

South Okanagan Similkameen Teachers' Union

Welcome Back Newsflash

SOSTU website will be updated next week – pay period dates for contract teachers, TTOCs, Pro-D forms, etc.

SOSTU & SD53 Pro-D agreement and when/how Pro-d happens in SOSTU, visit our website www.sostu.net

TTOC tiered categories (3 of them) will be used again this year / An email from HR with explanations and expectations will be forthcoming
TTOC Survey Results will be shared on website in fall (June Survey)

New district laptops are appreciated / please keep personal info separate / Avoid using personal cell phones for classroom use

With the late start in Sept, we will teach into the last week of June, ending on Wednesday, June 30th

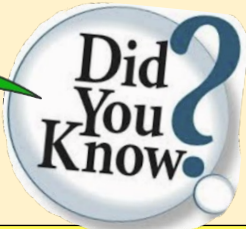


Another look: Is there a teacher shortage in SD53?

Failure to Fill 6 year Comparison

2025-26	12.60	FTE
2024-25	140.00	FTE
2023-24	316.05	FTE
2022-23	276.143	FTE
2021-22	259.217	FTE
2020-21 (Covid schooling)	28.3	FTE

Other Indicators



2nd year that overall district student numbers have declined
Smallest number of new hires in well over 10 years
Fewest number of job postings (May to Sept) ever
More teachers were transferred within district last spring
Many TTOCs stated they were not getting enough work

Benefit Changes

Pacific Blue Cross Benefit Premiums

Effective July 1, 2026, there is a provincial minimum floor for employer payment of extended health and dental benefit premiums. All full-time employees will have employer-paid premiums of 85% minimum. Part-time employee benefit premium coverage will continue to follow the local provisions.

SOSTU already had this with employer paying 85% coverage; this brings other locals up.

Provincial Extended Health Benefit Plan Improvements

- Effective July 1, 2026, hearing aids will be covered up to \$4,000 per 48 months.
- Effective July 1, 2026, audiologist services included in speech therapy coverage.
- Effective July 1, 2028, counselling services will be covered up to \$1,750 per year.

Other recent improvements already in effect that you may not be aware of:

- Counselling services now include psychologist, registered clinical counsellor, and registered social worker services up to \$1,500 per year.
- Coverage for Shingles and HPV vaccines.
- The vision care maximum is now \$650 per 24 months.
- Naturopath coverage is now \$1000 per year.

Gender Affirming Care

Effective July 1, 2028, the lifetime maximum under the plan will increase to a total of \$50,000. Members will be able to access up to \$30,000 in coverage until then, and then the final \$20,000 in coverage after July 1, 2028.

Members can get the best information about their coverage directly from Pacific Blue Cross.