



Stronger Together

October 22, 2020

VESTA Weekly

Topics Worth Talking about! Please read and discuss with your colleagues

Recording and Reporting Failures to Fill and Loss of Service

The shortage of TTOCs has created significant challenges at the school level by increasing teacher workload, loss of service to students and the closing of school-based learning centres. VESTA needs your help in tracking the number of unfilled vacancies in your school.

We ask that you maintain a list at your school of the names and dates when there is an unfilled absence and record the impact on your school and students using [this fillable PDF form](#). Please email it to jody@vesta.ca on a weekly basis so we can collate and assess the district impact. Additional TTOCs need to be hired and provided a safe workplace!

Remember that if your prep is missed due to reassignment of teaching staff, it has to be made up within the week, as per [Article D.4 of the Collective Agreement](#).

Health and Safety Provisions in the Ministry and VSB documents

VESTA has produced two documents to support Health and Safety Reps and all members in ensuring the health and safety protections are being enforced.

[Health and Safety Index](#) – This document, already available to H&S reps identifies quick reference points for the protections teachers can expect in their schools. Use this document to easily find the details in these two documents ([VSB](#) and [Ministry](#) plans), which need to be read together. If there is disparity between the two, the stronger provision applies.

[Health and Safety Checklist](#) – This document contains a checklist of key protections and requirements and is cross referenced with WorkSafe, the Ministry H&S plan and the District H&S plan. Members can use this to ensure that H&S protections are in place and continue to be enforced.

What to expect if there is a confirmed case of COVID in your school community

VESTA has developed a [new resource](#) that can be shared to support members in preparing, should there be a confirmed case of COVID in your school community. VESTA and the BCTF both have taken the position that communication and contact tracing are insufficient and require greater teacher input and participation.

Current practice follows the guidelines set out by the Health Authority and unnecessarily restricts the timing and depth of information provided to school staff. Advocacy for change will continue at the district and provincial level, but please share the above resource with your colleagues to help prepare members, should this event occur.

New Federal EI COVID related benefits

There are three new COVID-specific EI benefits that are intended to apply to members who do not have any sick leave available, have used their sick leave, do not have sufficient hours for an EI claim, or are not, themselves, sick.

Please read the information in [the comparison chart](#) to determine if these new leaves are beneficial to you or any of your colleagues. PLEASE NOTE that these benefits are taxable and that anyone claiming them will need to claim and pay taxes on them, which will be due in the coming year. They include the Canada Recovery Benefit, the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit, and the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit.

Please consider the use of these leaves carefully and ensure you have a plan for tax repayment in place. The BCTF also has an [Assistance Society](#) available to all members, and provides limited support to members in financial crisis.

Remember to vote in Saturday's Provincial Election

Regardless of how tepid you may be feeling towards the current government, please remember that whichever party is elected, they will have a significant impact not only on the ongoing response to COVID in schools, but also on the next round of teacher bargaining. Please review the [information that the VESTA Political Action Committee has collated](#) on your behalf to support you in making good choices at the poll on Saturday. Teachers VOTE!

Teacher Collaborative Inquiry Funds 2020-2021

Last dates for applications for Teacher Collaborative Inquiry Funds for this school-year: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2020 and TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2020.

Every VESTA member, full or part-time, K-12 and Adult Ed, contract or TTOC can join up to two (2) inquiry groups and apply for \$200.00 per member per inquiry group per year for purchasing professional resources and meeting outside instructional time. You can access both the [Guidelines](#) and [Application](#) on the VESTA website. Please note that the funds may not be used to purchase classroom supplies, equipment or technologies.

Start by gathering together a number of colleagues interested in exploring a question around pedagogy. Plan and submit your application form to your school/site based Professional Development Chair. It will then be forwarded with the necessary signatures to the Joint District Pro-D Committee.

Employee Safety Plans

Please remember that Employee Safety Plans are different from student safety plans and are required in all places where there is a risk of workplace injury. The employee safety plans are kept in the school files in the office, but there should be a one-page summary that is shared widely with any staff that are or potentially could come in contact with the student in question. There is nothing confidential in the summary page and it should be shared thoughtfully within the school kept in the daybook of the teacher in order to support TTOCs or any other staff working with the class.

Reminder of Collegial Relationships

Please remember that our colleagues who work as SSSWs, Engineers and Custodians, Supervision Aides are all facing challenges similar to our own, with regards to workplace safety and challenges with information and resources. If you have concerns about any school health and safety processes or access to hand sanitizer or other material supports, please use the structure of your Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee to resolve the issue.

Meeting Dates:

NOTE

Please sign into the meeting using the link below. Please sign in early if the platform is new to you as the meeting will begin promptly at 4:00 pm.

Use of video is optional, but please rename your profile to show your first and last name and school name.

<p>Health & Safety Committee Meeting October 26 Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/98676230795?pwd=b2YyZ25QR3ZRNldTNGNKeKJSNnNadz09 Meeting ID: 986 7623 0795 Passcode: 954667 Dial by your location +1 778 907 2071 Canada</p>	<p>Executive Committee Meeting October 27 Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/91068787632?pwd=YWxLT1laQ1RCUWdWRDFXMiFleEdRQT09 Meeting ID: 910 6878 7632 Passcode: 264364 Dial by your location +1 778 907 2071 Canada</p>	<p>Professional Issues Committee Meeting October 28 Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/91406894941?pwd=d2ZjN29lSUQwYS9oV204OVdKSzI0dz09 Meeting ID: 914 0689 4941 Passcode: 497516 Dial by your location +1 778 907 2071 Canada</p>	<p>Teachers Teaching on Call Committee Meeting October 29 Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/93253662344?pwd=TFkvZGhzbVZDZmx5bk8rWTVs1Indz09 Meeting ID: 932 5366 2344 Passcode: 419021 Dial by your location +1 778 907 2071 Canada</p>
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VESTA

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