

VESTA WEEKLY

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



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Happy International Women's Day

March 8th is International Women's Day and at VESTA we would like to wish everyone a wonderful day and thank you for all the work you do, paid and unpaid, that contributes to our society in so many ways.

Teachers are predominantly women, and even more so at the elementary level. We hope you take some time to celebrate yourself, the women in your life and women across the globe.

This year's International Women's Day theme is '**breaking the bias**' and it's about working towards a world free of stereotypes and discrimination that is diverse, equitable and inclusive. If you are not a member already, you might want to consider joining the Anti-Oppressive Educators' Collective, the AOEC, a BCTF PSA (<https://www.aoec.ca>) who work throughout the year to break down bias and reflect on bringing anti-oppression into teaching and into our hearts and minds.

The Vancouver and District Labour Council is offering a free virtual event from 6-7pm on IWD March 8th. Here is the information: **March 08, 2022 at 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM PST.**

The Vancouver District Labour Council Women's Committee invites you to our annual **International Women's Day** event on Tuesday, March 8th, from 6:00 pm-7:00pm. This year's virtual event is free to attend, and the topic is "**Truth and Reconciliation: Paddles UP- Getting Ready**".

This event will include music, MMIWG2S poetry, and canoe teachings-paddling forward with active allyship. Presenters are Delhia Nahanne: composer, vocal and cultural advisor from the Nisga'a First Nation and Squamish First Nation. Shelley Saje Ricci: Indigenous activist, educator and cultural advocate for K-12, union education, as well as Cree, Mohawk, and Metis from Treaty 6 Territory.



Contacting the District Anti-Racism and Diversity Resource Teacher

Hello everyone, my name is Nassim Elbardouh, and I am the District Resource Teacher (DRT) for Anti-racism and Diversity.

The Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, and a significant increase in racially motivated hate crimes have exposed and heightened long existing racial and socio-economic inequities in our communities. As always, our students are looking to us to help them understand the world around them. I hope to contribute to these efforts by helping you in whatever capacity I can. The key areas I can help with include:

- Promoting/supporting implementation of anti-racism and diversity education in classrooms
- Developing and facilitating presentations, training, and workshops
- Increasing staff ability to infuse diversity and anti-racism education into the curriculum
- Accessing resources/presenters
- Working alongside school and district teams when responding to racist incidents.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Provincial Bargaining prepares to launch

Tomorrow is the end of the pilot local bargaining timeline, and local tables around the province will be wrapping up discussions and some locals will be trying the new local dispute resolution mechanism.

The Provincial Bargaining Team has been working to develop objectives consistent with the direction from members across the province, and the BCTF Executive Committee will be reviewing their work and providing additional feedback next week. Please make sure your contact information is up to date as communications from the BCTF will be increasingly focused on bargaining in the coming months.

Apology and correction for last week's VESTA Weekly banner image

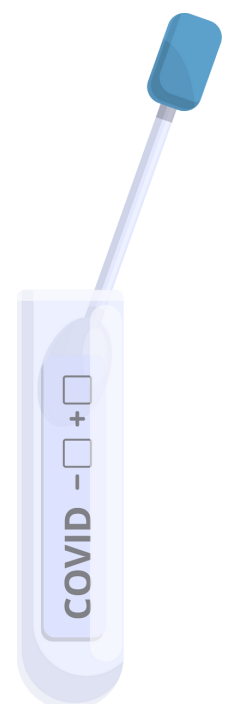
As we move forward in our learning about how to express solidarity and support, sometimes mistakes are made. We apologize for the image at the top of last week's VESTA Weekly, which included the Russian translation of the words "Teach in Peace" translated into Russian language, but not to Ukrainian. The image was borrowed from our partner organization, Education International, and we understand that the erasure of the Ukrainian language on this image was experienced as a conflation of Russian and Ukrainian cultures, which are unique and different.

The phrase, translated into Ukrainian, is "Навчайде в дусі миру".

Rapid Testing at Home

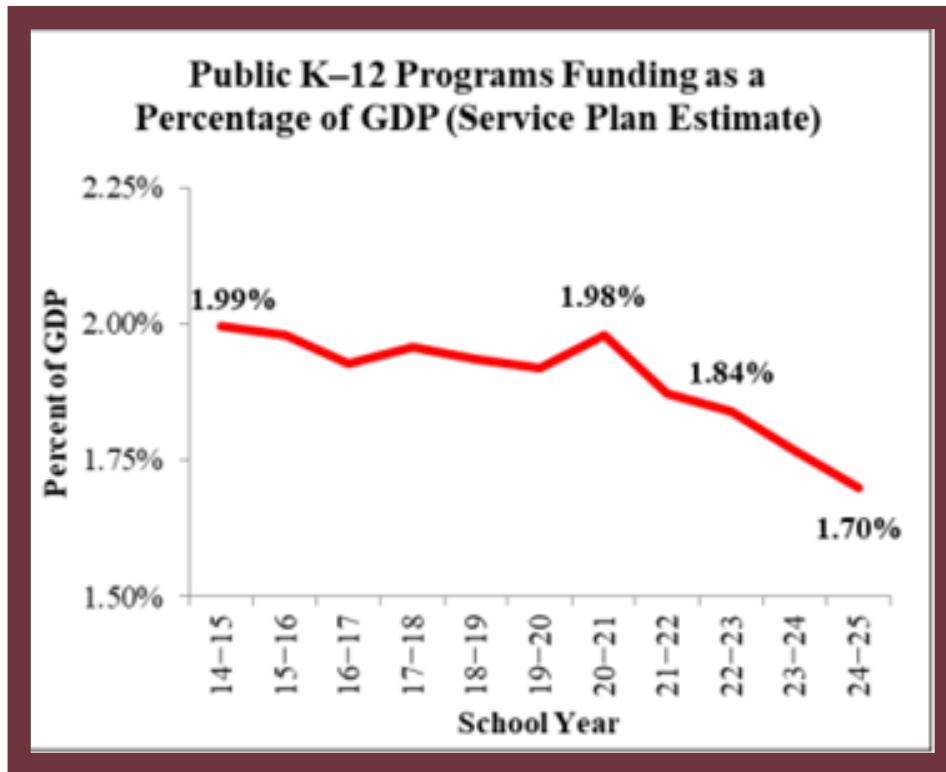
Health Canada issued some safety information in relation to the handling and storage of rapid antigen tests. Health Canada is advising that tests be kept out of the reach of children and pets. The information posted by Health Canada can be found here:

<https://recalls-rappels.canada.ca/en/alert-recall/rapid-antigen-test-kits-and-potential-exposure-hazardous-substances>



Budget 2022 – same old, same old for BCED

As we head into bargaining, it appears that we will be facing many of the same challenges as in budgets past. In the context of high inflation, we see the overall percentage of education funding as a percentage of GDP decrease, remaining well under 2%.



In January 2022, the Canadian Consumer Price Index reached 5.1%, its highest since September 1991. This year's budget assumes inflation adjustment of 2.9%, but inflation has been identified as above this number, meaning that the increases to the budget barely cover inflation and projected enrolment increases.

As of April 1, 2022, the Ministry of Education will be renamed the "Ministry of Education and Child Care", with the transfer of responsibility of childcare from the Ministry of Child and Family Development.

The messaging touts a \$960 million "lift" to the Ministry of Education and Child Care budgets for 2022-25, but this is mostly due to the projected increase in student enrolment and the new childcare funding associated with childcare's inclusion in the new Ministry. Vancouver is anticipating decreased enrolment in the coming year.

The Ministry is piloting a "Seamless Day" daycare plan that would see schools taking on childcare for school-aged children. There is one school in Vancouver, Strathcona, that has been identified for the pilot, but that has not yet been activated. The BCTF and VESTA have concerns about the introduction of childcare into public school spaces and are working with CUPE to create a strong position on our professional and union rights.



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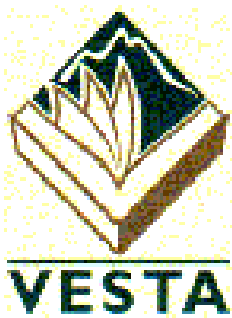
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Dates to Remember

Health & Safety Committee Meeting

March 3, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84419626146>

Meeting ID: 844 1962 6146

Passcode: 391392

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

General Meeting/ Staff Rep Assembly

March 8, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

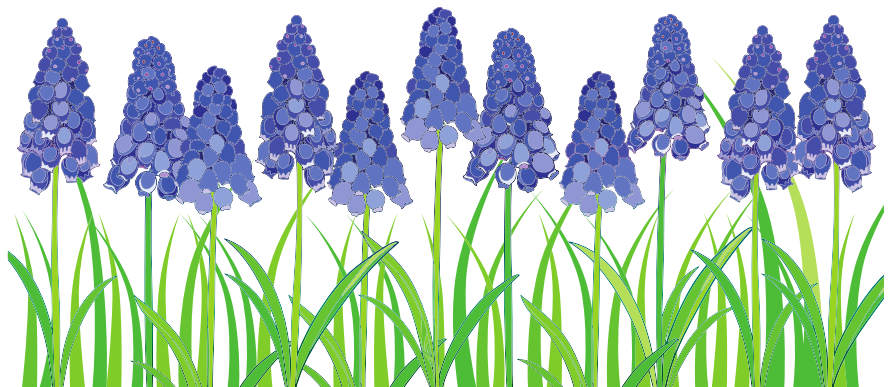
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83888809879>

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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.