

# VESTA WEEKLY

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

## IN THIS ISSUE

Space available for Feb 11 Disability Justice Event- Page 1

February is Black History Month - Page 2

Paid Leave for COVID - Page 2

Updates to the Provincial Health & Safety Guidelines- Page 2

BCTF Research Project on experiences of Canadian BIPOC teachers with School Policing- Page 3

Feedback on the November Indigenous Focus Day- Page 3

VSB SLO Review - Page 3



## Space still available for Feb 11 Disability Justice Event

**CRIP CAMP**  
A DISABILITY REVOLUTION

FROM EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY  
PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA  
AND MICHELLE OBAMA

A CONVERSATION WITH  
CORBETT O'TOOLE, AUTHOR OF FADING  
SCARS  
AND ANDRAEÁ LAVANT, PRODUCER OF  
CRIP CAMP

Date: Feb 11/21  
Time: 4-5:30pm  
\*limited space available\*

Be sure to pre-watch on:

CTA members register by emailing  
offices@chilliwackteachers.com  
VESTA members RSVP to amw@vesta.ca  
Early bird draw for a copy of Fading Scars  
by Corbett O'Toole

sponsored by

co-sponsored by CTA and VESTA

Please circulate this incredible event widely – there are still spaces available. We'd like a full house and are open to teachers from other locals and retired teachers to attend. Whether or not you'll attend the virtual event, check out the movie "Crip Camp" on Netflix or YouTube to further your learning and knowledge about the Disability Rights movement as connected to inclusion in schools and other public spaces. The session will be a conversation with two US disability activists connected with the film.

## **February is Black History Month**

Thank you to teachers who participated in Black Shirt Month last week as an act of solidarity. February is Black History Month and an opportunity to talk with students and colleagues about Black histories, current Black identities, Racism and Black Joy and cultures. BC and Vancouver have an extensive Black history that was subject to erasure. Challenge yourself to bring more complex representations of Black lives into your classroom and to acknowledge Black activism and culture and address the intersectionality of Black experience. Here are a couple of resources for your reflection:



<https://www.teachingforchange.org/black-history-month>

<https://teachbc.bctf.ca/>

<https://rethinkingschools.org/articles/queering-black-history-and-getting-free/>

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## **Paid Leave for COVID**

After months of advocacy, the employer has finally agreed to a paid leave connected to COVID that does not require teachers to use their sick bank when required to self-isolate. We are currently working with the district and the BCTF to clarify the application and access to the leave.

Unfortunately, the leave is not retroactive, and will take effect this week, so those who were required to self-isolate in the first year of COVID will not be reimbursed their sick leave used to self-isolate.

We are clarifying what process needs to be followed and what documentation is required, but in the meantime, members should use SFE to book absences if advised to self-isolate, and medical information can be provided to the district when available.

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## **Updates to the Provincial Health and Safety Guidelines**

Despite the fact that some schools and members will see improvements to the health and safety working conditions, the changes announced Thursday morning will have little impact on elementary school teachers. While analysis of the changes is ongoing, the aspects that reflect small improvements include the removal of “not recommended” term from mask guidelines for elementary school students, and additional guidance for PE and Music classes is a welcome recognition of some of the challenges experienced by elementary teachers. Creating a culture of mask wearing will continue to be an important part of elementary school teachers’ work.

VESTA continues to advocate, along with the BCTF for improved and reduced classroom density, the provision of an equitable remote learning option, consistent ventilation across all school sites and consistent compliance with the current guidelines.

### **BCTF Research Project on experiences of Canadian BIPOC teachers with School Policing**

The opportunity to collaborate with the BCTF Research department as a co-researcher on a local project about the experiences of BIPOC teachers about School Policing has been extended to February 10. Please share the opportunity with your BIPOC colleagues! Interested members can find the [CV form](#) and information on the [VESTA website](#).



### **Feedback on the November Indigenous Focus Day**

VESTA's motion about collecting feedback on the November district Indigenous Focus Day is coming back to the February Staff Rep Assembly on February 16. Please discuss the day at your school so that your Staff Rep is prepared to provide feedback at this month's meeting.

The VSB has determined that the first day of school in September 2021 will be a mandatory anti-racism inservice day for all staff, and that students will begin classes the following day. VESTA supports this initiative, and would like to provide as much and as specific feedback as possible. Remember that our colleagues were involved in the presentation of this day, and feedback should be focused on content, impact on participants and effective rollout of programming.

### **VSB SLO Review**

VESTA is still seeking members to participate in the VSB SLO review on behalf of VESTA members.

Please complete the [Task Force CV](#) on the VESTA website if you wish to participate. VESTA reps to VSB committees policies apply.

## January Dates to Remember



**Joanne Sutherland**  
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### **Executive**

#### **Committee Meeting**

February 9,2021 @4:00 PM

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://zoom.us/j/93233197092>

Meeting ID: 932 3319 7092

Passcode: 526761

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

### **Aboriginal Education**

#### **Committee Meeting**

February 11,2021 @4:00 PM

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://zoom.us/j/98704042825>

Meeting ID: 987 0404 2825

Passcode: 734201

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

### **Newly Scheduled General Meeting and Staff Rep Assembly**

February 16,2021 @ 4:00 PM

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82186116650>

Meeting ID: 821 8611 6650

Passcode: 746148

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



### **How EFAP Can Help**

Information to help with work and life

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[workhealthlife.com](http://workhealthlife.com)