



NWTU

Union News

February 2020

President's Message

Eric Young

After a long and sometimes heated debate at the Winter Representative Assembly (January 31 –February 1), the BCTF has adopted an action plan to support the Bargaining Team. You would have received an email from the BCTF with details of the plan and a thorough summary. Despite adopting an action plan, any potential job action would require a BCTF membership strike vote through the Labour Relations Board (LRB). However, it is important to note that as long as mediator is working with the BCTF and BCPSEA a strike vote CAN take place to add pressure on the bargaining table, but NO STRIKE (JOB ACTION) CAN TAKE PLACE. The good news is new mediation dates have been set for the last week of February, and an additional dates for three weeks in March. In the meantime, please continue to support our BCTF Bargaining Team through various forms of political action:

- BCTF “email to MLA” campaign
- Sharing their stories on social media or other formats
- #RedforBCED (Wednesdays and Fridays)

REMEDY - Recently the NWTU and the District signed a Local Letter of Understanding around 2019-2020 Remedy; all Staff Reps have a copy to share. This agreement also outlines the process for unused remedy from 2018-2019. If you have unused remedy funds from the last school year, please contact the NWTU Office for further information.

Search NWTU or (<http://bit.ly/2GqsosS>)



Important Dates

February 11 – NWTU Executive Committee Meeting

Feb. 10-13 – Ratification vote – Package of locally bargained language

February 14 – Free BCTF Workshops at NWSS

February 18 – NWTU General Meeting, 3:30, NWSS Library

Want to be up to date on local bargaining and other union issues? Subscribe to our NWTU EMAIL LIST with your personal email!

Click on the link
<http://bit.ly/2BDcKGi>



Sarah Wethered - Angela Thacker Memorial Award Winner



On January 31, I was in Toronto, accepting the prestigious Angela Thacker Memorial Award for my outstanding contributions to teacher-librarianship within our school district and the province. This award is presented every two years and is the highest honour in Canada for teacher-librarians. This year, three people were honoured, Alison Bodner from Manitoba, Alanna King from Ontario, and me.

I found out that I won on December 17, sitting in the union office with Kristie Oxley, and I cried for about half an hour. It is appropriate Kristie was with me, as she nominated me for the award. It was overwhelming to get messages of congratulations from the big names of our field – Anita Brooks Kirkland (pictured above in the middle), Judith Sykes and Carol Koechlin. I must admit, I thought that the selection committee had made a mistake in choosing me, or that only three people were nominated, so they gave it to all of us. I was so relieved to hear that there were many nominations and the reason they gave out three awards, instead of one, was that they couldn't pick from the three of us who had been shortlisted.

The awards ceremony was the kick off to the Treasure Mountain 2020 symposium, so I spent the weekend learning about the latest research on school libraries, which I hope to implement in my own library program as soon as possible. It was exciting to hear the authors of the articles speak about their projects and to discuss them with other teacher-librarians from around Canada. It was also fun to catch up with my University of Alberta graduate advisor, Dr. Dianne Oberg, whom I hadn't seen since November 2003, when I received my M.Ed.

This award would not have been possible without the support of so many – Kristie Oxley, the NWTLA, the NWTU executive, and the entire staff of NWSS – among others, so thank you to everyone who has contributed in their own way to me being recognized..

Lastly, I was very touched to have been presented a certificate of recognition from the School Board at the January 28, 2020 Board Meeting, with Eric and Kristie at my side.



Report from the NWTU February 18 General Meeting

Congratulations to the following members who will be representing the NWTU at the BCTF AGM on March 14-17.

2020 BCTF Delegates

- Rome Lavrencic (NWSS)
- D'Alice Marsh (FRMS)
- Darryl Nakashima (NWSS)
- Kristie Oxley (DISTRICT)
- Carmen Woo (EGMS)
- Eric Young

Alternate

- Sarah Wethered

The six delegates will join Local Reps, Bruce McCloy and Darryl Schelp, at this very important meeting. However, all members are welcome to drop by the AGM and listen to the debate and reports. Any BCTF member (you) can speak at the mic, however only elected delegates can vote.

At the meeting the following business was also conducted:

- Passed - amendments to NWTU By-Laws #2, #3, & #4
- Passed - amendment to Pro-D Fund Guideline #12

Finally, it was also announced that the local **language ratification vote passed** with a yes vote of over 88%. These local provisions will come into effect when a provincial agreement is reached.

BCTF Bargaining Updates

For more information about provincial bargaining, please go to the BCTF portal: <https://members.bctf.ca/>



Report from the 3rd Annual BCTF Women's Institute

By Mary-Jo Hunt, Aboriginal Education Committee Chairperson

This year was the third year that the BCTF has hosted the Women's Institute and it was a terrific event. As I slowly become involved with the good work that the BCTF does for our membership, I notice that I have strong connections with the teachers I meet at these events—we easily fall into conversations about the complexities of learning to teach. I have been teaching for twenty-one years and I am always willing and able to learn more.

This year the event took place on Valentine's Day, so the theme seemed like an obvious go-to. We all had our feminist glasses on! And through our multi-coloured feminist lenses (feminism is as varied as any pair of glasses) we looked at the predominant stereotypes of femininity projected into society on a day like Valentine's Day. I was pleased to receive a lovely Valentine's Day card, typically given to a kindergarten student, which turned into a fortuneteller game. We deconstructed the practice of card giving and laughed while we created our own Palentine's Day cards.

I left my house Thursday afternoon feeling somewhat guilty for abandoning my family on the Valentine's Day/Family Day weekend. The guilt quickly faded. In the morning, I went to a workshop on Activism and Art where we made portraits. Later, I went to a story telling workshop where we used story as a form political action. In the afternoon, I belted out some awesome sounds in the choir wellness workshop. And if that wasn't enough, after dinner we were entertained by M'girl, an Indigenous kickass girl band. I went to bed knowing I had a day full of love and friendship. Best Valentine's Day Ever!!

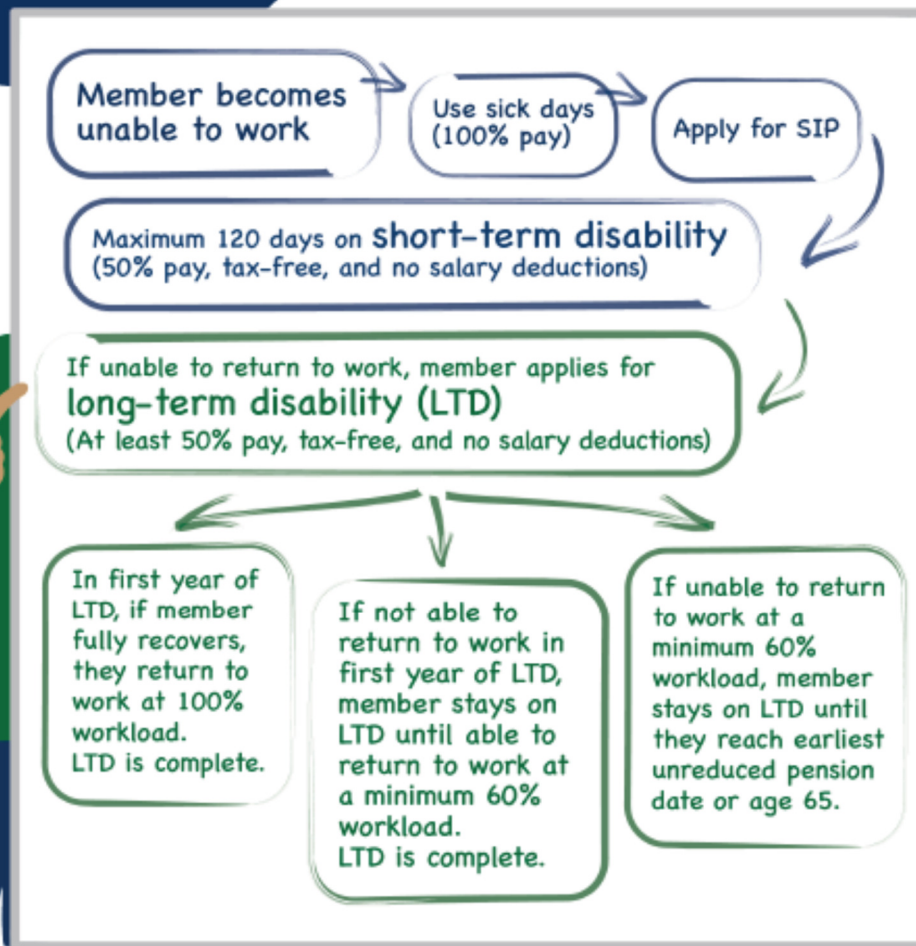
So next year, go onto the BCTF Portal and look for upcoming events. Apply. You won't be sorry you did.

Would you like to highlight the work of a colleague or colleagues at your school or in the district? Would you like to share with our membership an exciting pro-d event that you attended? If so, please send an article to include in our next newsletter. Email all articles to sarahwethered@gmail.com.

Just So You Know -

What if you get sick?

BCTF MEMBERS with a contract participate in the Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP) with contributions of 1.87% from each paycheck. This plan provides both short- and long-term benefits to members who, because of illness or injury, are disabled from working and have exhausted all of their sick leave. If the illness or injury is work-related, a Workers Compensation Board (WCB) claim must be initiated.



There are more details than can be provided in this flowchart. Please contact your local union office or the BCTF with questions specific to your situation.

If you are close to your earliest unreduced pension date and have enough sick leave accumulated in your sick bank to provide you with an income until six months prior to your retirement, you may want to investigate withdrawing from the long-term section of the plan. This will save you 1.36% in SIP contributions from your paycheck. Contact your local union office for guidance. ●

From the March 2020 edition of *Teacher* magazine, a publication of the BC Teachers' Federation.



Worth a Read!

Are you missing out on salary?

Teacher Qualification Service policy changes

MASTER'S OR DOCTORATE DEGREE CHANGES

1. If you are in category five plus (5+) and hold a master's or doctorate degree that meets the requirements, apply for an upgrade.
2. If you hold an acceptable master's or doctorate degree with less than 30 semester credits and have not yet topped up that degree and received an upgrade, apply for an upgrade.
3. If you are in category five (5) and hold a graduate degree that contains a teacher education program, you will need to complete an integrated program to qualify for category six (6).



INTEGRATED PROGRAM CHANGES

1. If you are in category five (5) or lower and have completed course work that meets the new requirements of an integrated program but have not yet used that course work for your current category placement, please apply for an upgrade.

If you require clarification as to how these changes might affect your upgrading requirements or current category placement, please request a director's review of your file. Submit your request through the "Contact Us" page at www.tqs.bc.ca. You must provide verification of current employment in the BC public school system (most applicants photocopy a pay stub) in order to receive a director's review.

To apply for an upgrade complete the Category Upgrade Application Form on the TQS website. Indicate that you are applying for an upgrade based on the policy and regulation changes.

No reviews or upgrades will be processed automatically. You must apply to the TQS in order to receive a review or upgrade. ●

SECOND TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND FAMILIARIZATION PROGRAMS

1. If you are in category five (5) or lower and have completed a second teacher education program for which you have not been granted Teacher Qualification Service (TQS) category credit, please apply for an upgrade.
2. If you are in category five (5) or lower and have completed a familiarization program for which you have not been granted TQS category credit, please apply for an upgrade.

For full information on these policy changes, please visit TQS at www.tqs.bc.ca.



iStock.com/malerapaso photo

From the March 2020 edition of *Teacher* magazine, a publication of the BC Teachers' Federation.