

RTA NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024

Local Bargaining Team

The RTA is starting to prepare for local bargaining that could begin as early as November 2024. Have you ever wanted to be part of a local bargaining team? The local bargaining team will meet and bargain during school hours and release time will be provided by the BCTF. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask me. Please contact me if you're interested in becoming part of the RTA Local Bargaining Team. A local bargaining team usually consists of four roles: team chairperson, lead negotiator, recorder, and observer. The new bargaining chair will get an expense paid trip to the BCTF Bargaining Conference. The conference is scheduled for May 22–23, 2024 at the River Rock Casino Resort in Richmond.

Bargaining Chairperson

The Bargaining Chairperson shall, in consultation with the local president and executive committee:

- a) have a general understanding of matters concerning the Collective Agreement, and work in conjunction with the President in matters of bargaining
- b) serve as chairperson of Bargaining Committee meetings, or in consultation with the President, designate others to do so,
- c) serve as a the chairperson of the Bargaining Team, or in consultation with the President, designate others to do so
- d) submit a report in writing to the AGM on the activities of the Bargaining Committee during the year

New RTA Social Justice Co-Chairs

Hello! We are Megan Smith and Rana Nelson, your new Social Justice Co-Chairs. Megan teaches Grade 2 at CPE and Rana teaches English First Peoples 10 at RSS and TTOCs with SD19 and SD93. We are looking forward to engaging with staff and students around topics such as Reconciliation, justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, care for the environment – and FUN!

For February, Megan created some simple slide decks on the Lunar New Year, which is this Saturday, February 10, and Black History Month, which coincides this year with the

final year in the International Decade for People of African Descent. Please contact Megan for the slide decks and other resources. Below are a couple of links to get you started:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/black-history-month.html>.

<https://canadianimmigrant.ca/living/culture/celebrate-chinese-new-year-2024>

Please let us know if there are any social justice issues you'd like us to focus on in the upcoming months. We are excited to be working with you!

Rana (rnelson@sd19.bc.ca) and Megan (msmith@sd19.bc.ca)

Living Life to the Full

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

**8 interactive
& educational
sessions**

In eight enjoyable 90-minute sessions —one per week—this program helps people make a difference to their lives. Participants are taught how to deal with their feelings when fed up or worried, and learn skills to help them tackle problems and navigate life transitions and difficulties.

Only
\$35!

12 Hours That Can Change Your Life!

- Want to know how to feel happier, more confident, and worry less about right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you? Living Life to the Full is a fun and interactive course that will help you understand your feelings, thoughts, and behaviours, and what to do about them!
- March 4 to April 29, 2024
- No class on Easter Monday (April 1)
- 4 - 5:30 p.m.
- \$35 +GST

To register call the Revelstoke Okanagan College campus at **250-837-4235**

Starling Minds Mental Fitness webinar series - February 2024

In today's fast-paced world, chronic stress has become all too common in our lives. It impacts our physical and emotional health, and our overall quality of life. At BCTF, we believe in the importance of helping our members live healthier and happier lives by addressing the impact of stress.

We are excited to invite you to an upcoming webinar, "***Cultivating Calm: Mindfulness Strategies for Chronic Stress***," hosted by our partner, Starling Minds.

During the 4-week webinar series, you will:

- Restore your energy balance with meditation, yoga, and mindful breathing practices.
- Promote tranquility and alleviate stress, anxiety, and fear through proven relaxation techniques.
- Enhance your overall well-being by embracing a holistic approach that nurtures your mental and physical health.

Whether you're dealing with work-related pressures, personal challenges, or simply looking to enhance your daily life, mindfulness can be a transformative tool.

Don't wait! Secure your spot by clicking on the registration link below.

[Register Now](#)

This webinar is **completely free**, and you will receive a **certificate of completion** at the end of the series.

Don't let chronic stress continue to take a toll on your well-being. Join us and Starling Minds for this transformative webinar and take the first step towards a more balanced and peaceful life.

Individual Mental Health Funds

Members will have a second opportunity to access funds to help offset the costs related to counseling, therapy, or other clinical mental health supports. To access this support, members need only email me and attach copies of receipts. The amount reimbursed will be dependent partially upon demand and partially on the amount spent on services. If you applied in the fall, provide new copies of receipts with a starting date after the last cut-off date of October 1, 2023.

I am asking for those who are interested in applying for funds to help cover those expenses to contact me no later than **April 29, 2024**. Funds will be distributed in May. Names of those who receive funding will be known only to me. I will report to the superintendent as to how the funds were disbursed but names of recipients will not be shared.

I, along with a few other RTA executive members, will again review the requests and decide how much we are able to reimburse each member. I will be the only one who sees the names of applicants. - information and documents provided to other executive members will have names redacted. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Important Dates for Teachers

Please follow this link to find [Important Dates for Teachers](#). This page gives you a quick reference to timelines and dates as related to leaves, requests for part time assignments and increases in assignment and other related matters. For more information, please refer to the articles in the collective agreement, and please do not hesitate to email or call the RTA office if you have questions.

BCTF AGM - March 16-19, 2024

The BCTF AGM is being held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver, March 16-19, 2024. Jillian Russell, Jason Stevens and I will be attending as your RTA delegates. The BCTF Reports and Resolutions are available for access through the BCTF [website](#), specifically within the 2024 AGM information. I encourage you to review them and send me any feedback you may have.

RTA AGM – April 11, 2024

Save the date! The RTA Annual General Meeting will be held Thursday, April 11, 2024.

- **Who: RTA Members**
- **What: RTA Annual General Meeting**
- **Where: Selkirk Room - Regent Hotel**
- **When: Thursday April 11, 2024 @ 4:00 p.m**

We will be electing our executive positions for next year, passing our budget, sharing a meal, and hopefully will be provided with a provincial update from a member of the BCTF Executive Committee.

RTA Table Officers:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer

RTA Officers:

Local Representative, Indigenous Education Chairperson, Bargaining Chairperson, Health and Safety Chairperson, Professional Development Chairperson, Social Justice Contact, TTOC Contact, Local Election Contact, and Social Convenor

Please follow the link to the [RTA Constitution and Bylaws](#) to find the duties of any of the Executive Committee Officers.

All RTA members are eligible to put their name forward for any position on our executive, and I encourage anyone who is interested to do so.

The meeting will be followed by a meal. More details will be published in March along with a sign-up sheet in your staff room. I really hope to "see" many of you there.

Contacting the RTA

Do not hesitate to call, text (250.837.2255) or email Barry rtapresident19@gmail.com. Please make sure the RTA has your personal email to receive valuable information like this newsletter.

RTA Newsletter Challenge

Thanks for reading the newsletter! As always there is a newsletter challenge designed to help you become more familiar with our contract and other related issues. The names of all of those who submit a correct answer by **7:00 am** Monday, February 12 will be entered into a draw. **Three** lucky winners will each receive a **Southside Market \$25** gift card.

February's newsletter challenge has **two questions**.

Question 1: "If you are interested in transferring from one school to another or wish to express an interest in a specific subject/grade, what is the name of the Article and date you must notify the superintendent in writing? "

Question 2: "If you were elected as our Local Bargaining Chair what conference would you be attending at the expense of the BCTF?"

Email your two answers to [rtapresident19@gmail](mailto:rtapresident19@gmail.com) by **7:00 am Monday, February 12, 2024**.

Have a wonderful weekend!