

LSA Handbook

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LSA Important Dates - Checklist

September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure LSA executive is in place • Update constitution • Initiate planning • Ensure banking (2 signing authorities) is in order • Watch myCOTA.ca for the application deadline for the October Professional Development day • Note - All new LSAs require a letter from the COTA office to set up a bank account.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSA Presidents' Committee meeting • Ensure that COTA has a copy of the LSA's constitution and banking information • Complete and submit grant application <p><i>Deadline for all documentation is October 30th.</i></p> <p>Please note: Late applications will not be accepted. Although the LSA will not be delisted, funds will not be received for the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend PSA or LSA Pro D activity
Late November/early December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch MyCOTA.ca for the application deadline for the February Professional Development day
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend LSA Pro D activity
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSA Presidents' Committee meeting
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year End Activity Report – submitted to COTA • Financial Reporting Form – submitted to COTA and District Accounts Payable <p><i>Deadline for documentation is July 15th</i></p> <p>Note: All forms were updated in the 2019/2020 school year. Please use the current forms.</p>

LSA Policies and Procedures

The COTA encourages and supports Local Specialist Associations (LSAs). As an integral part of the Association, the LSAs operate in accordance with BCTF policies and procedures and their PSAs and own constitutions. All COTA members are encouraged to become members of one or more LSA(s) to share expertise and to gain information and experience.

Each year, the COTA provides a complimentary PSA membership to each new member at the induction ceremony in the member's local.

Each LSA is unique—its strength determined by its members and its executive. LSAs promote communication among members through journals, newsletters, conferences, workshops, websites, e-mail lists, and other activities.

Individual LSAs are represented on the LSA Committee through their presidents. The LSA Committee provides advice to the COTA Executive Committee on matters of concern to LSAs and on working and learning conditions, curriculum, professional development, and educational leadership.

Purpose of a LSA

It shall be the right of each LSA to foster professional development through activities which may include:

1. Channels for members to exchange ideas on research, teaching strategies, curriculum development, and other shared interests.
2. Maintaining liaison with post-secondary faculty members in the specialist area.
3. Maintaining a system of group communication with its members through journals, newsletters, on-line communications/e-mails and the holding of general meetings.
4. Participate with the corresponding PSA through activities such as: conferences, membership, and leadership roles in the PSA.
5. Present sessions at the February Zonal Professional Development Conference.
6. Liaise with the COTA Professional Development Chairperson with matters pertaining to professional development.
7. Any other activity needs to be authorized by the COTA Executive Committee.

Representation

No LSA shall make representations to any authority or agency outside of COTA without authorization from the COTA office.

Finance

The financing of LSAs shall be provided through:

1. an LSA membership fee (optional) Note: If your LSA charges a membership fee, it must be reported on the financial reporting form at year end.
2. a \$500 grant from COTA.
3. any LSA in its second and subsequent years may be eligible for a portion of a school district grant that the COTA administers. Deadline for the grant submission is October 30th.
4. Income needs to be used, accounts in excess of \$500 will be required to provide a complete explanation of intentions for accumulated funds.

Note: LSAs are not intended to generate and accumulate monies.

LSA Bank Accounts

1. The use of an LSA bank account shall be restricted to depositing revenues and paying approved expenses.
2. The Executive of any LSA shall designate two (one of whom shall be the Treasurer) members of the LSA as co-signing officers of such a bank account.
3. The co-signing officers of the LSA shall provide the LSA a full financial accounting of the revenues and expenditures of the LSA at a LSA General Meeting.
4. The President or designate of the LSA shall provide the COTA with a copy of the financial accounting at the end of each school year by July 15th.
5. When a new LSA opens a bank account, it will require a letter of introduction from COTA to the financial institution.

LSA Membership

1. Individual membership in an LSA will be on a 12-month basis commencing in September.
2. All members of an LSA shall be BCTF members.

LSA Organization

1. All LSA constitutions and any changes that may be made to them are to be submitted to the COTA Professional Development Chairperson.
2. It is the responsibility of each individual LSA to:
 - a) maintain regular, on-going communication with its members.
 - b) encourage members of the LSA to renew their memberships.
3. Initial recognition of an LSA will be given to a group of members when:
 - a) It has established purposes as outlined in the Purpose of an LSA section.
 - b) It has established a program: objectives, activities, related to the objectives and evaluation criteria.
 - c) It has held a general meeting to approve a constitution, to elect officers, to establish a membership fee (if applicable) and to discuss goals and activities.
 - d) It has reviewed the COTA policies and procedures on LSAs will use them as guidelines.
 - e) It has a minimum membership of five, including an executive committee consisting of, at least, a President, a Treasurer and a Secretary.
 - f) Existing LSAs have made a concerted effort to accommodate a new group, and the new group has made a concerted effort to have its needs met within an existing LSA.
 - g) The LSA Committee has made a recommendation to the COTA Executive Committee that an LSA be established.
 - h) The LSA will align itself with a PSA and encourage membership to that PSA. **At least one of the LSA EC members should belong to the PSA with which the chapter is affiliated.** All LSA members will be encouraged to join a PSA.
4. The Professional Development Chairperson will present a list of active LSAs annually to the COTA EC after:
 - a) ensuring that the required paperwork has been completed.
 - b) confirming that the President or designate has attended two meetings per year.

Updated June 2020

- c) organizing professional development for the October/February Pro D day in consultation with the COTA Professional Development Chairperson.
 - d) the LSAs have provided COTA with a schedule of meetings held for the year (on year end activity report).
5. Delisting of an LSA with the COTA will follow these procedures:
- a) An LSA seeking delisting in the COTA will:
 - ensure that members, by a ballot or AGM, have agreed to delist.
 - Communicate with COTA Pro-D Chairperson that the delisting of the LSA proceed.
 - b) COTA Pro-D Chairperson will inform the COTA Executive Committee of decision by the LSA to delist and recommend that the EC remove recognition.
 - c) Any remaining funds in the LSA bank account shall be forwarded to COTA.
 - d) The funds will be held-over for one year. In the event that the LSA is not relisted within that year, the funds will be evenly distributed to active LSAs in the second year.


COTA LSA Committee

1. The LSA Committee shall be composed of the President of each LSA.
2. The LSA Presidents are responsible for attending committee meetings and representing the concerns of their respective LSAs.

Local Specialist Association/ PSA Affiliates (Existing LSAs)

	LSA name
1.	Alternate Education LSA
2.	Central Okanagan Dance Association
3.	COESCA (Central Okanagan Elem. School Counselors Assoc.)
4.	COSC Sec. Counselors
5.	COLATA Learning Assistance
6.	COMEIA Music Elem.
7.	COMEIA Music Middle/Sec.
8.	COPTA Central Okanagan Primary Teachers' Association
9.	COSSTA - Central Okanagan Social Studies Teachers' Association
10.	COTLA Librarians
11.	English – Inactive – remove 2020
12.	French as a Second Language
13.	Indigenous Education
14.	Kelowna Home Economics LSA
15.	KIDS Kelowna Instructors of Drama in School
16.	Mathematics LSA
17.	Science LSA
18.	Social Justice LSA
19.	TEK LSA – Middle Technology Educators of Kelowna
20.	TEK LSA – Secondary Technology Educators of Kelowna
21.	Visual Arts LSA

What are PSAs?

The BCTF includes 32 provincial specialist associations (PSAs) . PSAs are channels for members to exchange ideas on research, teaching strategies, curriculum development, and other shared interests.

Contact PSA Council members by e-mail to ask about their PSA.


What do PSAs do?

- **PSA conferences**
Each year, scores of volunteers organize provincial and regional conferences for colleagues. The PSA conferences are highlighted on the BCTF's PD Calendar as well as in the PSA conference brochure.
- **PSA workshops**
Many PSAs offer workshops for schools or districts, often at cost. Please contact PSAs directly for more information on the workshops that they offer.
- **PSA publications**
Volunteers, who are teachers themselves, produce newsletters and/or journals. BCTF members may join any of the Federation's PSAs. Subscriptions to PSA publications are available to non-BCTF members or institutions.
- **E-mail lists**
Subscribe to any of the PSA e-mail lists. Some lists are open to all members.

How does one join a PSA?

Join a PSA to share your expertise and obtain information.

Online membership registration is available. Click here to join or renew PSA memberships now.

Alternately, download and print the PSA application form , and mail it to the BCTF with the appropriate fees. For information concerning PSA applications, contact PSA-coordinator@bctf.ca, 604-871-1802 or 1-800-663-9163 local 1802.

Forming a Local Specialist Association

An LSA affords opportunity for teachers to discuss local problems and to exchange ideas. A group of enthusiastic teachers can invite speakers to locally sponsored workshops and can work through the local teachers' union on local conditions that need improvement.

Organization of an LSA

1. Any interested group may form an LSA. As soon as members have made a decision to organize, they should inform the local PD chairperson and the provincial specialist association's president.
2. At least one LSA EC member must belong to the PSA with which the chapter is affiliated.
3. An LSA has certain responsibilities to its local union. It should keep the executive informed of its plans and projects and shall go through the local union in any business with the school board or superintendent.
4. The executive of an LSA is elected from the membership at a general meeting of members held annually [usually in the late spring for the following term]. All members of the LSA executive should be PSA members and active BCTF members.
5. Finances for the chapter:
 - 5.1. A fee may be charged to members of an LSA.
 - 5.2. A registration fee may be charged for workshops; often a collection is taken to offset the cost of refreshments.
 - 5.3. COTA provides a grant of \$500 to all active LSAs. An application must be submitted to COTA by October 30th of each new school year. This application in the second and subsequent years will qualify the LSA for the school district grant as well.
 - 5.4. The provincial specialist association may offer grants to its chapter on behalf of members who are PSA members and BCTF members. The BCTF will provide lists of such members at any time on request.
6. Attendance at meetings: An LSA may invite any people it wishes to attend its meetings, but only members of the teachers' union local and the PSA may vote and/or hold office.
7. Notices of meetings should go to all members. Duplicated minutes or reports of meetings shall be sent to the members. It helps everyone to keep in touch with the group, especially if it is not convenient for all the members to attend every meeting. It is important that material sent out by an LSA be carefully prepared, neat, and accurate.
8. The executive will assume the responsibility of organizing activities, but the members should be informed of its plans and decisions. The membership is free to question or to offer suggestions at any time.
9. Each LSA determines the offices needed. Suggested: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.
10. Meeting dates should be set well in advance and should be well publicized. Choose times and places that are convenient for the majority.
11. It is better to have a few good meetings than many poor ones.

Organization of a LSA

12. Each LSA of a provincial specialist association is expected to:
 - 12.1. Maintain a legislative organization and ratify a constitution.
 - 12.2. Ensure that as many local members as possible join the PSA.
 - 12.3. Study the PSA's constitution and literature.
 - 12.4. Promote professionalism as interpreted by the PSA.
 - 12.5. Communicate and co-operate with the parent provincial specialist association.
 - 12.6. Direct appropriate action through the PSA executive.
 - 12.7. Direct appropriate action through the local teachers' union [PD chairperson].
 - 12.8. Keep information flowing.
 - 12.9. Complete necessary paperwork.

Constitution Template

The name of this association shall be the Choose an item. , subsection of the Local 23 Choose an item. and member of the COTA.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this association shall be:

1. To promote and advance education throughout the province.
2. To act as a clearinghouse for ideas and a source of trends and new developments.
3. To furnish recommendations and advice to the teachers' union local and to the P.S.A. on matters affecting education and teachers.

BASE OF OPERATION

The operations of the association are to be carried on in School District No. 23

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1—MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to any person who is a member of the local teachers' union. The membership year shall run from September to September of the following year.

ARTICLE 2—FEES AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

- a. Membership fees shall be established by resolution at each annual general meeting of the association.
- b. The financial records of the association shall be maintained by the treasurer and shall be open to the membership and to the executive of the parent provincial specialist association.

ARTICLE 3—OFFICERS

The officers shall be at least a President, a Treasurer and a Secretary. Officers shall be elected for a term of one year at the annual general meeting.

ARTICLE 4—COMMITTEES

- a. The executive committee shall be the officers of the association and selected committee chairpersons.
- b. Committees may be appointed by the executive committee from among the members of the association. Such committees shall be responsible to the executive committee.
- c. Wherever a vacancy occurs in the executive committee through any cause, the executive committee shall name a member to fill the vacancy until the next general meeting.

ARTICLE 5—DUTIES

- a. The duties of officers and of the executive shall be as defined in Robert's Rules of Order when not in conflict with any clause of this constitution, and they shall also govern the procedure of all meetings.
- b. At the first section of the annual general meeting, the secretary shall report in detail the business of the association during the year, and the treasurer shall submit in writing a report of the financial condition of the association, including a detailed statement of all receipts and expenditures.

ARTICLE 6—MEETINGS

- a. The annual general meeting of the association shall be held each year at a time and place to be designated by the executive committee.
- b. Other general meetings of the association shall be held from time to time as ordered by the executive.

ARTICLE 7—REPRESENTATIONS TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Any representations made by the L.S.A. to an authority outside the local teachers' union (on a local issue to the school board) or P.S.A. (on a provincial matter to the Ministry of Education) should be conducted through the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association or the Choose an item. "[click here to enter name of PSA]".

Duties of officers

Each L.S.A. will consider its needs and allocate duties to meet its requirements. The president of a P.S.A. is an ex officio member of each L.S.A..

President

1. Chair general and executive meetings.
2. Call meetings of the executive and of the membership [the dates and locations to be arranged for the convenience of those concerned].
3. Arrange the agenda for meetings of the executive and of the general membership. The secretary may be called on to prepare printed copies for use at the meeting. The agenda should be prepared well in advance of a meeting to allow for adequate pre-contacts with all persons involved in the business of that meeting.
4. Arrange for an annual general meeting and election of officers for the coming year.
5. Appoint special committees as necessary and be ex officio member of each committee.
6. Carry out plans set by previous committees.
7. Act as official representative to outside groups [or name a substitute— secretary] report to the membership, commitments or activities that involve the L.S.A..
8. Maintain knowledge of L.S.A.'s finances.
9. Assist the secretary in preparing the annual report of the L.S.A.'s activities, a copy of which is sent to the teachers' union local and to the provincial specialist association. A president both represents and leads.

Vice-President

In some L.S.A.s, holding this position is training for the following year's president. The vice-president, therefore, should make every effort to learn the routines and background of the association, which is best done by actively participating.

1. Attend all meetings of the executive committee and general meetings.
2. Be an active member of L.S.A. committees.
3. Be ready to chair meetings or act as the president's substitute at any time.
4. Keep on file copies of reports and records for ready reference.
5. Get to know many L.S.A. members personally.

Past-President

1. Attend all executive and general meetings.
2. Assist the president if requested.
3. Be ready and willing to assume any task in an emergency.
4. At the request of the president, act as nominations chairperson for the next election of officers.

Secretary

This might be divided into two offices: recording and corresponding.

1. Take minutes at every executive meeting and general meeting.
2. Be prepared to read the minutes at the following meeting of each group.
3. Duplicate the minutes and send them to the members, the local teachers' union, and the P.S.A..
4. The president needs a copy of the minutes immediately after a meeting to act on decisions recorded therein and to check for accuracy.
5. As directed by the president, send notices of meetings to all people concerned.
6. Promptly acknowledge correspondence received by the L.S.A..
7. Provide the local teachers' union's PD chairperson and the P.S.A.'s president a duplicated list of names and addresses of the officers of the L.S.A..
8. Arrange for the purchase and distribution of L.S.A. stationery.
9. Submit vouchers to the treasurer for all expenses related to secretarial duties. A professional tone in all communication is vital to good public relations for the L.S.A..

Treasurer

1. Keep an accurate record of all money belonging to the L.S.A..
2. Be prepared to give the balance on hand and a statement of receipts and disbursements at each general and executive meeting of the L.S.A..
3. Present an annual budget to the executive committee at the first meeting in the fall and request its adoption [the budget figures may have been prepared in the spring to request an allowance from the parent associations].
4. Be responsible for all routines in collecting and banking the L.S.A.'s money.
5. Issue cheques for payment of L.S.A.'s expenditures [usually there are two signing officers].
6. Attend to reimbursements promptly where guest speakers are concerned, have the cheques ready ahead of time.
7. At the end of the year, present a written statement of receipts and expenditures to the membership and to the P.S.A. treasurer

LSA Grant Process

- COTA will administer both the \$500 COTA grant and the Central Okanagan Public Schools Grant.
- Currently, the school district provides a total LSA grant of \$25,000 to be distributed to active LSAs. (Please note that COTA must apply for this grant and there is no guarantee that this level of funding will continue.) Cheques are usually sent out in early November but grant applications **must be completed by October 30th**. Grant applications are to be submitted to Daphne Meier at Daphne.Meier@sd23.bc.ca, COTA Office Manager.
- LSAs are required to submit a grant application (attached).
- Cheques will be sent to the LSA Treasurer – please **deposit this cheque ASAP** to avoid bookkeeping nightmares and the need to re-issue stale-dated cheques.

- LSAs must submit a financial statement **by July 15th** to COTA and to Accounts Payable accountspayable@sd23.bc.ca by July 15th.
- Banking information must be provided to the COTA office. You must have two signing officers on your account (i.e. President & Treasurer).

What can the grant funds be used for?

Grant funds can be used for bringing in speakers for your membership, providing food at regular LSA meetings, and/or sending delegates to conferences to come back and present at a Pro-d day or LSA meeting and PSA memberships.

Bank Accounts/Finance

LSA Bank Accounts

1. The use of an LSA bank account shall be restricted to depositing revenues and paying approved expenses.
2. There shall be a minimum of two signing officers. One shall be the President and the other the Treasurer.
3. An LSA should give their bank or credit union the COTA's address for all return mail.

Finance

A. The financing of LSAs shall be through:

1. A LSA membership fee. (optional) If your LSA charges a membership fee, it must be reported on the financial reporting form at year end.
2. A COTA grant. \$500 per LSA/year.
3. Any LSA in its second and subsequent years may be eligible for a portion of a school district grant that the COTA administers. Deadline for the grant submission is October 30th.
4. LSAs are ineligible in their first year for the district grant.
5. The funds returned to the COTA from a delisted LSA will remain with COTA for one year following the delisting. If the LSA is recognized the following year, the funds revert back to the LSA. The one year waiting period for the district grant is in place. If the LSA stays delisted after a year, the funds returned to COTA and will be divided equally among all LSAs for that said year.

Planning a Conference

Note: LSAs must coordinate professional development activities with the COTA Pro D Chairperson.

Responsibilities of the LSAs

1. **Financial:** Each LSA will pay for its own speakers (honorariums, travel, accommodation, meals). Financial support may be available from COTA depending on the costs and the number of teachers than can be accommodated. In order to receive funding from COTA, LSAs must meet deadlines established by the Professional Development Chairperson. This includes the "call for presenters" deadline as forms must be completed and submitted by the due date. There is very little discretionary funding, so try to be frugal while trying to attain a high standard of workshop and/or presentation.

2. **Facilitation of the workshop(s)**: Each LSA is responsible for finding the speaker(s), making all arrangements with/for them, and looking after them on the day of the conference.

3. **Timeline**: All speaker information (as above) and session blurb must be entered into mycota.ca by the deadlines indicated (watch MyCOTA.ca for the deadline dates). Timeline pressures become extreme at the COTA office, too, and we can't do anything regarding venues, brochure and supplementary activities until your information has been received.

Local Specialist Association: Grant Request Form

(Submit to the C.O.T.A. Pro-D Chairperson and the C.O.T.A. Office Manager no later than October 30th of any school year)

If completing this form on-line, please enter your information in the blank lines. The line will adjust to accommodate your entry. Once completed, please email to the Pro-D Chairperson Joe.Jamison@sd23.bc.ca and COTA Office Manager, Daphne.Meier@sd23.bc.ca

Name of L.S.A. Choose an item. Year Choose an item.

President School Choose an item.

Treasurer School Choose an item.

Please list names of other EC members:

Which PSA are you affiliated with? Choose an item.

How are you affiliated? (i.e. are you members of the PSA, on the PSA Executive, etc.)

LSA goals for the current school year:

- 1.
2.
3.

Our LSA is declining the grant for this school year Choose an item.

President's Signature:
Revised September 2019

L.S.A. Year End Activity Report

Revised: June 2019

Name of L.S.A. Choose an item. **School Year** Choose an item.

President: **School:** Choose an item.

Treasurer: **School:** Choose an item.

1. Summarize the L.S.A.'s accomplishments for the past school year.

2. Number of members this past school year?

3. How much was the LSA membership fee?

4. If you have over \$500 in your account, please explain. Is the LSA saving for a conference, to bring in a speaker, etc?

5. Please provide the names of your LSA Executive Committee for the upcoming school year.

President: **School:** Choose an item.

Updated June 2020

Treasurer: **School:** Choose an item.

Other members:

Please email this completed form to Daphne.Meier@sd23.bc.ca.

Reminder: Please prepare a **financial report** (reconciliation) for the past school year (using the LSA Financial Reporting Form (Excel) provided) and email to the COTA Office Manager, Daphne.Meier@sd23.bc.ca and SD #23 Accounts Payable, accountspayable@sd23.bc.ca

The DEADLINE is no later than July 15th

SCHOOL DISTRICT #23 / CENTRAL OKANAGAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

LOCAL SPECIALIST ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL REPORTING FORM

NAME OF LSA: _____ **YEAR:** _____

Person Reimbursed	Cheque #	Cheque Date	Membership & Workshop Material	Amount Paid

0

Balance carried forward from prior year:	
Contribution from School District No. 23:	
Contribution from COTA:	
Income generated through Pro-D activities:	
Total expenditures for the year (above):	
Closing Balance at June 30th	0

Certified correct by: _____
LSA TREASURER

_____ Date

- Notes:**
1) Each payment must have a cancelled cheque or other evidence indicating that the amount has been received
2) Each LSA must establish a procedure to ascertain that this allocation is being used for LSA activities

Please email a copy by July 15th to: COTA Office Manager, Daphne.Meier@sd23.bc.ca
Finance Department, accountspayable@d23.bc.ca