

STA Examiner

Surrey Teachers' Association

sta@surreyteachers.org

www.surreyteachers.org

Summer-What Summer?



John Wadge
President

By the end of the week, probably by the end of the day, the summer break will be a distant memory and we will be totally engrossed in our jobs. As with many things, the anticipation is the most painful part.

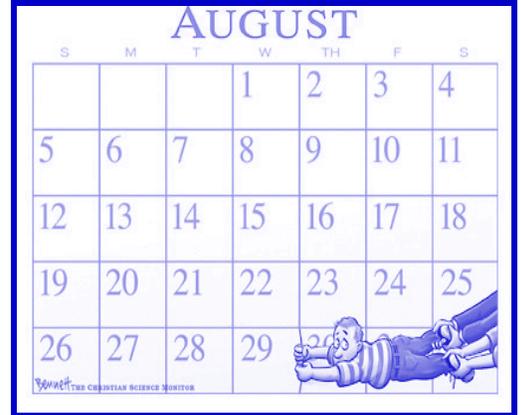
It goes without saying that this year will be difficult and fraught with uncertainty. The full effects of the budget cuts will hit this year. Classes will be larger than ever, schools will be dirty, and resources will be even harder to come by. (Do I hear people saying, "What resources?") And Christie will, no doubt, have a surprise or two in store. In other words, business as usual.

The devastation wrought on public education over the last 2 years is truly appalling. Ninety-one schools have been closed, 3000 teaching jobs eliminated and over 300 million dollars removed from the system. All the while, the minister keeps the public distracted with the ever-popular teacher bashing and claims that the system has never been in better shape. However, polls show that the public is not buying the "big lie". The majority thinks schools are in worse shape since the Liberals took power.

Clearly our jobs have become more stressful and less rewarding. Regardless, Surrey teachers continue to provide the highest quality education possible to their students. Unfortunately this is starting to take its toll on teachers optimism, enthusiasm, and health.

So this year it will be even more important to remember to take care of yourself. Think carefully before taking on extra responsibilities. Resist pointless bureaucratic tasks proposed by your administrator and others. You will certainly have more pressing matters to deal with than "sharing your goals" with the principal. Resist the pressure to do everything—voluntary activities are voluntary, and whether you take them on is your business alone. Focus on teaching, you will likely have energy and time for little else. Remember, it was the government that chose to shortchange public education. It's not your duty to make up the shortfall.

John Wadge



College Fee Boycott Province Wide

The College of Teachers fee boycott is receiving strong support all over the province. By the end of June, in Surrey alone, 2100 teachers had submitted signed cards revoking permission for automatic deduction of their college fee. The BCTF executive committee has set

September 30 as the deadline for locals to report their level of support. If there are sufficient numbers, and it is almost certain there will be, the cards will be turned into board offices province wide at the end of September.

It is essential that we have unity on this issue. The take over of the College was a calculated insult to teachers and our response will be seen as a measure of our will to

defend our profession. Every teacher not participating in the boycott weakens the message to the government, and places colleagues who have joined, in increased jeopardy.

This is a battle for our profession, and it is a significant battle in the war to defend public education. United, we will win. If you haven't already, sign the yellow card today and give to your staff rep.