

Issue 1

September 2003



SURREY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

# TOC NEWS

## Dear Teachers,

**I** am Béla Kovach, your newly elected TOC Representative. I am thrilled to be the voice of TOCs for the 2003/04 school year. The Surrey School District is the largest in the province with over 800 TOCs. We encompass 20% of teachers in the district. This means that TOGETHER we can make a difference.



Bela Kovach,  
TOC Rep

### ***A little bit about myself.***

*I have been teaching for three years. After graduating from SFU I went to London, England where I was a substitute teacher for 6 months and then had my own grade 4 class for the other half of the year. I then went to sunny Sydney, Australia to travel and teach in public and private schools. I decided to go back to school and do a Master of Education at Sydney University. Now I am a Teacher On Call in Surrey and working hard for TOCs.*

### ***My Promises to TOCs***

- 1. I will keep TOCs fully informed about TOC issues through meetings, the STA website, the TOC listserv and TOC bulletin boards in schools.*
- 2. I will be available for TOCs to visit or call me personally every week at the STA office to ask questions or voice concerns.*
- 3. I will work to make TOCs feel more welcome in staffrooms by talking to HR, principals and STARA reps and provide them with strategies for how this can be accomplished.*
- 4. I will be a strong voice for TOCs at Executive and STARA meetings.*
- 5. I will liaise with the Human Resources Dept. and the STA about TOC concerns.*

*Please feel free to contact me at:*

***Belajoyk@hotmail.com***

*604-594-5353 (STA office, Tuesdays 3:00—4:00 pm)*

*Sincerely,*

*Béla Kovach*

## **Upcoming Events:**

- TOC Meeting, September 29, 4 pm., Conference Centre*
- STARA Meeting, Wednesday, September 17, 4 pm, Conference Centre*
- Special General Meeting, October 22, 4 pm, Conference Centre*

# What's happened to the College?

## ...and how will it affect me?



**O**n May 12, 2003, Education Minister Christy Clark tabled Bill 51, legislation that significantly altered the *Teaching Profession Act*. Following is a summary of the major changes in the legislation with some comments on their impact on TOCs and on teachers generally.

### ***College Council composition***

All of the existing council members (both elected and appointed) were fired on May 30. The Minister appointed 20 people to a transitional council. The Minister has taken control of the College—but teachers pay for it. The College is no longer a democratic, self-regulating professional body.

### ***Teachers must report on their colleagues' professional misconduct.***

A member who has **reason to believe** that another member is **guilty of professional misconduct must** report to the College registrar. The report must be made **even if belief is based on privileged information or is confidential and forbidden from disclosure** by other legislation. This jeopardizes the ability of members to share certain information with teacher

union reps, and could have a very chilling impact on collegial relationships. As usual TOCs are in a particularly vulnerable position. This provision also challenges the BCTF Code of Ethics, Article 5, which used to offer TOCs and others some protection. There will likely be higher College investigation and discipline costs, and probably higher fees. What are “reason to believe” and “professional misconduct?”

### ***Members of the public can file complaints against teachers directly to the College.***

This will increase the number of complaints to College. It could escalate and prolong issues between parents and teachers unnecessarily.

For further information about Bill 51, see the BCTF web site: [www.bctf.ca](http://www.bctf.ca) or [www.surreyteachers.org](http://www.surreyteachers.org)

### ***And what can we do about it?***

Join with other teachers in BC to boycott the College of Teachers' fees.

The first step is to sign the enclosed yellow card telling the Board that you do not wish your fees to be deducted automatically. After you've signed the card, you can either give it to a staff rep, send it to the STA office, or bring it to the TOC meeting on September 29th. At the end of September, these notices will be collected province-wide and

submitted to school boards so that the automatic deductions will not be forwarded to the College.

If you have questions, or are unsure about this, come to the TOC meeting on September 29 at the Conference Centre. Neil Worboys, the president of the BCTF, will be there to explain the BCTF strategy, and the options for further steps.

The next steps will be a decision that teachers make together. Should we completely withhold the fees? Should we pay them in a prescribed manner? Should we pay bit by bit, through the year? Should we pay them into a trust fund, to be kept until certain conditions are met? After discussions on the topic, local representatives from around the province will meet at the BCTF Representative Assembly and vote on the strategy.

***“TOCs are in a particularly vulnerable position”***

***“Whatever is decided will be a collective strategy, and we will not allow people to be singled out and picked off. It will work because we stand together and make it work.”***

***Lynda Toews, 2nd V.P.***

***Bela Kovach, TOC Rep***

# Calling for STARA Reps

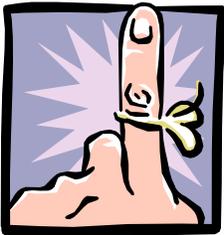
**A**t our TOC meeting on September 29th, we will be electing STARA reps. These are important volunteer positions. TOC's are allowed to have six STARA reps. They provide three functions. Firstly, they are advocates for staff with management on union issues and secondly, they represent their school at STARA meetings. Lastly, they take back union updates and information and report to their schools.

Because TOC's don't have a school to liaise with, their jobs are slightly different. The TOC reps would go to STARA meetings and voice TOC concerns and issues and vote on BCTF issues. TOC STARA reps would also update TOC bulletin boards and would help with TOC projects like web site development, listserv, TOC meetings and they would meet with Bela Kovach to discuss TOC issues. STARA meetings are held about six times a year. All STA members can attend

STARA meetings with voice (ie can speak) but only Reps can vote. Each school in Surrey sends their rep(s) to voice staff concerns and to vote for them.

It is very important for TOC's to have full representation at STARA meetings, so our voice can be heard and counted. If you are interested and would like more information, contact Bela Kovach by email at **Belajoyk@hotmail.com** or come to the TOC meeting and put your name forward.

## Helpful Hints for TOCs



\*Network by leaving business cards with your request number on the teacher's desk, neighboring teachers, with secretaries and in staffrooms.

\*Visit different schools to introduce yourself and hand out your business cards.

\*Leave your phone on, even if you have a job, in case Sub Finder needs to get in touch about changes to your assignment.

\*Call Debbie Anderson (604-599-7446) or Leslie Mortimore

(604-599-7496) if you aren't getting work so she can check your records and make sure there are no mistakes.

\*Inform Sub Finder when you are **and** are not available for work.

\*TOC's have full access to the Teacher Centre to obtain teaching materials, to laminate and to use computers. Secondly, TOCs are welcome to attend any inservices which range from math seminars to computer program seminars like Kids Pix. Dawne Murray and Susan Evans, who run the centre, are excellent resources and extremely helpful. Call for an appointment to laminate, use

*"Leave your phone on, even if you have a job,..."*

computers or attend an inservice (604-590-2255). The Teachers' Centre is located in the Curriculum and Instructional Services Centre (CISC). The address is 7532—134A Street.

\*Stay informed about what is going on in the district and union (contact Béla, STA website, Listserv, TOC Bulletin boards at schools).

\*Visit staffrooms while on assignment.

\*Be punctual (the earlier the better).

\* Dress professionally.



## TOC Listserv

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**T**OCs have a listserv which is a "virtual staffroom" to ask questions, give opinions or read comments. It is a great way to stay in touch with other TOCs. Our job can be very lonely so this is an easy way to stay informed about what's happening. Signing up is easy. All you need to do is send an email to Carrie at [cgabriele@shaw.ca](mailto:cgabriele@shaw.ca) with your request and your full name and she will sign you up.

## TOC Meeting

**T**he first TOC meeting of the year is on Monday, September 29th, from 4-6 pm, at the Surrey Conference Centre, 9260—140th Street. There will be food and drinks. The following is the agenda:

1. **Welcome and Introductions** by Béla Kovach (TOC Rep)
2. **Guest Speaker:** Joanne Rowen (District Principal) - to discuss recall and job opportunities
3. **Guest Speaker:** Neil Worboys (President of the BCTF) -to discuss what the union does for TOCs, the dismantling of the BCCT and what TOCs can do about it.
4. **Election of STARA Reps** (see "Role of STARA Rep" page 3)  
TOCs are entitled to six STARA Reps.
5. **Open Mic:** A chance for TOCs to voice their concerns, comments and suggestions
6. **Notices** of upcoming events

Participation by TOCs is vital to stay informed and to have our voice heard. We need to stick together and show support for each other and our union. I am looking forward to meeting you and hearing your comments.

*Béla Kovach*