



# NWTU UNION NEWS

OCTOBER 2021

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Sarah Wethered*

This month was full of new experiences for me, as well as revisiting some old ones.

At a mediation last month, BCTF and BCPSEA agreed to allow me to enter into negotiations with the district on class size for summer school and night school classes. Apparently, this work should have been done back in 2001, but because of Christy Clark's stripping of our collective agreements, it was left unfinished. I am very thankful for my partners in negotiation, Glenn Bullard and Darryl Schelp. Glenn provided the historical context needed for the negotiations, and Darryl once again proved himself to be a skillful negotiator. I think the three of us did a great job in the negotiations and we will shortly have a signed agreement on what class size should be.

October also saw the grand opening of the new NWSS and I was honoured to be an invited guest to this ceremony – my first invitation to an in person event since becoming president last year. While I know that there are numerous outstanding issues at NWSS, it was lovely to see so many different community members come together to celebrate. While it was a much smaller scaled event than was originally planned, it was still a joyful day.

I also met this month with Satnam Sangra, our Equity and Inclusion chairperson. We discussed the role that this new committee could play in our local and we are going to start with three easy things. First, we will be holding BCTF training next month. Next, from now on, we will be including articles in our newsletter on religious and cultural celebrations that are celebrated by our members. And last, starting next month, we will be including book reviews on books that explore the topics of diversity, inclusion, reconciliation, and social justice. We will be offering one prize a month to anyone who wishes to send us a book review. If there is more than one review submitted, we will draw for the prize. This month has also seen the Bargaining Advisory Committee meeting to set our bargaining priorities and to begin writing local language to be bargained with senior admin. Local bargaining can begin on November 1 and I look forward to another successful round of local bargaining. Andre Kozak, Darryl Schelp, and I will also be attending the BCTF Bargaining Conference October 28-30, where we will help set the provincial bargaining priorities.

As I close, I want to thank you for all you do for the children of my adopted hometown. I am so proud to be president of this fantastic local.

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Nov. 5-6** - BCTF Rep Assembly

**Nov. 9** - NWTU Executive Committee Meeting

**Nov. 12** - District Professional Development Day

**Nov. 16** - NWTU General Meeting

**Nov. 24** - Advancing Equity and Inclusion SURT

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION

# October is National Disability Awareness Month

Throughout the month of October, NWSS teacher, Mike Parker, has been emailing colleagues with information on Disability Awareness. The following information on the precedent setting *Jeffery Moore Case* was shared by Mike earlier this month. It serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of inclusion in our schools.

### The Jeffery Moore Case

More v. British Columbia (Education) 2012 SCC61, [2012] 3 S.C.R. 360

This is a famous court case for educators across the country.

In 1994, a third-grade student, Jeffery Moore, was labeled as having a severe learning disability. The School District enrolled him in a special program for children with learning disabilities where he would receive help with his reading and writing skills. The School District decided to cut the program due to budget restrictions and suggested to the family that they enroll their son in a private school where he would receive the help he needed. The family launched a Human Rights Complaint against the school district. The School District was found guilty of discriminating against Jeffery and through a series of appeals this case found its way to the Supreme Court of Canada. In 2012 the Supreme Court unanimously upheld the original findings of the Human Rights Commission.

The Implications:

- That learning disabilities like dyslexia are a bona fide Disability.
- Children with learning disabilities have the right to a meaningful education.
- Without specifically designed programs to help children with learning difficulties, there is the potential to inflict irreparable harm and real suffering.
- The words like "Inclusion" or "Chromebook" were not used in the ruling, but words like "special needs programs" were.
- Where barriers are constructed by school districts, then discrimination is clearly established.
- It highlights the need by administrators to provide an individualized program for children with learning disabilities.
- The district should provide a range of services for special needs students.
- Special Education programs are not a luxury but a ramp to providing equal access to education.

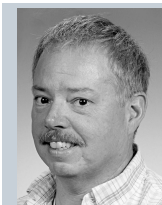
The Outcome:

In conclusion, the School District of North Vancouver was found guilty of individual and systemic discrimination and ordered to pay \$10,000 in damages.

### References:

More v. British Columbia (Education) 2012 SCC61, [2012] 3 S.C.R. 360

Philpott, D.F. & Fiedorowicz, C.A.M. (2012), The Supreme Court of Canada Ruling on Learning Disabilities. Learning Disabilities Association of Canada.



Mike Parker is a Social Studies and Law 12 teacher at NWSS.

He has recently completed a master's degree from UBC in Special Ed with a focus on Learning Disabilities.

**Check out this video!**

*Schoolboy Realizes  
Dyslexia is a superpower!*

<https://tinyurl.com/3cr2emtb>

## DID YOU KNOW?

### ***Hanukkah 2021***

Chanukkah. Chanukah. Or Hanukkah. The Festival of Lights. However you spell it, Hanukkah celebrates the defeat of King Antiochus IV by the Jews in Judea, led by Judah the Maccabee. Legend says that when they went to rededicate the Temple in Jerusalem, there was only enough oil to keep the lamp burning for a single day, but it lasted for the eight days needed to make more oil.

These days, Hanukkah is celebrated by eating latkes, spending time with one's family, and, yes, giving gifts. But the most meaningful aspect in my opinion, is lighting the candles in the menorah. During the darkest time of the year, when the days grow short and gloomy, the warm, steady glow of the candles celebrates the joy in yet another season together, and the light that pushes back against the dark.

Chag Sameach, and Happy Haunukkah.

~Article by Lisa Seddon  
QMS Teacher-Librarian



### ***Mentorship***

The Mentorship Program is up and running in New Westminster. All participants have been contacted with instructions on how to book their release time or request support.

There is also money available to release teachers who do not want to join the Mentorship Program. If you are a new teacher, a TTOC or an experienced teacher taking on a very different role this year, you can request release time to:

- learn how to write report card
- explore assessment or term planning
- observe another classroom
- attend a pro-d event
- engage in another activity to support your practice

If you would like to book some release time or join the Mentorship Program, please contact at Kristie Oxley at lx40vp@bctf.ca.

### ***The Invisible Disability***

#### **Profile of a person with a disability:**

- It can only be diagnosed by a psychologist or other trained individuals.
- Learning Disabilities are not the same as Autism.
- They have a spiky cognitive profile.
- There is no cure or quick fix for this.
- It can be painful to the individual to read and/or write.
- It affects other aspects of life that can't be tested, like not knowing if people like you or not, or how to go on a date.
- There are no interventions that will correct a Learning Disabilities.
- Individuals must learn how to manage their disability on their own.
- They need to develop personal strategies that work for them.
- They need to learn to take control it and not have it control them.
- Learning disabilities comes in different forms and can be comorbid.
- Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, Dyslexia are the most common ones.
- Related disorders: ADHD and Dyspraxia
- People with disabilities often feel unsupported, unwanted, invisible, and excluded.

#### References:

LD Awareness Month (2019) The Learning Disabilities Association of York University

#### **Important Statistics**

- 1 In 10 people in Ontario are impacted.
  - 35% Of students with LDs drop out of school
  - 62% of students with LDs will be unemployed a year after graduation
  - 36% of youth in correctional facilities have specific learning disabilities.
  - Almost 50% of adolescent suicides have a diagnosis of an LD.
- (Source LDAC Pacfold survey)

## CELEBRATIONS

### Happy Diwali

Diwali is a festival that celebrates the triumph GOOD over EVIL and LIGHT over DARKNESS. The festival is a symbol of hope, a renewed commitment to social justice, friendship and good will.

The Diwali festival has its roots in South Asia.

Diwali is celebrated every year by lighting "Divas" (Candles)

This year the Diwali festival is on Thursday November 4th.

To learn more about this festival please visit:

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/pages/article/diwali>

Don't forget to wish your students and colleagues a happy Diwali!

~ Article by Satnam Sangra



### Guru Nanak

Sikhs across the world will be celebrating Guru Nanak's Gurmurb (birthday) on November 19th this year.

Guru Nanak is the first Guru or teacher of the Sikhs. He was born in 1469. Five centuries ago, Guru Nanak found himself in a society where people of different faith groups had enmity toward each other. Women in his society were treated as second class citizens. People were separated into classes; the lower one's class the worse they were treated in society.

Guru Nanak challenged these beliefs. The basic premise of his teachings was that we are all one. His philosophy was grounded in the equitable treatment of all human beings, respect for diversity and the importance of the philosophy of inclusion where everyone feels valued, welcome and a sense of belonging regardless of differences.

Please consider wishing your students a Happy Gurmurb on November 19th this year.

~ Article by Satnam Sangra

#### What I learned from Guru Nanak An NWSS student reflection

*Being a Canadian Sikh means understanding Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings and putting them into practice, such as 'Vand Kay Shukna,' which means sharing with others and helping those in need. To me, it includes taking part in Gurdwara events and programs, such as doing sewa (selfless service). Furthermore, it involves assisting in the education and awareness of the injustices being committed not just against Sikhs, but against all humans, as Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught us to serve all people regardless of race or color.*

#### Want to learn more about Guru Nanak?

Check out these links:

<https://www.sikhpa.com/five-facts-about-guru-nanak/>

[https://youtu.be/\\_yBUiVIVAzk](https://youtu.be/_yBUiVIVAzk)

## RECOGNITION

### ***BCTLA New Teacher- Librarian of the Year Award***



At our recent BCTLA awards ceremony, Jenny Chang, NWSS teacher-librarian, was named BC New Teacher-Librarian of the Year, sharing this award with Emily Huang of Langley.

I first met Jenny 7 years ago when she was hired as a TTOC and a very part time band teacher at New Westminster Secondary. At the end of that contract, Jenny went to South Korea to teach for a year, but returned in 2016 to work at FW Howay as a music teacher. She was also hired at Connaught Heights Elementary as a info tech prep teacher. She continued on at Connaught Heights as a music teacher and in 2018, added the position of teacher-librarian at Lord Kelvin Elementary. In September 2019, she began as a full-time teacher-librarian at NWSS, and she became my teaching partner.

Jenny has quickly taken on a leadership role within NWSS. She was appointed business education department head in 2020, and helped plan and execute the move of her department. She also was responsible for the preparation for the moving of the NWSS Library, a task she did almost by herself. Throughout the process, she showed dignity and grace, and overcame all obstacles that came her way.

Jenny has introduced new technology into the library and has mentored two new teacher-librarians.

Congratulations Jenny on this tremendous achievement!

~ Article by Sarah Wethered

### ***District Pro-D Day***

Our *District Pro-D Day* is coming up on Nov. 12th!

Our keynote speaker, Kevin Lamoureux, is a Faculty member at the University of Winnipeg and a well known public speaker. He has served as Associate Vice President for the University of Winnipeg, Education Lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, and as Scholar in Residence for several school divisions.

His keynote will focus on the role of schools in contributing to the work of Truth and Reconciliation.

Our afternoon will include the our bi-annual employee recognition presentation.

To register for this event, please contact your school's Pro-D Chair or use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/PDNov12>



*The 94 Calls to Action of the TRC provide us with a pathway towards a healthier, safer and more vibrant Canada. Education is central to that work. Where schools were once used as weapons against children, our schools can be places of healing.*

~Kevin Lamoureux



## OPPORTUNITIES

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### ***Interested in a position on the NWTU Executive?***

The following positions are available on the NWTU Executive and will be voted on at our **General Meeting** on **November 16th**. If you are interested in running for a position, please email President Sarah Wethered at [lp40@bctf.ca](mailto:lp40@bctf.ca) to declare your interest before November 10th. You will receive a CV form. Members can also declare their interest at the meeting.

#### **Pro-D Co-Chair - interim PD chair, Lisa Seddon, will be running**

- Chairs meetings of school-based Pro-D Chairs several times a year
- Organizes Pro-D Rep SURT training once a year
- Reviews Pro-D Guidelines with Pro-D Reps annually
- Makes recommendations for the Pro-D Days for the District Calendar Reviews
- Revises Pro-D Forms on the NWTU website
- Answers Pro-D questions from school-based Pro-D Reps
- Compiles and shares list of Pro-D opportunities monthly
- Co-chairs District Pro-D Day Committee meeting

#### **Aboriginal Education Contact - vacant**

- Chairs Committee meetings with school-based representatives several times a year
- Answers questions from school-based AE Reps
- Provides reports to the NWTU Executive Committee
- Attends NWTU Executive Meetings
- Attends Zone Meetings (twice a year - Winter & Spring, typically a Friday/Saturday)
- Attends Summer Conference (in August, typically 3 or 4 days)
- Possibility of sitting on District Committees if they are struck

#### **Local Rep to the BCTF - 1 position vacant**

- In consultation with the President and the NWTU Executive Committee, represents the general membership of the NWTU
- Attends BCTF Representative Assemblies, 4 times per year
- Attends the BCTF Annual General Meeting
- Provides reports to the NWTU Executive Committee and to the NWTU General Meetings

Time Commitment: 8 days for Rep Assemblies (Fridays & Saturdays) 4 days for BCTF AGM (over Spring Break)

#### **Political Action Contact (2 positions) - vacant**

- Provides reports to the NWTU Executive Committee
- Attends Zone Meetings (twice a year - Winter & Spring, typically a Friday/Saturday)
- Attends Summer Conference (in August, typically 3 or 4 days)
- Works with President to connect with local politicians such as MLA, MP, etc

#### **French Language Education Chair - vacant**

- Provides reports to the NWTU Executive Committee
- Attends Zone Meetings (twice a year - Winter & Spring, typically a Friday/Saturday)
- Attends Summer Conference (in August, typically 3 or 4 days)

#### **BCTF AGM Delegate - 5 positions and 2 alternates**

- Attends the BCTF Annual General Meeting (March 19-22, 2021)
- Represents NWTU at this important meeting

# REMINDER

## NEW REPORTING ORDER



### ***Have your say on the reporting order!***

The Ministry of Education is seeking feedback on the draft reporting order.

The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback from Sept. 27 to Nov. 5, 2021. To participate, visit <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogether/bc/consultation/studentreporting/>

## DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

Do you know an NWTU member that has received special recognition for their work as an educator? Or do you know a member that you would like to highlight work they are doing in their school?

If so, please send an email to Kristie at, [lx40vp@bctf.ca](mailto:lx40vp@bctf.ca) to have them included in an upcoming edition of the NWTU Union News.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you find yourself living at a new address, please take the time to update the following:

- **BCTF:** Go to <https://www.bctf.ca/> and login to access your member profile.
- **New West School District:** Update through Gordana Ballarin (Manager of HR, Teacher/Admin), [gballarin@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:gballarin@sd40.bc.ca)
- **NWTU:** Update through Office Manager, Yvonne, [nwtuadmin@telus.net](mailto:nwtuadmin@telus.net).

## STAY UP TO DATE

### **NWTU Email List**

[http://bit.ly/NWTU\\_email\\_list](http://bit.ly/NWTU_email_list)



### **NWTU Facebook Page**

[http://bit.ly/NWTU\\_Facebook](http://bit.ly/NWTU_Facebook)



### **New Teacher & TTOC Email List**

[http://bit.ly/NWTU\\_NT-TTOC\\_Email](http://bit.ly/NWTU_NT-TTOC_Email)



## CONTACT US

- Sarah Wethered, President, [lp40@bctf.ca](mailto:lp40@bctf.ca) or 778.789.5713 (cell)
- Kristie Oxley, 1st VP, [lx40vp@bctf.ca](mailto:lx40vp@bctf.ca)
- D'Alice Marsh, 2nd VP, [lx40vp2@bctf.ca](mailto:lx40vp2@bctf.ca)
- NWTU Office: 604.526.8990.