

KTTA News - January 20, 2017

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A. Class Size and Composition

(*Priority Measures Funding and Positions Attached*)

Consultation:

The KTTA and District agreed that there needs to be **good faith consultation** between teaching staff at each of the schools regarding the allocation of staffing to their schools from the Priority Measures fund. This should look like whole group discussion with all members of staff participating. If a staff wants a representative from the KTTA to meet with staff, please contact us and we will try to accommodate a meeting as quickly as possible.

Staff representatives (or someone appointed to represent staff on this process) should be involved in discussions with administration around allocation as would occur for the Education Fund. The focus should be on addressing collective agreement needs - smaller class sizes, addressing composition (i.e..Behaviour support, resource room/relief teacher or split classes), and specialist staffing (LART, Library).

Amanda Jensen (KTTA 1st VP) has contacted staff representatives or a contact at each school with the funding allocation to the schools and to ensure good faith consultation was occurring. Those individuals are following up with us regarding this issue.

Attached to this email is the funding and allocation of staffing for the first phase of positions. The second phase will get an allocation of staffing but we want to ensure it is maximized and that all funds are expended.

Phased Staffing:

The allocation of staffing to **secondary schools will occur first** to ensure positions are posted before the start of Semester 2. The next allocation will be for **staffing to elementary schools where additional classrooms** are being created. Once these processes are completed, **then the funds will be distributed to other elementary schools** to ensure maximum possible staffing for all schools based on their need.

We are hopeful this entire process will be completed by the end of January or early February.

B. Extended Spring Break Matter

(Petition Attached - you can ask community members and parents to sign the petition outside of school hours)

District management was requested by the School Board to engage partners to look into whether support exists or not for a continuation of the extended Spring Break.

The KTTA negotiated a three year trial with the district and then incorporated the Letter of Understanding into the Collective Agreement. However, that agreement ends this year. The KTTA surveys members and nearly 600 members responded to the survey with 94% of members (and 75% of TTOCs) indicating support for a continuation of the extended Spring Break. The November, 2016 carried a motion to authorize the KTTA to start negotiations with the district to extend that agreement. The KTTA representatives met with Human Resources and shared a proposal that addressed some of the concerns members had about the structure of the work day.

District management took all of the input from all partner groups including teachers, support staff, school administration, and parents and all groups indicated in a large majority that they wanted the extended spring break to continue. This included 69% of parents surveyed (through Thought Exchange). A report was prepared and provided to trustees. This included a motion that the Board approve a continuation of the two week spring break.

Monday, January 16, 2017 Board Meeting

There were seven trustees at the school board meeting last night. A report and motion regarding the continuation of the Spring Break came to the Trustees. Three spoke against the motion and three supported the motion. One trustee had concerns about professional development days but was hesitant to support the motion to continue the extended spring break. The vote on the motion ended up being a 4-3 vote against the motion essentially ending the extended spring break beyond this school year (for the 2017-18 school year).

The Trustees who voted **for the motion** were: Joan Cowden (jcowden@sd73.bc.ca), Joe Small (jsmall@sd73.bc.ca), and Megan Wade (mwade@sd73.bc.ca).

The Trustees who voted **against the motion** were: Gerald Watson (gwatson@sd73.bc.ca), Kathleen Karpuk (kkarpuk@sd73.bc.ca), Cara McKelvey (cmckelvey@sd73.bc.ca), and Rhonda Kershaw (rkershaw@sd73.bc.ca).

The two missing trustees were: Denise Harper (dharper@sd73.bc.ca) and Shelley Sim (ssim@sd73.bc.ca).

The trustees who opposed the motion stated that they did not take stock in the survey of parents because parents could vote more than once. One noted that it isn't educationally sound but didn't provide evidence of how that is the case (management noted that there was no negative impact on student achievement). There was also some concern about hardship around some families. Trustee Watson noted that the survey was not a referendum and trustees could vote as they wished.

The trustees who were in favour of the motion noted that the district surveyed partner groups and should not disregard the desire of the majority and that issues around hardship were not supported by the evidence.

The trustees then voted for a motion to look at alternatives to the two week spring break.

NOTE RE: EMAILS: If members choose to email individual trustees, please remember that the school district is your employer and encouragement is more likely to get reconsideration than stronger language. The key issues below may help with your message.

Possible Actions

Letter of Understanding No. 41 was a negotiated provision, but does end on June 30, 2017. The KTTA expected good faith negotiations from the district and district management were willing to engage to continue the extended spring break. Members will undoubtedly be upset about this surprise decision of the district's trustees who disregarded the will of those they consulted with.

We note that the issue of an extended spring break has an educational component to it and that has to be stressed.

The key issues members identified in our survey were:

- It allows teachers to catch up on preparation work, marking, and reporting.
- Students are more rested and it is easier to proceed with instruction
- It addresses issues of children missing instruction when they are taken on holidays during the week prior to or after spring break

Petition and Board Presentation

The KTTA has sent a petition to every school that highlights the educational reasons for an extended spring break. This can then be presented at a public board meeting with an encouragement for trustees to reconsider their response.

Media

Radio stations and CFJC TV reported on the teachers' perspective on the 2 week spring break issue.

Attached here is the CFJC TV report: <http://cfjctoday.com/article/556356/kamloops-teachers-not-impressed-spring-break-switch>.