

## **KTTA News - September 8, 2016**

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**Positions are Posted on SD 73 Website. Check at - <http://www3.sd73.bc.ca/careers>**

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### **A. Assessment Guides**

(Check out: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0ByJi-LSIV0UCbjBnTUNVSXhrMVU?usp=drive\\_web](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0ByJi-LSIV0UCbjBnTUNVSXhrMVU?usp=drive_web) for assessment guides - cut and paste into URL if clicking doesn't work)

Attached to this e-newsletter are assessment guides for each subject area in each grade from K-9 which members are welcome to use if it helps. A note that the new Science 8 curriculum does NOT include "space" and this can be removed from the document.

Thank you to the district coordinators for creating these documents.

### **B. Posting Process Delays**

The district is still filling positions for Round 4 and nearly completed this process. Once all the positions are filled, a successful applicants post will be sent out to all members. Note that the KTTA's position is that successful applicants will still retain continuing status on those positions posted as continuing.

Members can appeal / challenge the placement of a less senior candidate into a position by sending an appeal or challenge to Associate Superintendent Shayne Olsen ([solsen@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:solsen@sd73.bc.ca)) or District Principal Rick Kienlein ([rkienlein@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:rkienlein@sd73.bc.ca)). Please specify the position you are challenging in the email, the successful applicant's name, your qualifications and your seniority.

If the district denies the challenge, please contact the KTTA and we will put in a formal request for a meeting to review the challenge with the district.

## **C. WHMIS Training**

Members who work with chemicals will need to get WHMIS training again due to an updated module. The district has provided this information and instructions to members who would work with chemicals as a result of their teaching assignment. If there are any questions about the training, please contact Michelle Marginet at (250) 374-0679 (District Manager - Health and Safety).

The modules can be completed at any time and once they have been completed, members will be considered to have the training until another change occurs to the modules.

Note that the district is not required to provide release time for this training. A previous decision from the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal noted that school districts are not required to provide release time for teachers to do workplace health and safety training because wages are paid as a salary and not on an hourly basis.

Having said this, members can work at their own pace on the training modules.

## **D. Changes to Exam Week in Secondary**

As a result of the changing curriculum, school districts are reducing the number of days for exams. The current calendar has limited time between the traditional turn around day and when final reports are due.

The KTTA will raise this issue with the district at the Joint Labour Liaison Committee meeting and push for more reasonable timelines between turn around days and when report cards are due.

## **E. Curriculum Update**

*(Summary from BCTF President Glen Hansman)*

A few days ago, the Ministry posted the finalized version of the revised K–9 curriculum, as well as updated proposals for the 10–12 curriculum. These can be accessed on the Ministry's website here. A new "Educator Update" has also been posted there. It functions as a pretty useful FAQ for many of the changes under way, and may be of interest to many of your members.

The Ministry has also begun posting instructional examples on their website (<https://curriculum.gov.BC.ca/>). These were developed by many of our members working on the curriculum revision team.

Federation representatives have continued to impress upon government the need for the proper supports to be in place in order for implementation to be successful and sustainable. Since this time last year, at times we've perceived a government emphasis on "getting it done." And, experience has taught us that in the lead up to an election there can be periods of instability when, unfortunately, professional expertise may at times take a back seat to political expediency—rather than an approach that understands that system-wide change done well requires time, support, resources, and strong working relationships. During the summer, in meetings and correspondence, Federation representatives underscored once again the need for responsible implementation timelines and plans to be developed to better support teachers and students.

In response, the Ministry now seems to be softening its approach. Following a meeting on August 16, Deputy Minister Dave Byng wrote acknowledging that a "change of this scale will take time, and we fully expect to continue to make adjustments to curricula based on teacher feedback. Please be assured, there will continue to be time to refine and adjust in order to support successful learner outcomes."

The Ministry knows that we will be emphasizing to our members the need to take things slow—to make changes gradually within the realities of their teaching and learning conditions.

Now is also a time where it will be important for locals to push their school districts in discussions at the relevant district committee. The Executive Committee will be contemplating some recommendations in this regard.

### **Classroom assessment**

There are no required changes to classroom assessment. This is entirely up to the autonomy of individual teachers, and will remain as such.

### **Pedagogical choices**

While some individuals in government continue to refer to "personalized learning," a change in curriculum does not necessitate a change in pedagogical approach. Choice of how to teach the curriculum is captured by the professional autonomy language in our collective agreements. Please continue to assist us in communicating this distinction to your members regularly.

The Federation has neither a position for nor against the concept of "personalized learning." Furthermore, it isn't even a new concept in BC. For a historical primer, please refer to this Teacher Magazine article from last school

year ([https://issuu.com/teachernewsmag/docs/2015\\_Jan-feb\\_teacher\\_issuu/6?e=0/32913483](https://issuu.com/teachernewsmag/docs/2015_Jan-feb_teacher_issuu/6?e=0/32913483)).

### **Reporting to parents**

The Ministry has now released the changes to the Ministerial Orders associated with communicating student learning to parents. More information about these will be developed by the Ministry and made available to teachers. We can confirm again that teachers will not need to report on the Core Competencies.

In a nutshell, the Ministry will be allowing districts to maintain the status quo, or to choose district-developed approaches. It will be important for locals to be involved in any discussions at the school district level, and to ensure that school districts do not go overboard in what they opt to do. Reporting should be meaningful—not a make-work project for teachers, only to be read by (or even wanted) by a very small percentage of parents.

### **Resources**

The BCTF has repeatedly raised the need for new resources to support the curriculum change. Making available a limited number of teacher-made samples to be posted online does not address the depth of the need. While helpful in a limited way, the Federation does not view online exemplars to be an adequate response or an approach that supports successful implementation. Accurate, up-to-date, and inclusive teaching and learning resources need to be developed and made available for schools' use in all communities around the province, and there needs to be a plan and funding available to ensure that this happens.

In the letter from Deputy Minister Byng referenced above, he also went on to say that he recognizes the concerns that the Federation has repeatedly raised about resources to support the new curriculum, and he “agree[s] accurate and up-to-date learning resources need to be made available.”

The plan is to meet early in September to begin mapping out where gaps are, and a plan to address the gaps. There is particular interest on the part of both the Federation and the Ministry to attend to the gaps in supports related to the enhanced Aboriginal content in the curriculum, and there is acknowledgment that there are many other areas that need attending to. Conversations began last spring about the variety of resources needed to support the implementation of the health curriculum, which has been moved over into what is now known as Physical & Health Education, and we will continue to work with the Ministry on this front as well, in addition all pushing for resources across all subject areas.

It will continue to be very important for locals and the Federation to be hearing from members about their needs. EC members travelled to many locals last year to hear first-hand from members about their experiences with implementation thus far. There are SURTs and other supports also available through the Federation, and we look forward to continuing the dialogue. Your zonal contact

on the Executive Committee will also be contacting you regularly, and this is also a venue to pass along members' concerns.

School district management has its responsibilities too to ensure that people in their employ have the tools to do their job!

### **The additional non-instructional days**

The Federation was pleased to see a step in the right direction with the provision of two additional NI days devoted to the curriculum change in the 2015–16 school year, and the additional day in both 2016–17 and 2017–18. Further, we appreciated that the Federation played a key role in the overall design of the days. This was a positive undertaking.

We believe there remains a strong need for continued teacher collaboration and planning at both the district and school levels, and that will require time for in-service. This must be properly funded and cannot be yet another expectation layered onto teachers' already very demanding workload and very scarce collaboration time.

This is a conversation that we are also encouraging locals to have with their districts. Districts do have funds set aside for in-service and professional development. How districts spend that money is what is questionable, though.

### **Provincial Student Assessment Program**

The province has committed to eliminating the FSA and provincial exams. The Annual General Meeting and Representative Assembly have made decisions about the Federation's next steps in the process of developing possible alternatives at both the elementary level and secondary level. We are awaiting, though, a final decision from the government whether they will agree to not release school and student data to third parties. Discussions on this continue. A detailed update was provided to the membership in the spring, and is posted in the MyBCTF portal [here](#).

### **Continued Professional Development Advisory Council**

The Federation has long believed that teachers benefit from engaging in professional development activities, strengthening their practice and the profession. It's no surprise that BC's public school teachers already engage in extensive and comprehensive professional development on an ongoing basis, and welcome the availability of diverse in-service in their workplaces or in their districts.

However, as Federation representatives have discussed at length with the past five or six Ministers of Education, opportunities for professional development and in-service can be fairly limited in more remote and rural areas of the province. This is a significant issue that needs to be overcome. And, regardless of where our members work in BC, access to professional development and in-service can

also often be fettered by the amount of funding made available to teachers (which in some cases has not increased in a couple of decades) and the availability of staff or other individuals to provide the supports. In the cuts that school districts have had to make over the past decade or so, most districts have eliminated a significant number of the helping teacher, teacher-consultant, or mentorship positions at the district level—the very people who develop and provide the professional development and in-service sessions in schools and across school districts.

There is recognition from the Deputy Minister and the current Minister of Education that the issues in the paragraph above need to be addressed. What they are willing or able to do remains to be seen. The Ministry is considering a three-year strategic plan that touches on some of the above.

However, a couple days ago, the Federation received notice of the commencement of consultations flowing from 2015's Education Statutes Amendment Act—which has a number of problematic aspects to it, including the possibility of Teacher Regulation Branch oversight of teachers' professional development choices. It is understood that certificate holders in BC also include independent school teachers, and individuals in management positions. There are individuals who hold BC certificates who teach overseas or in other provinces. If the province feels it needs to oversee the professional development of those groups of certificate holders that is one thing. When it comes to BC's public school teachers, though, there is a collective agreement in place—and the venue for such discussions is at the bargaining table or via existing local provisions in the collective agreement.

The spring 2015 Representative Assembly adopted a strategy associated with Education Statutes Amendment Act consultations, which included participation in the consultations, and this was communicated to all members via the BCTF News that spring. Correspondence has been sent to the Deputy Minister outlining the Federation's position—detailing areas of common ground and as well as outlining some of the areas of disagreement (including areas which, in our opinion, fall within the realm of collective bargaining) in advance of the first meeting of the "Continuous Professional Development Advisory Council." A face-to-face conversation also occurred this week.

The Federation does believe that there would be value in positively shining a light on teachers' professional development, celebrating what teachers and other certificate holders do on a regular basis, and helping the public better understand what we do on non-instructional days. We've put it to the Deputy Minister that we welcome the opportunity to work with the Ministry of Education on such an initiative. The time for teachers to collaborate, hone their skills, reflect on their practice, and make changes to improve outcomes for students is so important! Teachers are proud of what we do, and what we invest individually, as whole schools, and through our union, to advance our profession.