

VEAES WEEKLY

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



Table of CONTENTS

PBC Extended Health Vote - Page 2

2025 Bargaining - Page 2

VSB Budget - Page 3

Early Retirement Incentive Plan - Page 4

What is "Land Back"? - Page 5

Spring Transfer Timeline - Page 6

PBC Extended Health Vote

Thank you to all members who participated in the benefits vote over the past two days. VSTA will be running their vote March 7 and 8 and we will release the results of the decision after that.

The BCTF ran the ballot for us and helped us identify issues in how the BCTF membership database is, in some cases, out of sync with VEAES'. The two organizations are working to sync them, but in the meantime, it's important for votes like this, and as we prepare for bargaining, that your member information is updated at VEAES as well as at the BCTF.

You can update your contact information with the BCTF [here](#).

Some of the issues we found in helping members troubleshoot were unclear, and simply resending the ballot solved the problem. For some members who had moved from VSTA to VEAES, even though they were updated in our lists, they were not part of the eligibility list for this vote. Some folks had no email address on record, and some listed inactive email addresses. In some cases, folks had unsubscribed from the BCTF communications, and this precludes the BCTF from communicating with you for all purposes.

Watch this space for updates connected to the Extended Health Benefits Plan

2025 Bargaining

by: Jody Polukoshko

An enormous thank you to all members who completed the two bargaining surveys to date. We had an over 300% increase in member engagement and learned a tonne about member experiences. While specific recommendations are confidential, members spoke loudly and clearly about the importance of workload considerations and the proliferation of non-teaching tasks that are increasingly being required, with reporting workload receiving significant consideration.

Your VEAES representatives will be advocating on behalf of VEAES members to ensure that our voices are well canvassed at the BCTF Provincial Bargaining Conference in May 2024. Please watch your email for the upcoming Local Bargaining survey that will ask members to identify and prioritize matters to raise with our local employer, the VSB.

If you are interested in getting more involved with bargaining, and helping to create the upcoming bargaining survey, please contact greg@veaes.ca, VEAES' Working and Learning Conditions/ Bargaining Chair who will be calling a meeting shortly to begin this work. VEAES will also be appointing our reps to the local bargaining team in the coming months, so watch for that opportunity.

If you're interested in jumping in with both feet, the BCTF has put out a [posting for the Provincial Bargaining Team!](#)

VSB Budget

by: Jody Polukoshko

The VSB has started its' budget setting process. As always, VEAES participates fully in the stakeholder opportunities, raising VEAES' position and supporting our colleagues and union partners. Our feedback this year was determined by the Feb General Meeting:

- Questions regarding savings from failures to fill
- Information about demographics data used for projections
- Teacher shortage and impact on teacher workload
- Need for fully staffed schools including district programs, itinerant and specialist teachers, School Psychologists and Speech Language Pathologists
- Comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy including employment equity
- Funding for Adult Ed Facilities
- Dedicated funds for Fine Arts instruction at each worksite, subject to Staff Committee direction

In addition to this, we articulated our longstanding positions that :

- services to students and frontline student-facing staffing must be part of any budget and ought to be the priority for the district.
- Non-enrolling and district staffing need to be replaced from the first day of absence
- increased transparency on budget process as well as funding allocations to schools.

The VSB has released a Financial Plan Survey and while it's less leading than last year's survey, it provides a list of suggestions that participants can select, none of which include additional staffing or supports for students. As usual, the list of possible solutions all look like more work for teachers, with no reference to additional supports for students or teachers.

While we will be representing all members as stakeholders, individual members could participate in the survey and provide feedback on the importance of staffing and direct service to students, on the need to decrease district management and prioritize student-facing staffing, or on the ways that new initiatives and additional responsibilities won't be effective without a commensurate increase in staffing allocations.

We all want better supports for students, and improved student access to schools. And, our perspective on the ways that shiny new initiatives can compound the problem, or that rentals of school spaces won't fix what is a systemic funding problem.

Please encourage members of your community to complete the survey and to provide important input on the lived experience of parents and supporters of public education!

<https://ca.research.net/r/VSBFinancialPlan>

Early Retirement Incentive Plan

by: Jody Polukoshko

Our Collective Agreement provides for an Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP) for members who choose to retire prior to age 65.

To qualify, you must:

- Work until June 30 of the year you retire and be retiring with a pension
- Provide notice to the VSB prior to May 31
- Be between 55 and 64 years of age, inclusive, in the year they retire
- Be on continuing appointment
- Have a minimum of 10 years FTE service with the VSB
- Have been in active service for the previous 4 years, with a maximum of one year leave. This does not include leaves due to disability

ERIP is calculated as follows:

[Your annual salary] minus [Category 5 step 3] if you are full time and 55 years old. The percentage of that difference decreases with age by 10% per year.

Age	Pay Grades				Payout Percentage
	4PC	5PB	5PA	6PM	
55	25,602	25,602	33,471	34,862	100%
56	23,042	23,042	30,124	31,376	90%
57	20,482	20,482	26,777	27,890	80%
58	17,921	17,921	23,430	24,403	70%
59	15,361	15,361	20,083	20,917	60%
60	12,801	12,801	16,736	17,431	50%
61	10,241	10,241	13,388	13,945	40%
62	7,681	7,681	10,041	10,459	30%
63	5,120	5,120	6,694	6,972	20%
64	5,120	5,120	6,694	6,972	20%

*these amounts will be prorated for part time employees, averaged over the last 5 years



What is “Land Back”?

by: Jody Polukoshko

Land Back is a phrase that originated from Indigenous communities to address the connection between colonial harm and the historical and ongoing land theft that took place here, and across Canada. On Musqueam, Tseil-Waututh, and Squamish Territories, no treaties have been signed, and the local Nations never consented to the appropriation of land that is sometimes described as “settlement” or “Nation Building”. Colonialism is based on the assumption that the land was empty or vacant when settlers arrived, as described by the [Doctrine of Discovery](#), or the concept of [Terra Nullius](#).

There are many ways that people, organizations, and government can engage with the concept of Land Back, but it begins with an interrogation of the ways that land is deeply connected to Indigenous culture and knowledge, and the impact of the theft of this land. It includes recognizing how the theft of that land privileged and continues to privilege settlers in unearned ways, and allowed inequality to favour settlers, compounding over generations.

Land Back can mean a literal restoration of land ownership to First Nations. It can connect to land claims and self-governance, and it absolutely requires settlers to reckon with the forced relocation of Indigenous children, the legacy of Residential Schools, the conditions that lead to the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2 Spirit, and the racism that disproportionately incarcerates and polices Indigenous people. In Victoria, there is a [municipal voluntary tax](#) where homeowners can donate to the Songhees and Esquimalt local First Nations through property tax.

Land Back is about consent, and recognition, an acknowledgment of harm, and the first steps towards reparations and reciprocity – essential components of any movement towards social change.

For our part, VEAES is donating \$100,000 from the sale of our building to the local First Nations, as an acknowledgment that our members and our organization have benefited from the purchase and sale of stolen land, and to demonstrate reciprocity to First Nations. This is also in recognition of the need to go beyond territorial acknowledgments and curriculum, and to show, in a small way, that our work as an organization is connected to Reconciliation.

“When you hear the words decolonization, white supremacy, patriarchy or even racism, do you feel something? Do you get a chill down your back, randomly start crossing your arms, get tense all over your body, or even just feel an urge to resist? Well good! [...] It tells you that something is there and that you must go through it and find ways to process it.” – Kris Archie, Secwepemc Nation

Resources:

<https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/>

<https://davidsuzuki.org/story/land-governance-current-crisis-and-rise-of-land-back/>

Spring Transfer Timeline

by: Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

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

Important upcoming dates to remember:

March 15 at 4:30PM is the deadline to commit to a transfer as per E.21.12. 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 comparable with their FTE.

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

- applications of leave of one year or longer beginning in September 2024.
- requests to increase FTE at your current school made to the principal using the Request for Increase/Change in Teaching time for 2024 September.

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 letter, if any.

June 4 is when the first round of continuing and temporary vacancies are posted.

June 17 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 [here](#) and available at your school.





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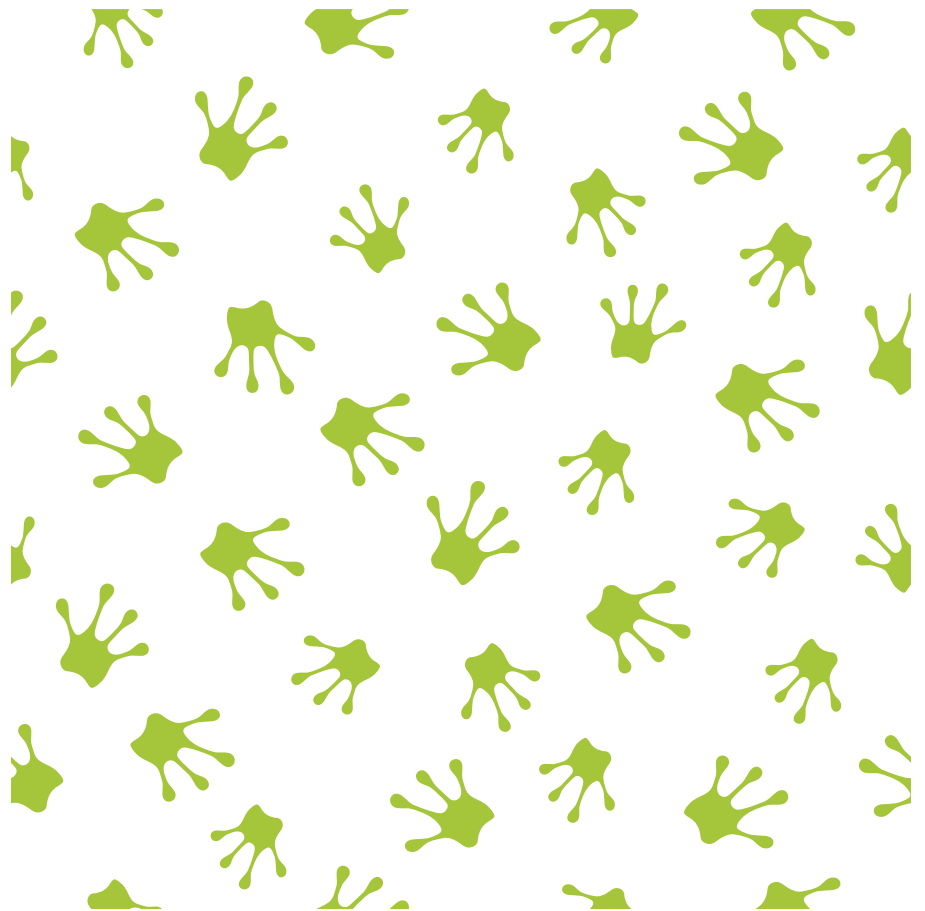
Dates to Remember

General Meeting/ Staff Rep Assembly

March 12, 2024

@ 4 pm

Tupper Secondary - Cafeteria



VEAES

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