

# VEAES WEEKLY

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



## *Table of* CONTENTS

**Post- Collective Agreement Ratification - Page 2**

**Housing in Vancouver - Page 2**

**VTF Extended Health Plan Vote - Page 3**

**New Pay Scales and Retroactive Pay - Page 3**

**Adult Educators Bargaining Concluded - Page 3**

**Upcoming New Teachers' Zoom Gathering - Page 3**

**Food Safety Protocols - Page 4**

**Stewart Schon Health and Safety Award - Page 4**

**School Union Contact Lists - Page 4**

**Dates to Remember - Page 5**

## **Post- Collective Agreement Ratification**

After ratifying the K-12 Collective Agreement last week, members will almost certainly have some questions about next steps. While the salary increases will go some way to supporting members struggling financially, our new agreement will not address the concerns we hear daily in the office – legitimate and serious concerns about teacher workload, violence in schools, support for students with disabilities / disabled students, or the failures to fill.

Each of us needs to think seriously about our relationship to collective bargaining, as it is the only way to improve on our working conditions, and to start taking steps now to be in a position to support a strong bargaining team with a membership ready to stand up for our rights. There's an old saying among bargainers: "you don't get what you want – you get what you bargain!" and another, more recent meme that says "Bargaining – because it's extremely unlikely that your employer will be visited by three ghosts this holiday season".

VEAES has an active Working and Learning Conditions / Bargaining Committee that meets monthly to discuss teacher workload and make recommendations to the VEAES EC on matters connected to teacher workload and bargaining. Please consider attending, or appointing someone from your worksite to attend and collaborate with other passionate teachers. The next WLC/B meeting will be held on January 4th at 4pm.

## **Housing in Vancouver**

We know that many of our members commute to work from other areas of the Lower Mainland, in part due to the high housing costs and lack of available, affordable housing. We also know that district enrolment continues to decrease while other districts with more accessible housing grow the number of families and students in their communities. In the coming weeks, a motion will be debated at Vancouver City Hall to increase housing cooperatives and to reduce the barriers to rezoning and increased density.

We know teachers are committed to neighbourhood schools for all that they offer and provide – opportunities to live, work and learn in your home community, possibility of intergenerational family support, and the reduction of housing insecurity are all good for our students and ourselves. You can read more about the motion to increase non-profit, co-operative and social housing in Vancouver [here](#).

## **VTF Extended Health Plan Vote**

As you know, Vancouver teachers have our own, locally negotiated Extended Health Benefits (EHB) medical and dental Plan. In many ways, the local plan is superior to the provincial plan that the majority of locals have access to. Each time there are improvements to the provincial plan, VEAES and VSTA members are asked to vote to retain the local plan or join the provincial one.

There are benefits to each, for certain. However, it is extremely important that members are making an informed decision about the benefits plan, not only for the current time of their lives, but with consideration for their own and their family's future needs.

It's easy to compare dollar amounts across the two plans, but moving to the provincial plan will have significant impacts on restricted access to coverage for all medications, overall deductibles, and the requirement to use lowest cost alternative treatments. VTF will be creating and distributing information with comparisons between the two EHB plans and explanation of some of the more complex aspects in the new year.

## **New Pay Scales and Retroactive Pay**

The new Vancouver pay scales have been calculated and are now available on the [BCTF website](#). As the agreement was ratified November 30, the new pay takes effect December 1st, and your pay on both of the regular December paycheques will reflect the new salary increases.

Retroactivity for members who worked between July 1 and November 30 will be paid by the employer in an additional pay advice prior to December 30.

## **Adult Educators Bargaining Concluded**

Congratulations are in order to VEAES' Adult Educator members, whose bargaining team is recommending a tentative agreement to the membership.

Adult Educators should plan to attend the January 7th General Meeting to hear about the terms of the agreement. Voting will take place electronically in the days following the General Meeting.

## **Stewart Schon Health and Safety Award**

The Stewart Schon Health and Safety Award will be granted to a member or honorary associate member who has made an outstanding and sustained contribution to the health and safety of BCTF members. For more information about the award, nomination form and procedures, please visit [here](#). The deadline for nominations is January 31, 2023.

## **Food Safety Protocols**

In Spring, 2022, we heard through Health and Safety that new, rigorous standards would be required for food preparation and service in schools. Teachers raised the alarm and despite the efforts of your representatives on the District Health and Safety Committee, they have passed the buck to the VSB Food Service Division.

Without sufficient information, training, or support, teachers' efforts to include food in their teaching and learning has been significantly impacted. Teachers at Wolfe wrote a letter to the District about the gaps left when the Board requires training, but does not provide that training as inservice to employees. You can [read their letter here](#):

In particular, we continue to raise the issue with the district regarding the Foodsafe requirements and lack of district support – becoming foodsafe certified is not Professional Development!

## **Upcoming New Teachers' Zoom Gathering**

Teachers with five or fewer years of teaching experience are invited to join a Zoom gathering with their new teacher colleagues at 3:30 p.m. on January 17. This hourlong Zoom gathering will focus on land acknowledgments and give participants an opportunity for discussion in both French and English breakout rooms. Don't miss this great opportunity to connect with colleagues from across the province. Enter your email address [here](#) to receive the Zoom link.

## **School Union Contact Lists**

Members are reminded that VEAES sends out notices to our mailing lists of staff reps and committee reps to inform them of upcoming GMs, SRAs, and standing committee meetings.

Because not all sites have a full complement of all reps (i.e. Aboriginal Education, Communications, Health and Safety, Pro-D, Working and Learning Conditions and Bargaining, Social Justice and Solidarity, Staff Committee Chairperson), notices are sent to staff reps for **posting purposes only**, so members at each site are notified, should they decide to attend. This may result in some staff reps receiving multiple emails from the VEAES office, and we apologize for that.

It is, however, the only way we can be sure that communication is somehow getting through to each site. Please be reminded that staff reps are not expected to attend all committee meetings. A better solution is to invite colleagues to fill vacant roles in order to build capacity as a staff. Please encourage colleagues to step up by inviting them to fill out one of these forms: [Staff Reps](#), [Committee Reps](#).



**Jody Polukoshko**  
President  
[jody@veaes.ca](mailto:jody@veaes.ca)

**Marjorie Dumont**  
Vice President  
[marjorie@veaes.ca](mailto:marjorie@veaes.ca)

**Darren Tereposky**  
Vice President  
[darren@veaes.ca](mailto:darren@veaes.ca)

**Karine Ng**  
Vice President  
[karine@veaes.ca](mailto:karine@veaes.ca)

**Vanessa Lefebvre**  
Vice President  
[vanessa@veaes.ca](mailto:vanessa@veaes.ca)

**Eric Proulx**  
Vice President  
[eric@veaes.ca](mailto:eric@veaes.ca)

**Rob McGowan**  
AE President  
[rob@veaes.ca](mailto:rob@veaes.ca)

Office:  
604-873-8378  
Fax:  
604-873-2652  
[www.vesta.ca](http://www.vesta.ca)



## Dates to Remember

### **Aboriginal Education Committee Drum Making Workshop**

**Date:** Thursday, December 8, 2022

**Time:** 4:00 – 8:00 pm (approximately)

**Location:** Xpey' Elementary School (1950 E Hastings St)

**Cost:** at no cost to member



### **Professional Issues Committee Meeting**

December 12, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84161037122>

Meeting ID: 841 6103 7122

Passcode: 966071

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



### **Executive Committee Meeting**

December 13, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

#### **VEAES Office**

2915 Copmmercial Drive

Vancouver, BC V5N 4C8



VEAES

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