

NOTEBOOK

Issue #15 June 28, 2018



A Message from the NVTa President

Almost there! Before summer begins, I would like to thank you all for your wisdom and guidance as we navigate these waters together. I never cease to be amazed at the thoughtfulness and dedication of North Vancouver teachers. You truly are what is so great about working here. An extra loud shout-out to the great NVTa office team we have with Beth, Carolyn, and Robin. Their dedication to tirelessly providing support for members is absolutely outstanding. Thank you to the NVTa Executive and Committee Chairs who have given up so much of their valuable time. Finally, CSRs, you are the front line support at each work place and your endless energy helps with contract enforcement, wellness, and a myriad of other issues you deal with each and every day. May you all have a wonderful summer of health and relaxation, with family and friends, at places that are dear to you, whether near or afar.

A final few items to report on before summer begins:

1. Remedy

This has been a challenge for many this year and as a result there are many minutes that are still outstanding. There has been consistent pressure to ensure that these minutes roll over into next year so that members can start using them in September. I am happy to report that BCPSEA and government have both clarified that it is no longer their position that a right to a remedy under the MOA extinguishes on June 30. Stay tuned for further information on this.

2. Last week the BCTF reached a favourable settlement agreement with BCPSEA on the issue of Speech Language Pathologists and School Psychologists being included in the definition of a Special Education Resource Teacher, for the purpose of calculating the non-enrolling ratios. This has had a serious impact on the number of LST positions in North Vancouver as the inclusion of SLPs and School Psychologists in the calculation of the ratio has had a negative impact on the number of LST positions in the District. The impact of this agreement should have a positive effect on the number of LSTs next year. In addition, to help with recruitment issues, we will continue to advocate for a separation of LAC and LST positions into two distinct roles.

3. Our MyEd concerns and reporting change advocacy is paying off at the provincial level. BCTF President, Glen Hansman, has shared our Reporting Committee's PowerPoint presentation, that was presented to the April Board of Trustees Meeting, with the Minister of Education, Rob Fleming. Glen has also written a letter to the minister that summarized our concerns and specifically requests the minister contact the NVTa for further information. The NDP spoke strongly against MyEd while in opposition. Now in Government, we call upon them to act and improve or replace this flawed reporting system.

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4. Board Budget: The Board's Budget motion was defeated at the June 19 Board Meeting. The key issue was the lack of counsellors at the Elementary level and LST staffing levels. Last night, The Board met again to review options and to pass a budget. The resulting budget that was passed will ensure that the elementary counselling levels for 2018-19 are the same as they were for this current school year. There will be also be an increase in LST over 2017-18 levels.

5. Admin Day tomorrow. A reminder that the Admin Day ends at noon tomorrow after which time you are free to leave for the long weekend!

Martin Stuible
NVTAs President

The Superintendent Responds to the RA Motions Passed by Staff Reps on May 16, 2018

A. *"That the NVTAs Representative Assembly request that the North Vancouver School Board send a memo to all elementary schools outlining an option for extending Kindergarten Gradual Entry for 2018/19 to include up to the 25 hours less of instruction as outlined in the BC School Act."*

Superintendent Pearmain's Response:

The School District is confident that the current NVSD model for gradual entry into Kindergarten ensures a successful start to the school experience. Teachers have been instrumental in providing input over the years into the design and implementation of this model. The shortened days with time increments allows for students to gradually adjust to a full day. It is the District's perspective that our model provides a reasonable amount of time for a family to make special arrangements for transportation and childcare while transitioning the family routine around full-time Kindergarten. Parents have appreciated having their children settle into a full day school routine as soon as it can be done successfully.

Kindergarten readiness is an area of focus for the North Vancouver School District as illustrated with 7 StrongStart centres based in our schools, various "Ready, Set, Learn" events for parents and community members across the North Shore, our Kindergarten Parent Orientation Evening and Parent Information Evening for Incoming Kindergarten students with special needs. These programs and events are all focused around assisting parents with preparing their child(ren) for Kindergarten entry. The District recognizes that there can be unique circumstances when a teacher or parent determines that a child may benefit from additional supports and/or a longer transition process to full days. The decision to extend the transition to full-time Kindergarten is made in conjunction with the teacher, parent and school-based administration on a case by case basis with support from the Director of Instruction. The District has no plans to change the current format.

B. *"That the NVTAs recommends that the LAC and LST positions be separated into two distinct roles."*

Superintendent Pearmain's Response:

With respect to your suggestion that high and low incidence caseloads be separately allocated to two distinct teaching positions, I would like to assure you that this has been given careful consideration. The North Vancouver School District made the decision to discontinue assigning low incidence students to district case managers in order to extend the practice of situating "level two" supports at the school level to include low incidence students.

Schools are encouraged to best utilize the experience and expertise of their Learning Services Teachers to support the wide range of learning profiles at the school. We continue to be supportive of employees who wish to further enhance their professional skill set as it relates to either high or low incidence students.