

VESTA WEEKLY

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

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Welcome Back – Known and unknowns

On behalf of all of us at the VESTA office and the VESTA Executive, we want to welcome you back to school, despite the uncertainties and continuous flexing of expectations. We hope that your break allowed for time with family and friends as well as rest and recuperation from the stressful year.

VESTA is having regular discussions with the District and the BCTF is advocating strongly with the Ministry to address matters such as PPE provision, teacher workload, health and safety precautions, school density and instructional format.

As we saw in the PHO report on Tuesday, Dr. Bonnie Henry indicated a disinclination towards future Provincial Health Orders, preferring to leave decisions to businesses and districts. This means that there is a lack of consistent decision-making across districts and a great deal of speculation from members here as well as in other locals on social media. It's important to remember that until direction has been given by the district, we'll be waiting to see what the plan will be.

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Teachers are covered by a collective agreement. This means that no matter what decision the district makes, they still need to abide by the provisions that protect our workload, class size and composition limits. We continue to be entitled to weekly prep time and all other rights.

If you need to access the Vaccine Leave for the three hours, you need to book off in SFE under "Illness, Personal" and then email leaves@vsb.bc.ca your vaccination confirmation and the hours will be reimbursed to your sick leave bank.

BCPSEA has taken the position that this week is non-instructional time and that TTOCs need not be called. This is not the position of VESTA or the BCTF and practice seems to be mixed. When booking any absences, please continue to request a TTOC. VESTA continues to advocate for the provision of TTOCs for absences this week and throughout the school year.

Remember that our Collective Agreement has quarantine leave for any required self-isolation. If you are sick with COVID or any other illness, your sick leave is available. If you have a family member who is sick, all members have 5 days of immediate family member sick leave that come from your sick bank.

If you have run out of sick leave, remember that the Short Term Indemnity Plan provides additional benefits for members who need additional time off. You can apply for SIP through the BCTF for longer term illnesses, but also for intermittent leaves (a day off for a cold, for example) up to 5 days per year.

The following are some documents that provide additional information:

[Deputy Minister's Bulletin on 2022 Restart](#)
[VSB's Daily Health Assessment](#)

Please be advised that the BCTF is fighting hard for the following protections:

- Provision of N95s at school for students and staff and enforcement of mask-wearing
- Mitigation for sites without MERV-13 air filters
- Access to rapid testing for staff and students
- Contact tracing and sharing of information about school exposures and clusters
- Limits on school gatherings and virtual meetings at schools
- Revision of Daily Health Assessment Tool
- Limiting exposures by staggering lunch / recess / start and end times
- Keeping vaccination clinics open and prioritizing teachers for boosters

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #63

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

TTOC access to EI when work is unavailable

For TTOCs who do not have an active regular EI claim but are experiencing shortage of work, the eligibility criteria is as follows:

- 420 EI insurable hours accumulated in the previous 52 weeks or since your last EI claim, whichever period is shorter. (for TTOC, a full day of work is 9.1 EI insurable hours, so 46.2 equivalent days of full time work) which includes any work done in the previous 52 weeks where EI was deducted from your pay
- The EI applicant has had no work and no pay for seven consecutive days in the last 52 weeks – last day worked may be December 14 or earlier

CERB benefits ended in October 2021, but there is a Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit to limited workers of \$300 per week, but is only available when lockdown orders are in place and BC residents are currently not eligible, however, there is a possibility that this may become available for the week of January 2 to 8. We will advise when information becomes available.

BCTF Teacher Newsmag spotlight on Adult Education

As you all know, VESTA includes a diverse sublocal of Adult Educators – similar to our neighbouring locals Burnaby, Coquitlam, Surrey and others. The articles highlight some of the inequities that our Adult Educator colleagues face in their work around the province. It is especially important to understand the different issues of members as we prepare for bargaining. Please take the time to read the article and others at https://issuu.com/teachernewsmag/docs/jan_feb_2022_teacher_-_issuu

Payroll Information

An extensive email was sent to all employees this week from Payroll. It was pretty dense, so we wanted to offer a bit more of an in-depth commentary on it. Some of the material contained in the email doesn't affect VESTA members, and some reminded us of other matters for you to consider.

Matters that may impact your take home pay:

- Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Employment Insurance (EI) deductions are determined as a percentage of your income, but there is also an annual maximum. This means that most members will have reached your maximum contributions prior to December 30. How this looks is that you will have fewer deductions nearer the end of the year, and you may notice that your pay is slightly less in the new year, due to those deductions being activated again.
- There is a small increase in the CPP contribution rates, which may also reduce your take home by a small amount.
- Members have the opportunity to elect to have more or less taxes taken off of your paycheque than required by your income. This would just mean more or less of a refund or taxes owing in the spring
- *if you are age 65 or older*, you may opt out of CPP contributions.
- *if you are age 64 or factor 88* you can [withdraw from paying the Long Term fee for BCTF SIP](#)

Filing your taxes for the year 2021

- School Supply Tax Credit Form – Teachers can claim tax credit when you spend personal income on school supplies. It is up to 15% of \$1,000 spent, and requires your administrator's signature. You can find additional information on what can be claimed at [CRA](#)
- You can receive your T4 electronically through the PeopleSoft employee self-service in mid-February



BCTF Annual General Meeting March 19 – 22nd

We still have positions for members to attend and vote at the 2022 BCTF Annual General Meeting. The meeting will likely be held virtually over 4 days, but confirmation of the format will be provided as soon as information about the COVID status is sufficient. VESTA members who are elected to attend will receive training and preparation for the meeting on an upcoming release day and attend sessions along with the VESTA delegation of 31 members. The BCTF AGM elects your provincial Executive Committee, sets the membership fee, manages the Short Term Disability Plan and sets policy for our public and internal direction. Please contact any of the Local Reps donna@vesta.ca, vanessa@vesta.ca, chloe@vesta.ca, karine@vesta.ca if you have questions about attending, and [complete the CV](#). Deadline for applications is January 11 and can be found on the VESTA website.

Change of Salary Category.

If you have completed requirements for reclassification of salary category (15 credits, Masters Degree, etc), the deadline for submitting your application form and proof of that change must be submitted to the Board before January 31st in order for the classification to be effective retroactive to January 1st. For the remainder of this school year, any change in salary application takes effect the 1st day of the following month. Learn more in Article B.25.4 of the Collective Agreement!

January 25 Teacher Teaching on Call Zoom Gathering

The BCTF is hosting an upcoming virtual gathering for teachers in their first five years of teaching. The session is to share ideas and strategies with colleagues around the province with English and French breakout rooms. You can find information about joining the gathering [here](#).

BCTF Opportunities for Members

BIPOC members for BCTF 2050 – this provincial team explores professional and union experiences of early career teachers who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. Participation is open to members who began teaching after December 31, 2011. The Deadline is January 17, 2022.

AGM Ombudspersons – apply to the four vacancies for members who assist with member-to-member complaints during the AGM related to harassment at the meeting.

Women’s virtual Wellness event – this day + evening event facilitates connection between members who identify as women to share and learn together.



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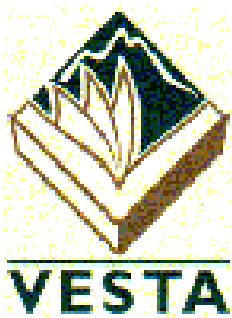
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Dates to Remember

Executive

Committee Meeting

January 11, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87113721143>

Meeting ID: 871 1372 1143

Passcode: 189068

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

TTOC

Committee Meeting

January 12, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83842159385>

Meeting ID: 838 4215 9385

Passcode: 716777

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

Health & Safety

Committee Meeting

January 12, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85684716953>

Meeting ID: 856 8471 6953

Passcode: 645009

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

Aboriginal Ed

Committee Meeting

January 13, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89638651543>

Meeting ID: 896 3865 1543

Passcode: 624183

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.