

From: [Susan Bauhart](#)
To: [Board of Education](#)
Cc: [Lori Dawsonbedard](#); [Mary Hope](#)
Subject: LAT Presentation - February 28, 2024
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2024 4:00:43 PM

Please include this as Board Correspondence - thank you.

Good evening, Trustees:

You all know that I am the COTA President, and I represent the largest employee group in our school district. I am also the parent of a boy, who in grade 2, was diagnosed as severely learning disabled – his life was changed for the good largely because of the work of a skilled and dedicated SD 23 LAT and her team of similarly trained colleagues. As such, my comments here are for SD23 parents as well, to take into consideration.

The purpose of my presentation today is to request you TABLE the recommendations made in Action Item 13.3 – this being the deletion of several longstanding, well-serving LAT policies that have existed in policy for almost 22 years. These are policies Trustees and COTA members are being told are job descriptions, and as such, do not belong in Policy. The COTA disagrees with this.

I refer you now to the package I have provided all of you tonight. This includes the February 22, 2024 letter written by COTA's 1st VP, Lori Dawson Bedard, to Trustee Geistlinger after the recent Policy Committee meeting, outlining COTA's queries/concerns with the proposed deletion of the LAT policies, and I will not be restating these concerns here as they are clearly stated: a copy of the SD23 Trustee Handbook with sections highlighted by me; and a condensed chart which explains Robert's Rules of Order as it relates to various types of motions.

Referring to the Trustee handbook, Page 8 states the primary function of the Board is to establish policies by which schools are to be administered. Page 9 goes on to state the Board is to employ the superintendent and set policy for hiring of other personnel. Page 10 states Board members are to be knowledgeable about district efforts so as to explain them to the public, and page 16 states

Board members need to be fully informed before making a decision.

The situation at hand here is that the Inclusive Education department is, we believe, set to undergo a major restructuring. I say, we believe, because district officials will not share any details with us in writing, telling us that this is a work in progress and no decisions have been made.

District officials have met with all district Resource teachers and SEL teachers already, and would not share specifics with them either, though they were told decisions would be made by April 1st, before staffing processes were started. During all of this, the deletion of LAT policies surfaced, and district LATs were not informed of this.

To refer back to the Trustee handbook, your role as Trustees is to set policies that indicate your expectations as to how schools are to be administered – you are to set policies that lead the hiring of other personnel beyond the Superintendent – you are to be fully informed about District efforts before making a decision so you are then able to explain these decisions to the public.

We at the COTA have met with district officials about this potential inclusive ed department restructuring three times now. At the first meeting, we were told this could affect Resource Teacher, SEL teacher, LATs and ELL teacher roles – but again, were given no specific details.

District practice usually has new programs and courses introduced to Trustees at ESS committee meetings, but to my knowledge, the restructuring of the Inclusive Ed department has not come to this committee yet.

For all of the reasons I have mentioned already, I believe

the deletion of these LAT policies is premature. You, and your affected employees, need to be advised of the specifics of this inclusive ed restructuring before any policies are deleted, so as to allow for informed and relevant feedback. If these policies are deleted, this takes away management's responsibility to report to you how they are potentially altering in this case, LAT roles. If questioned about this by you, you could be informed that this is now an operational matter, and therefore beyond your responsibility. The only way to ensure you are informed about specific changes to the LAT role is to have these policies in place that require your agreeing to any changes, and I again refer you back to Ms. Dawson Bedard's letter that outlines our queries and concerns.

In conclusion, I am not asking you to defeat this motion in Action Item 13.3 – rather I am asking you to TABLE the motion to give everyone affected here, and especially you who are tasked with governing the district on behalf of all students, time to come to a full understanding of all that potentially will be involved. District officials owe it to you, to affected staff members, and to affected parents and their students to allow them to fully understand what this 'new department' will look like, and how it will operate. Keeping these LAT policies for the time being is crucial to ensure this vital role within our current district structures is not diminished in any way.

I have included in your package information on the 'tabling' motion as well as how things can eventually be 'lifted from the table', to deal with at a future date.

Thank you very much for allowing me to make this presentation to you.

Sincerely,
Susan

Susan Bauhart
President, Central Okanagan Teachers' Association (COTA)
Traditional Unceded Territory of the Syilx/Okanagan Nation

Telephone # 250-860-3866

... the rain begins with a single drop

This e-mail and any attachments are only for the use of the intended recipient and must not be distributed, disclosed, used or copied by or to anyone else. This e-mail and any attachments may be confidential, privileged and/or subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If you receive this message in error, please delete all copies and contact the sender by return e-mail. Thank you.