



October 2010

OKANAGAN-SKAHA TEACHERS' UNION

The Myth of the Provincial Contract

To say that because teachers have a provincial contract, the working and learning conditions across British Columbia are the same is far from the reality.

In our case, here in Okanagan-Skaha, of the 115 Articles that make up our Collective Agreement, 31 are common to many other local contracts around the province. 84 of them are distinct to our contract alone.

The salary grid is common across the province so, to many, that means "it's the same all over".

Let's take Temporary Contracts as an example. In Okanagan-Skaha we have teachers who have worked 1, 2, or as many as 14 temporary contracts in their time spent in this district. These teachers do not have secure employment, but, in many other districts around BC they would have.

It is quite simply not the case, as many critics would claim, that these teachers are all poor-

performing teachers that do not merit a permanent teaching position. While declining enrollment and budget cuts have made teaching positions harder to get everywhere in BC, in a select number of districts continuing appointments seem to be extremely elusive.

Benefit coverage is another area where there is a wide diversity of provisions across BC school districts.

In Coquitlam there is 100% dental coverage, no limit on orthodontics and no lifetime limits. In Okanagan-Skaha we have 80%, 50% and a \$2000 lifetime limit on orthodontic coverage. These plans are with the same carrier (Pac Blue Cross) but are vastly different in coverage. Small district or large district, it doesn't seem to matter. Terrace, Vancouver, and the Gulf Islands have no lifetime limit on ortho coverage yet Surrey, Golden, and Okanagan-Skaha do.

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Seventeen years ago the Provincial Contract model was started and, here we are, preparing for another round of bargaining and the starting points for every local across the province are different.

So, as you can see from these examples, the idea that there is a provincial contract is, in many ways, not accurate. As we prepare for the end of the current contract and, hopefully, a new one reached through good-faith negotiations, it is important that we look at our contract's strengths and weaknesses because it isn't the same all over.

Inside this issue:

Know Your Collective Agreement	2
Bargaining Talk	2
Social Justice & Wellness News	3
Factor 88—Don't Wait	3
Upcoming dates	4
Member Milestones	4

Check out OSTU.CA for ...

- Bargaining Information
- Our Calendar of events
- Frequently Used Documents
- And much, much more.....

Social Justice



My name is Lindsey Mennell and as your Social Justice chair I am happy to help you in any way I can.

I can help you find resources, posters, lesson plans, books and DVDs to integrate Social Justice themes into your lessons.

Social Justice includes:

- Anti-racism
- Environment and sustainability
- Lesbian, gay, and transgender issues
- Peace and global education
- Poverty
- Status of Women

These Issues come up everyday in our schools and in our society. It's not hard to integrate them into what we're already teaching. I'm doing it at KVR in Art, Socials and Science and I would be happy to share my ideas with you.

Contact Lindsey at:
KVR Middle School
770-7600
lmennell@summer.com

Wellness - presents:

Living With Balance

The Okanagan Skaha Teachers Union is hosting a "wellness/vitality program" called "Living with Balance". The BCTF Health and Wellness Program is co-sponsoring this with SD#67 in order to allow teachers to attend this workshop free of charge.

DATE: Tuesdays, starting October 26, 2010
(2 hours once a week for 6 weeks)

TIME: 4:15 to 6:15 p.m.

PLACE: OSTU Office

To register, please go on line <http://bctf.ca/LivingWithBalance.aspx> to complete the registration form. For further information please call Robin Gabert at 250-859-1819 or

***Our Students'
Learning Conditions
Are Our
Working Conditions!***

FACTOR 88—Don't Wait!

A member who has attained age 64, has reached factor '88' (age plus contributory service), or is in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the long-term portion of the Salary Indemnity Plan.

Withdrawal may be made during any school year in which one of the fore-going conditions has been met and upon the completion of the appropriate withdrawal form. Withdrawal will be effective, upon approval, in September for applications received in that month. Applications submitted later will be effective the month

following approval of the application. In making application for withdrawal, you should ensure that in the event of serious illness or accident you have sufficient accumulated sick

leave which, when combined with 120 days of benefit from SIP: shortterm, will protect your salary to the end of the month in which you reach factor '90' or the end of the month you attain age 65, whichever comes first. Applications are available online at: ostu.ca under 'Documents' or at bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SalaryBenefits/SIP/LT-withdrawal Form.pdf or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.

Member Milestones

- ◆ Dawn & Amory Walliser welcomed baby Porter Amory (8lbs) born July 7th.
- ◆ Scott & Carmen Harkness welcomed baby Kiera Dawn Harkness (3lbs 10 oz) born September 28th.
- ◆ Linda Hoshizaki retired September 29th after 37 years of teaching! For the last number of years Linda taught at Giant's Head Elementary.

Congratulations!

Please forward announcements to OSTU at ostu@shaw.ca for publication in the newsletter.

Health and Safety Committee

Chairperson: Jasmine Hunter

Outstanding Safety Training Unlimited

OSTU Safety Reps: Here is your chance to show off your talent and creativity.

H&S Safety Bulletin Contest in Schools

Criteria:

Create, set up, redecorate your bulletin board in your school to reflect the following :

- ◆ Information regarding the Joint Health and Safety Committee, names, pictures,
- ◆ Dates of meetings, Posted minutes of the committee meetings,
- ◆ Copies of Forms; 6A, Tela claim # or poster
- ◆ BCTF Claim advocates names and phone #
- ◆ Does Your Joint Safety Committee have Terms of Reference?
- ◆ The four rights
- ◆ Information on New and Young Workers Orientation in School
- ◆ Any Safety concerns for workers
- ◆ (If you need any help, contact Jasmine Hunter)

First Prize \$50.00 Gift certificate

Second Prize \$40.00 Gift certificate

Third Prize \$30.00 Gift certificate

End of the contest is October 29, 2010 Judges will be touring around the schools to find the best bulletin board display.

Upcoming Dates.....

Oct 12 -

OSTU Executive Meeting @ OSTU 4pm

Oct 20 - General Meeting & Induction Dinner

Oct 21 - Staff Rep Training @ OSTU (all day)

Oct 12 - PRO—D DAY

Oct 26 - Staff Rep Assembly

Oct 27 - TOC Committee Meeting @ OSTU 4pm

Oct 28 - PD Committee Meeting @ OSTU 4pm

