



BURNABY TEACHERS'  
ASSOCIATION

April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020  
Volume 2, Issue 21

# Report From Henning Drive



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- BCTF Ratification Vote  
April 28 - 30  
See left for more information
- Rep Assembly  
May 5  
Zoom Meeting

## PROVINCIAL RATIFICATION

The provincial ratification vote takes place online April 28-30.

The BCTF will be using a secure online platform to conduct the ratification vote from April 28–30, 2020. This platform is trusted and used by our teacher union counterparts in Ontario. **This tentative agreement was unanimously endorsed by the BCTF executive. In order to ensure that you receive your individualized voting information, we need you to make sure the BCTF has your correct contact information.**

### Here's how to do that:

To check what email address is on file for you, go to the BCTF Member Portal home page, <https://www.bctf.ca/mybctf>.

### If you're already registered on the portal

Please login and verify that your contact information is up-to-date under "Your Info" on the home page. If your information is not up-to-date, please click on "Update Your Info" and follow the prompts.

### If it's your first time on the portal

Click "[Sign up now](#)" and follow the prompts. Then, please verify that your contact information is up-to-date under "Your Info" on the home page. If your information is not up-to-date, please click on "Update Your Info" and follow the prompts.

### If you need your BCTF Member ID

Click on "[Forgot Your Member ID?](#)" and follow the prompts. Then, please verify that your contact information is up-to-date under "Your Info" on the home page. If your information is not up-to-date, please click on "Update Your Info" and follow the prompts.

You can also bypass the portal and update your personal information using our "[Change of Address and Personal Data Form](#)"

## LOCAL RATIFICATION

The local ratification vote will take place in May also done virtually. A revised package of the tentative agreement between the BTA and Burnaby School District will be sent to members to review after the provincial ratification late next week.



## BTA Contacts

### Leanne Sjodin

President  
[lp41@bctf.ca](mailto:lp41@bctf.ca)

### Daniel Tétrault

First Vice-President  
[lx41vp@bctf.ca](mailto:lx41vp@bctf.ca)

### Heather Skuse

First Vice-President  
[lx41vp2@bctf.ca](mailto:lx41vp2@bctf.ca)

### Christina Fernandes

Pro-D Chair [bta3@bctf.ca](mailto:bta3@bctf.ca)

### BTA Office

604-294-8141  
[bta3@bctf.ca](mailto:bta3@bctf.ca)  
[www.burnabyteachers.com](http://www.burnabyteachers.com)

## TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

**On Thursday, April 23**, Burnaby teachers can take part in a telephone hall that will include teachers in Metro/Fraser Valley and Metro West.

Members should receive a phone call and an email today (Wednesday) with instructions on how to participate. It's really just as simple as answering your phone at 7:00 p.m. when the town halls start.

BCTF President Teri Mooring will be on the line along with Jody Polukoshko, a member of the Executive Committee and co-chair of the Bargaining Team. They will give a brief overview of the contents of the new Agreement-in-Committee, and the challenges the team faced in this round of bargaining, which culminated in the closure of our schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A telephone town hall is similar to a radio call-in show, with the focus being on listeners' questions. To ask a question, just press \*3 on your telephone, and you'll be connected to an operator who will help moderate the flow of questions and answers. Teri and Jody will continue to take your questions for an hour. Anyone who doesn't get to ask their question will have an opportunity to leave a message at the end of the call, and the BCTF will get back to you with the answer.

The BCTF is committed to fully informing members about the Agreement-in-Committee so that you can cast your ratification ballot in confidence. Please try to take the time to participate in a telephone town hall meeting. To ensure that you will be called, please check that your correct phone number(s) are listed on the Member Portal. To update your contact info you can use the "[Change of Address and Personal Data Form](#)."

## BTA COVID-19 HARDSHIP FUND

In response to the current state of emergency and COVID-19, the BTA has created an Emergency Hardship Fund. A loan or non-repayable grant, up to \$1,000.00 may be accessed through an application to this fund. Please understand that the intention of the financial aid is not to replace lost income, but to provide emergency relief for those in need. While this emergency relief is available to all BTA members, please make all attempts to access other financial assistance before applying as we have limited funds to be distributed.

We are still taking applications for the COVID-19 Hardship Fund. The Hardship Committee is meeting weekly to assess applications as quickly as possible.

**To access this fund, please fill out an application form and scan to [bta3@bctf.ca](mailto:bta3@bctf.ca). Applications can be found on the BTA Website [here](#). All applications will remain**

## BCTF AGM

The BCTF Executive passed this motion on April 16, 2020

1. That, in light of the impact of COVID-19, the Federation cancel the face-to-face meeting of the Spring Representative Assembly scheduled for May 29–30, 2020, and hold an abbreviated Spring Representative Assembly online prior to the end of June 2020, with the primary purpose of adopting the budget.
2. That the 2020 Annual General Meeting be held May 25–27, 2020, with the business conducted over three afternoon sessions.

When the EC voted to postpone the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and schedule an truncated online version, it was with the intention that the AGM deal with the items that it is required to: set the membership fee, set the Salary Indemnity Plan fee, appoint the auditor, and conduct the elections.

Over the next few weeks, we will be updating the delegates with more details about the AGM and Representative Assembly, and the online platforms that will be used for the different items of business.

## BTA AGM

The BTA executive passed a motion to move the BTA Annual General Meeting from May 19th to June 16th. This will be happening virtually and all voting for elections will also be occurring virtually. Stay tuned for more details.

## TEACHERS' PENSION PLAN - BUY-BACK OF SERVICE UPDATE

You may have recently received from your employer a letter from the Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees in regards to the buy-back of pensionable service for a leave of absence. A copy of that may be found here: [tpp.pensionsbc.ca/board-communicue-april-6-2020](http://tpp.pensionsbc.ca/board-communicue-april-6-2020). Here is a quick summary that may be useful to include in your next newsletter to your members:

### Leaves and your pension

Members on a paid leave of absence (LOA), such as, sick days, Salary Indemnity Plan's short-term disability, or long-term disability, will receive full pension crediting. That is, there is no pensionable service (PS) to buy-back.

Members on an unpaid LOA, may buy-back PS up to the limit allowed by the collective agreement (CA). This purchase is done as a lump sum payment to Teachers' Pension Plan after you return to work, or in one-year portions. The buy-backs of PS include periods of reduced assignment, arrears (missing contributions), non-contributory service, or child-rearing credits (as you near the end of your career—this one is free of charge). Unlike other leaves, there are special leaves as categorized by Part 6 of the *Employment Standards Act* (current to March 25, 2020), whereby the member pays only their portion of the pension contributions. These include, but are not limited to: pregnancy leave, parental or adoptive leave, family responsibility leave, bereavement leave, and compassionate care leave. Details can be found here: [tpp.pensionsbc.ca/taking-time-off-work-and-buying-service](http://tpp.pensionsbc.ca/taking-time-off-work-and-buying-service). Always check in with our local office as there may be top-up provisions in our CA.

Starting May 1, 2020, a **new payment option is available**. Members may choose to continue making contributions during the leave by direct payment to Teachers' Pension Plan, and they will invoice your employer separately for their portion of the cost. The details will be published on the Teachers' Pension Plan website ([tpp.pensionsbc.ca](http://tpp.pensionsbc.ca)) by mid-May.

## PRO-D UPDATE

As many of you have heard already, the April Professional Development Day is still happening on April 27th. Despite the uncertain times, we are still engaging in our professional development. There have been many questions about what this will look like. As you know, nothing right now looks like what it has in the past. As of now, all schools are still doing their own Pro-D. With that said, we know that teachers will not be getting together in the same way. We are encouraging teachers to collaborate using the Teams or Zoom platforms. These platforms are supported by our district and every teacher should have access and accounts. If teachers have issues with access, they should reach out to their administrators.

As per usual, we are encouraging teachers who would like to lead an online workshop to connect with their pro-d committees and advertise via email or other collaborative platforms within their schools.

Additionally, our district's Staff Development and Learning Technologies Teams have also offered to put together several workshops that will be given online. Topics will include: Indigenous Education, Technology, SEL, Numeracy, Assessment, and French Immersion. Further information regarding times, registration, and sessions will be announced shortly.

If you are a Pro-D Chair and would like extra support, please contact your BTA Pro-D Committee. You can do this by emailing [btat3@bctf.ca](mailto:btat3@bctf.ca)

We know that this is not a 'typical' Pro-D day, but we are happy that we are still able to engage in professional learning and collaboration despite the current situation.

We hope everyone is healthy and staying safe,

BTA Professional Development Committee



## REP ASSEMBLY

The next Rep Assembly for Staff Reps will be on Tuesday May 5, 2020. This meeting will be contacted on Zoom. The last Rep Assembly was on April 14, 2020, also on Zoom. Below is a picture taken by Katie Marsh, BTA Secondary Member-at-Large attending the Zoom Rep Assembly on April 14.

## INCOME SUPPORT & EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Members who experience a lay-off or shortage of work, an illness, injury or are affected by the COVID-19 virus may be eligible to claim EI wage loss benefits. In 2020, the maximum EI payment is \$573 per week or \$1,146 bi-weekly. EI does not pay extended health and dental premiums, Teachers Pension Plan or other entitlements.

Whether or not you qualify for EI wage replacement you may qualify for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) which will provide \$500 per week for up to 16 weeks. Application for the benefit opens April 6–9, 2020. The benefit is available for the period from March 15, 2020 to October 3, 2020. This program will not pay extended health and dental premiums, Teachers Pension Plan or other entitlements.

### Key points

- If you became eligible for EI March 15, 2020, onward, your claim will be automatically processed through CERB. For EI eligible claims pre-March 15, 2020, you will be enrolled under pre-existing EI rules.
- You do **not** need to be laid off to be eligible for any of these benefits.
- A member may apply for the benefit on their last day worked.
- Apply for benefits online, as the Government of Canada telephone service is experiencing high call volumes.
- **You do not need a copy of your ROE to complete the application.** Employers must supply an ROE to the Government of Canada for COVID-19 affected employees who are now without work. If you are unsure of your ROE status, please contact your employer to request a copy.

### 1. The Employment Insurance (EI) Regular Benefit Eligibility

To qualify for the EI Regular Benefits a member must satisfy the following criteria:

- Have no work or no expectation of work for seven consecutive days.
- Have 700 hours of EI insurable employment (for most regions in BC) in the previous 52 weeks from all employment.
- Members who are casual, Teachers Teaching on Call (TTOC) and members who are unemployed at the end of contract may be eligible for this benefit.

### 2. The Employment Insurance (EI) Sickness Benefit Eligibility

a. To qualify for the **EI Sickness Benefit (COVID-19 affected)** a member must satisfy the following criteria:

- Have a reduction of more than 40% in regular weekly earnings.
- Have 600 hours of EI insurable employment in the previous 52 weeks from all employment.
- Must be unable to work because of sickness or placed in quarantine due to the COVID-19.

b. To qualify for the **EI Sickness Benefit (non-COVID-19 affected)** a member must satisfy the following criteria:

- Have a reduction of more than 40% in regular weekly earnings.
- Have 600 hours of EI insurable employment in the previous 52 weeks, from all employment.
- Must be unable to work because of sickness, injury or quarantine.

### 3. Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) Eligibility

As of April 6, 2020, the Government of Canada will allow workers to apply for the **CERB** whether or not they qualify for EI. If you are on an EI claim effective prior to March 15, 2020, you will be automatically enrolled in CERB when your EI claim is exhausted. Members may qualify for this benefit if they satisfy the following criteria:

- Have stopped working because of COVID-19 and have not voluntarily quit their job.
- Had income of at least \$5,000 in 2019, or in the 12 months prior to the date of their application.
- Expect to be without employment or self-employment income for at least 14 consecutive days in the initial four-week period.

Members on CERB from March 15, 2020, onward will have maximum benefit eligibility to July 3, 2020, (16 weeks).

For subsequent periods beyond the initial first four weeks of claim, you must expect to have no employment or self-employment income.

If work is not available as a result of reasons related to COVID-19 upon conclusion of your maternity/parental leave, you may be eligible to apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, provided you meet the eligibility requirements.

To apply for this benefit please do this online at: [www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html)

Members may be eligible for additional financial support including increases to the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), GST Credit, student loan and tax deferrals. For further information please check the most recent notice from the Government of Canada: [www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html)

**INCOME SUPPORT & EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (CONTINUED)**

Applying for EI & CERB Online	EI by Telephone
Apply for EI Regular Benefit: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/apply.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/apply.html</a>	EI Telephone Information Services 1-800-206-7218
Apply for all EI Sickness Benefits: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html</a>	For EI Sickness (COVID-19 affected) claims, after applying: Telephone: 1-833-381-2725 TTY: 1-800-529-3742
Apply for CERB through Service Canada: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html</a>	
Apply for CERB through CRA: <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/apply-for-cerb-with-cra.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/benefits/apply-for-cerb-with-cra.html</a>	To speak with an agent about CERB, or CRA My Account: 1-800-959-8281

**LETTER FROM MEMBER**

Dear Teachers,

I have been teaching a small group of children for six days now and I would like to share my experiences in the hopes of encouraging more teachers to volunteer for these upcoming teaching positions: I am working with a very experienced EA with four girls ranging from kindergarten to grade two. I am working in a module (fancy two classroom portable) which includes a small and large sink and a bathroom in each classroom. We also have paper towels and sanitizer. The principal and custodian check in daily to see if we need anything. The custodian also cleans every day. As our numbers have increased from four to seven to potentially ten, the second classroom was opened with another teacher and EA for the intermediate students. With only a handful of students, we are able to separate the students at individual tables.

I have set up a daily routine as follows:

1. Greeting students at the door and asking if they are healthy. Parents do not enter the school.
2. Students wash their hands, and do so about six times during the day, as do I.
3. We do a morning message, I read a story, we do Cosmic Kids Yoga using my school iPad and the projector. There are even individual yoga mats in my classroom!
4. We do journal writing, have a snack, and play outside. Students have been provided with a ball, a hoola hoop (the grade two student can go for 7 minutes – we are having timed competitions), and skipping ropes. The EA takes them out while I take a break.
5. After recess we look at the literacy and numeracy assignments provided by the teachers. I must admit it is a struggle with getting logins from teachers/parents and working on old iPads, but I email the children's teachers daily, and they are very helpful. I take photos using my iPad of students' work and email samples to the teacher. I did set up Epic accounts and we have math games on the iPads as backup activities. Jennifer Delvecchio, the school's teacher-librarian, has even come in to help with technology.)
6. After lunch, we do a meditation and science. Brainpop has free videos weekly, or you may have a subscription. You can also register with the National Film Board. My colleague in the other room is a former high school biology teacher who will sometimes work with my students as I work with his.
7. After another recess/D.P.A we have free time – an art activity, reading (I may do one-on-one), singing and dancing to YouTube sites our music teacher suggested, playing, etc.
8. The parents pick them up or the children are taken to the day care beside the school. I tidy up and spray some of the toys. I put up the morning message for the next day. I check my emails as I do throughout the day on the class computer, and then go home.

I go home feeling very satisfied that I have helped some children and families. I have the freedom to run the class and feel supported. Keeping little children apart is a constant struggle, but we do our best. The children know to cough in their arm and to wash their hands. As I have not heard of school age children getting the virus or passing it to adults, I am not overly worried. I do wash my hands a lot and change clothes when I get home. As I am single, with no dependants at home, I don't feel that I am risking anyone else's health. I feel that as a teacher-librarian and former elementary classroom teacher, I am in the unique position of having experience working with children in various grades and subjects. Also, I am not responsible for any one class or report cards as classroom teachers are right now. I encourage teachers, especially those who do not have their own class or are not working with vulnerable students, to consider volunteering. Many EAs and childcare workers are working with children at this point, and at this point, seem fine. The resources I am using are on the Taylor Park website under Library -> Collections -> Brentwood Park. Feel free to look at those or any other Collections I have put up.

Thank you, Diana Zimmerschied