

VESTA WEEKLY

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

IN THIS ISSUE

- VTF General Meeting Summary - Page 1
-
- Honouring Indigenous Veterans This National Aboriginal Veterans Day - Page 2
-
- 2022 BCTF Annual General Meeting - Page 3
-
- VESTA Reps to VTF Bargaining Team - Page 4
-
- BCTC New Teacher Survey 2021 - Page 4
-
- Petition to implement two mandatory days of in-service in K-12 for Reconciliation activities - Page 4
-
- Making Sense of Your Pension, CPP, OAS & Group Benefits: An Essential Workshop from BCRTA - Page 5
-
- VSB Laptop renewal rollout plan - Page 5
-
- Health and Safety Rep Release Time - Page 5



VTF General Meeting Summary

VESTA Executive extends a sincere appreciation to all members who got active in ensuring that a Vancouver Teachers' Federation General Meeting took place prior to the opening of bargaining. Our first date at the table with the employer is just six days away and we are looking forward to crafting language that supports the decisions made by the VESTA General Membership, and expanded by VSTA members and Executive. The response to our calls for support were overwhelming, and receiving signatures of over 10% of the membership in less than a week was a clear indication of how important bargaining and democracy are to VESTA members.

The turnout at the meeting was excellent, and while there is still much preparation to be done, we are pleased to start working on the joint objectives and advocating with the Board for improvements to our local agreement. The VESTA reps on the bargaining team will be expanding by one member as per the agreement with VSTA, and we have determined some steps forward to ensure communications and relationships are supported and repaired. As bargaining discussions are in-committee, we hope you will plan to attend next Tuesday's Staff Rep Assembly for detailed information about the process moving forward and resolution to the matters of concern.

Honouring Indigenous Veterans This National Aboriginal Veterans Day.

This November 8th is National Aboriginal Veterans Day, a day of remembrance and commemoration of the contributions of Indigenous veterans in the First and Second World Wars, as well as the Korean War. This Aboriginal Veterans Day, we would like to express our gratitude for the contributions Indigenous veterans have made to Canada and the world.

National Aboriginal Veterans Day began in Winnipeg in 1994 when Indigenous veterans were not recognized in Remembrance Day activities, and is now celebrated in many communities across Canada. Over 12,000 Indigenous people are estimated to have volunteered in all three wars, including 7,000 First Nations members, and approximately 300 died during these conflicts.

First Nations, Inuit and Metis people were not eligible for conscription because they were not citizens of Canada (they were also unable to vote), but many volunteered despite the challenges they faced, including traveling long distances from remote communities to enlist, learning a new language (English), and coping with racism against them. Indigenous people were not allowed to join the Canadian Air Force until 1942 and the Canadian Navy until 1943. Both men and women enlisted, serving as soldiers, nurses and in other roles. Many served with distinction, winning medals for bravery in action.

After the war, enlisted Indigenous people returned home to continued discrimination, including in some cases denial of benefits, loss of Indian Status, and expropriation of their land by the government for non-Indigenous veterans. It was only in 1995 that Indigenous veterans were allowed to lay wreaths commemorating their fallen comrades at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The first monument commemorating the role of Indigenous people during these three wars was dedicated in 2001 in Ottawa. It took until 2003 for the Government of Canada to provide veterans' benefits to First Nations soldiers who had been denied them in the past, and Metis veterans have never received them.

Today, Indigenous people continue to serve in Canada's armed forces.

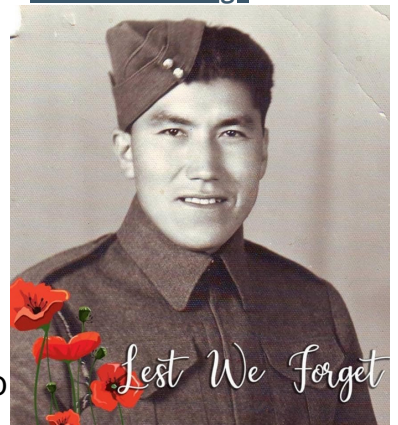
<https://www.righttoplay.ca/en-ca/national-offices/national-office-canada/whats-new/honouring-indigenous-veterans-this-national-aboriginal-veterans-day/>



Tommy Prince



Uncle Fred George



Uncle Fred George holding flag



2022 BCTF Annual General Meeting

From the November / December BCTF Teacher Newsmag:

How the BCTF makes decisions

I want my union to take action on climate change!

The BCTF's governing bodies follow democratic processes to make decisions. To present an idea to a governing body, you need to present a **motion**.

A **motion** brings business before a meeting. Motions contain specific action items. For advice on who to talk to about writing a motion, contact your local.

I have two motions:

That my local participate in the climate march in my community on November 14.
That the BCTF show support for the organization Teachers for Action against Climate Change.

Local motion

Every local hosts general meetings open to all members in the local. Connect with your local office to learn about their process for presenting a motion. At the **local general meeting**, you will have an opportunity to speak for your motion and share why you think it's important.

A **local general meeting** is where local decisions are made.

Members of the local general meeting will vote on the motion, and it will be carried or defeated.

Carried—The local will take action as specified by the motion.

Defeated—As a union, we respect our democratic processes and understand that once our decisions are made, the collective position prevails.

However, you can still present your motion, or something similar in spirit, at a future local general meeting. Connect with like-minded members in your local and do some grassroots organizing to garner support—local committees can be a great place to start. When you have more members engaged in your issue, bring it back to a local general meeting for consideration.

Provincial motion

Present it to your **local executive committee**.

The **local executive committee** is made up of elected members who oversee the business of the local and provide political leadership.

The local executive or representatives on behalf of the local to the governing bodies of the BCTF: the **Representative Assembly (RA)** and the **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. Motions from locals are termed resolutions, and are debated at these provincial meetings.

If a motion is urgent and must be addressed before the next RA or AGM, a local can send the resolution to the BCTF **Executive Committee (EC)**. A BCTF EC member must move the motion for debate at the EC meeting.

BCTF Representative Assembly

At the Representative Assembly, 131 local representatives vote to give mandate to the BCTF Executive Committee, the BCTF EC and local presidents attend the RA with voice but no vote.

Just like at the local level, motions brought to the RA or AGM are typically carried or defeated, and the collective position prevails. Members can continue to work locally and provincially to have their issues heard.

BCTF Annual General Meeting

Approximately 700 elected teacher delegates meet at the AGM to elect new BCTF EC members, debate EC recommendations, local resolutions, and set BCTF priorities for the year.

This is a reminder that the BCTF Annual General Meeting, which takes place every Spring Break, provides an opportunity for members to shape BCTF policy and practices. In our December General Meeting, we will be soliciting motions from members to take forward to that meeting. Please watch your email for forms. Some examples of past VESTA motions include:

- Provision of extended medical and dental benefits for retirees
- Teacher Pension Plan divestment from fossil fuels and weapons
- Improvements to SIP plan to support partial return to work
- Creation of democratic structures to strengthen bargaining

We will also be appointing VESTA delegates to the AGM, so please consider whether you're interested in attending this 4 day meeting with members from around the province, representing VESTA and advocating for a better world.



VESTA Reps to VTF Bargaining Team

As per the agreement reached this week with the VSTA, VESTA will be appointing an additional member to the VTF team. Our first bargaining session with the employer is scheduled to take place November 10, so the timeline for this posting is very short. Please complete the CV form [here](#) and email to amy@vesta.ca by Monday, November 8 at noon. Participation on the bargaining team includes one or two release days per week from November to the start of March, as well as attending VESTA and VTF EC and General Meetings as needed. It's a great chance to learn about the workings of the Collective Agreement and work collaboratively with colleagues on making improvements to our working conditions.

.....

BCTC New Teacher Survey 2021

We encourage eligible VESTA members to complete the 2021 Survey, which is a project of the BC Teachers' Council. The survey is a follow-up to the initial survey from 2015. The purpose of the 2015 Survey was to better understand how well-prepared new teachers were for the realities of teaching in the BC K-12 school system. The 2021 Survey takes this aim a step further by focusing on how new teachers entering the BC system develop their professional teacher identity with the end goal of recommending strategies to better support this process. The cross-cutting themes of the survey are the Professional Standards for BC Educators. The survey invites teachers who have completed their teacher education programs in BC within the past 5 years (2015–2020) and who are currently certified to teach in our K-12 system.

The BCTC New Teacher Survey 2021 was successfully launched on October 6, 2021. An invite to participate in the survey was sent out to close to 10,000 eligible certificate holders. The participants can access the Survey [here](#).

.....

Petition to implement two mandatory days of in-service in K-12 for Reconciliation activities

If you haven't already, please sign the Anti-Oppressive Educators' Collective petition calling on government to make a financial and legislative commitment to the role of education in the Reconciliation process.

You can find the petition here.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSegNs4wRqFOsXHgLZLCw9Ixl9i6lh1dMUD6N5ccTcOm3xUCQ/viewform>

The petition currently has over 2000 signatures in support of district staff receiving time to read the TRC report and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in their entirety, debrief in collective groups and learn, and to establish goals and action plans to implement the Calls to Action.

Making Sense of Your Pension, CPP, OAS and Group Benefits: An Essential Workshop from BCRTA

The important decisions that will determine your retirement lifestyle should not be made at the last minute as you fill out your forms. This seminar will prepare you to confidently make choices that are right for you. All teachers age 50+ should plan to attend one of BCRTA's Pre-Retirement online (Zoom) workshops. The workshops are free. You get great planning materials along with answers to questions you have about your retirement. Please pre-register at <https://bcрта.ca/workshop>. The agenda includes: Teachers' Pension Plan, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, and voluntary group benefits. Information about choosing your group benefits (dental, extended health and travel). We show some of the differences between the plans and help equip you to select the plan that best suits your needs. November 24, 2021 7 p.m. January 19, 2022 7 p.m. February 16, 2022 4 p.m. March 2, 2022 7 p.m. April 6, 2022 7 p.m. April 20, 2022 7 p.m. May 11, 2022 4 p.m. May 19, 2022 7 p.m. May 25, 2022 7 p.m. June 1, 2022 7 p.m. All teachers are welcome! Sign up takes two minutes and will give you access to all the workshop materials and future updates

.....

VSB Laptop renewal rollout plan

VSB has recently announced that all teachers on continuing contracts will be given an opportunity to get a new VSB device as part of a five-year replacement cycle. The replacement rollout will begin sometime in November and will hopefully be complete by the end of June. The VSB is currently working on how to transfer your information and documents on your current device to your new one. These are work devices and should be used for work purposes only. The old devices will be refurbished and made available in schools for TTOCs and temporary contract teachers. Please see the "Teacher Laptop" communication on the VSB SharePoint for more information about when your specific school will begin this transition and the specific steps you should be taking to prepare to ensure your documents and files are transferred to your new laptop.

.....

Health and Safety Rep Release Time

The VESTA EC has decided to spend the BCTF COVID grant on releasing Health and Safety reps at each worksite for a ½ day a month. As with the Staff Rep time, they can be combined after two months into a full day. The new sheet will be emailed to H&S reps starting in November. Please fill in and return your forms to hitomi@vesta.ca when you've booked your dates.

These dates are to support Health and Safety reps in their roles of supporting members, preparing and communicating out JOHS decisions and issues, and any other Health and Safety or VESTA responsibilities.





Joanne Sutherland
President
joanne@vesta.ca

Allison Jambor
Vice President
allison@vesta.ca

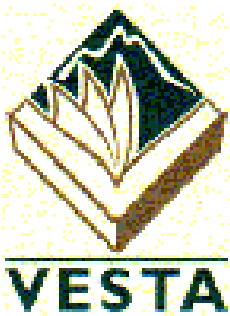
Darren Tereposky
Vice President
darren@vesta.ca

Marjorie Dumont
Vice President
marjorie@vesta.ca

Jody Polukoshko
Vice President
jody@vesta.ca

Rob McGowan
AE President
rob@vesta.ca

Office:
604-873-8378
Fax:
604-873-2652
www.vesta.ca



Dates to Remember

Health & Safety Committee Meeting

November 8, 2021 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81441015888>

Meeting ID: 814 4101 5888

Passcode: 090543

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

Executive

Committee Meeting

November 9, 2021 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88580794263>

Meeting ID: 885 8079 4263

Passcode: 246418

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



Starling

Build
Resilient
Minds.

VESTA

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