

VESTA WEEKLY

TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT! PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

IN THIS ISSUE

VESTA advocacy at VSB - Page 1

Option 4 - Page 1

#RedForBCED campaign - Page 2

Welcome to VESTA - Page 2

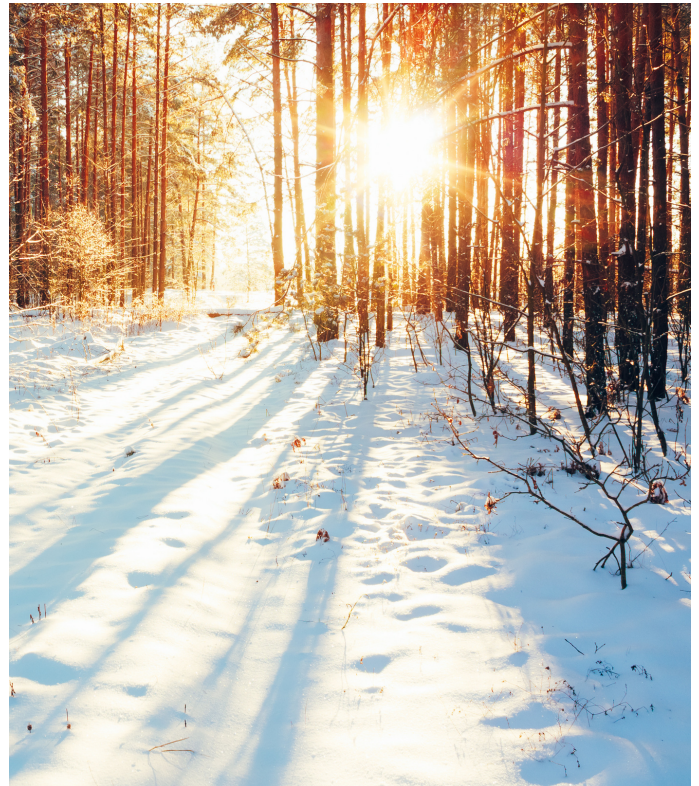
Creating a mask culture - Page 3

Retirement resources - Page 3

Additional Supervision Aides - Page 4

Reach out to your new MLA! - Page 4

December 6th Day of Remembrance - Page 4



VESTA EC RAMPS UP ADVOCACY AT VSB

Your VESTA representatives have been fierce and relentless when it comes to raising matters of concern to teachers at Board standing committees and our contractual committees, in conjunction with the provincial work happening through the BCTF. New motions passed at Tuesday night's EC redouble our efforts and will support the continued fight. Please watch for a one-per-member mailout on the motions that covered issues including: communication about contract tracing, Option 4 student workload, provision of hand sanitizer, mandating of masks for students and staff, reducing classroom density and more. Watch for a one-per-member letter with information about the actions being taken by VESTA and plan to attend next week's Staff Rep Assembly (open to all members!) on December 8.

OPTION 4

It is disappointing that once again, without consultation with union or Trustees, district management has made a decision to extend the inadequate, inequitable and unsustainable Option 4 until March 1. Despite VESTA representatives shoe-horning our opposition into every possible meeting, the district made the decision to continue with the current model of Option 4 without consultation or acknowledgment of the impact on staff and students.

A remote learning option needs to be made available to students, but this deeply flawed approach needs to be reconsidered and we will continue to assert our opposition to this approach and the lack of consultation required by the BC K-12 Restart Plan.

#RedForBCED campaign

Time to dig into your closets and find your red shirts. We're joining Surrey Teachers' Association in bringing back the #RedForBCED campaign. This time it's to call for better safety measures in BC schools. With increased cases & exposures in schools, it is critical that we work collectively in our call for stricter measures.

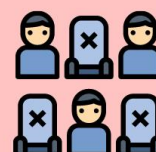
Wear red every Friday, starting Dec.4th and share this campaign with your colleagues. You can post your socially-distanced and masked pictures to social media using the #RedForBCED and tag [@VESTA39](#) & [@BCTF](#) to amplify your message. You can find an infographic for sharing on the VESTA twitter feed and the [VESTA website](#) connecting #RedforBCED with issues important to teachers.

5 REASONS TO WEAR RED

#REDFORBCED



You want a mask mandate in all classrooms



You want smaller classes for physical distancing



You are tired of failures to fill



You were denied accommodations



You don't want to use your sick days to isolate because of a positive case in your classroom

BONUS REASON:

You received a COVID-19 exposure notice from a school and you don't want your next COVID-19 test to be positive

Welcome to VESTA

Are you a new teacher? New to teaching in Vancouver? Curious about the inner-workings of your new union?

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, then we've got an event for you! Vancouver Elementary Teachers' Association (VESTA) cordially invites you to the 2020-21 New Member Induction on Monday, Dec 7th 2020 at 4 pm.

This will be a virtual event. Perks include a \$20 Skip-the-Dishes gift card and your chance to win some fun door prizes! To RSVP, contact lori@vesta.ca



Creating a culture of mask wearing at school

Classroom strategies:

You might find these documents helpful in your efforts to support mask wearing in class. Please remember that while VESTA and BCTF are advocating for masks to be required in schools, there will continue to be some staff and students who cannot wear them for medical reasons and we cannot require students to wear them. Indiana teachers document and CDC suggestions can be found at the link. Please note that these are American documents and may not map directly to the Canadian experience.

School strategies:

- Hanging BCTF posters and creating a script for teachers to use based on your school culture may be supportive and reinforce messaging.
- A shared discussion at a virtual assembly may be helpful in building shared language
- Teachers could bring a motion to Staff Committee Meeting such as: “That ____ school develop a plan to increase mask wearing by all school community members” or “that mask wearing be incorporated into aspects of the school code of conduct” or “that masks be provided at school entryways with posters emphasizing care for self and others”
- Hold a poster contest for students



Resources for teachers considering retirement

FORUM is the Federation of Retired Union Members and an organization open to any members “greater than 50” to help members prepare for retirement and connect with other union members to continue the solidarity work that is such an important part of our lives. FORUM organizes community events and makes available a Health and Dental Benefits plan for purchase. You can find out more here: www.bcforum.ca

BC Retired Teachers’ Association is a BCTF Specific organization for retired teachers that also provides access to an extended health plan, travel, life and home insurance. They connect with the BCTF Advantage program for retirees and are active in the Teacher Pension Plan, as well as having committees on matters such as wellness and advocacy. You can learn more here: www.bcrtta.ca

MORNEAU SHEPELL 

How EFAP Can Help

Information to help with work and life
 Confidential · Immediate Assistance · 24/7/365
 Morneau Shepell · 1-844-880-9142
workhealthlife.com

Additional Supervision Aides in schools

The VSB has agreed to extend the daily hours of work for our IUOE colleagues who work as continuing Supervision Aides until the end of the year on a voluntary basis. Supervision Aides who accept the offer would then work 9:30 – 1:30 on a daily basis. This is intended, in part, to address the supervisory issues resulting from staggered recesses and lunches and the additional requirements for physical distancing and managing cohort overlap and hopefully assist in reducing the draw on SSSW support for students.

The primary duties of the Supervision Aides is to supervise students. This includes supervision on the playground, in the halls, in the lunchroom, classrooms and on field trips. This can also include school events such as equipment distribution, accompanying classes to and from sites within the school and supporting supervision at school assemblies. Please ensure that any requests you make of Supervision Aides is consistent with these guidelines.

Reach out to your new MLA!

The BCTF is encouraging teachers to send a “snail mail” letter, the handwritten kind with an envelope and stamp, to their MLAs in Victoria. They need to hear firsthand about the many challenges of teaching during COVID-19 and the urgent need for better health and safety measures. This is a great way to get your views read by those working in the Legislative Assembly, and your personal letter will carry much more weight than an email.

A cautionary note: When you write your letter, remember that it will not necessarily remain confidential. Be mindful to respect student privacy and stick to an informational tone. Our goal is to make sure MLAs, both new and experienced, really understand the current state of education in BC from their own constituents.

December 6th Day of Remembrance

Every year on the anniversary of the massacre at Montreal’s L’Ecole Polytechnique, we remember and take action. On December 6, 1989, 14 women were murdered in their university classrooms because they were women and because they were studying engineering.

This is a day to think about and take action on Violence against Women and to acknowledge that gender-based violence is a significant barrier to an equitable society. We also acknowledge that Indigenous women and girls are disproportionately impacted by violence and its’ relationship to colonization.

VESTA requests that members respect this day by either safely attending socially distant vigils in their communities or observing this important memorial in their classrooms.



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Dates to Remember

Welcome to VESTA

December 7th

@ 4 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85752169489>

Meeting ID: 857 5216 9489

Passcode: 1111

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

General Meeting/ Staff Rep Assembly

December 8th

@ 4 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

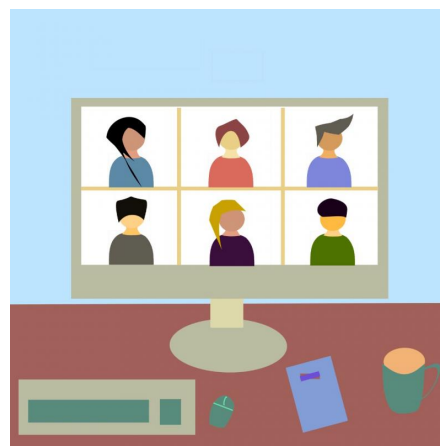
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83747417461>

Meeting ID: 837 4741 7461

Passcode: 453202

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



VESTA

The Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association is the union representing elementary teachers and adult educators working in public schools in Vancouver.