



President's Message



Curtis Bendig, Brittany Anderson, Karen Walgren, Wanda Machado, Carla Wilson

Dear colleagues,

I am thrilled to be back in the Kootenays after a successful round of bargaining and am looking forward to re-connecting with teachers at all the schools and representing your concerns.

A present concern on my radar is reports about inadequate supports for designated students and increased incidents of violence in the workplace. I am trying to understand why many schools have fewer EAs and how that is impacting staffs and students. If this sounds familiar, I would love to hear from you. Please have your staff-reps connect with me to determine dates when it would be convenient for me to visit.

On another note, last week, four of us (Curtis Bendig, Wanda Machado, Karen Walgren and myself) met with our MLA Brittany Anderson. She was open to hearing our concerns on a variety of subjects and promised to follow-up with appropriate Ministers. We discussed educational funding; the need for adequate supports in our schools for vulnerable and at risk students; capital funding to improve infrastructure in our older schools; lack of and/or minimal recycling in SD8; and climate change and

education. Brittany had a support staff present who took notes and Brittany asked many questions. She voiced interest in touring some schools, so we will be following up with her on availability.

~ Carla

BCTF AGM

Would you like to represent our local at the BCTF AGM? We are looking for 4 delegates to attend the BCTF AGM on March 18-21.

Each year, 750 delegates from around the province attend the BCTF AGM. It is a great way to see how the BCTF operates, to hear perspectives on important issues, meet colleagues from other parts of the province, and to have a voice in decisions made by the union.

The AGM is held in Vancouver at the Hyatt Regency. The BCTF will pay for your travel, hotel expenses and a per diem for food.

Please contact us as soon as possible if you are interested or have questions.

New Teachers' Conference

Every year the NDTA sponsors new teachers to attend the New Teachers' Conference. This year the New Teachers' Conference is being held in Nelson on May 12 and 13. If you are in your first five years of teaching and would like to attend, please let us know. We will draw from the names submitted prior to spring break. Please check out [this link](#) for more information about the conference.



Maternity Leave Demystified

In this last round of bargaining, our local maternity supplemental employment benefit (SEB) provisions were replaced by a new provincial standard which will see all members who take this leave have their salary topped up to 100% of their pay for the 16 weeks of maternity/pregnancy leave. This means 100% of your current salary for the first week of the leave (the one-week EI waiting period), and for the remaining 15 weeks of the EI benefit period, if you qualify for EI benefits, the employer will top-up your EI payment to 100% of your current salary.

Prior to this agreement, local provisions varied widely district by district with some districts receiving zero top-up and others receiving up to 95% top-up. In SD8, teachers on maternity leave received 85% of their salary for the first two weeks of the leave and then were topped-up to 75% of their salary for the remaining weeks. 100% top-up is a win for all locals and an equity piece that is long overdue in coming. For SD8 employees, you will have gained the equivalent of a month of full-time pay over the course this leave. This affects not only your salary, but also your pensionable earnings.

Beyond the new provisions in our CA, there is often confusion about why maternity leave benefits do not continue over the summer. This is because we are 10-month employees and we do not get paid over the summer. EI only replaces part of what you would have earned and as you do not earn salary over the summer, you do not receive maternity pay over the summer months. This means that if your child is born after the first or second week in March, you will not receive the full 16 weeks of EI and top-up. There is, however, a work around. You can choose to take your maternity leave anytime up to 13 weeks before the expected birth of your child. In this way, you will benefit from maximizing your top-up for an increased number of weeks before transitioning to parental leave which does not have any top up at present.

You should give the employer 4 weeks notice before taking your maternity leave and will have to apply to EI.

For further information or questions regarding maternity leave, please contact your local union office.

NDTA Office: 102-518 Lake Street, Nelson, BC V1L 4C6
Phone: 250-354-9693

Management Meetings

The KLTF presidents meet with management (HR and the Superintendent) every Wednesday. During these meetings, we bring up concerns and try to problem solve. This is also where the employer gives us an audience to discuss grievances.

Grievances are formal complaints that the union files when the employer violates an employee's rights on the job. Examples of this could be asking teachers to give up their duty-free lunch hour to attend a staff meeting or supervise students, not providing the minimum standard of non-enrolling support as indicated in the collective agreement, or disciplining a teacher without following proper procedure.

If you feel your rights have been violated, it is important to contact the union. This protects not just your rights, but the rights of all teachers. It is also important to contact the union if you have other concerns. For example, if you are having violent incidents in your classroom and do not have EA support.

Lack of adequate EA support is huge concern this year and we will be reaching out to various schools to better understand the situation at each school. If your staff would like such a meeting at your school, please contact us to set up a day/time that would work for you.



Extended Health Benefit Improvements

Our new Collective Agreement sees improvements in our extended health benefits plan. Effective January 1, 2023, registered counsellors and social workers will be added to the existing Psychologist coverage, and the combined coverage will increase from \$900 to \$1200. This is in recognition that EFAP plans across the province are inadequate, that psychologists are scarce, particularly in rural communities, and they often have long wait times.

Additionally, coverage for Dexcom continuous glucose monitors will be added to the plan and the limit for services of chiropractors, massage therapists, physiotherapists, and acupuncturists will increase from \$900 to \$1000 each. There will also be additional improvements to health and/or

dental benefits with ongoing allocations of \$1.5 million effective July 1, 2023, and an additional \$2.0 million effective July 1, 2024.

Key Dates

Date Time	Event
Feb 3	SURT
Feb 10	BCTF Women's Conference
Feb 14	Board Meeting
Feb 17	School Based Pro-d
Feb 17	EC Meeting
Mar 18-21	BCTF AGM

TTOC Social

The NDTA will be hosting a social and Q&A event to offer TTOCs the opportunity to:

- bring your unanswered questions to the table
- to ask Local 07 President, Carla Wilson, questions you might have about your rights as members of the union
- to create a stronger community among TTOCs.

The social Q&A:

- will take place from 4:30-6:00 pm
- will have snacks provided.
- date and location of event will be chosen post-questionnaire.

Please answer the following questionnaire to inform us if you would like to attend, and if so, which date would work best for you.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd2ERJ_6jhtEjmKxh962K3z_ggZfwetLUkR5nSxMOz9ri4fuyw/viewform?usp=sf_link