

VEAES WEEKLY

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



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Extended Health Benefits Vote Feb 27th – 28th

Thank you to all the members who made it out to our Extended Health Benefits virtual session on Wednesday. We appreciate the time members are taking to inform themselves & discuss this really important vote with their colleagues. If you have yet to read up on the information, please visit the [VEAES website](#), there are two articles on the home page that link to the [comparison chart](#) of the two plans and provide some historical context and the process we've undergone to get where we are at today.

We are at the final stage of this process, where we will be voting to retain the local plan or move to the provincial plan. It is important to note that if we move to the provincial plan, there is no ability to move back to the local plan. If we retain the local plan, we would continue the process that we've always done, which is to conduct a vote after the next round of bargaining, should there be improvements to the provincial plan.

In terms of the ballot, it will read :

Regarding the Extended Health Benefits Plan, I vote to:

- Remain in the local Vancouver EHB plan
- Move to the standardized provincial EHB plan

In anticipation of this very important vote, please ensure that your contact information is up to date. **You will receive your voting credentials from Simply Voting** and it will come to the email we have on file. ***Please check with your colleagues to ensure their contact info is updated so that they can get their voting credentials.*** You can update your contact info by emailing lori@veaes.ca. With the tight timeline, it will not be possible to process contact info updates while the vote is underway from February 27th-Feb 28th. As you may have not received emails from Simply Voting before, please check your junk folder.

Prep Time and Early Dismissal

We have been getting questions about loss of prep time due to early dismissal for parent conferences. This is usually for members whose prep is between 2-3 pm on those days. Staff reps can inform the administrator that there is a grievance resolve from June 2022 where the employer agrees to reschedule the prep to instructional time on the same day or make up the prep within the week. The arrangement to do so should take place prior to the parent teacher conferences.

Resource Teacher Task Force March 3rd

We look forward to our upcoming Resource Teacher Task Force and ***encourage all schools to send one Resource Teacher so there is as wide of a representation as possible.*** Completion of the [CV for the task force](#) is part of VEAES processes and is simply a tool for members to express interest and for the office to keep track of who is interested to help with communication, logistics, and provision of TTOCs. If there are sections on the CV that don't apply to you, leave them blank.

Part of the task force's role is to determine its future direction. As such, there is no commitment at this time from attendees beyond the morning of March 3rd, 9 am-12 pm. The group shall decide what happens next and how!

We will send you an email once your CV has been processed to inform you of next steps. Deadline for CVs is Tuesday, February 28th.

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 February 27 so we can arrange for the proper amount of food!

Feb 22 Joint District Pro-D Meeting Cancelled

We regret to inform membership that the district has cancelled the Joint District Pro-D meeting scheduled to meet on Feb 22. It has cited clerical staffing shortage as the reason for the cancellation. This body meets regularly during the school year to review and approve applications submitted by members to access Collaborative Inquiry and Temporary Supplemental Funds. While we were encouraged by the recent clearing of the backlog (due to the same reason, clerical staffing shortage), this cancellation will set us back once again. VEAES will continue to advocate for the timely processing of applications. We know members put in a lot of time and effort to plan their Pro-D activities that can incur significant costs.



Kindergarten Survey Report Out

There was great participation from Kindergarten teachers in the recent VEAES survey put out by the Working and Learning Conditions & Bargaining (WLC/B) committee. 122 teachers responded from more than 80% of our school sites! Thanks to those teachers who took the time to share their thoughts on the gradual entry process. An overwhelming majority of teachers (91%) reported that they have noticed a decrease in school readiness skills among Kindergarten students since the pandemic. There were clear themes in the comments that teachers provided: difficulties with social skills, self-regulation, independence and self-care skills, fine and gross motor skills, and speech and language development among many others. 84% of respondents were in favour of extending the gradual entry period to the end of the second week of school, with many teachers emphasizing the importance of teaching early skills in small groups to set students up for success in their K year and beyond. Fewer teachers (37%) were in favour of extending gradual entry into the third week of school.

We heard loud and clear the specific working and learning challenges in Kindergarten, and the VEAES Executive Committee has passed a number of motions to support our colleagues. These include:

- advocating for the gradual entry schedule to be extended to the end of the second week of school
- highlighting the importance of the transition into Kindergarten and identifying student support needs before the school year starts
- addressing the issue of support during gradual entry to ensure supervision-free breaks
- advocating for alternative ways to access support for undesignated students

Thank you again to all the teachers who have participated in this process. Your voice makes a difference and we are powerful in numbers. The next WLC/B committee meeting is April 4, 2023 on Zoom and all are welcome. Please email kate@veaes.ca if you have any further questions about the WLC/B committee or the survey.



HOBIIYEE 2023 – Restoring our Roots

Hobiyee (Ho-be-yeh) is a celebration of the waxing crescent moon, during the latter part of winter, each year.

Celebration of the Nisga'a New Year through stories, songs, and dances. The Nisga'a Of Ts'amiks (Vancouver) hosts this celebration each year and invites dance groups from other nations to celebrate the strength, beauty, and diversity of Indigenous cultures.



Drummers at Hoobiyee 2018

The event is free and open to all to attend. This year it will be at the PNE Forum (2901 East Hastings, Vancouver, BC) on March 2-4, 2023. Check out the [scheduled events](#) for Hobiyee this year.

Animals in the Classroom

At a recent District Health & Safety meeting, there was discussion about animals in schools. The VSB has policy around this topic that we want to highlight. [The Administrative Procedure 255](#) outlines the guidelines around having animals in the classroom and states that: *“The use of animals in schools for curricular purposes ranges from the presence of a classroom pet, to demonstration in a classroom setting, to the participation in a science fair. Youth Science Canada (YSC) oversees the use of animals in K-12 education, science classes, and science fairs across Canada and employees and students must comply with YSC requirements.”*

With this AP 255, there are 2 appendices. In [Appendix A](#) it outlines Prohibited Animals and [Appendix B](#) is the procedure for a Request to Introduce a Classroom Pet. If you are considering bringing animals into the classroom, please read these procedures thoroughly.

One of the issues brought up by the employer is around the chick hatching project that has happened at many schools in the past. Farm animals are on the prohibited list and at the District Health & Safety meeting and the employer raised the issue of this project happening in classrooms. Some teachers have relationships with the farmers/groups that facilitate the chick hatching project and those groups are reaching out to teachers directly. Please let those farmers/groups know that the program is not supported by the employer or direct them to your administrator to deliver the news.

The district is currently creating an Administrative Procedure for Guide and Service Animals, which will be brought through the Board process.

Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society Logo Contest

As VEAES has recently changed our name to reflect the inclusion of Adult Educators and other non-teaching members, we are looking for a new logo for our association. We're inviting Indigenous students in Vancouver schools to submit original artwork for our Logo Contest. Through our Executive Committee and General Meeting, a winner will be chosen whose image will represent VEAES on our website, letterhead, advertising and other promotional materials. The creator of the chosen design also wins a bursary worth \$500 or an Apple iPad. All entries will receive an honourarium. We know our students are creative, imaginative, connected to their school communities and teachers, and we are very excited to see what they will create!

The contest is open to all Indigenous students in Vancouver Elementary, Secondary or Adult Education.

We are looking for an image that represents Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' relationship to schools and that connects to our work with Truth and Reconciliation. The criteria is as follows:

- include the acronym "VEAES" in a legible script, and it is preferred that there be no other wording.
- be visible in both black and white and colour copies
- use black and white, and may include one or two additional colours, but no more than two.
- make a connection between public education and reconciliation or social justice
- the logo may be created using pencils, crayons, markers, and/or paint. It may also be created using a computer drawing program, but all images must be original.

We are looking for an image that will be bold, clear and that can be simplified to a line drawing for use on t-shirts, mugs, etc. Fine line detail can be easily lost or will not reproduce well. VEAES may modify the winning selection for this purpose.

All artwork must be original. All submitted entries, images and artwork become exclusive property of VEAES, and the winning artist and their parent must grant VEAES the right to use, reproduce, alter or modify their design and use it in VEAES materials without restriction or further compensation.

Submissions must be scanned and emailed to lori@veaes.ca and the original be sent by blue-bag to Lori Liang at the VEAES office. Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2023.



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Dates to Remember

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.