

VESTA WEEKLY

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

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Statement of Solidarity with 2SLGBTQIA+ students

The following statement has been made, following the events at Britannia Secondary last week. It is a reminder to us all that our worksites and our unions are not exempt from heterosexism, homophobia and transphobia. It's important to keep checking in with our anti-oppression work and to continue to reflect on our important role as teachers and our relationships with students.

“The Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association stands in solidarity with 2SLGBTQIA+ students, and all equity seeking students. Schools need to be a safe place not just for learning, but for students to self-identify, self-determine, to be provided with equitable opportunities for representation within school structures, and to be supported by all the staff who work with them.

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VESTA has a long tradition of standing up for diverse and equity-seeking students. Posters advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ representation on student council were removed at a Vancouver Secondary School by an elected union officer who was not a member of the school staff. This is a stark reminder that our collective work on heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, hetero- and cis-normativity has a long way to go before schools are safe for all students with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. Inclusion efforts must not be contingent on the maintenance of the status quo.

We believe that ongoing anti-oppression work is necessary in all of our workplaces, including our unions. While mistakes will be made, addressing these mistakes cannot end at an apology. When mistakes are made, apologies are in order, but transparency is also essential, actions must be taken to address the harm to students and staff, and steps must be taken to prevent future harm.”

New VESTA Website

Yesterday, VESTA launched our new and updated website. The information hosted on the website is being updated and reorganized, and the layout includes a member portal that will be password protected, to better communicate in-committee and confidential information.

Thank you for your patience while we work out the bugs and transition to the new website. Please check your email for information about how to access the new website including the portal. Thank you very much to our staff, Lori Liang, for the creative and technical work in the development and maintenance of this vast improvement to this key part of our communications strategy!

N99 Mask Donation through BCTF

Thank you to all school reps and TTOCs who came to the VESTA office yesterday to pick up the masks for your school. You should have received 2 masks per teaching staff at your school, and if there are extras, please offer them to itinerant staff and TTOCs.

For those masks remaining at the office, we will make all efforts to get them to your school as quickly as possible. Thank you for your patience, as we try to do this safely and within the limits of the inter-school mail system.

VDLC sponsored Gratitude Gathering



Join us in recognition of everyone who has helped us get through the past 2 years, especially those frontline folks who kept hospitals, schools, grocery stores etc. up and running. To say thank you for people who were out each day and to those who stayed home - all to keep us safer. This Gratitude Gathering will allow us to come together and be energized and inspired by some local heroes and heroines. We would love to light candles as the sun sets to the west of Jack Poole plaza - share some light at a time when the dark has taken up too much space! Watch this event space for updates on speakers and music. We've got this, together!

Facebook event: <https://fb.me/e/2VWffpUz1>

BCTF Annual General Meeting March 19-22, 2022

VESTA still has several spots available for representatives to attend the 2022 BCTF Annual General Meeting. The BCTF AGM is an excellent way to have input into the governance, direction and policy of the BCTF, as well as to represent your VESTA colleagues at the provincial level. Please complete the [CV here](#) or attend the March 8 General Meeting. The deadline for new delegates is March 9 so March 8 will be the last chance to be elected to attend.

The meeting is virtual and held during Spring Break, and many members report that the AGM is the best learning experience they've had as a teacher. Consider joining us and email any of us at the office if you have questions, or simply complete and submit the [CV form](#).

Climate Education and Awareness K-3 resources

Members with primary teaching experience and a background in developing learning materials are invited to apply for this opportunity to co-develop K-3 climate education materials in collaboration with the Climate Action Secretariat, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. View the [online posting](#) for more details. The deadline to apply is Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

Updates to COVID Provincial Health Orders

The Deputy Minister's Bulletin often includes information helpful to the big picture changes to the health orders. You can find it here:

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/bulletin/20220215/special-bulletin---feb-15---remove-dec-addendum.pdf>

Yesterday afternoon, Dr. Henry announced planned changes to public health orders over the coming days and weeks focused on resuming various types of activities and events. More information is available at

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022HLTH0053-000219>.

BCCDC will be rescinding its December 2021 public health Addendum for K-12 schools on Friday, February 18, 2022. As such, the Ministry's [Addendum – Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#) will also be rescinded at end of day, this Friday.

K-12 schools will return to the prevention measures as outlined in the [Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings](#). The most significant impacts on schools will be the return to in person gatherings, no limits on visitors, and spectators at school events. There are no limits on gatherings that involve staff, students, and necessary volunteers; indoor capacity limits at 50% or 50 people (whichever is greater) for events that involve school community beyond staff, students, and volunteers (e.g., parents, general public audience).

Access to Services (COVID-19) Act Q&A

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/bulletin/20220215/access-to-services-revisedqaandas.pdf>

Black History Month resources and stories

Here are a few more resources to consider incorporating into your lessons as we continue to acknowledge and celebrate Black Canadian history this February:

- [“What Happened to Vancouver’s Black Neighbourhoods?”](#) If you can’t visit in Vancouver, use Google Maps to show students how the area has changed and discuss the impact on the Black community through various lens
- [Places That Matter: Hogan’s Alley](#)
- check out these children's [books](#) for students of all ages
- find more [resources](#) and [stories](#) on bctf.ca.

Do you have a story, lesson, or resource you would like to share? Please contact hkelley@bctf.ca and kchong@bctf.ca.

BCTF New teachers' Conference May 14, 2022

Registration is now open for the 2022 New Teachers' Conference: "Creating Connections" to be held in May. This is a great opportunity to connect with other TTOCs from around the province to share strategies, information and to identify and problem solve the challenges.

There are two local sources of funds to support your attendance - School and site-based members can be reimbursed from the school based VTF/VSB Joint Conference Fund, and for those without site-based work, you can contact VESTA for reimbursement for registration fees.



New Teacher Survey through BC Teachers' Council

Thank you to Vancouver Early Career teachers who answered our call to participate in the survey in droves! We are currently the district with the highest response rate for New Teachers and that will help alert the BCTC to the concerns being faced by Early Career Teachers.

There is still time to complete the survey if you have not yet done so.

The BC Teachers' Council is looking to learn more about the experience of educators as they transition from their teacher education programs into the teaching profession. Teachers who completed an approved BC teacher education program between 2015 and 2020 are invited to participate in the BC New Teacher Survey. [Click here](#) for more details and to complete the survey.

This survey is a follow-up to the initial BCTC New Teacher 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.



Joanne Sutherland
President
joanne@vesta.ca

Allison Jambor
Vice President
allison@vesta.ca

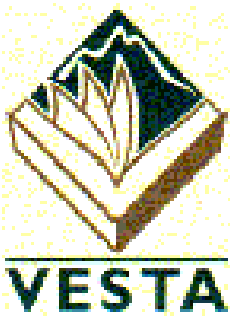
Darren Tereposky
Vice President
darren@vesta.ca

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

Executive Committee Meeting

February 22, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84977822885>

Meeting ID: 849 7782 2885

Passcode: 192466

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

Social Justice & Solidarity Committee Meeting

March 1, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84776052882>

Meeting ID: 847 7605 2882

Passcode: 100963

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.