:

1. All students in BC schools will be required to wear a mask when inside a school building, including while at their desks and on busses effective today, October 4, 2021.
2. The guidelines also contain strategies for schools to help create space between people, including staggered recess, lunch breaks and class transition times, managing the flow of people in common areas, and using available space to spread people out.
3. **Exceptions to the mask policy include:**
  - A person who cannot tolerate wearing a mask for health or behavioural reasons.
  - a person unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person.
  - If the mask is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the person wearing it.
  - If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask. For example: playing a wind instrument; engaging in high-intensity physical activity; eating or drinking; if a person is behind a barrier; or while providing a service to a person with a disability or diverse ability (for example, hearing impairment); where visual cues, facial expressions and/or lip reading movements are important.
4. **In cases of exceptions being requested, school/districts should work with these individuals (and their parents/caregivers, if applicable to a student) to explore other environmental and administrative measures to ensure their safety and the safety of others.**
5. The safety measures in the guidelines can be supported by:
  - Having staff model these behaviours
  - Sharing of reliable information from the BCCDC, PHO with parents/guardians
  - Promoting safety measures such as visual aids and signage
  - Remind students and staff about respecting personal space

Where an exception is requested, your Principal has to work with the parents/caregivers to explore other environmental and administrative measures to ensure the student's safety and the safety of others.

If your Principal is not exploring other environmental and administrative measures to ensure the student's safety and the safety of others, please do the following:

1. Immediately refer the matter to your site-based JOHSC, in writing, and copy Carla Wilson at [lp07@bctf.ca](mailto:lp07@bctf.ca), your staff rep(s) and our NDTA Health and Safety chair Ailis Lawrence at [ailislawrence@gmail.com](mailto:ailislawrence@gmail.com).
2. Do not get into arguments with parents/caregivers and refer any challenging situations to your Principal and email Carla a summary at [lp07@bctf.ca](mailto:lp07@bctf.ca) and she will follow up with the Superintendent and HR if necessary.





## Salary for new teachers and TTOCS Taking Contracts

As of July 1, 2021, new provincial language in article B.1.6 (Salary) came into effect that affects the salary placement of new teachers and TTOCs taking contracts. The language is:

*Effective July 1, 2021 Teachers Teaching on Call (TTOCs) on the first step of the salary grid, who accept a contract will be paid at the second step of the salary grid for the term of the contract. Temporary/term contract and continuing employees will be placed on the second step of the grid or at a higher step in accordance with the local placement on the scale provisions.*

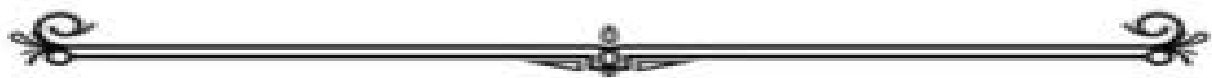
This new provision applies to new teachers and TTOCs who would be at the bottom step (step 0) of the salary grid this year. For example:

- A **new teacher** hired into a contract on or af-

ter July 1, 2021 will be placed at Step 1.

- **Existing contract teachers** who were at Step 0 in June 2021 will be advanced to Step 1 effective July 1, 2021.
- A **TTOC** who accepts a contract on or after July 1, 2021 will be advanced to Step 1 from the beginning of the contract.

If a new teacher or TTOC would have already been at Step 1 at the beginning of September, they will **not** advance a further step. It is vital that everyone check their pay statements regularly to verify they are being paid at the correct salary grid and step. It is particularly important for teachers in the situations above to make sure their pay has been adjusted correctly. If you believe there is an error, first contact Payroll, and if it is not rectified contact the NDTA office.



## Congratulations

It is with great pride and some sadness that we wish Lori Jones a hearty congratulations on her new position with the BCTF as a member of the Field Service Division Staff. We will miss her, but know that she will make us proud as she continues her work there.

Carla Wilson has been appointed to the Provincial Bargaining Team and looks forward to helping us achieve a freely negotiated collective agreement to meet the needs of the province's 47,000 members. The work of the provincial bargaining team will begin sometime in January.

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www.ndta.ca - Also, like our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter

## Key Dates

Date Time	Event
Oct 5	World Teachers' Day
October 11	Thanksgiving
October 14	Mentors' Zoom Meeting
October 21-22	Mentorship Retreat
October 22	Provincial Pro-d
October 25	Executive Meeting
October 26	Open Board Meeting