Maple Ridge Teachers' Association

:Martin Dmitrieff

News from the Office || November 2021

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A Word from the President...

Before I begin, I want to thank everyone for all you do in the context of what continues to be a year full of unexpected challenges. There are many aspects of the job which have returned somewhat to normal, but the heightened sense of stress and anxiety of teaching during an ongoing pandemic endures for many teachers. The point is that even though things may appear closer to normal than they were last year, the need to be forgiving, generous and understanding to ourselves and our colleagues remains the most important area of focus this year. It is important to realize that for many of our colleagues, the duress of the sustained varying degrees of anxiety, from a continuing pandemic, wildfires, floods, and perpetual teacher shortages to name a few, have a culminating effect that makes it necessary to express again that we can't expect ourselves or our colleagues to act like things are normal.

To that end, I will say that I was disappointed, as most teachers were, that the District did not allow teachers to work from home this year, during our Pro-D, as six other districts in the region did allow. We did express our view, strongly, that allowing teachers to work from the comfort of their own homes, during these exceptional times, would serve to help teachers emotionally and show that the district was doing what it could to help teachers with the stress and anxiety they are experiencing. We will continue to press the district to reconsider this decision but we remain, at this time, disappointed they haven't already made that decision to allow teachers to work from home on Pro-D.

One point I wanted to clarify about the Professional Autonomy during Pro-D is that teachers retain their ability to decide what they will focus on during a Pro-D and even though the district has made the decision to disallow teachers from working from home, that doesn't mean teachers need to work on site, if their Pro-D requires them to work off site. There was some confusion about some administrators expressing an

expectation that teachers were to work on site. We clarified with those admin that teachers are permitted to work off site whenever the pro-d activity requires it, meeting with others from other schools for example, but if there were admin who did say staff were not permitted to work off site, please tell us and we can follow up, or have your site based Staff reps follow up.

As a final note, I just want to ask that teachers continue to focus on your physical and mental wellbeing, and to be forgiving of each other and yourselves. It continues to be important to limit your expectation of yourself and others, as we try to navigate all the additional stresses we face this year.

Thank you,

Trevor Takasaki

A Word from the First Vice-President...

MRTA Teachers and Associated Professionals,

Feeling like you need that Winter Break yet? If the concerns we've heard in the MRTA office are any indication, many colleagues are taking work in the classroom one day at a time. Even though we are still in a Covid situation, and not everyone is comfortable interacting with each other in the same manner as pre-Covid, I'm hoping some staff interactions are occurring regularly. That we are all getting a chance to, wherever possible, check and see how our School community members are doing. You never know how important or appreciated someone finds a thoughtful ear to listen to how things are going during a stressful time. Take care out there everyone.

Martin Dmitrieff

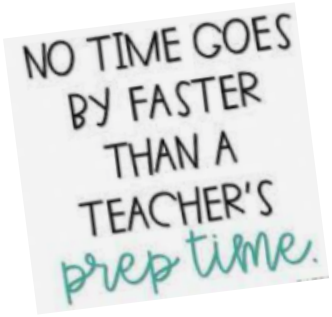
TTOC TIMES

Safety Plans

We would like to remind TTOCs that, as a TTOC, you are required to view, and then sign, safety plans that are put in place for students you will be working with that day. If you arrive and a day plan indicates there is a safety plan that you need to read, but the safety plan is not present, check with the school office to find out where you may locate the safety plan.

Did you know that schools are required to give all TTOCs sufficient time to read safety plans before starting to work with that child? That means if you arrive late at a school or have trouble locating the safety plan, the school is required to cover the class until you have time to read and sign the safety plan for any students you may be working with. You must read the safety plan before coming into contact with the student – not after!

Early Career Teachers: *Access to Prep is Important*



Know that all teachers at 0.5 FTE or higher should have prep in their weekly teaching schedule (and for all Job Share teachers of all FTE amounts, as has been arranged between themselves and their partner). This is true for classroom teachers **and** all those in non-enrolling positions, from Teacher Librarians, to Support Teachers, from English Language Learning roles (ELL) to Aboriginal Resource Teachers (ARTs), through to Prep and Collaboration teachers, and also Permanent Contract TTOCs.

Prep Time expectations you should have access to is as follows:

- Twelve and one-half percent (12.5%) of in-classroom instructional time (one (1) block in 8) for full-time secondary teachers.
- Ninety (90) minutes per week for full-time elementary teachers. (One hundred (100) minutes effective September 17, 2014, and one hundred ten (110) minutes effective June 30, 2019.) The scheduling of preparation time shall be in no less than thirty (30) minute units of work.
- Preparation time shall be *pro-rated* for part-time teachers assigned no less than one-half (0.5) FTE time.

If you are pulled from your Prep time, due to your Administrator requiring you elsewhere, the expectation is that they will help you make up the missed time at a later time.

Seniority Reports from SD42: Checking Them is a Good Idea

At least once per year, the district issues a report to ensure teachers know their accumulated Seniority. In previous years, teachers occasionally catch errors in what has been reported for them. It is a good idea therefore, to check when it comes out!

What reports are released?

The employer releases a Continuing Teacher Seniority report, and a separate Temporary Teacher Seniority report.

How do you check?

You can go to www.SD42.com and along the top bar in all-caps is STAFF INTRANET. Click and login with your credentials, then click “Human Resources”. Scroll down and look on the far left for a folder icon labelled “MRTA”. Click and then repeat, looking on the lower left for a folder “Seniority Reports”. Both reports should be present here.

Get to Know the Contract

Each month, the MRTA will be featuring a part of the Collective Agreement that may be useful to members around the District. This month’s featured section of the *Provincial Collective Agreement* (2019-2022) is regarding:

Article C. 2, Section 2. - Porting Seniority

2. Porting Seniority

a. Effective September 1, 2006 and despite Article C.2.1 above, an employee who achieves continuing contract status in another school district shall be credited with up to ten (10) years of seniority accumulated in other school districts in BC.

b. Seniority Verification Process

i. The new school district shall provide the employee with the necessary verification form at the time the employee achieves continuing contract status.

ii. The employee must initiate the seniority verification process and forward the necessary verification forms to the previous school district(s) within ninety (90) days of receiving a continuing appointment in the new school district.

iii. The previous school district(s) shall make every reasonable effort to retrieve and verify the seniority credits which the employee seeks to port.

You’ll note that embedded is an obligation of the district to provide you with the paperwork to do the transfer of experience/seniority, and then, the employee to get it within 90 days. Additionally, know you should also be able to transfer over unused sick days from your old school district in the same manner!

Flood & Disaster Relief

Help Those Devastated by Flooding

Have you wanted to help and donate where you can but don't know where? Here are a couple of relief efforts that would be grateful to have your help:

BC Dairy Association: https://gofund.me/b4cb1d10

The funds from this GoFundMe will meet the immediate needs of the families who are now homeless and without their essential possessions. It takes a community of people to support them so thank you all for donating.

Horse Council BC:

https://hcbc.online/Donate

Please consider donating to the *Horse Council BC Animal Disaster Relief Fund*. Funds collected are used to provide resources like hay, supplies, fuel to volunteers, emergency evacuation centres and other recognized groups assisting with the relief effort.

Bargaining Time!

It's that exciting time again! We will be bargaining *New Language* over 10 sessions from now until Spring 2022.

Meet our 2021/22 MRTA Negotiating Team:

Trevor Takasaki: Chief Negotiator
Martin Dmitrieff: Assistant Negotiator
Leanne Dunbar: Caucus Chair
Ryan Neufeld: Sensor/Observer
Lindsay Zepeski: Recorder

Dale Hardy: Alternate Negotiating Team Member

November 18 - 20	**BCTF Federation Leadership Institute**
December 1	**MRTA Executive Council Meeting**
December 20	**Schools Close for Winter Break (with exception of Kanaka Creek)**