

VEAES WEEKLY

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



Table of CONTENTS

Memorial March for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit and Trans People - Page 2

BIPOC Affinity Gathering March 1, 4-6pm - Page 2

Black History Month - Page 2

Extended Health Benefits Plan Vote - Page 3

Spring Transfer Timeline - Page 4

New VEAES Building - Page 5

Dialogue Sessions on Racism - Page 5

VEAES Resource Teacher Task Force - Page 5

Upcoming BCTF Membership Survey - Page 6

Discrimination - Page 6

Kindergarten Survey - Page 7

Memorial March for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit and Trans People

VEAES members attended the 32nd annual Memorial March on February 14th to honour the lives of the many murdered and missing Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit, and trans people. Members of the Indigenous community shared their personal experiences and the impacts of their loved ones being murdered and those that are still missing. The message was clear – not enough is being done and there has been little improvement over the years despite ongoing and tragic disappearances. Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit, and trans people are murdered or experience violence at extremely disproportionate rates than their non-Indigenous counterparts. While bearing witness at these events is important, we need to be working collectively to do more. Please read the following [article](#) that provides a lot of information on the march and the cause.

BIPOC Affinity Gathering March 1, 4-6pm

We continue to build strength and capacity in our gatherings through talking circles and tactile activities to nourish our souls and foster healing amongst ourselves.

March 1 will see the completion of a weaving project, and some visioning to carry this community forward. All members who identify as Black, Indigenous and Persons of Colour are welcome to join. Please RSVP to karine@veaes.ca or marjorie@veaes.ca with any dietary restrictions by Monday Feb 27 so we can arrange for the proper amount of food!

Black History Month

As we move through Black History Month, we want to highlight different resources available to deepen our own learning about Black History in Canada, as that will translate into more learning for our students. The City of Vancouver has created a [Black History Month page](#) on their website. There is some great, local information on it, along with links to other resources, like [Massey Book's Black History Month Reading List](#). The work we do this month really helps to weave Black History into our teaching throughout the school year. As we are all at different stages of our anti-oppression journey, it is really important to connect with colleagues to keep us moving forward toward equity for all of our students.



Extended Health Benefits Plan Vote

Reminder for members that the vote to remain in the local VTF Extended Benefits Plan or to join the Standardized Provincial Plan is taking place virtually on February 27 and 28.

***IMPORTANT* the February 22 meeting originally scheduled at Tupper Secondary will now be held virtually on the zoom platform at the following link:**

Topic: EHB Voting meeting
Time: Feb 22, 2023 4:00 PM
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85463048107>
Meeting ID: 854 6304 8107
Passcode: 391392
Dial by your location
+1 778 907 2071 Canada

Monday night, we held an information session at which Pacific Blue Cross and the VSB Insurer took questions on the Standardized Plan and our local plan. You can watch the recording of that meeting [here](#). Questions yielded the following answers:

- The limits on the provincial plan cannot be exceeded with a doctor's note
- Only medications on the Blue Rx list will be covered
- The paramedical limits will not increase without being bargained (i.e. will not increase with practitioner fees).
- Pacific Blue Cross can require members to use lower-cost alternatives prior to being considered for more expensive medication prescribed by a doctor. There are no across-the-board timelines for how long a medication has to fail before the prescribed medication will be approved. There would be a 1 year transition period for members who are currently on a non-Blue Rx medication.
- If a member is currently on a more expensive medication that is working for them, they may be required to change to a lower-cost alternative, if that hadn't been tried first.
- The cost to members of the switch in premiums, and for TTOCs who pay the full cost was not provided.
- Moving to the provincial plan will not have an impact on dental or life insurance provided in our current collective agreement.
- Provision of drug card results in lower dispensing and service fees (and also limits for coverage)
- Adjudication of approval of drugs that are not the lowest cost alternative are determined by cost and PBC research / experience, not your doctor

Continued on Page 4

Continued from Page 3

Due to space challenges, we have had to move next week's union-led information session virtually. We hope that this will result in increased participation, and that members attending will come not only with their questions, but also ready to discuss this important decision.

You can find out more at the PBC website: www.pac.bluecross.ca/teachers and <https://www.pac.bluecross.ca/bluerx> and compare plans at www.bcpseabenefits.ca and the information provided in [last week's communications](#).

Spring Transfer Timeline

The timelines for Spring Transfer this year have been provided to schools, and you can find it online [here](#).

There are no Consultant or Mentor vacancies for the upcoming year.

Important upcoming dates to remember:

March 15 at 4:30PM is the deadline to commit to a transfer as per E.21.12. Please be mindful that there is no longer a "B" category, so committing to a transfer does not result in increased priority for posting. It should only be used by members who want to make certain that they will not return to their current site in the following year. In practice, this means that if a member commits to a transfer, and is not successful in the Spring Transfer Process, they will be placed in a position commensurate with their FTE.

March 31 at 4:30PM is the deadline for:

- applications of leave of one year or longer beginning in September 2023
- requests to increase FTE at your current school made to the principal using the Request for Increase / Change

May 31 at 4:30PM is the deadline for retirement notice to qualify for the Early Retirement Incentive Plan

June 1 or earlier is when the Board is required to provide surplus letters, if any.

June 6 is when the first round of continuing and temporary vacancies are posted.

June 14 is when placements begin for unassigned continuing employees (Category C teacher)

Other dates and relevant information are included in the full document on the [VEAES website](#) and available at your school

New VEAES Building

At long last, the city permit process is drawing to a close and it looks as though work will begin on our new office site in the coming weeks. VEAES is looking forward to our relocation at 2238 Yukon Street. Due to permitting delays and increasing cost of building materials and labour, VEAES finance and building committees are working hard to ensure that the transition moves ahead in a sustainable and efficient manner.

Watch this space for updates!



Dialogue Sessions on Racism

The newly created BCTF Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Office (ARAOO) is undertaking a systemic review of racism within the Federation. The [dialogue sessions](#), conducted by the ARAOO, included in the systemic review of racism within the Federation are an opportunity for the BCTF to collaborate with all members—including specific sessions for members who are Aboriginal or Indigenous, Black, and other people of colour—on necessary systemic changes to make our union more inclusive and accessible. All members are invited to join a dialogue session and share their experience, expertise, and ideas for dismantling systemic racism within the BCTF. The deadline to fill out an [expression of interest form](#) to participate in one of eight scheduled sessions is February 17. Sessions will take place on select Fridays in February, March, and April. To learn more about the work of the BCTF ARAOO, and to read additional details about the dialogue sessions, visit the systemic review of racism project [webpage](#).

VEAES Resource Teacher Task Force

As mentioned in last week's VEAES Weekly, we are convening a Resource Teacher Task Force to consider issues related to provision of service and lack of support for vulnerable students. We know that Resource Teachers are at the nexus of many aspects and well placed to comment on workload, service models, reassignment resulting from the employer's failure to fill employee absences.

We will be providing a ½ day of release time with a TTOC for up to one Resource Teacher per school to attend a session at the VEAES Office on the morning of Friday, March 3rd, to discuss the challenges facing Vancouver Schools. There will be opportunities for additional virtual and after school sessions to continue the work of this meeting, but we hope to hear from diverse voices across the city. Please complete the [CV](#) and submit it to Hitomi@veaes.ca to take part in this important work.

Upcoming BCTF Membership Survey

Next week, the BCTF will be conducting the first of what will be an annual membership survey. The survey—designed by the BCTF Research Department—aims to build a representative picture of teachers' lived experiences across the province during the current school year. The BCTF will use the findings to continue to advocate for the working and learning conditions you and your students need.

The survey will be open to a representative group of randomly selected members. If you are selected, you will receive an invitation to complete the survey early next week.

Discrimination

In the last round of local bargaining, we negotiated new language under Article E.20, Discrimination. The reason for this change is to acknowledge that discrimination is not just something that happens between individuals, but it is connected to the systemic nature of institutional discrimination. We know that schools and our district are not impervious to racism and other forms of discrimination. This new language is a commitment to the joint responsibility of the union and the employer to create equitable, anti-oppressive spaces in the district.

While we didn't achieve all of the important changes to this article, we managed to make some progress in making this difficult process better for our members.

We've added a new clause E.20.4, which states: *"Employees proceeding with complaints under Article E.20 may bring a support person of their choosing from the bargaining unit to act solely as emotional support for that individual. The support person does not replace the role of the union representative at the meeting and/or matters relating to complaints under this Article"*.

While the previous language included a union representative, we acknowledge that our union reps do not always reflect our membership. What this new language means is that you can bring in one of your colleagues, as long as they are a VEAES or VSTA member, to support you in this process. For example, you may choose someone who is from the same equity-seeking group as yourself, who will have an informed lens as to what you have been dealing with. You will also have a union representative with you to ensure that process is followed and that your rights as a member are being respected.

If you have any questions about this process and your rights, please do not hesitate to contact the VEAES office for support.

Kindergarten Survey

Thank you to all the Kindergarten teachers who filled out the K survey. The results were a topic of lively discussion at the Working and Learning Conditions & Bargaining Ctte (WLCB) this week. A big shout out to the members who came to the meeting at the VEAES office and worked together to interpret the data and decide on next steps. There are motions that will be coming to the next Executive Committee meeting and we will be sharing out a summary of the report and the actions that we will be taking in an upcoming VEAES Weekly, so stay tuned!!!

Jody Polukoshko
President
jody@veaes.ca

Marjorie Dumont
Vice President
marjorie@veaes.ca

Darren Tereposky
Vice President
darren@veaes.ca

Karine Ng
Vice President
karine@veaes.ca

Vanessa Lefebvre
Vice President
vanessa@veaes.ca

Eric Proulx
Vice President
eric@veaes.ca

Rob McGowan
AE President
rob@veaes.ca

Office:
604-873-8378

www.veaes.ca

Dates to Remember

Executive

Committee Meeting

Feb 21, 2023 @ 4:00 PM

VEAES Office

2915 Commercial Drive



Professional Issues

Committee Meeting

Feb 27, 2023 @ 3:30 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82239628741>

Meeting ID: 822 3962 8741

Passcode: 174448

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada



Social Justice & Solidarity

Committee Meeting

Feb 28, 2023 @ 4:00 PM

VEAES Office

2915 Commercial Drive

VEAES

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