

VEAES WEEKLY

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



Table of CONTENTS

May is Asian Heritage Month - Page 2

Job Share Meet and Greet May 15th - Page 2

TTOC Appreciation Social May 22 4 PM - Page 3

Student Teacher Recruitment - Page 3

Health & Safety Update - Page 4

Important deadline for Salary Change - Page 4

BCTF launches new ad campaign - Page 5

School Staffing - Embrace the power of your Staff Committee! - Page 5

Did you know? BCTF Short Term Indemnity Plan - Page 6

TRB dues - reminder! - Page 7

VEAES AGM May 14 - Tickets to CODEV fundraising dinner - Page 7

May is Asian Heritage Month

by: Jody Polukoshko

This month is Asian Heritage Month, an opportunity to highlight and lift up the voices and lives of Asian Canadian people. The Federal government declares this month “an opportunity to reflect on and recognize the many contributions that people of Asian origin have made and continue to make to Canada” since the 1990s.

As workers, it's important to recognize that while Asian Canadians have been a significant part of the nation-building project of Canada, that there still exists deep inequities in much of the work faced by immigrants, particularly Asian workers, including temporary caregiving, farming, and factories without a fair path to immigration.

VEAES encourages teachers to show solidarity by challenging discrimination in our classrooms and workplaces, by learning and unlearning together, and by naming and addressing systemic racism in our institutions, including our unions.

It's important to also acknowledge the diversity of experience, language, and culture across the Asian diaspora. Additionally, as Canadians, it's essential that we recognize that Canadian laws have enforced racism and denied fair, safe, living and working conditions to many Asian Canadians, such as the Chinese Head Tax, the Japanese Internment Camps, and the Komagata Maru incident, as well as more recent events like COVID-19 related racism and the rise in Islamophobia.

We encourage members to consider this month as an opportunity to teach about Asian Heritage Month and to spend time considering our own internalized racism as individuals and institutions.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/community/asian-heritage-month-2024-1.7197764>

[https://vpl.bibliocommons.com/list/share/568630227_vpl_childrens_teens_info/2295023869_asian_heritage_month_for_kids_\(vpl\)](https://vpl.bibliocommons.com/list/share/568630227_vpl_childrens_teens_info/2295023869_asian_heritage_month_for_kids_(vpl))

<https://www.vanmag.com/city/arts-and-culture/celebrate-asian-heritage-month-with-a-visit-to-canadas-first-chinese-canadian-museum/>

[Asian Canadian Labour Alliance](#)

Job Share Meet and Greet May 15th

by: Darren Tereposky

A reminder that on May 15th from 4-5 PM VEAES will be hosting a meet and greet (at our office) for teachers, area counsellors, psychologists and SLPs who are interested in finding a potential job share partner for next year. So far, we have about 8 members signed up to attend, with a mix of primary and intermediate teachers. Under our collective agreement language, VEAES members can apply for 1.0 positions as a job share team working full days split either 50/50 or 60/40. When applying for jobs, your seniority will be the average of both members. At the meeting, we will set aside areas for teachers interested in primary/intermediate/counselling etc. It would be helpful if you can register in advance so we can gauge interest to make the event worth your time. Please fill out this form [here](#), and contact darren@veaes.ca if you have any questions.

TTOC Appreciation Social May 22 4 PM

by: Darren Tereposky

The VEAES Teachers Teaching on Call Committee invites all TTOCs to come and celebrate your hard work and dedication this year. All TTOCs should have received an invitation in your personal email. Hosted at our beautiful new VEAES meeting space and patio, come and connect with other TTOCs, win door prizes, and enjoy food and refreshments. Please RSVP to kevin@veaes.ca by Wednesday May 15th. See you there!



Student Teacher Recruitment

by: Vanessa Lefebvre

VEAES is looking to find out more about student teachers' experiences with job fairs. If you are a sponsor teacher and have a student teacher in your classroom, please ask them about any recent experience at job fairs. Information we are looking for: which job fair they participated in (UBC, SFU, etc.), their experience with the various district recruitment teams present, the message they received from the VSB reps regarding hiring, and if they were offered contracts and interviews with any districts.

VSB senior management and VEAES IHTOs had their first meeting this week regarding recruitment and retention and we know that recruitment of student teachers has been an ongoing issue. This information will maintain confidentiality, we don't require the names of your student teachers. We just want to know their experience. We will collate the feedback provided and use that to make recommendations to senior management regarding recruitment. Please send any feedback to Vanessa@veaes.ca.

Health & Safety Update

by: Danielle Durant and Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

We are grateful to you for your hard work and determination for promoting safety in our work place. We could never take for granted the hard work you all do. We see it and appreciate you!

We wanted to take this opportunity to compare last year's statistics to this year. By the end of the 2022-2023 school year, there had been 341 total reported accidents or incidents; 55 of those reports were claims filed due to workplace violence and 160 were reports of workplace violence (no time lost at work, no medical treatment, etc.).

Since the OurHealth platform has gone live, as of the April 18th District Health & Safety Committee meeting, there have been 949 reported incidents, and most submissions were from an elementary setting. Of those 949 reported incidents, 475 were reported as workplace violence. To further break down that number, 285 were close calls, 146 sought first aid, 13 saw a doctor, 13 lost time at work, 17 lost time at work and sought medical treatment. The Employer noted that there were 135 incomplete reports of incidents (77 of those were reporting workplace violence). They advised that only complete submissions are submitted to WorkSafe so please make sure you complete your reports.

As workplace violence is the number one incident type being reported and most of these reported incidents happened in elementary settings, the employer did recognize that elementary workplace violence should be the area focused on for prevention. Thank you everyone for your continued advocacy! We raise our hands in honour and respect.

Important deadline for Salary Change

by: Vanessa Lefebvre

Members who consider that they have completed requirements for reclassification of salary category must not only make a TQS request, but must also apply to the Board. There are 3 times in the year that you can apply to ensure you get retroactive payment and May 31st is the next deadline. You need to submit the Change of Salary Category form by May 31st in order for it to be retroactive to May 1st. Even if you are still waiting for your TQS request to process, ***it is important to submit this application before May 31st.***

If the VSB does not receive the form prior to May 31st, the salary adjustment shall be effective the first day of the month following the filing of a successful application. To complete the application, you will need to submit your TQS change of category validation when you receive it. ***It does not go automatically to the VSB.***

The procedure for change of salary category is Article B.25.4 (pg 55 in your [Collective Agreement](#)). The VSB has provided a detailed document that outlines the steps necessary to fill out the [VSB Change of Category form](#). If you cannot locate the documents on the Employee Services Sharepoint, you can obtain a copy of the entire packaged which includes the application form through your school's Admin Assistant, or by emailing humanresources@vsb.bc.ca.



BCTF launches new ad campaign

excerpted from BCTF communications

The BCTF has been using a multi-phase advertising plan since the end of the last round of bargaining to keep our issues front and center in between rounds of negotiations. This week, we are launching the latest phase of that strategy with a focus on the teacher shortage and the need for government to act on recruitment and retention. Given the upcoming election and the next round of bargaining, our aim is to outline our priorities for the current provincial government and all political parties. We need decision makers to see that teachers are stretched too thin, and we need to help parents and the public understand why it is critical to get more teachers into schools to properly support students. The BCTF has been lobbying, and will continue to lobby the government to implement a fully funded workforce strategy similar to what they did for health care.

In the ad [Hire More Teachers](#), we show moments of students struggling and teachers there to help—delivering a simple and straightforward call to action: It's time for BC to hire more teachers.

- [15-second ad version 1](#)
- [15-second ad version 2](#)
- [15-second ad version 3](#)

School Staffing - Embrace the power of your Staff Committee!

by: Jody Polukoshko

School Organization and Staffing can be one of the most stressful times of our year. Information can be confusing or overwhelming, and it's key that we support one another through the process and remember that our unity and solidarity are among the most important thing for us to nurture and maintain through the process. While it's infrequent that everyone is satisfied with the outcome of school organization processes, we urge VEAES members to prioritize processes that increase transparency, fairness, and equity.

Rolling into school staffing decisions, we urge all schools to use their processes under Staff Committee – to use your structures to communicate with one another and to make recommendations to your administrator regarding School Organization, teacher assignment, and your working conditions.

Staff Committee is a powerful and important tool for teachers. It is our contractual right to advise the administrator as a collective through this process. Article A.5.5.c outlines the rights of the Staff Committee including (as relates to Post and Fill – please see the Collective Agreement for other SCM rights)

- Employees' assignments, including adequate physical requirements and suitable instructional assignments
- To assess the teaching and learning conditions within the school and to make recommendations to the Principal for improvement in the total teaching/learning situation
- To be involved with the timetabling and organization of the school
- To consult and be involved in school staffing and to conduct studies of the utilization of staff
- Establish the Interview Committee, Timetable and Staffing Committee, Finance Committee

We remind members that even though we don't sit in on school and district interviews, we are still active on the interviewing and staffing committees – providing advice about how schools are organized, how postings are written, and how shortlisting and interviewing should be conducted.

Did you know? BCTF Short Term Indemnity Plan

by: Jody Polukoshko

The BCTF runs our own [Salary Indemnity Plan](#), which is a self-funded plan that provides support to members who are sick, disabled, and unable to work after exhausting their sick leave. The SIP program is part of the BCTF's Salary Indemnity program that includes working with the Teacher Pension Plan, the Short and Long Term Disability, the [Health and Wellness Program](#), [Starling Minds](#) online CBT program, and other supports for teachers.

Each of these programs and supports are available free to BCTF members, staffed by the BCTF, are confidential, and is supported by member dues and interest on BCTF investments. As a result, members own, run and determine the direction of this plan through BCTF budget and policy decisions.

Today, we'd like to highlight the Short Term Indemnity Plan, which provides up to 120 additional days of benefits for sick or disabled members who have run out of sick leave days provided by their local collective agreement. It helps members whose illness exceeds their days to remain away from work without income, and to prevent members from having to make the financial decision to return to work before they are medically ready.

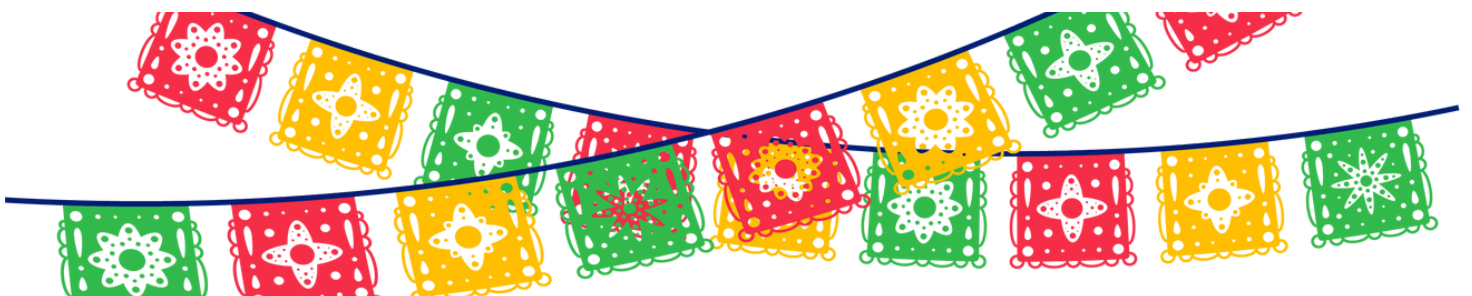
Whether you are on a full or partial leave with the VSB, if you are coming close to using up your available sick leave, consider the option of applying to BCTF SIP. The application process has two parts – one for you to complete and one for your doctor to complete. If approved for SIP, the benefits are applied retroactively.

We say that SIP are sick leave benefits, not sick days, because the rate of pay is about 55% of your regular salary. However, there are no deductions so most members find that while it's a reduction in income, it is sometimes the bridge that is needed for members to resolve medical issues prior to returning to work. While members do not pay pension deductions while accessing SIP, they continue to receive credit for having paid their pension and union dues.

Changes have recently been made to make it easier for teachers who have returned from extended sick leave to access SIP for intermittent sick days (i.e. an injury depleted your sick days, you return to work, then catch the flu) to support ongoing wellness even after a return to work.

If members use their SIP benefits, they may apply for Long Term Disability, a plan also run by the BCTF, and supported by member dues, but it's important to understand that the bar for eligibility is much higher than for the Short Term plan.

SIP is available to all members who are actively employed on a full or part time basis, but unfortunately is not available for TTOCs, who do not pay into the Salary Indemnity Plan.



TRB dues – reminder!

by: Jody Polukoshko

You may have noticed that your April 30 paycheque was \$95 less than usual – this is because our employer automatically deducts our annual Teacher Regulation Branch dues and remits it on our behalf, in order to ensure that we remain certified! Our fees have been consistent at \$85 for many years, and this year a \$10 increase was introduced.

IMPORTANT CAVEAT! – If you are on leave and not receiving salary from the VSB, you will need to pay your own certification fee. Failure to pay your annual TRB dues will result in your certificate being cancelled, a process that is onerous and time consuming to reverse.

Check your pay advice. If you do not see the deduction, you'll need to pay it yourself, [directly to the TRB](#). The deadline is May 31.

BEFORE-TAX DEDUCTIONS		
Description	Current	YTD
Teach Regulation Branch Fee	95.00	95.00

Having a cancelled certificate is no joke, and means that you cannot teach, and will be placed on an unpaid leave until you are able to pay and recertification has been completed. Take it from members who have experienced this – it's a terrible and costly error.

Our VEAES Weekly is distributed to active members and members on leave, but if you have a friend on leave, give them a nudge and they'll thank you for it.

VEAES AGM May 14 – Tickets to CODEV fundraising dinner

by: Jody Polukoshko

All members welcome! Please join the VEAES Executive Committee and Staff Reps at Soundhouse (33 East 8th Ave) at 4pm to make the decisions that will lead us into the 2024-2025 school year, including budget, electing the VEAES Executive Committee, and voting on our local bargaining objectives for the coming round.

All members are welcome at the AGM, and RSVP is not required, however, if you can email hitomi@veaes.ca if you intend to attend, we can ensure sufficient food and beverages for members in attendance.

Please check your inboxes for the AGM agenda, budget and budget related motions, by-law change motions, and candidates running for next year's Executive Committee. The annual issue of the VEAES News includes the overview page of the proposed budget recommended by the VEAES EC, and you can click on the links to review the audited statements for the 2022-2023 year and the detailed budget information. The VEAES News was sent out on Friday, April 26 to all members. Paper copies will be available at the AGM.

We will be doing a draw for tickets to the CODEV Canada fundraising dinner at the AGM for 10 lucky members to attend the event on June 1, 2024. VEAES is a CODEV partner and works with them to support projects in Honduras (PRICPHMA) and Colombia (FECODE) working and learning together with teachers to create and implement the "Non-sexist and inclusive pedagogy" and "Schools as territories of peace" curricula and collaborations.



CONTACT US

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



Dates to Remember

VEAES
Annual General Meeting
May 14th, 2024
Soundhouse
(33 East 8th Ave) at 4pm

Job Share
Meet & Greet
May 15, 2024 @ 4 pm
@ the VEAES Office

Executive
Committee Meeting
May 21, 2024 @ 4 pm
@ VEAES Office

TTOC Appreciation Social
May 22, 2024 @ 4 pm
@ the VEAES Office

VEAES Member Portal

To access the portal, go to the [VEAES website](#). On the menu, scroll down to [Member Portal Log In](#). When you click on it, there will be a prompt for your to register. After much consideration, we have chosen to use members' VSB employee numbers as the username, as it allows us to verify members. So, you will have to have your VSB employee number ready in order to register for the portal.

Once your registered and verified, you can access the portal menu, which is located on the left sidebar, under Member Portal. We encourage all members to sign up. If you have any issues with your registration, please email lori@veaes.ca

VEAES

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