

# VEAES WEEKLY

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



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## **VEAES' Executive Committee for 2023-24 elected**

On Tuesday, May 16th, VEAES members came together at our Annual General Meeting to vote on bylaw changes, the budget, and elect the Executive Committee for next year.

### **Your 2023-24 VEAES Executive Committee members are:**

**Table Officers:** Jody Polukoshko (P), Marjorie Dumont (VP), Karine Ng (VP), Vanessa Lefebvre (VP- Grievance Officer), Darren Tereposky (VP), Eric Proulx (VP - 0.4FTE), and Glen Hansman (Sec.Treasurer – U Hill).

**Local Reps to the BCTF:** Chloë McKnight (Oppenheimer), Natasha Burditt (Seymour), and Samuel Couture (Kerrisdale).

**Members at Large:** Bernadette Milton (χpeý), Ramatoulaye Balde (Selkirk), Japleen Gill (Thunderbird), Marcus Zheng (¿uuqinak'uuh), Deborah Tin Tun (Douglas)

### **Standing Committee Chairs:**

Aboriginal Education Ctte: Jennifer Sebastian (χpeý)

Communications: Alexander Graham (Henderson)

Health & Safety: Danielle Durant (Secord)

Professional Issues: Sandra Fox (DLS)

Social Justice and Solidarity: Elaine Ong (Oppenheimer), Madalene Wong (Roberts), Maria Teresa Foster (Jamieson)

Teachers Teaching on Call: Kevin McPherson (TTOC)

Working and Learning Conditions/ Bargaining: vacant (2 positions)

### ***Our Adult Ed colleagues held their AGM on May 6th and elected their EC:***

Rob McGowan (P), Cathleen With (VP), Kyle Kirkwood (Staff Rep – South Hill), Allan Haley (Staff Committee Chair - South Hill)

Any vacant positions will be filled by appointment by the Executive Committee, so if you are interested in a position, please don't hesitate to reach out to the VEAES office for more information on how to apply.

We are grateful to those who put their names forward to do this work to uplift our members and uphold our Collective Agreement rights. We know that members' working conditions are having an immense impact on your health and wellness and we will continue to fight for improvements.

We want to thank our outgoing Executive Committee members, who dedicated much time and energy to the union on behalf of their colleagues: Alexandra de Montigny, Nancy Espinoza Magana, Heather Allison, Sylvia Jackson, Kate Zisman, and Liam Patterson-Morris. We thank you for sharing your time, experience, and perspective in helping us make collective decisions on the many issues that arose this year. Your commitment to public education and to your colleagues is deeply appreciated.

## **TRC Call to Action 15: Aboriginal Languages Initiatives**

This week, we looked at Call to Action 15: *We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-languages initiatives.*

On Monday, June 14, 2021, the federal government announced the first appointees to the [new Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages](#): Ronald E. Ignace (Commissioner), Robert Watt (Director), Georgina Liberty (Director), Joan Greyeyes (Director).

The Office of the Commissioner will operate independently from the Government of Canada. They will support and work with Indigenous peoples, their respective governments; other governing bodies, communities and organizations; the governments of Canada and the provinces and territories; and all Canadians to support the self-determined work of Indigenous peoples in reclaiming, revitalizing, maintaining and strengthening First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages.

While this call is technically complete, there is still much work to be done. [The UN has declared 2022-32 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.](#)

The UN estimates that over half of the Indigenous languages around the world could disappear before the end of the century. The next 10 years are critical to make Indigenous languages living languages. Indigenous people are mobilizing to teach their languages to younger generations – speak their languages every day: at home, in ceremonies, at schools, community events and all aspects of daily lives.

We need to take a look at Public Education and how we can support these initiatives. We need to look at what is considered the official languages of our country and the colonial impacts of only English and French being recognized and prioritized. This is going to be something we are going to have to grapple with. There will be discomfort when we discuss this as a collective, as there is in all decolonizing work that we do. The important piece is that we have to talk to one another, hear each others' stories, and support each other as move toward a more inclusive system. As Marjorie Dumont always says: "This is hard work, but it is heart work".

## **School Organization 2023-24 Class Size/Composition Violations**

We've heard from some sites that their School Organization for next year is already in violation of Class Size and Composition language. For more information on Class Size and Composition, please refer to our [Post and Fill Workshop presentation, it starts on page 46](#). If your site is in that position right now, please email your School Organization sheet to [darren@veaes.ca](mailto:darren@veaes.ca).

Remember that Staff Committee has a role to play in the Post and Fill Process, so talk to your Staff Rep, hold a VEAES meeting, and discuss alternate organizations for your site. If you have a recommendation that members feel unified on, bring it forward through Staff Committee. If the recommendation is carried by Staff Committee and the Administrator chooses not to follow the recommendation, their reason needs to be recorded in the minutes.

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## **PREP – Vacancy Job Assignments in SFE**

At this month's TTOC Committee Meeting, there was discussion around information provided in SFE for assignments. TTOCs appreciate the time that teachers are taking to put in some key information that the TTOC can read ahead of time that helps in preparing for the day ahead.

The biggest issue we are seeing is for those PREP – Vacancy assignments, which are usually entered by admin. *A little* information goes a long way, so giving some info on what kind of prep will be delivered is really helpful. If it will be outside all day, or in an Art Room, or moving from room to room to deliver whatever prep the TTOC would like – all of this is really good information to help a TTOC plan for their day and be prepared upon arrival.

While this does not solve the Failure to Fill problem that the district is still having, it may increase the chances of the PREP Vacancy job at your site being filled in a timelier manner. This can come as a recommendation through Staff Committee, so put it on the agenda for your next site-based VEAES meeting.

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## **Appeal process for Designations**

We are currently working with VSB's Learning Services to establish the Review Panel process when Central Screening denies identification for a student. In addition, with a recent mediated settlement around the Jackson Arbitration, we are clarifying the steps that teachers can take to ensure students who already have a designation count for class size and composition based on their learning profiles. We are hoping to have a clear process on both these matters communicated to Resource Teachers at the Resource Teacher Training that the District provides every year.

If you have any current input or questions on the Review Panel or getting clarification on which designated students count for class size and composition, please contact [vanessa@veaes.ca](mailto:vanessa@veaes.ca) for more information.

## BCTF Public Education Conference

VEAES recently sent representatives to the [2023 BCTF Public Education Conference](#) in Surrey, BC. The conference, which brings together teachers, parents, and school board trustees from across the province, was an important opportunity to hear from a variety of perspectives and sources related to this year's theme of 'Responding to hate in our schools and communities'.

In addition to teachers and parents, Vancouver was represented by school board trustee and education advocate Suzie Mah, who was able to bring her unique experiences and perspectives on public education to the conference. This coalition of stakeholders and advocates presented a unique opportunity to engage with vital issues facing schools and communities today.

The conference featured a wide variety of speakers from British Columbia, Canada, and beyond, including representatives from the BC Human Rights Commissioner's Office, the Chicago Teachers Union, and the Canadian Anti-Hate Network.

[The Anti-Hate Network](#) presented updated findings on the means by which students and young people are at risk of being targeted, or recruited, by hate groups across Canada. The presentation and subsequent discussions were an opportunity to learn about, and engage, with the realities of hate in a contemporary, digital world, and the ways in which teachers are at the forefront of protecting youth by fighting for safety and equity in our schools. There are some great resources available on the website, including [a toolkit for Confronting and Preventing Hate in Canadian Schools](#).

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### Dates to Remember

**Executive  
Committee Meeting**  
May 23, 2023 @ 4 pm  
**VEAES Office**  
**2915 Commercial Drive,**  
**Vancouver, BC**

**Social Justice &  
Solidarity  
Committee Meeting**  
May 30th, 2023  
@ 4:00 pm  
**VEAES Office**

VEAES

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