

VEAES WEEKLY

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



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Winter Break Message

by: Jody Polukoshko

Colleagues,

Every year we find ourselves at this point, in the cusp of winter break, recognizing the exhaustion that comes with the profession, reporting timelines, and the inevitable entropy of a December classroom.

This time of year is also one for celebrating our achievements, our resilience, our activism, our struggles, and our communities. Regardless of how we celebrate, we invite VEAES members to recognize the importance of collectivity in all aspects of our lives. Living in community, teaching in collegiality, making change in comradeship continually underscores the importance of building and maintaining relationships.

For some of us, family are at the forefront this time of year. For others, it might be faith, and others still, reflection and renewal. We invite VEAES members to build on our solidarity, to forge connections, and to reach out across our differences this holiday season. In difficult times and when faced with untenable working conditions, it's more important than ever to centre justice and equity. Teaching is a transformative, political act, especially when we embrace our ability to make change in large and small ways.

Thank you to each of you who reached out to a colleague this fall in kindness or with care, as a mentor or someone seeking support, for speaking up even when you were the only one, who brought your concerns or the concerns of your colleagues forward, who solved problems, and or who supported children and families. We are all VEAES, and we are stronger together.

All of us at the VEAES office, Amy, Andrea, Darren, Eric, Hitomi, Karine, Lily, Lori, Marjorie, Vanessa, and myself, wish you a restful and restorative holiday and a Happy New Year. See you in 2024!



In memoriam: Jane MacEwan

by: Jody Polukoshko

This fall has claimed another of the giants on whose shoulders our union today stands. Jane MacEwan, long time VEAES activist and Primary Teacher at Lord Roberts Annex Elementary, passed away on December 7th.

Jane was instrumental in VEAES for decades. For many of us, she was a strong guiding voice that mentored us into union work, always reminding us of the reasons why organizing was important.



Jane was deeply involved in the development of the social justice, and particularly, the Status of Women programs at the BCTF and at VEAES, and worked hard to create a union that embodied members in more than just their workplace. She understood that our work as trade unionists was about wages and working conditions, but she consistently recognized the positionality of teachers, our identities, and the context of the work.

Jane worked across the province with other folks struggling for a union that represented and reflected our teachers, working hard to ensure that we approached our members with compassion, principles, ethics, and equity. Jane was always open to new learning, to changing her mind, and to recognizing and lifting up the perspectives and voices of new activists. While feminism brought Jane to the work in many ways, she embraced the opportunity to work in intersectional ways, and fought for recognition of equity and diverse needs at the bargaining table, her classroom, and the Executive Committee.

After her retirement, Jane continued to volunteer at the Learning Centre at Carnegie Community Centre in the Downtown Eastside, supporting their literacy programming, traveling extensively with her partner, Phil, and maintaining strong friendships with teaching colleagues and fellow union activists.

Jane represented VEAES at the BCTF as a Local Rep for many years, and bargained many of our local collective agreements, participating on the VEAES Grievance Committee until her retirement. Jane was never afraid to be a dissenting voice, to slow us down, to consider things differently, or to approach the work by centering love and care. Jane spoke truth to power throughout her career as a VEAES member, and inspired so many of us to do the same. She was truly one of the architects of VEAES' reputation as thorough, feisty, ethical, and strong. She will be deeply missed. Her Celebration of Life will be held on May 26, 2024 at the University Golf Club 1- 4 pm

BCTF AGM March 16-19, 2024: Call for delegates

by: Jody Polukoshko

A reminder that the BCTF AGM is happening in person this year in Vancouver! It's a great networking opportunity to meet your colleagues from across the province, to hear and participate in lively debates about issues related to our profession and social justice. VEAES has a number of resolutions that have been submitted for debate that have come through our committee structures and meetings. Please check out the AGM page on the BCTF website for more info, including all resolutions that have been submitted from around the province. We still have room for delegates! Elections will take place at the January 16 General Meeting, held at Tupper Secondary School. All related expenses including hotel accommodation, childcare, and meals will be covered.

If you have questions about attending, please contact any of the Local Reps: samuel@veaes.ca, natasha@veaes.ca, chloe@veaes.ca, bernadette@veaes.ca, or cathleen@veaes.ca. Interested candidates can fill out this [nomination form](#).

Pay Dates for Winter Break 2023/24

by: Darren Tereposky

A reminder that there are adjustments to pay dates in December due to the break. Contract teachers are paid on December 15 and 22nd and then not again until January 15 2024. For TTOCs, pay will be deposited on the 21st for work from December 1-15th, and then the next pay will be on January 15th 2024 for work from the December 16th-31st period.

BCTF Health and Wellness Program

by: Karine Ng

The BCTF Health and Wellness Program is designed to assist members in regaining a state of wellness, health, and productivity to sustain or return to a teaching assignment. It is funded by the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan, which in turn is 100% funded by members' dues.

The Health and Wellness Program puts teachers in contact with professional rehabilitation consultants located in communities throughout the province. In consultation with your health care provider, these consultants will coordinate services that help to improve the teacher's health and functional abilities. For more information about the program, please refer to this [web page](#). You can apply by calling 1-800-663-9163 or fill out the [online form for self-referral](#).



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Dates to Remember

TTOC Committee Meeting

January 10, 2024 @ 4 pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85740581941>

Meeting ID: 857 4058 1941

Passcode: 655912

Dial by your location

• +1 778 907 2071 Canada



General Meeting/ Staff Rep Assembly

January 16, 2024

4 pm

Tupper Secondary - Cafeteria



Executive Committee Meeting

January 23, 2024

4 pm

VEAES Office

2238 Yukon Street



VEAES

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