



April 2019

Electronic version available for download under Social Justice Publications at [bctf.ca](http://bctf.ca)

*By Lauren Wright, member of BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice*

With Earth Day falling on the 22nd, April is [Earth Month](#), the perfect time to think about the environmental challenges we face as a planet, and how local decisions can have ripple effects across Canada and around the world.

In February, the National Energy Board recommended the approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, even though, in the same [report](#), they admitted the project would unleash a flood of global warming pollution, devastate endangered orca whales, and threaten Indigenous culture. Today, while we may stand disappointed by the decision, many of us will continue to defend the coast we call home and advocate for a transition to a renewable energy future.

BCTF members have passed a number of [motions](#) in support of climate justice, including the following decision, made by delegates to the Winter 2019 Representative Assembly:

**Public actions on climate change**

*That the Federation encourage members to attend major public actions such as marches, rallies, and demonstrations organized by groups that are geared toward raising awareness about climate change, global warming, and the deleterious impacts of the fossil fuel industry on the environment, our waterways, and our coast lines.*

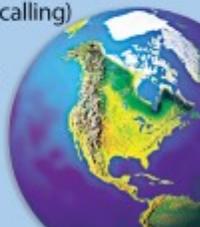
As AGM delegates, who heard calls for action from Victoria students can confirm, the Climate Action movement among youth has been gaining force since the United Nations Climate Change Conference held last December. The [School Strike 4 Climate Action](#), inspired by 15-year-old Swedish student Greta Thunberg, has grown to a movement of more than 20,000 students across all continents. There is no better way to encourage political action, raise awareness of our responsibility as stewards of the Earth, and promote engagement in the fight for sustainability than through climate action organized by students, for students.

As educators, we see the future every day in our classrooms. We have the unique opportunity to inspire and make space for the voices of youth, who are disproportionately affected by decisions on climate and the use of fossil fuels. This edition of *Seeds of Social Justice* provides strategies, resources, workshops, and opportunities to support teachers in this role. For additional resources, explore the [Environmental Justice web pages](#) on the BCTF website.



On **Equal Pay Day**, consider wearing red to raise awareness of the gender pay gap. **April 2** is roughly the day on which women's earnings accumulated since January 1, 2018 finally reach the total amount that men earned last year.

April	
2:	Equal Pay Day
4:	Refugee Rights Day
7–13:	National Wildlife Week
10:	International Day of Pink
12:	Day of Silence (against LGBTQ2S+ name calling)
14–20:	Prevention of Violence Against Women Week
22:	Earth Day
28:	National Day of Mourning



**April 4** is **Refugee Rights Day**. Visit the [Refugee Resources page](#) on the BCTF Peace and Global Education web pages for resources and lesson plans addressing refugee issues.

During **National Wildlife Week, April 7–13**, register your class on the Canadian Wildlife Foundation's [One Promise web page](#) to share students' promises to #DoMoreForWildlife and to follow daily stories about people making change.

The LGBTQ2S+ action group's [Day of Pink web page](#) provides resources and activities to celebrate the **International Day of Pink**, on **April 10**.

On **April 12**, access resources and register your students to participate in the **Day of Silence against LGBTQ Name Calling** by visiting the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network's [Day of Silence web page](#).

**Prevention of Violence against Women Week** takes place from **April 14–20**. The BCTF [Gender-Based Violence web pages](#), provide lesson plans, resources, and information about workshops and support services.

On the **National Day of Mourning, April 28**, remember the hundreds of workers killed on the job each year and raise awareness of the need for safe work spaces by registering for the [Day of Mourning BC Schools Project](#).

## Resources



## Environmental Justice



The following motion was passed at the BCTF Winter 2019 Representative Assembly:

### **Environmental Justice Committee**

*The BCTF encourages locals to establish an Environmental Justice Committee at the local level.*

The new brochure, [Tips for starting a Local Environmental Justice Committee](#), provides useful background information and a step-by-step plan to start up an Environmental Justice Committee in your local.

The [Winter/Spring 2019 Social Justice Newsletter](#) was recently mailed to all schools. Patrick Shreck's article on page 21 provides an in-depth analysis of BC's LNG Canada Project.

Find additional resources, including the *What we Stand to Lose* posters and *Climate Heroes* posters and resources on the BCTF Environmental Justice web pages. To request hard copies of posters and pamphlets, email [socialjustice@bctf.ca](mailto:socialjustice@bctf.ca), please include the name and number of each item, along with your mailing address.



One of the modules in the [Teaching Green](#) workshop is **Creating Climate Heroes**. Workshop participants will consider barriers to teaching about the climate change emergency and develop solutions to overcome these barriers. Teachers will also learn strategies to support students in using critical thinking skills to approach climate change through a solutions-based approach.

Additional Teaching Green modules include Food Security, Water Rights, Sustainable Resource Use, and Sustainable Transportation.

Visit the [Social Justice workshop page](#) on the BCTF website to learn about additional social justice workshops and to book a free workshop for a school-based, local, or regional professional development day.

## Opportunities for Members



The BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice (CASJ) has openings on its Antipoverty, Antiracism, Status of Women, and Peace and Global Education action groups. Responsibilities of CASJ members include making recommendations to the BCTF Executive Committee on social justice issues, creating resources for teachers and locals, assisting locals and zones in developing general social justice programs and projects, and developing alliances with other unions and community groups. More information and application forms are available on the [BCTF Committee/Facilitator Postings page](#). The application deadline is **May 24, 2019**.



The Provincial Social Justice and Aboriginal Education Conference will take place on May 24 and 25, 2019 at the Pacific Gateway Hotel in Richmond.

One social justice contact and one Aboriginal education contact from each local are funded to attend—two of each for locals with 1000 or more members. For more information, see the [Social Justice Conferences page](#) on the BCTF website.

## Grants



## Awards



The [Regional Social Justice Conference Fund](#) is designed to provide funding for [social justice conferences](#) to be held throughout the province. The intent behind these grants is to build capacity and support the growth of social justice in a given region. These grants are usually offered on a biennial basis, subject to approval through the BCTF budget setting process. To allow time for conference planning, the application deadline for conferences taking place in the 2019/20 school year has been changed to **Friday, May 31, 2019**.

There are still funds available for two additional social justice grants. The deadline to apply for the [Ed May Social Responsibility Fund](#) and the [Local Social Justice Grant](#) are April 11 and 12, 2019 respectively. For information and to download application forms, visit the [Social Justice Grants and Funds web page](#).

Barb Ryeburn  
 Assistant Director of Social Justice  
 BC Teachers' Federation  
 100-550 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2  
 604-871-1821  
[bryeburn@bctf.ca](mailto:bryeburn@bctf.ca)

