

# VESTA WEEKLY

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

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### SURT registration reminder

**Anti-Racism and Professional Autonomy training February 3 and 4 - One Rep per school**

Next week we have an incredible opportunity to learn with and from our teacher colleagues around anti-oppression and the union on Wednesday and Anti-Racism and Active Witnessing on Thursday, as well as delving into our professionalism in the time of COVID in the afternoon.

Thank you for respecting the days on which you are scheduled to attend, and please send in your RSVP as soon as possible to assist our staff in planning and preparing the tech for the training.

VESTA's position is that members have the knowledge and ability to work safely from a remote location on union leave days. However, if your administrator directs you to attend the worksite, you should follow that direction and let your VESTA in-house liaison know.

We look forward to seeing you all and sharing the opportunity to learn and grow together, to build the anti-racist skills for our roles as teacher and student advocates. If the school Staff Rep is unable to attend, please find another rep from your school to take advantage of this opportunity.

## #RedforBCED



### #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 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

# CRIP CAMP

A DISABILITY REVOLUTION

Please join  
Vancouver Elementary & Chilliwack Teachers'  
Associations  
for this incredible Disability Justice opportunity

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

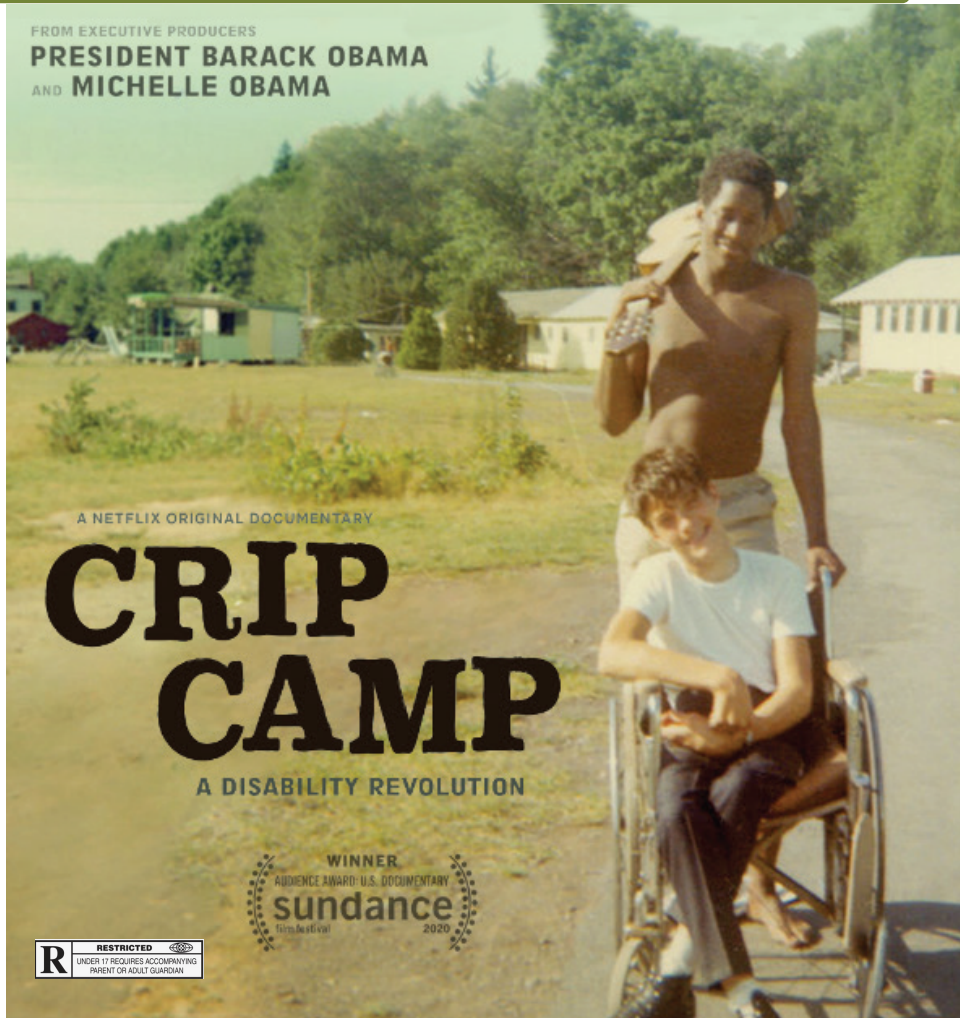
Date: Feb 11/21

Time: 4-5:30pm

\* limited space available \*

Be sure to pre-watch on: 

CTA members register by emailing  
[office@chilliwackteachers.com](mailto:office@chilliwackteachers.com)  
VESTA members RSVP to [amy@vesta.ca](mailto:amy@vesta.ca)  
Early bird draw for a copy of Fading Scars  
by Corbett O'Toole



## Disability Justice Virtual event February 11

VESTA is delighted to be co-sponsoring an event with the Chilliwack Teachers' Association that highlights the work of Disability Justice Activists connected to efforts to make schools and public spaces accessible for students and adults with disabilities.

If you haven't already, please take the time to watch "Crip Camp", available on Netflix or on YouTube. It's a compelling, honest and challenging documentary about the Accessibility Revolution in the US and following a group of disabled activists. It's a story about both the unique and universal aspects of activism and solidarity and the difference that individuals can make when they fight for their rights.

On February 11, two disability activists, Corbett O'Toole, author of Fading Scars, and participant in the "Crip Camp" documentary, and Andraea Lavant, producer of the documentary will be holding a conversation with teachers about Disability Justice. It's a free event and VESTA will be giving away 10 copies of Fading Scars as door prizes.

VESTA has 50 spots available on a first come, first-served basis. Please email [amy@vesta.ca](mailto:amy@vesta.ca) if you wish to attend. Note: This is not a viewing of the documentary, and viewing of the documentary is not required to attend, but it's a great movie, and we recommend you watch it before or after, whether you're coming or not!



**Community and connections for early career teachers**  
**February 26, 2021**

**REGISTER NOW!**

[bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2021](http://bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2021)

### **VESTA sponsoring attendance at BCTF New Teachers' Conference**

VESTA will be sponsoring release time and registration fees for 10 TTOCs to attend the BCTF New Teachers' Conference on February 26th, 2021 and paying registration fees for 10 additional early career contract teachers.

If you are interested in attending this incredible opportunity to network, share ideas and concerns and connect with your union and other early career teachers, please complete the [VESTA CV](#) and submit to [jody@vesta.ca](mailto:jody@vesta.ca). If more than 10 applications are received, attendance will be determined using an equity lens, so please indicate on your CV if you identify as a member of an equity-seeking group.

For Early Career Teachers in contracts, you can apply to your school's Pro-d fund for release time to attend, or to the [VSB/VESTA temporary supplemental pro-d fund](#). Please contact your school pro-d chair for additional information. If you need additional support regarding accessing these funds for the New Teachers' Conference, please contact [allison@vesta.ca](mailto:allison@vesta.ca)

### **Provincial and Federal COVID grant spending**

VESTA has advocated for the funding from the provincial and federal grants to be applied quickly and equitably to reduce classroom density, increase compliance with the Health and Safety guidelines and to ensure that appropriate PPE is provided for teachers and other school staff and students.

While the progress on ventilation improvements has been effective and focused, given it's increasing importance in reducing transmission, we are frustrated to see that much of the funding remains unspent despite teachers' calls for additional support, especially when it comes to reducing classroom density and providing appropriate and discrete learning support for Option 4 students.

VESTA has just received an accounting of the spending of those grants and will be sharing this information with Staff Reps this week. Please check in with your Staff Rep or check the VESTA website for this information. We will continue advocating for safer classrooms for teachers and students, including through the budget setting process.



### **Self-Directed Professional Development**

A big thank you to school-based Professional Development committees who are working hard to develop and promote meaningful, teacher-led Pro-D opportunities! Please remember that teachers have professional autonomy regarding how they use their Pro-D time, and that while notice of your plans for your pro-d should be submitted as early as possible to the Pro-D committee to support and respect their planning, teachers have the ability to choose and organize Pro-D that is relevant and important to their work. You can find guidance on this matter in the [Pro-D Handbook](#) on the VESTA website.

If working from remote sites, including at home, for the upcoming Pro-D day, please ensure, as always, that you and your worksite on that day follow the health and safety guidelines.

### **Aboriginal Cultural Leave**

One of the gains from the 2019 round of bargaining is connected to teachers' support of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the underrepresentation of Aboriginal teachers in BC schools. Teachers who self-identify as Aboriginal now are entitled to up to 5 days of paid leave to plan and attend cultural events connected to their communities. Please spread the word about this important provision that is a first step towards awareness of the needs of Aboriginal teachers in BC to participate in important cultural events.

This leave identifies the diverse cultural needs of Aboriginal teachers, but also begins to acknowledge the unpaid and often unrecognized labour that Aboriginal teachers take on in schools when leading or sharing cultural knowledge and experiences with non-Aboriginal teachers and students, and acknowledges that this leadership requires connection and relationships with home communities, something that the Collective Agreement previously did not provide distinct support for.

### **Virtual BCTF AGM**

Ever wondered where BCTF policy and positions come from? The BCTF AGM is the most sovereign decision-making body that determines important aspects of how our union serves our diverse and geographically varied 38,000 members.

For four days during spring break, 700 teachers get together and debate policy and make decisions as delegates on behalf of teachers from around the province. VESTA is still seeking 9 delegates to complete our delegation of 31. Benefits include: knowledge of the mechanics of the BCTF, the opportunity to learn and work alongside your colleagues for a stronger union and a better world, having a voice in the election of next year's BCTF Executive Committee.

Whether your passion is Health and Safety, Professional Issues, Bargaining or Social Justice, there will be something for you at the AGM.

Please submit your [CV](#) if you would like to put your name forward as a delegate. Elections for the remaining 9 positions will be held at the February 16 General Meeting.

### **New negotiated VESTA Mentorship Fund**

In the last round of bargaining, a provincial fund of \$12 million was provided to locals to support mentorship. VESTA's allocation of that funding allows for access by all VESTA members including TTOCs and Adult Educators to participate in mentorship including, but not limited to, the provision of release time to:

- Observe in another teacher's classroom
- Work in a self-identified mentor partnership
- Collaboration between a new and experienced teacher

A VESTA committee will accept applications starting next week and ensure that distribution is as broad as possible. Please watch this space for updates.

### **Change of Salary Category**

If you have completed requirements for reclassification of salary category (15 credits, Masters Degree, etc), the deadline for submitting proof of that change must be submitted to the Board before January 31st in order for the classification to be effective January 1st. The next opportunity to submit application for change is September. Learn more in Article B.25.4 of the Collective Agreement!

## January Dates to Remember



**Joanne Sutherland**  
President  
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**Allison Jambor**  
1st Vice President  
allison@vesta.ca

**Darren Tereposky**  
2nd Vice President  
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**Jody Polukoshko**  
3rd Vice President  
jody@vesta.ca

**Donna Brack**  
AE President  
donna@vesta.ca

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**Health & Safety  
Committee Meeting**  
February 1, 2021 @4:00 PM  
**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://zoom.us/j/91296398145>  
Meeting ID: 912 9639 8145  
Passcode: 951691  
Dial by your location  
+1 778 907 2071 Canada

**Social Justice & Solidarity  
Committee Meeting**  
February 2, 2021 @4:00 PM  
**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://zoom.us/j/96520607570>  
Meeting ID: 965 2060 7570  
Passcode: 016498  
Dial by your location  
+1 778 907 2071 Canada

**Communications  
Committee Meeting**  
February 4, 2021 @4:00 PM  
**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://zoom.us/j/96520607570>  
Meeting ID: 965 2060 7570  
Passcode: 016498  
Dial by your location  
+1 778 907 2071 Canada

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workhealthlife.com