

NOTEBOOK

Issue #5 December 5, 2017



FIRST CALL FOR NVTA DELEGATES TO THE 2018 BCTF AGM *March 17 - 20, 2018*

The North Vancouver Teachers' Association's BCTF AGM delegation will be elected at the January 31, 2018 General Meeting. The NVTA can elect 16 delegates who, along with the three NVTA Local Representatives, will comprise our delegation.

Please consider putting your name forward as a candidate. Contact NVTA President, Martin Stuible (martin@nvta.ca) or First Vice President, Robin Deleurme (robin@nvta.ca) at the NVTA office for more information.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Thank you and congratulations to these members, appointed to the following committees: H. Myhre and S. Maki to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee; E. Clark to the Emergency Preparedness and OH&S Committees; J. Bertrand and L. Stewart to the French Immersion Review Committee; M. Stoker, T. Summers, C. Kinnon and N. Hagarty to the Inclusion Committee; C. Cunliffe, O. Howell, and C. Fraenkel to the Info & Technology Committee; P. Wright, S. Waddle, L. Barreca to the Mainstreaming/Integration Committee; M. Boljuncic and V. Vinaric to the Mentorship Committee; S. Megahy and C. McKenna to the School Cleanliness Committee; P. Wright, V. Jessiman, L. McCormick, M. Rogers to the Screening Committee; V. Shim, M. Fletcher to the Special Needs Schools Committee; R. Vosahlo to JEPIC Steering, T. Alexis and K. Tozer to the NVTA's Reporting Committee and M. Trollip, R. Leung, M. Sparks and N. Hagarty to the NVTA's Caseload Committee.

A Message from the NVTA President

As the year unfolds we continue to have concerns about the implementation of our restored language. While there have been improvements, there is still a long way to go before we can all feel that the language is fully in place. Many EA positions continue to remain unfilled. Further, the number of classes needing remedy is a concern. 108 elementary classes are currently in a remedy situation. 631 secondary blocks are also in a remedy situation. Examples include Ridgeway, where 15 out of 25 classes are in violation of our restored language and Lynn Valley, where only five out of 15 divisions meet the restored language. Carson Graham leads all secondary schools with over 200 blocks violating the restored language.

I recently had three opportunities to publicly express these concerns. On Tuesday, November 21, I spoke to the Board of Trustees and outlined our concerns about the restored language as well as the increasing caseloads that so many of our specialist teachers are now facing. I encouraged the trustees to join the fight for the proper funding of a quality public education system. My statement to the Board is printed on page two. The *North Shore News* then did a follow-up interview which formed the basis of their November 28 newspaper article entitled *Crowded Classes Still a Concern for North Van Teachers' Association*. Finally, last Wednesday, November 29, I had the wonderful opportunity to appear as a guest on Steven Quinn's *On the Coast* CBC radio show along with Gioia Breda, the President of the Surrey Teachers' Association. I really liked Gioia's comment that Districts are implementing the "cheapest interpretation" of the language. You can listen to the interview in its entirety on the CBC radio website under *On the Coast*, November 29. The interview begins at the 58.23 mark.



IT'S ALMOST NVTA CHRISTMAS PARTY TIME

It could get ugly (sweater, that is)!

When: Friday, December 8, 2017, 3:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. **Where:** Two Lions Pub, 2601 Westview Drive

Wear your ugliest Christmas sweater! Bring a **cash donation for the food bank** and earn an entry into the NVTA Turkey Raffle. Come and enjoy some delicious hot and cold appetizers. Put your name in the basket for the door prize draws. **Cash bar with generous Happy Hour Specials. Join us!**

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THE NVTA PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT TO THE BOARD ON November 21, 2017

I come to you this evening to ask for your support. One year ago the Supreme Court of Canada restored the language that was stripped by the BC Government in 2002, language that provided an incredible array of supports to all our students. November 10, 2016 truly was a remarkable day not only for teachers but also for all students in BC.

And we should continue to celebrate. Hundreds of millions of dollars have come back to our public education system. Three thousand teachers have been hired across the province. Many students are in smaller classes with more supports. Many more EAs have also been hired.

There are some concerns, however.

The caseloads of our LSTs, HRTs, SLPs, school psychs, and counsellors are beyond critical. There is not a day that goes by when I do not hear of the overload that these positions must now bear. My members are working at maximum capacity while the lack of these specialists positions means students are not getting the level of services that they need. There is money in the operating budget to increase the FTE for these services. The need is now and the need is urgent.

I appreciate the challenge of finding qualified LSTs. But the hiring of LSTs could be simply solved with a breaking up of that position into the two parts of LAC and LST.

Lack of space and facilities is another growing issue.

There still continues to be too many classes in our district that are not following the restored language numbers and are now in a remedy situation.

A new school clearly needs to be built at Cloverley just to meet the language, let alone the 3,000 units being built below third. This will desperately be needed in addition to another Lower Lonsdale school. Decisions of the past were based on a false future.

Secondary schools such as Carson Graham need portables and an eventual addition to properly meet the restored language. There are far too many classes at all our Secondary schools that are in violation of the language and consequently not meeting the needs of our students, especially our most needy ones.

I appreciate that you have been living under the deficit model of the last 17 years. Every year you were forced to do more with less. But the ministry and the current government is open to your feedback. You no longer need to aspire to the minimum.

Already at the end of June the original sum of \$7 million for the CEF was increased to over \$9 million. Together, let's make public education what we all have wanted it to be.

No more robbing Peter to pay Paul.

That week in November a year ago, where the tragedy of Trump was juxtaposed with the triumph of our restored language, actually began with a far sadder event two days earlier – the passing of Leonard Cohen.

Leonard has a wonderful song called *Anthem*. One line reads:

*There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in*

Our restored language has been the crack that put so much more funding back into public education. Now it's up to you. Trustees Sacre, Stratton, Gerlach, Forward, Skinner, Higgins, and Stanley. The crack has opened.

You can be the light.

SBRT and Distribution of High Incidence Hours

A further reminder that SBRT should be allocating the entire total of high incidence hours each school has received. The NVTA representative on each SBRT should report back to staff committee if these hours have not been allocated properly. CSRs should contact the NVTA immediately if high incidence hours have not been distributed in their entirety by SBRT. These hours should be distributed during the school day when teachers are working with students.