

VEAES WEEKLY

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



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Happy New Year, colleagues!

We hope the summer break filled your buckets and that your first few days are going as smoothly as possible. There are always moving parts at the beginning of the school year and this year is no exception. We have heard that there is a large number of students that are being placed in schools this week that will require reorganization of classes, which can be stressful for members. We hope that you are working collectively to organize and use your union structures to problem-solve these emerging issues at your site.

If you are new to our union, we are so happy that you have joined us and trust that our colleagues are helping you navigate these early days. Please connect with the Staff Rep at your school, attend your site-based VEAES meeting, and come to our General Meeting & Staff Rep Assembly on Tuesday, September 20th to learn more about the important work of our union in improving our working conditions, which are our students' learning conditions. Together, we will continue to advocate for a more inclusive and safer public education system so we can meet the needs of all of our learners.

New Crew

Your new In-House team is looking forward to meeting with members, hearing your concerns and your triumphs, and advocating on your behalf with the employer. With a great mix of familiar and new faces, we are working together to represent all members and uphold our Collective Agreement rights.



Back Row: Eric Proulx, Marjorie Dumont, Darren Tereposky, Jody Polukoshko
Front Row: Karine Ng, Vanessa Lefebvre **Missing:** Rob McGowan

Name Change

After a few years of working on our new name, it is finally official and we've got the certificate to prove it. Now, we have to work on using it. The Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society, includes not only Elementary and Adult Educators, but also SLPS, counsellors, and school psychologists. The new name is a way to make our identity clearer and more inclusive of our membership. What is less clear and a topic of hot debate is the pronunciation of our new acronym, VEAES. It rhymes with 'days' and hopefully the more we use it, the more familiar it will become.

Our website and emails reflect our new name, so update your bookmarks & contacts. You can find us online at www.veaes.ca. Our email addresses for VEAES In-House team & staff, as well as our Executive Committee, will now have the @veaes.ca domain.

Witness Blanket by Carey Newman

Inspired by a woven blanket, this large-scale art installation by Carey Newman is made from pieces of history – hundreds of items reclaimed from residential schools, churches, government buildings, and other cultural structures all across Canada.

Contributions to the Witness Blanket were donated by residential school survivors and their families, band offices, friendship centres and governments. Other items were reclaimed from former residential school sites. Those responsible for the school system – churches and the Canadian federal government – have also donated pieces for this installation as a gesture towards reconciliation.

More than 800 items from 77 communities were gathered for this artwork. They include letters, photos, stories, books, clothing, art and fragments of buildings.

Please visit the Human Rights Museum online at <https://humanrights.ca/exhibition/the-witness-blanket>

Witness Blanket Teacher Guide

Learning about the residential schools and the experiences of survivors is essential. Teaching about the residential schools and the genocide of Indigenous peoples in Canada can be difficult for both teachers and students. This resource positions teachers as guides moving alongside students as they learn, empathize, and act together.

Link to the teacher guide <https://witnessblanket.ca/teacher-guide>

NEW UNION LEAVE request process on the VEAES website!

We are delighted to announce that the process for accessing union leave has been streamlined, and a new fillable PDF is available on the [VEAES website](#). Every time union leave is accessed, we need receipt from the member to square our budget and ensure that the proper account is being charged. Your help in ensuring that the form is submitted immediately will greatly assist in reducing unnecessary workload at the VEAES office.

When you book union leave, please continue to do so using Code 141 on SFE. On the day of your leave, please complete the online form and submit it to the VEAES office. You will need to include your name, school, date and reason for absence. It's best to wait until the day of the leave and then you can indicate at the same time whether the absence was filled with a TTOC.

For all union leaves, please remember that VEAES policy ensures that no service is lost to students as a result of union work. If you are absent, no matter what your role, VEAES will pay for you to be replaced. Increasingly, there are failures to fill. For your reference:

- If no TTOC is provided and you are directed back to your classroom, VEAES will not be charged and you can re-book the leave for a later date
- If no TTOC is provided and another teacher is pulled from their program to cover you, VEAES will be charged, and those funds deposited in your school flex account. Staff should make a recommendation through Staff Committee and book a TTOC for another day to replace the lost service to students (i.e. an additional day of resource for the day, an additional day of library)

Note: Due to the restructuring of the BCTF COVID grant, the ½ day Health and Safety Rep release will be discontinued for this school year.

Your work as union activists is so appreciated!

Provincial Bargaining

We know this is a busy time, but it is important to remember that we are still in provincial bargaining. Please put this on the agenda of your next school-based VEAES meeting to discuss with your colleagues, especially those new to the profession and this process. The uncertainty that surrounds contract negotiations can be stressful for some members, especially as they consider planning financially for the possibility of our own job action. We will have more information at our first General Meeting on Tuesday, Sept 20th. This meeting will be virtual and is open to all members. Please encourage your colleagues to attend the meeting and check out the bargaining updates on the [BCTF website](#) as they provide information about what has been happening at the provincial table.

Public Health Update

VEAES met yesterday with Drs. Patricia Daly and Alex Choi from Coastal Health to receive an update on the Public Health Guidance including recommendations for Schools and an update on Monkeypox.

You can read the update on [Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools and the Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings](#) online, but the general message we hear echoed through all of these venues is that the BCCDC continues to view schools as low risk for transmission. The requirements for COVID protocols and protections have been drastically reduced and there is no longer any additional guidance on cleaning of frequently touched surfaces, gatherings and events, space arrangements, or transportation. The rules regarding isolation and testing have also been significantly reduced.

VEAES [spoke in the media](#) about teachers' need for clear mandates around masks and protocols, as well as the need for cleaning to be maintained, especially in times when absences are not being replaced. Our advocacy, including through the BCTF at the provincial tables, is seeking clear advice and information for members, as well as an acknowledgment that not all members and students experience COVID risks the same way.

There continues to be an acknowledgment that mask wearing remains a personal choice, and we encourage members to work within their comfort zone and continue to use their school-based JOHS committee to address any concerns that you have. Please remember that vaccination is the single most important factor contributing to reduction of the severity of symptoms and the overall reduction of the transmission of COVID. Invites for the second booster are going out to the public now.

Please consider joining the VEAES Health and Safety Committee to be part of the conversation on COVID and related Health and Safety issues in schools.

Important deadline for Salary Change

If your salary category changed over the summer, you need to submit the Change of Salary Category form by September 30th in order for it to be retroactive to September 1st. Even if you are still waiting for your TQS request to process, it is important to submit this application before September 30th.

If the VSB does not receive the form prior to September 30th, the salary adjustment shall be effective the first day of the month following the filing of a successful application. To complete the application, you will need to submit your TQS change of category validation when you receive it. It does not go automatically to the VSB.

The procedure for change of salary category is Article B.25.4 (pg 55 in your [Collective Agreement](#)) The VSB has provided a detailed document that outlines the steps necessary to fill out the [VSB Change of Category form](#). Please consult it for further information.



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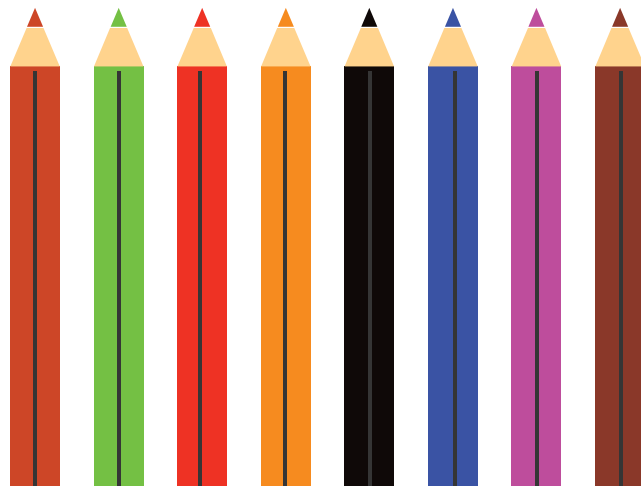
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Dates to Remember

Executive Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 13, 2022
4 pm at the VEAES Office

General Meeting/Staff Rep Assembly
Tuesday, September 20, 2022
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86526565971>
Meeting ID: 865 2656 5971
Passcode: 391392
Dial by your location
+1 778 907 2071 Canada



VEAES

The Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society is the union representing elementary teachers and adult educators working in public schools in Vancouver.