

# Vernon Teachers' Association VOICES

Volume 70 April 2015

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VTA PRESIDENT ELECTION - APRIL 20, 2015



*Speaking for Teachers in the North Okanagan*



## *Reflections.....*

*Hello Colleagues,*

I am excited to announce that we will be holding an election for the position of President of the Vernon Teachers' Association and am waiting with anticipation, to see if it will be Greg Ellis or Lisa LaBoucane who will become the next head of the VTA. There will be an advance poll on Thursday April 16th at the VTA office and on April 20th, general polling will be at school locations during lunch or after school and at the VTA office all day. Please note that if you are at an Alternate school or work out of the Board office, those locations won't have a polling station but you can vote at any another location, including the VTA office.

This condensed version of Voices is intended to provide you information on our candidates and their qualifications. We have two very capable people stepping up and willing to take on this important job. It is healthy for any organization to have a choice.

In regards to all other officers of the VTA Executive, our AGM will be held next month and all positions (excepting the President, Past President and OCTAV President) are open for nominations. Consider putting your name forward and getting involved. If you would like to put your name forward now, please send an email to Lisa LaBoucane at [lisalaboucane@gmail.com](mailto:lisalaboucane@gmail.com), advising her which position you would like your name to stand for (all positions are for a one year term). Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the AGM.

Please plan to attend the VTA AGM on May 4th, be sure your voice is heard and that your union is working to meet your needs and ideals! We look forward to seeing you there.

Good luck to Greg and Lisa, I look forward to working with the next president.

In solidarity,  
**Heather**

## **Election of VTA Executive for 2015-2016**

- As per the VTA Constitution nominations for the position of VTA President must be received in writing at the VTA office **no later than Monday, April 7, 2015**. All other positions may be nominated prior to the meeting by contacting the VTA office or may be nominated from the floor at the AGM. (Nominations received: Greg Ellis and Lisa LaBoucane).
- VTA Executive Positions to be Elected: First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Local Association Representative (LAR), Local Bargaining Chairperson, Professional Development Chairperson, Two Social Justice Reps, Communications Chair, Local Aboriginal Education Contact and Three Members at Large .

**Meeting dates to keep in mind at the VTA:**

April 16th	VTA President	Advance Poll	8:30 am to 4:30 pm
April 20th	VTA President	Regular Poll	8:30 am to 4:30 pm
April 23rd	VTA Rep Training	Schubert Centre	8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Followed by the April Rep Assembly			

# VTA Year End/Retirement BBQ

June 25, 2015 - 3:30—7:00

Paddlwheel Hall

Hosting the event is Harwood Elementary

***Hope you can make it!!***



Something to think about .....



“Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.” – [Abraham Lincoln](#)



“Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.” – [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#)

“Every election is determined by the people who show up.” – [Larry J. Sabato, \*Pendulum Swing\*](#)

“Voter apathy was, and will remain the greatest threat to democracy.” – [Hazen Pingree](#)

# YOUR CANDIDATES FOR VTA



## ***Greg Ellis***

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Colleagues,

Thank you for considering me as a candidate for VTA president. It would be an honour to serve you in this role.

I have always been willing to help others, as people get to know me they often use me as a sounding board or confidant when needing support. I am happy to listen to the concerns of others and work with them to find a solution. I am very willing to accept advice and input from others and I know that I have a strong support network that I can depend on.

I hope to engage members through regular open communication in schools and an open door policy at the office. I will use humour to lighten the mood and am willing use the teaching of the talking circle to help to resolve or facilitate conversations.

The past few years have been difficult and stressful for all of us. I want to build on the bonds that we have formed with each other during our walks along the strike line. Now, more than ever, given the high rate of turn over in our staff rooms it is so important that we support each other and stick together for common causes.

I know that I am ready to accept this new challenge and work diligently for you. I have shared more about me at: [www.facebook.com/gregellisvernon22](http://www.facebook.com/gregellisvernon22)

In Solidarity. Limlemt, Merci, Thank you

## VTA President Election

Important  
DATE!

**Advance Poll:** Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> — 8:30 to 4:30  
VTA Office, 4004 31<sup>st</sup> Street

**Regular Polls:** Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>  
School Locations (look for signs in  
your school for location and time)  
VTA Office - 8:30 to 4:30

# PRESIDENT - 2015–2016 TERM



**LISA LABOUCANE** ....ADVOCATE FOR:

RESPONSIVE, FAIR DECISION-MAKING

CLEAR COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

TEACHER WELLNESS

PROFESSIONALISM AND TEACHER LEADERSHIP

SUPPORT FOR CLASSROOMS

FOCUS ON WORKING & LEARNING CONDITIONS

**VTA Executive:** 2007-2009, 2011-2015

**VTA Committees:** Bargaining Table, Strike Coordinator, District Pro D, Community Resources, Constitution, Climate, Local Election Contact, District Professional Relations

**BCTF AGM Delegate:** 2014, 2015

**Canadian Labour Congress Training:** Facing Management

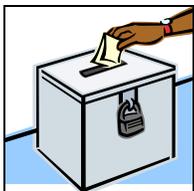
**Teaching Background:** Resource Teacher, Counsellor, Elementary & High School Teacher

I certainly have a vision for leadership of our local executive, and I will continue to take a stand on issues that affect my colleagues. I believe my experience within our local executive has helped me to be prepared to take on the president's role. I would like to continue to improve ways that we can, as a local union, collaborate with trustees and the district management. I am also dedicated to finding ways to improve morale and support teacher wellness, and to honor the daily work of teachers and their professional growth. My personal strengths are in my organization, communication skills and work ethic.

## VTA Annual General Meeting

Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup> 2015

4:00pm - Seaton Theatre





## Professional Development in S.D. 22

With the introduction of Bill 11, part of which threatens to control teacher professional development, it is important to remember how we acquired PD days in the first place and to think about how we are going to maintain our hard fought control. In a recent column, Keith Baldrey referred to teachers' "mysterious professional development days, which seem to have grown like untended weeds over the years." Not quite, Keith.

PD days were added to the school year in 1972, without any additional compensation to teachers. During contract negotiations, teachers agreed to lengthen the school year without a commensurate salary increase. The agreement was to work these days for free, if we have control of the content. There has never been a loss of instructional time for students.

For decades, we've had six non-instructional days for teachers to work on our educational knowledge and skills in order to improve teaching practice. One of these is a ministry mandated, planned by or with administration, and the other five are under the control of teachers.



Autonomy over our PD is essential because the needs are so different from teacher to teacher and school to school. A top-down mandate from the ministry on how these days are spent, is not likely to accommodate the needs of individual teachers or schools. One size will never fit all when it comes to teacher learning.

Autonomous, teacher directed PD creates informed, inspired, and engaged teachers. We must value it for ourselves. We must guard it fiercely. Teachers and administrators should be sharing information with each other and parents about the learning happening on these days. There should be nothing mysterious about it.

In solidarity,  
Robyn Ladner  
PD Chairperson