

PGDTA Support for Local Specialist Associations



Local Specialist Associations (LSAs) are chapters of BCTF Provincial Specialist Associations (PSAs). PSAs exist to support teachers within subject specialties (e.g. Math, Physical Education, Art Teachers) or special interests (e.g. Environmental Educators).

LSAs used to be quite common, but many disappeared with the rise of the internet. However, there are new reasons to think about starting or joining an LSA:

1. PSAs mainly have their meetings and conferences in the Lower Mainland -- LSA events are easier to access and the people more familiar.
2. PSAs often have funds for "chapter" support -- an LSA can access these funds for Pro-D events, activities, or resources.
3. LSAs provide a collaboration model that is distinct from school or district-coordinated structures -- sometimes this is just the right fit.
4. LSAs provide local opportunities to develop teachers as leaders and mentors, and to provide leadership and mentorship for others.

Within the PGDTA, we have a few LSAs: HomeEc, Kindergarten Teachers, Modern Languages, Singfest (Music), Secondary Math, Social Studies, and Teacher-Librarians. Maybe there are other LSAs I don't know about?

The PGDTA Pro-D Committee has decided to offer more support for LSAs in the future. We currently have a "Special Projects" fund allocation which is designated for inquiry groups, teacher-led group projects, local mini-conferences, and miscellaneous uses (e.g. snacks or books for a pro-d gathering). We have increased this budget line by a few thousand dollars and would like to open it up to applications for LSA support. To qualify, LSAs must register with the PGDTA (submit a constitution and any minutes from the year), and either notify or register with their corresponding PSA, develop a project plan and budget for their intended use of Pro-D funds, and use the new "LSA Funding" form to apply for funds. This form is posted at <http://pgdta.ca/pro-d>, along with other documents about how to get an LSA started. Keep in mind that LSAs may also apply to their corresponding PSA for funds.

There will be two intakes per year, with all applications submitted by the deadline considered together for decision by the Pro-D Committee. The deadline for funding in September-January is June 30th, 2017. For February-June the deadline is Dec 15th, 2017. As this is a pilot year for this initiative, we will likely refine the rules as necessary once we see what happens.

Please contact me with further questions or assistance with setting up an LSA or accessing funding.

Best regards,

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