



# TACKBOARD

## President's Message

**"Education costs money, but then so does ignorance."**

*Sir Claus Moser*



AS I WRITE I'M HOPING THAT ALL of you enjoyed your well-deserved Spring Break. However you spent it, I hope you found it relaxing and rejuvenating. For 25 VSTA members the first half of Spring Break was spent attending the BCTF AGM. We were very pleased to have 14 new delegates this year and

all reported how interesting this exercise in participatory democracy was for them and we thank them all on behalf of the membership. This year's AGM elected a new President, Susan Lambert, 1<sup>st</sup> VP Jim Iker, and Glen Hansman, former president of VESTA, as 2<sup>nd</sup> VP. We are also pleased that Chris Stewart, a VSTA member (Britannia), will serve a second year on BCTF Executive. Decisions were made on a variety of issues including a recommendation from the BCTF Executive on how to maintain full indexing of pensions. The following options for maintaining full indexing were passed:

1. Increasing contributions to the Inflation Adjustment Account
2. Removing the Extended Health Benefit subsidy.
3. Indexing from age 60 and indexing only the lifetime portion of the pension.

These recommendations were based on the consultation survey results and this combination of options will be discussed with the current government.

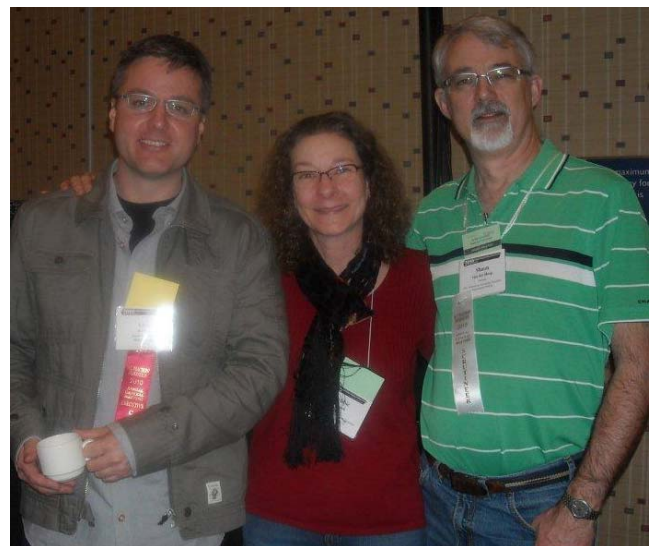
We are currently in the throes of the VSB budget process and the latest figure for the deficit is \$18 million despite the government reinstating the AFG grant and stating they are funding the salary increases for teachers. The numbers still look like a shell game on the part of the Liberal government, but VSTA will be presenting our brief to the Board and our primary message will be that students' needs and support for teachers must remain the priority. A form has gone out to all schools (staff reps) asking for your input and we will incorporate your comments/concerns into our presentation to the trustees.

Despite the doom and gloom around this reductive and

frustrating process of trying year after year to do more with less, **I am pleased to report that the alternate school calendar will be adopted for the 2010/11 school year.** This proposal was passed overwhelmingly at our General Meeting in February and then taken to the District Calendar Committee. As well as having a standard school day across the district (bookends will be 8:35 to 3:05 with lunch from 11:40 to 12:25 and within those, schools may organize their breaks, silent reading etc. to suit their needs), this will mean a two week spring break and 4 long weekends added to the year in October, November, February and May. The savings of \$1.4 million from this proposal will, we are certain, go to direct service to classrooms, and that is our message to trustees.

Thanks to all of you who came out to our rally at the Minister of Education offices on March 1<sup>st</sup>. A clear message was sent to Victoria about our frustration with their smoke and mirrors funding. Our advocacy around funding needs to and will continue.

*Anne*



Glen Hansman (VESTA Past President and 2010-11 BCTF 2nd VP), Debbie Pawluk (VSTA 1st VP), and Shaun van der Hoop (VSTA 2nd VP). BCTF AGM, March 2010.

## Important Upcoming Deadline: March 31, 2010

Teachers on continuing appointments are reminded of the upcoming deadline for the following requests:

- Increase in Teaching Time
- Decrease in Teaching Time
- Personal Leave Without Pay of One Year or Longer
- Intent to Return to Work for the Terms Beginning September 01 or January 01 for the Coming School Year

Please ensure that the required paperwork *is received by Human Resources* by March 31, 2010. Forms for requesting an increase or decrease in teaching time are available at your school and the VSTA office. Contact the VSTA office if you have any questions.

## “88 and Out” – Save up to \$800. Per Year

**BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan** regulations provide for a member who has reached age 64, or a total of age plus contributory service of 88, to withdraw from the long term portion of the plan. You may wish to continue the plan, however, if your accumulated sick leave and BCTF Short Term SIP (120 days) will not protect your salary until you reach the age of 65 or factor 90. Members who withdraw from the Long Term portion of the plan will still receive the 2% SIP allowance. Call the Income Security Division at the BCTF at 604-871-2283 or VSTA for more information.

## Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP)

All teachers planning to retire this year must notify the board in writing by 2010 May 31. Those teachers who are committed to retiring early and qualify for the Early Retirement Incentive Plan must also submit a letter of intention to retire to Human Resources by May 31. ERIP information is posted in all schools. Contact the VSTA if you have further questions.

To be eligible for the Early Retirement Incentive Plan, employees must:

- be on a continuing appointment
- retiring with a pension
- have a minimum of ten (10) FTE years' service with the Vancouver Board of Education.
- be at the maximum of their scale
- have been in active service for the previous four (4) years, during which there may be a maximum of one year leave not including leaves under Article G.21.30., and/or leaves granted due to disability (within the meaning of *The British Columbia Human Rights Code*)
- be a minimum age of 55, and a maximum age of 64 as of June 30th in the year of retirement
- submit his/her request to retire, in writing, **on or before 2010 May 31** for a retirement date of June 30

Based on the salary upon retirement, excluding allowances, the minimum salary to be PB(5), step 10, the maximum to be 6M, step 10, minus PB(5), step 3, and to be adjusted by the applicable earnings as at age upon retirement date:

Age	4/PC	5/PB	5/PA	6/M	Payout %
55	\$18,665	\$18,665	\$24,610	\$25,660	100%
56	\$16,798	\$16,798	\$22,149	\$23,094	90%
57	\$14,932	\$14,932	\$19,688	\$20,528	80%
58	\$13,065	\$13,065	\$17,227	\$17,962	70%
59	\$11,199	\$11,199	\$14,766	\$15,396	60%
60	\$9,332	\$9,332	\$12,305	\$12,830	50%
61	\$7,466	\$7,466	\$9,844	\$10,264	40%
62	\$5,599	\$5,599	\$7,383	\$7,698	30%
63	\$3,733	\$3,733	\$4,922	\$5,132	20%
64	\$3,733	\$3,733	\$4,922	\$5,132	20%

**Note:** For members who participate in the Payroll deduction of the BC College of Teachers' annual fee, the annual BCCT fee will automatically be deducted on 2010 April 30 for the 2010-2011 school year. Please be sure to cancel your payroll deduction by 2010 April 16, if you do not intend to teach in BC.



Vancouver teachers, trustees, citizens and students rallied in front of the Minister of Education's office to advocate for increased funding for public education. Hopes and Dreams Rally, March 1, 2010.

## 12,000 Classes Exceeding the Class-Composition Limits

The government's own legislation sets the limit at three students with an Individual Education Plan per class. In 2010 there are close to 12,000 class-composition violations. That is up from 11,000 in 2009 and 10,000 in 2008. The data presented by the minister of education also shows 3,229 class-size violations with more than 30 students for the 2009-10 school year. That is down a mere 100 classes from 2008-09, but still higher than in 2007-08 when there were 3,179 violations. It has been more than four years since BC's teachers went on strike to improve classroom conditions, and in that time no progress has been made and government has refused to fund its own legislation.

The full report can be found in Overview of Class Size and Composition in British Columbia Public Schools for 2005-10 at the Ministry of Education website [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/district\\_data\\_summary.php](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/district_data_summary.php).

## Build a Better BC

The Federation is a partner in the community Coalition to Build a Better BC.

Community service groups, cultural and art associations, and unions joining together as one voice to call on the provincial government to:

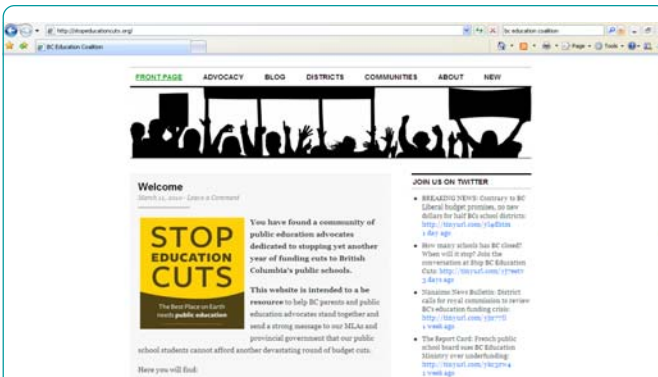
- immediately stop eliminating public and community services.
- fulfill their legislative responsibility to provide adequate, fair and consistent funding to support public services and community groups.
- work in substantive consultation with groups and individuals to build public opportunity to participate in building a better BC.

*Mark your calendar...*



### “BUILD A BETTER BC” RALLY

Saturday, April 10, 11:00am-1:00pm  
Vancouver Art Gallery



The “Stop Education Cuts” Facebook groups and webpage. Visit [www.stopeducationcuts.org](http://www.stopeducationcuts.org)

## Congratulations and thanks to

**SUE INGLIS** from Point Grey for her return to the Executive Committee. Sue was elected by acclamation at the February Council Meeting as Member-at-Large.

## Questions About TQS?

Want to know how to upgrade your pay to category 5+? Visit [www.tqs.bc.ca/faq3.html](http://www.tqs.bc.ca/faq3.html)



Top: Young Cheng & Shelley MacPhail; Lisa Pacheco, Mary Walsh, Susan Gallpen & Anne Guthrie Warman; Chris Price; Christine Stewart. Middle: Rosalind Kellett, Mary Filleul & Moira Ekdahl; Moira Ekdahl & Bal Panesar; Henny Coates; Vic Choy & Raza Mirani. Bottom: Louis Jefferson & Shaun van der Hoop; Sylvia Metzner; Michael-Don Borason & Leo Strong. BCTF AGM, March 2010.

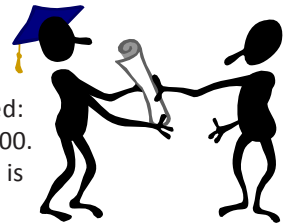
## Bargaining History: Did You Know?

On January 27, 2002, the provincial government passed two pieces of legislation which imposed a collective agreement on teachers and gave the employers their entire bargaining agenda and more. Bill 28, *Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act*, stripped away any and all provisions concerning non-enrolling teachers as well as language concerning the inclusion of students with special needs. A companion piece of legislation, Bill 27, *Education Services Collective Agreement Act*, imposed a 7.5% salary increase over three years and eliminated ten local teacher agreements in school districts which had previously amalgamated in 1996 where the local unions had preserved their separate agreements.



## VSTA Scholarships

Application forms for VSTA scholarships are available from the VSTA Office, Staff Reps at school sites, and at the VSTA website at [www.vstaweb.ca](http://www.vstaweb.ca). To be eligible, the 2009-10 graduate must be a child or legal ward of an active VSTA member in good standing or of a retired member. A total of four scholarships will be awarded: 1 x \$1,500 award and 3 x \$1,000. The deadline for application is May 7, 2010.



**Always happy to  
hear from you!**  
Anne, Debbie, Shaun, Kim & Mo