

# VESTA WEEKLY

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

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June is

## Indigenous History Month

Honouring the history, diversity, and resilience of Indigenous peoples



Lauren Hutchison

## Indigenous History Month

"As educators, it's important to ask if you and your students know the stories behind the mountains you look at through your classroom window from Monday to Friday. Do students know that the shortcut they take to school might be located on top of a sacred burial ground? For educators in Vancouver, do you know the story of the two sister mountains? They are not the lion mountains, as many so incorrectly refer to them. Do students know about Camossung (who Cammosun College is named after), who she was and where her spirit still lives to this day? Do you know about Coyote Rock in the Shuswap Nation territories? Do you know about the significance of the salmon run to Indigenous Peoples going back to time immemorial? Or the story of the Trout Children in Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc? If not, I would recommend you learn alongside your students.

Invite Indigenous knowledge holders from the local community to share those oral histories and stories, so the next time a student looks out the school window they might see a significant landmark from a different viewpoint; one that will give them the tools to be able to work alongside Indigenous nations to protect the lands and waters as they have been doing for millennia. This act of respecting Indigenous traditional knowledge as equal to, and possessing teachings absent from, scientific knowledge will help to also eliminate racism and stereotypes."

– **Katlia Lafferty, Dene/Cree Metis from Northwest Territories, currently residing on Lekwungen territory**

## **Online Pension Seminars**

Member attendance at the online pension seminars on Wednesdays in May has been very good and increasing. Members have also expressed a desire for more dates.

Therefore, for the next five Tuesdays, starting May 31 and ending June 28, the BCTF will be presenting an online pension seminar to help members learn about their pension plan, their pension options, and factors to consider when planning for retirement.

Hopefully members who were not able to attend the previous seminars on Wednesdays will be able to attend one of these meetings. July pension seminar dates will be announced closer to the end of June.

All seminars are at 4 pm Pacific time and via Zoom. Please include the Zoom link below when you communicate this information to your members. [This is the zoom link](#)

Please note that the Teachers' Pension Plan website is an excellent source of information about your pension and can assist you in estimating your pension at different potential retirement dates. The myaccount option is very useful. You can now book a 30 minute one-on-one phone appointment with a trained TPP representative. Appointments are for members who will be retiring within the next year and have a pension estimate generated within the last year.

You can sign up for this appointment [here](#).

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## **Provincial Bargaining**

Please continue to check the BCTF portal for bargaining updates. As you know, our collective agreement expires on June 30, 2022. You'll have seen the challenges that our public sector colleagues have been facing. After years of being on the frontlines of the pandemic, providing supports to our communities, teachers and other public sector workers have been the driving force behind our recovery.

It's important to keep in mind that teacher bargaining doesn't exist in a vacuum, and while discussions at the table are currently productive and focused on our objectives, the messaging and funding from government is not sufficient to provide the salary and workload improvements we need and deserve. Please stay up to date on the progress of bargaining, as it will assist you to make good decisions in the weeks and months ahead. We expect increasing pressure to be brought to bear on the provincial table by our Federation of Labour colleagues and our solidarity will almost certainly be required.

## **Ministry Committee Opportunity**

The BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) is seeking eight members to work on a Ministry of Education and Child Care committee that will be tasked with developing policy guidelines and ongoing teacher learning materials to support the implementation of the new K-12 Reporting Policy Framework.

This working group will include teachers interested in further developing policy guidelines and teacher learning materials to support teachers, administrators and parents. The ministry is seeking representation that includes Indigenous teachers, Alt Ed and Adult Ed teachers, DL or Hybrid teachers, French speakers.

Meetings will be held June – August 2022 with an honourarium of \$300 for every 7 hours of work OR have TTOC coverage provided for time out of the classroom. Deadline is Monday, June 6. Application [here](#).

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## **VESTA Appreciation Event**

June 16 is this year's VESTA Appreciation Event, where we host a celebration of all members who dedicated time to supporting VESTA members through representation on VESTA committees or Board Committees on behalf of VESTA. This year's event will be held at Trout Lake Community Centre with food and the opportunity to recognize and appreciate all of the ways that members contribute.

Please RSVP to [lori@vesta.ca](mailto:lori@vesta.ca) by June 9th.

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## **Bill C-8 and Teacher Tax filing for 2021**

This Bill has implications on some teacher tax filings for 2021, and some teachers and educators who claim Line 46900 – Eligible educator school supply tax credit for their 2021 tax return may experience delays with their Notices of Assessment (and subsequent refunds). Bill C-8 is now at Third Reading in the House of Commons, it should go to the Senate soon for the Senate half of the legislative process required to achieve Royal Assent.

The CTF/FCE has raised this issue and is actively pursuing resolution at a national level. The Federation is also advocating to ensure that BC MPs have an awareness of the impact of these delays.

Teachers impacted or with questions should contact CRA regarding this issue, especially if experiencing hardship as a result, at 1-800-959-8281. We will provide additional information as it becomes available!

## **VESTA Retirement Dinner**

Retirement is one of the most significant choices teachers make, and something to be celebrated! We are so honoured to have worked with you in the years prior to your retirement, and are so grateful for the contributions you made during your career, both to your students and public education, but also to your colleagues and your union. Whether you were here for a short or long while, we are grateful that the COVID restrictions are preparing to allow us to gather, to honour VESTA retirees, and to look back and forward in time, together.

Thank you for understanding the necessary delays in VESTA celebrating your retirement with you, and for your patience as we work out the details.

### **In Person Appreciation**

Now that restrictions have lifted for in-person gatherings, we are pleased to offer dates and an alternative option that allows us to acknowledge those of you who do not wish to attend an in-person dinner.

VESTA will be hosting two in-person dinners at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club at Jericho Beach, as per our tradition, and offering those dates to members who retired in 2020, 2021 or 2022. Due to our desire to keep density low, and to ensure that we can meet safely, we will be offering a choice of dates, Monday, June 20, or Monday, June 27, until such a time that we reach occupancy maximums. Register early in order to ensure your preferred date is still available.

Please note that if uptake on in-person dinner is low, we may need to combine the evenings, further information will be provided, should this be the case.

### **Alternative Appreciation.**

If attending in person is a challenge for you, or those dates are not available, you may opt for a second choice, to receive a \$200 gift card for your choice of restaurants. Our hope is that this will broaden our ability to recognize members within your comfort zone. If you choose not to attend in person on June 20 or 27, please indicate your preference of gift card in your RSVP and we will forward it to you as soon as possible.

The two choices for gift cards are:

**[The Sequoia Group](#)** (The Sandbar, Carderos, Seasons in the Park, or Teahouse in Stanley Park.

**[Recipe Unlimited Group](#)** (19 restaurants including The Keg, Montanas BBQ and Bar, Original Joe's, Bier Markt, The Landing and more)

Regardless of your choice, please reply as soon as possible, and before June 7th, to **[lori@vesta.ca](mailto:lori@vesta.ca)**. Make sure to include your preferred date, if attending in person, your choice of gift card, if opting for the alternative option, and ensure we have your mailing address.

## VESTA Special General Meeting June 6 – 4pm

Due to the requirement for specific wording, we have called a one-item Special VESTA General Meeting on June 6 at 4pm, to be held virtually. The VESTA GM and AGM have approved the purchase of our new building at 2238 Yukon, but prior to removal of subjects, our by-laws require a Special Resolution through a Special General Meeting.

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86050071300>

Meeting ID: 860 5007 1300

Passcode: 599034

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

The wording will be as follows:

**WHEREAS** the Society may from time to time borrow money, mortgage its property to secure repayment of such money, and enter into security agreements as it deems necessary and as the Directors are of the reasonable and honest opinion that it is in the best interests of the Society that it borrow \$3,600,000.00 (the "**Principal Amount**") from Community Savings Credit Union (the "**Lender**");

**RESOLVED AS A SPECIAL RESOLUTION** that:

1. The Society is authorized to grant to the Lender the first priority mortgage, assignment of rents, general security agreement, environmental indemnity agreement, and assignment of fire insurance (collectively the "**Security**"), pursuant to the commitment letter dated May 19, 2022, as amended from time to time issued by the Lender to the Society and accepted by the Society.
2. The Society is authorized to grant the Security and all such other documents, including all collateral security relating to the Security, necessary to give effect to this resolution or as may be required by the Lender.

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## Update on TTOC Paid Personal Illness and Injury Leave

After fighting against exclusions, some TTOCs are now eligible for 5 days of paid sick leave per calendar year (January to January). There are some details becoming clear, some of which we are still working on with the district and BCPSEA:

- an employee must have worked for an employer for 90 consecutive days (regardless of callout)
- district sick leave must be used before accessing the ESA days
- pay is an "average day's pay" calculated by averaging individual salary over last 30 days, divided by the number of days worked

The employer's position is currently that these days can only be accessed if TTOC work has already been accepted for that day. This is something we do not agree is reasonable.

If you are denied access to this leave, please send the details to the VESTA Office!

## Metis Hunters killed in Alberta

Teachers will remember the unjust killing of Colten Boushie, an Indigenous man in Saskatchewan, who was murdered for “trespassing”, and the subsequent acquittal of the white farmer who killed him. A recent case in Alberta reminds us of the racism inherent in the judicial system and also in the media. News reports identify the murderers in sympathetic ways, and using racist stereotypes to justify violence against, in this case, unarmed Metis hunters.

Please take the time to consider the ways that our unconscious bias might allow certain understandings to thrive, unchecked, and how these assumptions connect to inequitable access to the justice system, fair representation in the media, and human rights protections.

The BCTF provides a number of resources and teacher supports to assist teachers with understanding some of the ways that colonialism in our structures and our own learning can manifest, and investigating respectful educational practices. You can read more [here](#).



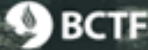
**Learning is connected to land, culture, and spirit.**  
We—the two-legged, four-legged, finned and feathered, plants and rocks—are all related.  
We must always practice reciprocity through acts of giving and receiving.

**Learning honours our Ancestors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Descendants.**  
It respects and embraces ceremony, protocol, and teachings that are connected to the sacred medicines including tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass.  
Important teachings emerge through stories.

**Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspective of others in our communities.**  
The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.

**Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility.**  
It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.

**ABORIGINAL  
WAYS OF  
KNOWING  
AND BEING**

 BCTF

Mask, carving and Raven moon artwork: Carl Stromquist | Design and layout: Jennifer Kennedy | Printed by the BC Teachers' Federation



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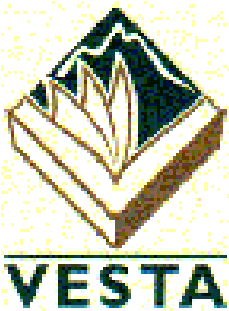
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## Dates to Remember

### Special General Meeting

June 6th, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

#### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86050071300>

Meeting ID: 860 5007 1300

Passcode: 599034

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



### Health & Safety

#### Committee Meeting

June 6th, 2022 @ 4:00 PM (following the

Special General Meeting)

#### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82368447979>

Meeting ID: 823 6844 7979

Passcode: 391392

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



### Executive

#### Committee Meeting

June 7th, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

#### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88095870741>

Meeting ID: 880 9587 0741

Passcode: 307159

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.